

Environment and Climate Change

March 1, 2024

Environmental Assessment Bulletin

The Honourable Bernard Davis, Minister of Environment and Climate Change, has announced the following relative to Part 10 Environmental Assessment of the **Environmental Protection Act**.

UNDERTAKING REGISTERED:

St. George's - Great Atlantic Salt Project

(Reg. 2290)

Proponent: Atlas Salt Inc.

The Proponent is proposing to develop an underground salt mine on the west coast of Newfoundland within the town of St. George's. The Project would produce and export crushed salt for the road de-icing market with initial production of approximately 2.5 million tonnes of rock salt per year. Project components would include an underground mine and ore processing facilities, mine site surface infrastructure, an overland conveyor system, use of the existing Turf Point marine facility, and associated ancillary infrastructure including access roads, water and sewer systems, and power supply. A description of the Project can be found on the department's webpage at: <https://www.gov.nl.ca/ecc/env-assessment/projects-list/>.

The undertaking was registered on February 29, 2024; the deadline for public comment is April 5, 2024, and the minister's decision is due by April 14, 2024.

Comments may be sent to: EAProjectComments@gov.nl.ca

ENVIRONMENTAL PREVIEW REPORT REQUIRED:

Great Coastal Trail – Parson's Pond to Daniel's Harbour

(Reg. 2284)

Proponent: Central Development Association

The minister has advised the Proponent that an environmental preview report (EPR) is required for the Project. The EPR is required to include:

- Identification of any overlap of the trail with the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure (TI) property, including rights-of-way, and measures that will be undertaken in consultation with TI to mitigate land use conflicts;
- Identification of any overlap of the trail with other land ownership/use, such as municipal development plans, Local Service Districts, private lands, the Crown Land Wind Land Reserve Order, the Arches Provincial Park, etc., and mitigations that will be undertaken to address potential land use conflicts;
- Avoidance of sand dunes along the trail, particularly at Portland Creek and Clifty Point;

- Digital mapping of the trail, in consultation with the Crown Lands Division of the Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture (FFA);
- Plans to engage the Wildlife and the Crown Lands Divisions of FFA, and TI in discussions on the design of future phases of the Great Coastal Trail;
- Plans for a Short-eared Owl survey to be conducted by a qualified independent third party between late June and late July of the construction year;
- A Contingency Plan that considers potential accidents and malfunctions and takes into account site-specific conditions and sensitivities;
- A Management Plan that includes appropriate preventative measures to minimize the risk of adverse effects on migratory birds and their habitats;
- An Environmental Protection Plan that describes measures that will be undertaken to:
 - prohibit motorized vehicle access on the trail;
 - prevent the introduction and spread of aquatic invasive species into waters from machinery and equipment working in/near water;
 - avoid Bank Swallow nesting colonies and critical habitat along/near the trail, particularly near areas with known breeding colonies at Parson's Pond and Portland Creek;
 - maintain a minimum 30-meter undisturbed buffer along all waterbodies (except coastline and water crossings) and wetlands (including bogs and marshes) that appear on 1:50,000 National Topographical Survey maps;
 - avoid a small section of a wetland next to the outfall of Portland Brook; and
 - monitor and maintain trail construction and operation by developing a Trail Monitoring and Maintenance Program that commits the Proponent to overseeing appropriate trail construction and use;
- A Waste Management Plan specific to the Project;
- Demonstration that the finished grade of the trail crest near the town of Parsons Pond will be below the 20-year flood elevation to avoid interference with the flow of water or displacement of water that could create a worse flooding situation for other locations; and
- An Historic Resources Impact Assessment.

An Environmental Assessment Committee (EAC) has been appointed to provide scientific and technical advice to the minister and to prepare guidelines to advise the Proponent of the information to be included in the EPR. The public will be invited to provide comments on the EPR upon its submission. The EAC includes representation from the following government departments:

- Department of Environment and Climate Change
 - Environmental Assessment Division – Chair
 - Pollution Prevention Division
- Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture
 - Policy and Strategic Planning

- Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation
 - Provincial Archaeology Office
- Department of Transportation and Infrastructure

UNDERTAKINGS RELEASED:

Pinchgut Lake to George's Lake Distribution Line Upgrade (Reg. 2285)
Proponent: Newfoundland Power Inc.

The Project is released from environmental assessment subject to the following conditions:

- The Proponent must uphold all commitments made in the environmental assessment submission to mitigate the effects of the Project on the environment, including the commitment to consult with Corner Brook Pulp and Paper Ltd. (CBPPL) regarding any overlap of proposed activities within CBPPL timber limits, and with other land users noted in the registration document.
- The Water Resources Management Division (WRMD) of the Department of Environment and Climate Change requires the Proponent to submit an Erosion Control Plan that identifies erosion-susceptible areas of the Project that occur within the Stephenville Crossing floodplain watershed and measures that will be implemented to mitigate the effects of erosion. The Erosion Control Plan must be approved by the WRMD prior to Project commencement.
- The Wildlife Division of the Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture requires the following:
 - Surveys for Black Ash and Red Pine are required before the project commences. Survey results must be presented to the Wildlife Division for further consultation regarding any potential mitigations/requirements for Black Ash and Red Pine prior to clearing activities.
 - Should any vegetation clearing commence prior to June 30 the Proponent must contact the Wildlife Division at least 15 business days prior to the planned work start date with specific information on locations, planned activities, and associated equipment as well as proposed time frame, for review and approval to ensure no negative impacts to American marten or their denning sites.
 - Vegetation clearing is not to occur within 800 metres of a bald eagle or osprey nest during the nesting season (March 15 to July 31) or within 200 metres during the remainder of the year. The 200-metre buffer applies to all other raptor nests (Northern Goshawk, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Merlin, American Kestrel, Great-horned Owl, Boreal Owl, Northern Saw-whet Owl). The location of any raptor nest sites must be reported to the Wildlife Division.
 - The Proponent must submit a copy of the Environmental Protection Plan noted in the registration document, to the Wildlife Division for review and approval prior to Project commencement.

- The Proponent must advise the Environmental Assessment Division when the conditions of release have been met, by emailing a written description, documents, and images (where applicable) to demonstrate that the conditions have been fulfilled.
- The Proponent must update the Environmental Assessment Division on the status of the Project, including a copy of all permits, licences, certificates, approvals and other authorizations required for the Project, within one year from the date of this release letter and to provide additional updates if required.

Point Rouse Quarry
Proponent: Shoreline Aggregates Inc.

(Reg. 2286)

The Project is released from environmental assessment subject to the following conditions:

- The Proponent must uphold all commitments made in the environmental assessment submission to mitigate the effects of the Project on the environment.
- The Water Resources Management Division requires that a Water Resources Management Plan be submitted to and approved by the Division prior to commencement of any work related to the Project.
- The Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture requires the following:
 - A minimum 50-metre undisturbed riparian buffer is to be maintained from the high-water mark of all wetlands and waterbodies within and adjacent to the Project, that are identified on either the 1:50,000 scale National Topographic System Maps, or the topographic mapping layer shown in the Provincial Land Use Atlas, to protect sensitive riparian and aquatic species and their habitats.
 - Vegetation clearing is not to occur within 800 metres of a bald eagle or osprey nest during the nesting season (March 15 to July 31) or within 200 metres during the remainder of the year. The 200-metre buffer applies to all other raptor nests (Northern Goshawk, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Merlin, American Kestrel, Great-horned Owl, Boreal Owl, Northern Saw-whet Owl). The location of any raptor nest sites shall be reported to the Wildlife Division.
- The Proponent must advise the Environmental Assessment Division when the conditions of release have been met, by emailing a written description, documents, and images (where applicable) to demonstrate that the conditions have been fulfilled.

- The Proponent must update the Environmental Assessment Division on the status of the Project, including a copy of all permits, licences, certificates, approvals and other authorizations required for the Project, within one year from the date of this release letter and to provide additional updates if required.

Learn more

Environmental Assessment Division
Department of Environment and Climate Change
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P.O. Box 8700, St. John's, NL A1B 4J6

Environmental assessment information is available at:

<https://www.gov.nl.ca/ecc/env-assessment/>

https://www.gov.nl.ca/ecc/files/GUIDE-TO-THE-PROCESS_Jan-2024.pdf

Follow us on Twitter: [@GovNL](https://twitter.com/GovNL) and [@ECC GovNL](https://twitter.com/ECC_GovNL)

Project comments may be sent to: EAProjectComments@gov.nl.ca

Anyone submitting comments on a Project under environmental assessment is asked to please advise the Department if they DO NOT wish to have their comments shared with the Project Proponent.

Media contact

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