

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS

PROPONENT: Department of Northern Affairs/Rocky Lake
East and North Shore Cottage Associations:
Applicants
PROPOSAL NAME: Rocky Lake Wastewater Treatment Lagoon
CLASS OF DEVELOPMENT: 2
TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT: Wastewater Treatment Lagoon
CLIENT FILE NO.: 4335.00

OVERVIEW:

On April 30, 1998, the Department received a Proposal on behalf of the Department of Northern Affairs and the Rocky Lake Cottage Associations – both East and North Shore, to construct a wastewater treatment lagoon to service the cottage development around Rocky Lake. The wastewater treatment lagoon will be located in unorganized territory on the northwest quarter of Section 25 & the northeast quarter of Section 26, Township 59, Range 27 WPM. The Proposal indicated that the wastewater treatment lagoon will be designed and constructed to provide storage capacity for 235 days without discharge. The proposal did not indicate the intended discharge period.

The Proposal, prepared by Charles Boyd, P. Eng., Department of Northern Affairs, indicated that the lagoon will be constructed with local clay material.

The Department, on August 26, 1998, placed copies of the Proposal in the Public Registries located at 123 Main St. (Union Station); the Centennial Public Library; The Pas Public Library; MKO and Opaskwayak Cree Nation Band Office and provided copies of the Proposal to the Interdepartmental Planning Board and TAC members. As well, the Department placed a public notification of the Proposal in The Pas Opasquia Times on Friday, September 4, 1998 and The Cree Nation in the September 1st issue. The newspaper and TAC notification invited responses until October 5, 1998.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:

Two responses were received to the public notification. The Rocky Lake East Shore Seasonal Cottage Owners Association and the Rural Municipality of Kelsey objected to the proposed development.

The R.M. of Kelsey objected for the following reasons:

- *The municipality is currently providing the same type of service to these cottage associations;*
- *The municipality is currently negotiating a long term contract to provide these services to the cottage associations, with the Department of Northern Affairs;*
- *There is no need for additional treatment facilities in the Wanless area which will affect the current revenue for the Wanless facility;*

- *Deputy Ministers of Rural Development and Northern Affairs have stated that there is no room for additional lagoon facilities in The Pas area; and*
- *Utilizing the Wanless facility will reduce the environmental risk.*

Disposition:

- The Department of Northern Affairs and the cottage associations have the right to file a Proposal for a wastewater treatment lagoon in accordance with The Environment Act.
- The negotiation concerning wastewater treatment services at the Wanless facility is not a relevant factor that can be considered in the licencing process.
- It is not possible to compare environmental risk of the Wanless facility to the proposed facility with the information provided. The Northern Region, Manitoba Environment has indicated that the lagoon facility at Wanless requires upgrading.

The Rocky Lake East Shore Seasonal Cottage Owners Association objected for the following reasons:

- *The Association (of seasonal users) does not want to share any of the cost associated with the development;*
- *The existing lagoon at Wanless is functional and there is no need for a second facility;*
- *Maintenance and liability issues associated with the proposed facility have not been clarified.*

Disposition:

- The Department of Northern Affairs is responsible for the funding of wastewater treatment lagoon and associated fees for its use. Maintenance and liability issues are associated with all wastewater treatment facilities and the owner and/or Licencee is responsible for dealing with these issues.
- The Northern Region, Manitoba Environment has indicated that the lagoon facility at Wanless requires upgrading.

COMMENTS FROM THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

Highways

- *No concerns.*

Rural Development

- *No concerns.*

Natural Resources

- *The Fisheries Branch had no concerns with the proposal.*
- *There was a concern with the quality of supporting documentation that was provided. The environmental assessment was very abbreviated and did not adequately describe the relevance of the raw data provided. Additional information, such as the depth to bedrock and distance from the proposed*

lagoon to the nearest residence with wells are required to complete the review.

Disposition:

- The quality of the Proposal received was poor and it was necessary to request additional information from the proponent. The proponent will be asked to improve environmental submissions in the future.
- The department has licenced wastewater treatment lagoons with rock outcrops in the cells provided the liner is continuous around the rock outcrop or the liner covers the rock outcrop. The concerns about depth to bedrock and distance to the nearest residence with a well will be addressed by the terms of the draft Licence respecting lagoon liner construction. The Northern Region, Manitoba Environment has indicated that the distance from the proposed site to the nearest water well is in excess of 3 kilometres.

Historic Resources

- *No concerns.*

Health

- *No response*

Environment-Operations Division

- *The receiving swamp or muskeg area as proposed by the Department of Northern Affairs is 2.53 hectares in area on the basis of forestry map records. It appears that the swamp then drains to a discontinuous stream that flows over a length of 2 kilometres towards a second larger swamp. The second swamp is 3.8 hectares in area and does not appear to have an outlet. It does not appear that the discharge route reaches Rocky Lake.*
- *There appears to be a possibility that the effluent may drain back towards the Rocky Lake Road. Some discharge route trenching or placement of berms between the road and the swamp may be required if the topography is not favourable.*
- *Additional information on the discharge route should be obtained.*

Disposition:

- The draft Licence requires that the discharge route be surveyed and makes provision for the construction of drainage improvements to ensure that the effluent flows into the swamp areas and does not flow back to Rocky Lake Road.

Environment-Water Quality Management

- *The following comments are provided:*
 - *effluent discharge periods should coincide with periods of photosynthetic activity in the discharge area;*

- *the type of vegetation and the characteristics of the soil in the area are important factors in determining the capacity of the area to adequately assimilate the treated effluent;*
- *due to the limited information provided on the drainage route it is unclear if there is a clear elevation gradient from the lagoon to Rocky Lake via the proposed drainage route;*
- *the proposal indicates a treed muskeg discharge area with a distinct boundary which may indicate a natural depression with little or no natural outflow;*
- *seepage from the facility could impact an abandoned burrow pit located near the site.*

Disposition:

- The draft Licence specifies the allowable discharge period, requires a survey of the discharge route and requires the approval of the drainage route and associated control works.

Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency

- *CEAA has indicated that application of The Canadian Environmental Assessment Act with respect to this proposal will not be required.*

PUBLIC HEARING:

A public hearing is not required.

RECOMMENDATION:

A Licence should be issued in accordance with the attached draft. Enforcement of the Licence should be assigned to the Approvals Branch until the report on the drainage route including drainage control works and the soil testing have been completed and approved.

PREPARED BY:

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