

**REGISTRATION PURSUANT TO SECTION 49 OF**  
**THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT**

**NAME OF UNDERTAKING:** Mink Farm - Old Hearts Desire Road,  
Outside Hearts Content,  
NL

**PROPONENT:**

- (i) *Name of Incorporate Body:* **Lower Trinity South Regional  
Development Association**
  
- (ii) *Address:* **P.O. Box 100  
New Perlican, NL  
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- (iii) *Chairperson:* **Mr. Francis Glynn  
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- (v) *Date:* **December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2005**

## **THE UNDERTAKING;**

**(i) *Nature of the Undertaking:***

Proposed development of a mink farm at a site off of old Hearts Desire Road, outside of Hearts Content, NL. The farm is being developed to produce high quality mink varieties for sale to a private business. Farm construction is proposed in the Spring of 2006.

The project proponent, Lower Trinity South Regional Development Association has a subsidiary company called Spruce Hill Farms Inc, which is an established Experimental/Research Facility with 5 years of experience in the farming industry. The Board of Directors has concentrated on farm development in various capacities to assist in economic increase for the region. Through our partnership with Viking Furs Inc. we have the experience and qualifications necessary to operate such an initiative.

**(ii) *Purpose/Rationale/Need for the Undertaking:***

Lower Trinity South Regional Development Association sees a great potential for mink industry development in the province. The province has the proper climate for mink production as well as offering potential advantages in land, feed and labour availability and cost, as compared to Denmark. Also, as a Not-For-Profit Organization, we have a mandate and mission to investigate avenues that will assist in the employment opportunities and economic increase.

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE UNDERTAKING:**

• ***Geographical Location:***

The proposed site, of approximately 17.5 acres, is located off of old Hearts Desire Road outside Hearts Content, NL and is adjacent to a large experimental/training operation. The site is located on the right hand side of the road as Enterprise Hefford Lease (AL 92350). Maps of the proposed site are attached in Appendix 1. These maps include an overall site location map, an aerial photo of the site, papers of incorporation, detailed farm infrastructure plan.

The land base is currently in need of clearing, approximately 5 acres in one field, with the remainder being brush, alders, and wood. The site is relatively flat. Residents are located approximately 3-4km from the proposed site. Adjacent to the proposed site is an agriculture leased site belonging to Enterprise Hefford. Directly across the road is Spruce Hill Farms experimental/training facility.

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• ***Physical Features:***

Physical requirements for the mink farm to be added to the site include mink sheds, perimeter fencing, temporary manure storage and access roads. The current area will encompass some of the land required for the sheds and other infrastructure. The remainder of the land will be used for future expansion. Each of the physical features are further described below:

### **Roads**

Access to the site will initially use the existing old Hearts Desire Road, some upgrading will have to be carried out on the road to make it completely accessible. An additional road will be constructed directly from Old Hearts Desire Road to the proposed mink shed location. On-farm access will be constructed and extended as required. See attached detailed map for proposed location

### **Mink Sheds**

The proposed mink sheds for this farm will be 450' length X 42' wide. The shed will house approximately four to six rows of mink cages, depending on the width. The shed will be constructed using simple post and beam wooded construction, with galvanized aluminum sheeting attached for roofing, as well as skylights in the peaks and the sides of plastic to allow for as much light as possible. See pictures below for examples of the type of construction to be used.

An automatic watering system will be installed in the shed so that the mink will have access to a continuous supply of water. Artesian well(s) will be drilled to provide the necessary water requirements.

### **Storage Shed**

A small shed of approximately 20' x 30' will be constructed on site to provide for storage space for equipment and materials as well as a small staff room/facilities.

### **Perimeter Fencing**

The mink shed site (approximately 4 acres) will be enclosed, with chain link fencing to prevent encroachment by pest/animals and mink escapement. To prevent possible escapement, the bottom of the fence will be extended 6-8 inches below the ground surface. Total fence height will be approximately five to six feet.

### **Manure Storage**

A storage area will be constructed, consisting of a concrete platform approximately 20' X 20'. There will also be 3 sides of concrete 1' high and it will be graded towards those sides so the manure stays on the manure path. There will be a cover of black plastic to prevent fly development.

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- **Construction:**

Project construction is projected to occur from March, 2006 through to August 2009. Construction will be undertaken in a staged approach to meet the requirements of the expanding farm. Following are the projected construction requirements for each phase:

- *March 2006 - July 2006*
  - Upgrade road and develop access
  - Clear/level land
  - 3 four-row or 1 six-row mink shed(s) for breeding stock (1,000 females)
  - Install watering system
  - Perimeter fencing (start)
- *August 2006 - December 2006*
  - Clear/Level Land
  - Perimeter Fencing (complete)
  - 1 Storage Facility (20' X 30')
  - Manure Storage Pad (20' X 20')
- *June 2007 - August 2007*
  - 1-2 four-row or 1 six-row Mink Shed(s) for expansion
- *June 2008 - August 2009*
  - 2-3 four-row or 1 six-row Mink Shed(s) for expansion (to 4,000 females)

The main site has been selected to minimize clearing and leveling requirements. Construction involves simple structures with low potential for environmental impact.

- ***Operation:***

Farm

The process of farming mink is closely tied to the natural breeding cycle of the animal. The basics of the mink year are outlined in the following figure, which was prepared for the US mink industry. For mink farming in Newfoundland and Labrador the primary seasons are as follows:

- Breeding – Breeding to start in early March;
- Whelping – The breeding females will start having their kits as early as April 20<sup>th</sup>. Litters may range from as few as three to as many as 13, but four or five is the average;
- Weaning – Separating the kits from their mother and getting them on solid food starts after six to eight weeks, in late June or early July;
- Growth and Furring – From August through to pelting time in November/December the focus is on kit growth and proper fur development;

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- Grading and Pelting – Prior to pelting, mink are graded such that the best

performers can be retained as breeding stock. Pelting starts in November and can continue to early December.

<b>Jan</b>	<b>Feb</b>	<b>Mar</b>	<b>Apr</b>
	Breeding		Whelping
<b>May</b>	<b>June</b>	<b>July</b>	<b>Aug</b>
Whelping		Weaning & Separating	
<b>Sept</b>	<b>Oct</b>	<b>Nov</b>	<b>Dec</b>
Growth & Furring		Grading	Pelting

**Mink Farm Season**

Lower Trinity South Regional Development Association plans to start with 1,000 disease free, high quality bred females, to be transferred from a local farm in April 2007. On average, mink produce between four to five offspring. In 2006, the projected kit production will be approximately 4,000-5,000 kits. Over the following three to four years the operation will expand to 4,000 female breeders, producing up to 20,000 kits per annum.

This proposed operation will consist of raising and breeding only. The pelting and disposal of carcasses will be the responsibility of a local mink farmer. Feed will be obtained from a local farmer.

**Waste Production/Handling**

Farm

Waste production from a mink farm consists of one primary waste stream, manure and urine from the mink, which is mixed with wood shavings and straw from the nest boxes. Manure production varies with the time of year, with lower volumes produced from late-November through May, as the farm is populated only with breeding stock, and larger and increasing volumes produced from June through November, as the kits grow. The mixing of the manure/urine with the wood shavings/straw produces a very manageable solid waste product. The projected maximum waste production for a 4,000 female mink farm is as follows:

- Manure 720 tonnes
- Shavings/Straw 100 tonnes

**Waste Collection**

Farm

With all animals held in cages the manure and urine collect directly under these cages, in the sheds. In a vast majority of cases the mink return to the same spot to deposit their waste on an ongoing basis. In addition, straw and/or wood shavings are used in the nest boxes and the manure/urine becomes mixed with the straw/shavings that fall through the cage, producing a more manageable waste product. For hygiene purposes and to reduce odour, waste will be collected from the sheds on a regular basis, consisting of every two weeks in the late summer and less often during cooler periods.

Waste is to be collected using a wheelbarrell with a motor so it is easier to manage.

### ***Waste Handling and Disposal***

#### Farm

The handling and disposal of the waste from the mink farm will be undertaken using approved manure management strategies. The primary handling and disposal methodologies to be used will include short-term stockpiling, land application and potentially composting.

#### *Short-term Stockpiling*

Stockpiling of manure will only take place on a short-term basis, to accumulate for land application. Stockpiling will be done in an approved manner and at a site on the farm of sufficient distance and location from the sheds and wells to ensure no risk of contamination. Most of the manure will be used at our research/training facility located directly across the road from the proposed site for the mink farming initiative

#### *Land Application*

A total of 150 female mink (plus kits and males) per acre is the recommended maximum from the “Environmental Farm Practice Guidelines for Livestock Producers in Newfoundland and Labrador” for manure spreading. As such, for a 4,000 female farm the recommended minimum acreage for manure spreading would be 26.67 acres. The site has a land base of approximately 50 acres, providing more than sufficient area for manure spreading. In addition, manure will be made available to our farm site for spreading on the fields.

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- ***Occupations:***

The proposed farm will require a projected six to ten employees, in addition to the proponent, during the construction phase. The operations phase will require four

full-time personnel in the first year, growing to six full-time personnel in the fourth year.

- Project-Related Documents:

N/A

#### **APPROVAL OF THE UNDERTAKING:**

Approvals required for the construction and operations phase for Spruce Hill Farms Inc include the following:

- Municipal – Town of Hearts Content – application submitted
- Crown Lands – application submitted
- Agriculture Report – application submitted
- Incorporation Papers - attached

#### **SCHEDULE:**

The initial land development and construction phase for this project must be started by March, 2006. Land clearing and leveling, the construction of one six-row or three four-row mink sheds, watering system installation and starting the installation of perimeter fencing must be done prior to the arrival of the breeding stock in March, 2007.

#### **FUNDING:**

Lower Trinity South Regional Development Association will be applying for assistance through the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Human Resources and Skills Development (Service Canada), the Agriculture Policy Framework (APF), and the Department of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development. No approvals have been granted to date. After the operation is established, Lower Trinity South Regional Development Association will take responsibility for running the operation. All monies derived from this operation will be turned back into the operation for future expansion. Estimated total program cost is \$250,000.

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**Mr. Francis Glynn, President**

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**Date**