

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

**NAME OF UNDERTAKING:**                      **Mink Farm - Comfort Cove Mink Farm -  
10,000 female breeders**

**PROPONENT:**

(i)     *Name of Corporate Body:*     **Comfort Cove Mink (TBI)**

(ii)     *Address:*                                 **P. O. Box 136  
Comfort Cove, NL  
A0G 3K0  
(709) 244-6361**

(iii)     *Chief Executive Officer:*     **Mr. John Head  
P. O. Box 136  
Comfort Cove, NL  
A0G 3K0  
(709) 244-6361**

(iv)     *Principal Contact:*                      **Mr. Brian Burke  
Burke Consulting Inc.  
7 Somerset Place  
CBS, NL  
A1W 4P3  
(709) 834-6331**



## THE UNDERTAKING:

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

Proposed development of a mink farm at a site off of Route 343, the road to Comfort Cove-Newstead. The farm is being developed to produce high quality mink varieties for sale through the North American auction houses. Farm construction is proposed to begin in the Spring/Summer of 2007. The project proponent, Mr. John Head, has an agriculture background and will be establishing the farm on his current agriculture lease, title #23466.

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

The proponent, Mr. John Head, views Newfoundland and Labrador as offering a significant opportunity for the development of a world-class mink industry. The province has the proper climate for mink production as well as offering potential advantages in land, feed and labour availability as compared to other jurisdictions.

Mr. Head has an extensive agricultural background - owner/operator of family farm business for the past 17 years. Farm currently consists of livestock operations as well as some root crop and forage production. He also has twenty-five years experience in the seafood processing industry holding senior management positions. This has included working with all aspects of the processing, as well as procurement of raw materials and marketing of finished products. To provide the necessary mink farm experience, an experienced mink farm manager will be hired for the new farm.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE UNDERTAKING:

### • *Geographical Location:*

The proposed site consists of an existing agricultural lease, lease #23466, of 97.88 acres in total. The site is located off of Route 343, on the road to Comfort Cove-Newstead. A total of over 30 acres of this site is currently cleared. Maps of the proposed site are attached in Appendix 1. These maps include a location map, survey maps of the lease, and an aerial photo of the site.

*Distances:* 1.6 km to nearest house; 1.7 km to dump; >5 km to nearest town

### • *Physical Features:*

Physical requirements for the mink farm to be added to the site include mink sheds (12-16 in total), a storage shed, perimeter fencing, temporary manure storage and upgraded access roads. A total area of 8-10 acres will be leveled to encompass the sheds and fencing. The main farm area will be situated with a treed buffer maintained to limit exposure. Additional land will be developed, as required, for manure spreading. Each of the required physical features are further described below:



## **Road**

Access to the site from Route 343 will be gained using existing access roads adjacent to the site. Access will be upgraded and extended to reach the proposed main farm area. No water bodies are to be crossed in upgrading the required access.

## **Mink Sheds**

The proposed mink sheds for this farm will be 400-600 ft long by 22 ft wide. Each shed will hold four rows of mink cages. The sheds are to be constructed using simple post and beam wooden construction, with galvanized aluminum sheeting attached for roofing, as well as a fibreglass skylights, and a plastic fabrene material used on the exterior sides (to enable natural light penetration).

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

## **Storage/Auxiliary Sheds**

One small shed (1,200-1,500 square feet) will be constructed on-site to provide storage space for equipment and materials as well as a small staff room/facilities.

## **Perimeter Fencing**

Fencing of the farm site will be completed as per the requirements established by the Department of Natural Resources.

## **Manure Storage**

A temporary manure storage area will be constructed, consisting of a concrete pad and bucking wall, covered by a heavy tarp to prevent washout by precipitation. This facility will be constructed and located in keeping with the Environmental Guidelines for Livestock Producers. For the ultimate 10,000 breeder operation around 12,000 cubic feet of storage will be required. Manure pads will be added in increments to meet the breeder requirements for the upcoming production season. The facility(s) will provide for temporary storage only, with the manure ultimately being made available to local farmers for spreading and/or used on existing fields or additional fields to be developed by the proponent. See Appendix 2 for a letter from the Comfort Cove-Newstead Agricultural Society requesting access to manure from the farm for the local 120 acre community pasture.

- ***Construction:***

Project construction is projected to occur from May/June 2007 through to July 2010. 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:

- *May/June 2007 - November 2007*  
Upgrade/Extend Access



Level Land

4-5 Mink Shed(s) for initial breeding stock (1,500-2,500 females)

1 Storage/Auxiliary Shed

Perimeter Fencing

Manure Storage Pad (3,200 cubic feet, for 2,500 breeders)

- *July 2008 - November 2008*  
4-5 Mink Sheds for expansion to 3,000-4,000 breeders  
Manure Storage Pad (3,200 cubic feet, for additional 2,500 breeders)
- *July 2009 - November 2009*  
4-5 Mink Sheds for expansion to 5,500-7,000 breeders  
Manure Storage Pad (3,200 cubic feet, for additional 2,500 breeders)
- *July 2010 - November 2010*  
3-4 Mink Sheds for expansion to 10,000 breeders  
Manure Storage Pad (3,200 cubic feet, for additional 2,500 breeders)

The main site will be selected to minimize clearing and leveling requirements and to utilize a natural buffer to minimize visibility. Construction involves simple structures with low potential for environmental impact. Good drainage will be maintained under the mink sheds to minimize the potential for pollution and pest production.

- ***Operation:***

The process of farming mink is closely tied to the natural breeding cycle of the animal. 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;
- 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.

Comfort Cove Mink plans to start with 1,500-2,500 disease free, high quality mink females from an established farming operation. On average mink produce between four to five offspring. In 2008 the projected kit production will be approximately 7,000-12,000 kits. Over the following two to three years the operation will expand



to 10,000 female breeders, producing up to 50,000 kits per annum.

This proposed operation will consist only of the farm. The proponent will be utilizing external suppliers for feed supply and pelting.

**Waste Production/Handling**

Waste production from a mink farm consists of two primary waste streams, manure and urine from the mink, which is mixed with wood shavings and straw from the nest boxes, and carcasses. 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. Carcasses are the primary waste stream from pelting. The projected maximum waste production for a 10,000 female mink farm is as follows:

- Manure 1,800 tonnes
- Shavings/Straw 250 tonnes
- Carcasses 50 tonnes

***Waste Collection***

With all animals held in cages the manure and urine collects 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 from mid-June though to October and less often during cooler periods.

Waste is to be collected using a small articulating tractor which is capable of operating in the sheds. A special attachment will be purchased which enables the tractor to easily collect the waste in an efficient manner. The proponent also has existing arm equipment that will be utilized for waste collection, stockpiling and spreading.

***Waste Handling and Disposal***

The handling and disposal of the waste from the mink farm will be undertaken using approved manure management strategies and in accordance with best practices being developed for the industry. 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 or composting. 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. Tarping of the stockpiles will be utilized to improve fly control.

#### *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 10,000 female farm the recommended minimum acreage for manure spreading would be 66.67 acres. The site has a land base of 97.88 acres, with over 30 acres currently cleared and the potential to clear an additional 20-30 acres. Combined with the request from the 120 acre community pasture (see Appendix 2), more than sufficient area for manure spreading is available.

#### *Carcasses*

Pelting will not take place on-site, the mink will be forwarded to a pelting facility for processing and disposal of carcasses. Although a decision has not been made on the pelting contractor to be utilized, options include the Nova Scotian Co-op or established pelting operations in the province, such as Charleston Mink or Viking Fur.

- ***Occupations:***

The proposed farm will require a projected 8-10 employees during the construction and operations phases. This will include one site foreman and the remainder as general labourers. This labour pool will meet the requirements for farm construction during the first three years as well as ongoing farm operations as the farm grows from 1,500-2,500 female breeders to a proposed 10,000 female breeders by the fourth year.

- ***Project-Related Documents:***

Letter of support from the Town of Comfort Cove - Newstead.

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

Approvals required for the construction and operations phases for Mr. Head’s farm include the following:

- Waste Management Certificate - Government Services Centre - Approval required prior to 2008 operations



**SCHEDULE:**

The initial land development and construction phase for this project will start in May or June 2007. Land clearing and leveling, the construction of mink sheds and the installation of perimeter fencing and a manure storage pad will be completed prior to the transfer of the breeding stock in late 2007.

**FUNDING:**

Funding for this operation will consist primarily of private investment. Mr. Head plans to apply for assistance through the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (repayable loans), Human Resources and Social Development (HRSD)/Service Canada and/or the Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment (wage subsidies), the Agricultural Policy Framework (APF), the Department of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development (Small and Medium Enterprise Fund) and the Farm Credit Corporation (repayable loans). No approvals have been granted to date.

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**Mr. John Head**  
**President**

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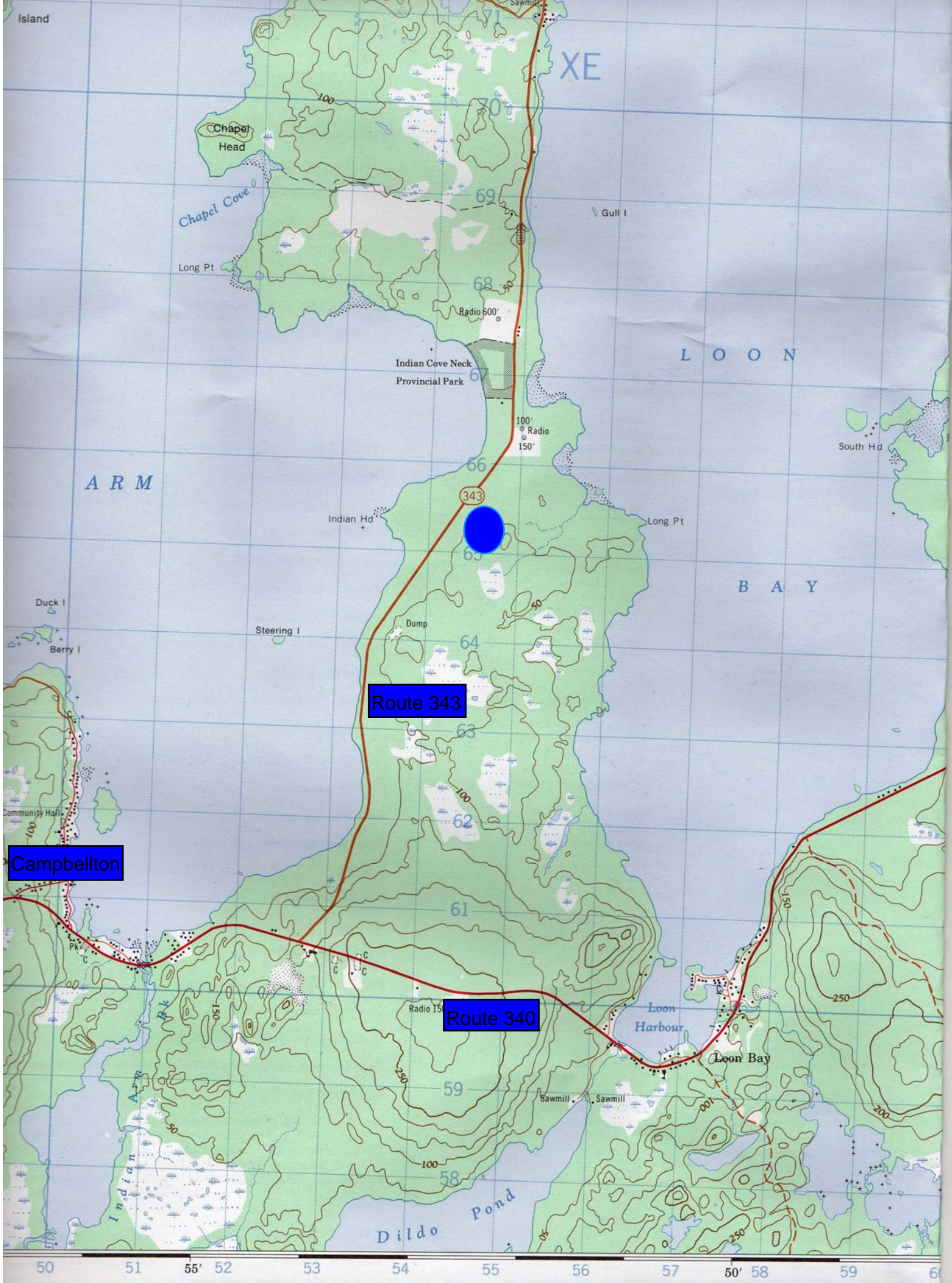
**Date**



## **APPENDIX 1**

### **SITE MAPS**



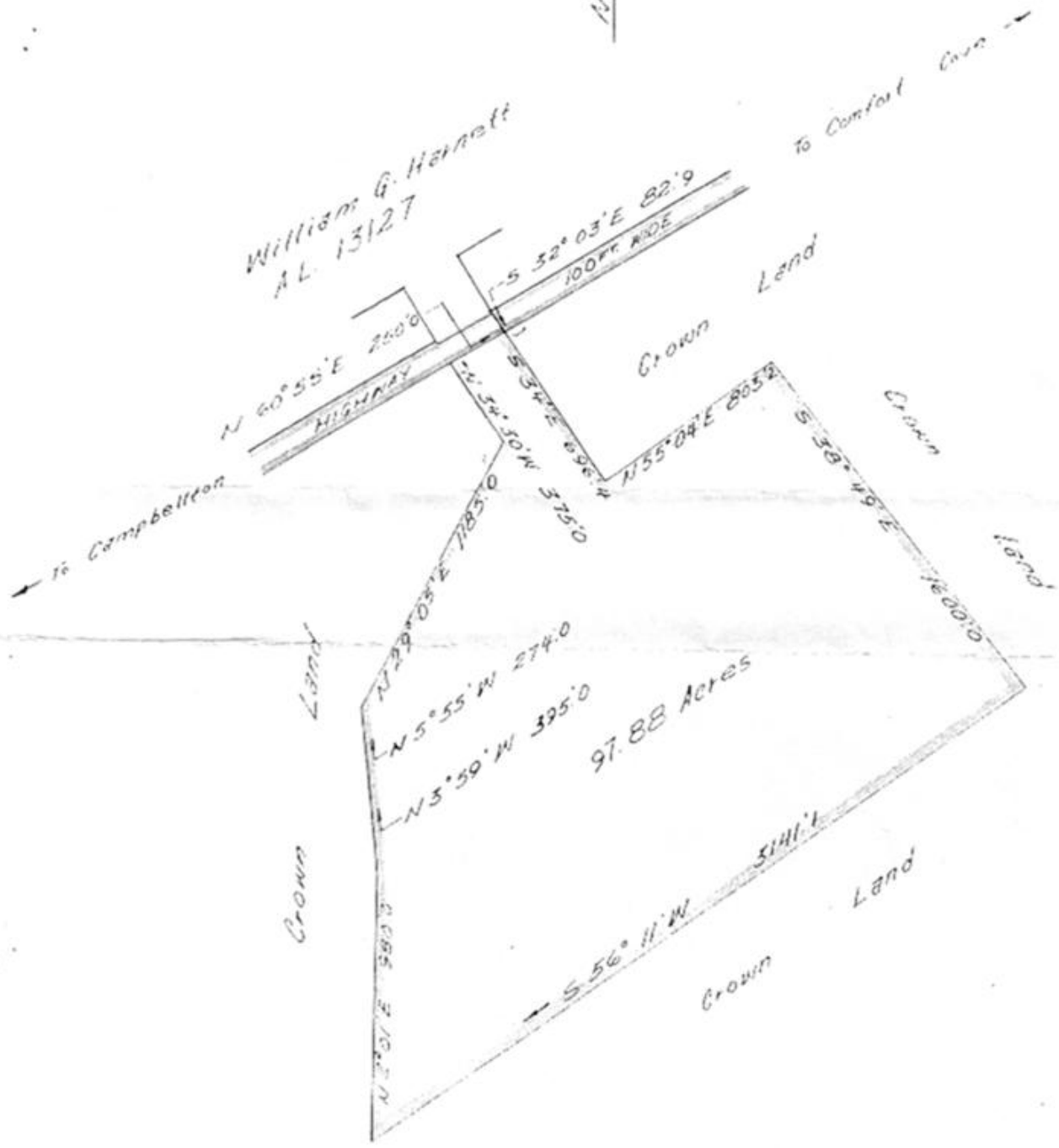




723466

North Meridian

William G. Harrell  
AL 13127





Comfort Cove-Newstead Agric. Society  
Title # 108931

Indian Head

Jon Lien  
App # 124957

Route 343

WILLIAM HARRITT  
No. 131 Pa. 48

John Head  
Title # 23466

Mink  
Sheds

Moose  
Pad

Jon Lien  
App # 124957

Public Works Canada  
Title # 98440

ARCHIBALD CARRING  
No. 112 Pa. 71

ARCHIBALD CARRING  
No. 112 Pa. 71



Comfort Cove-Newstead Agric. Society  
Title # 108931

South of Comfort Cove - Newstead  
App # 12007

ARCHIBOLD CAMPBELL  
App # 108931

ARCHIBOLD CAMPBELL  
App # 108931

Jon Lien  
App # 124957

Public Works Canada  
Title # 98440

Indian Head

Jon Lien  
App # 124957

Route 343

John Head  
Title # 23466

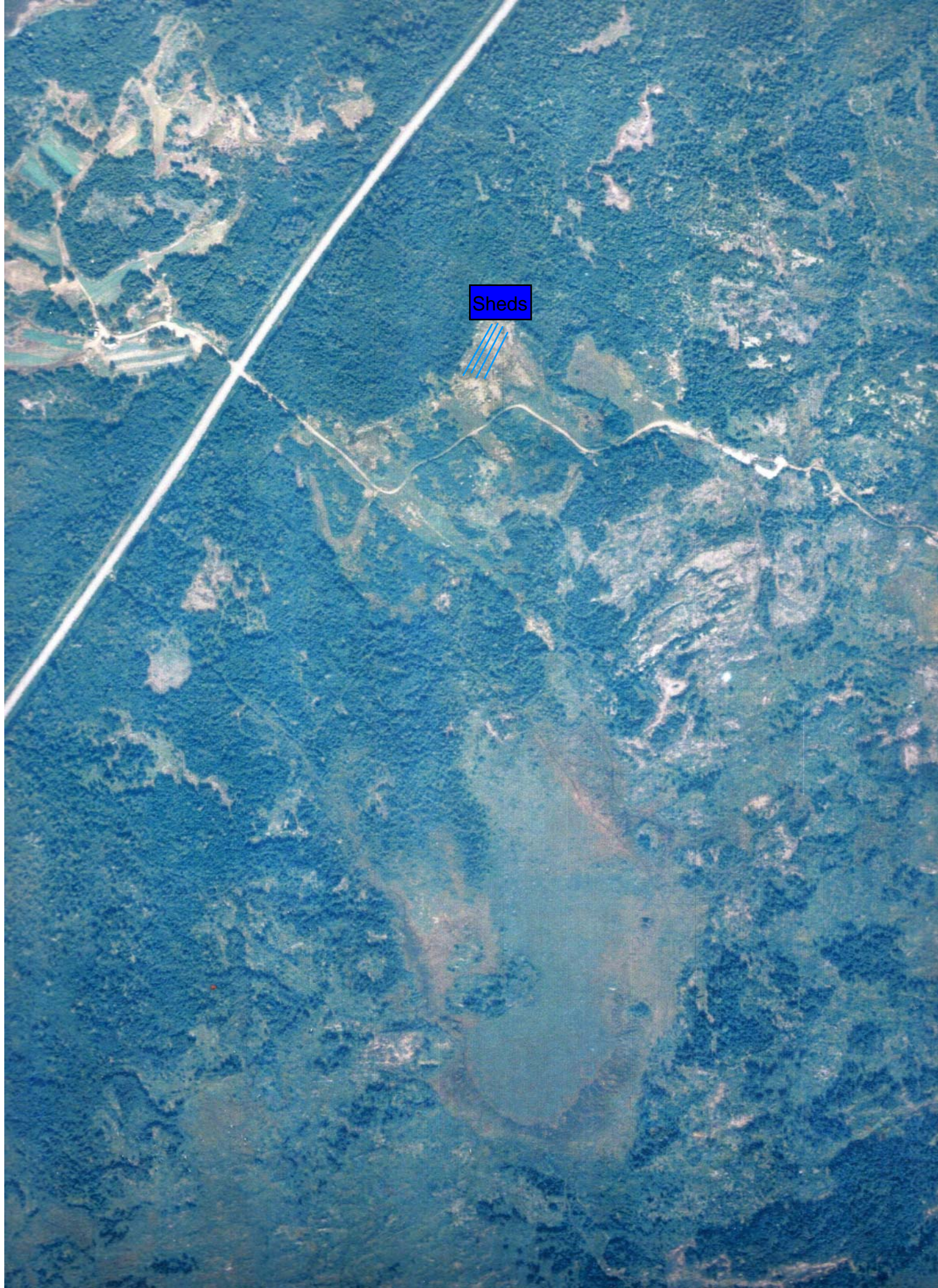
Long Point

MENDILLONHEAD  
V6-10894-125

KAYWOOD & CAMPBELL  
V6-177F6-127

Scale 1:20000





Sheds



## **APPENDIX 2**

### **LETTER FROM COMFORT COVE-NEWSTEAD AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY**



Comfort Cove – Newstead Agricultural Society  
P. O. Box 43  
Comfort Cove- Newstead, NL.  
A0G 3K0  
Tel: 709-244-3551

February 12, 2007

To Whom It May Concern:

We operate a one hundred and twenty (120) acre community pasture land located on Route 343 (road to Comfort Cove-Newstead) and would be very interested in obtaining any supply of manure available from Comfort Cove Fur Farm.

Sincerely yours,

Kaywood Canning

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kaywood Canning". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the printed name.



### **APPENDIX 3**

#### **LETTER OF SUPPORT TOWN OF COMFORT COVE-NEWSTEAD**



# TOWN OF COMFORT COVE-NEWSTEAD

P.O. Box 10 Comfort Cove-Newstead, NL A0G 3K0

Telephone: 709-244-4125

Fax: 709-244-4122

February 14, 2007

Re: Comfort Cove Fur Farm

To Whom it may concern:

We, the Town Council of Comfort Cove Newstead, support the Comfort Cove Fur Farm in their endeavor to set up and operate a fur farm in the area. This matter was discussed at a council meeting on February 12, 2007 and was given 100% support from all that was present.

If you require any further information please feel free to contact the council.

Sincerely,

*Bobbi Acherman*

*on behalf of the*

Town of Comfort Cove-Newstead