

MAY 11 2023

COR-2023-1456

Reg. No. 2237

Cory Grandy
Deputy Minister
Department of Transportation and Infrastructure

Dear Cory Grandy:

RE: Junction River Bridge Removals (the Project)

Your proposal has been reviewed by an interdepartmental environmental assessment screening committee and an opportunity to comment has been provided to the public as required by Part X of the Newfoundland and Labrador **Environmental Protection Act**, SNL 2002, cE-14.2. Please be advised that the Project is **released** from further environmental assessment subject to the following conditions:

- You are required to uphold all commitments made in your environmental assessment submission to mitigate the effects of the Project on the environment.
- The Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture requires the following:
 - 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) and within 200 metres during the remainder of the year. The 200-metre buffer also applies to all other raptor nests (e.g. Northern Goshawk, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Merlin, American Kestrel, Great-horned Owl, Boreal Owl, Northern Saw-whet Owl). The location of any raptor nest site must be reported to the Wildlife Division. For further information, please contact the Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture at (709) 637-2353.
- You are required to 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 to EAProjectComments@gov.nl.ca.
- You are required to 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, one year from the date of this release letter and to provide additional updates if required. Please email the Project updates to EAProjectComments@gov.nl.ca.

The reviewing federal and provincial government departments and agencies have provided advice, which is attached for your reference.

Although the undertaking as proposed is released from further environmental assessment, it is still subject to other legislative requirements. You must comply with all relevant legislation and obtain all necessary permits and approvals. You are required to inform this department of any proposed significant changes to the undertaking.

Please note that in accordance with Section 17 of the Environmental Assessment Regulations, my decision is valid for a period of three years from the date of this letter. If you have not commenced the Project within this three-year period, you may apply to extend the term of my decision for a maximum of three periods of one year. Should the term of my decision expire, the Project will have to be registered again for environmental assessment if you wish to proceed. For further information, please email EAProjectComments@gov.nl.ca.

If you have any questions about the environmental assessment process, please contact Joanne Sweeney, Director of the Environmental Assessment Division, at (709) 729-0673 or email joannesweeney@gov.nl.ca.

Sincerely,



HON. BERNARD DAVIS, MHA
District of Virginia Waters – Pleasantville
Minister

Enclosures

Cc: Chris Tibbs, MHA, District of Grand Falls-Windsor-Buchans

Attachment A

Federal and Provincial government departments and agencies provide the following advice:

The Climate Change Branch of my department advises that clearing trees and brush can contribute to climate change. Any heavy-duty equipment used in the construction phase of the Project should be operated in a manner to maximize fuel efficiency, thereby reducing greenhouse gas emissions that could contribute to climate change. For further information, please contact the Climate Change Branch at (709) 729-1485.

The Pollution Prevention Division of my department advises that the disposal of waste material from the demolition of the bridges requires the approval of that Division, prior to disposal. All waste material should be considered prior to disposal for reuse, resale or recycling. Guidance documents pertaining to wood waste disposal and management of excavated soils, concrete rubble and dredged materials are available online in the following locations:

- Treated Wood Waste Disposal: <https://www.gov.nl.ca/eccm/files/env-protection-waste-guidancedocs-gd-ppd-075.1treated-wood-waste-disposal-.pdf>
- Management of Excavated Soils, Concrete Rubble and Dredged Materials: <https://www.gov.nl.ca/ecc/files/env-protection-waste-guidancedocs-excsoilsconcreterubbledredgedmaterials.pdf>

The Pollution Prevention Division further advises you to prepare a contingency plan specific to the Project to enable a quick and effective response to a spill event. For further information, please contact the Pollution Prevention Division at (709) 729-5782

The Water Resources Management Division of my department advises that permits are required for any work (including infilling) within fifteen metres of a body of water or wetlands) and for the use of water from any source for any purpose prior to the start of construction. Any effluent or surface runoff leaving the site is required to conform with the Environmental Control Water and Sewage Regulations. For further information, please contact the Water Resources Management Division at (709) 729-1646.

The Occupational Health and Safety Division of the Department of Digital Government and Service NL advises that generally, you must ensure that activities are conducted in compliance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act and its regulations. This includes the responsibility for ensuring that contractors hired to perform work also comply with the legislation. For further information, please contact the Occupational Health and Safety Division at 1 (800) 563-5471.

The Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture advises that Junction River is a tributary of the Exploits River. Care should be taken to minimize impacts on the existing aquatic habitats that could affect salmon breeding and feeding. Although some vegetation removal may be required during Project activities, a minimum 50-metre undisturbed riparian buffer zone should be maintained where possible, to protect sensitive riparian and aquatic species, and their habitat.

The Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture reminds you to exercise due diligence to determine / consult with potential ownership of right of way access to the Junction River Bridge and the Little Junction River, prior to accessing the Project sites to commence work. For further information, please contact the Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture at (709) 637-2353.

The Government Service Centre of the Department of Digital Government and Service NL advises that a development permit is required under the Protected Road Zoning Regulations for any construction within 400 metres of the centreline of the Trans-Canada Highway. For further information, please contact the Government Service Centre Regional Office at (709) 292-4206.

The Provincial Archaeology Office of the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation advises that, in the event that archeological remains are encountered during Project work, activity in the area of the find must cease immediately and contact should be made with the Provincial Archaeology Office. For further information, please contact the Provincial Archaeology Office at (709) 729-2462.

Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) advises you to manage Project activities to ensure compliance with the Fisheries Act, the Migratory Birds Convention Act and the Migratory Birds Regulations. ECCC recommends that you prepare the following plans:

- a Management Plan that includes appropriate preventative measures to minimize the risk of impacts on migratory birds;
- an Oil Spill Prevention and Response Plan; and
- a Contingency Plan that considers potential accidents and malfunctions for site-specific activities.

ECCC further recommends that in order to avoid nest destruction and to accommodate the breeding season of migratory birds, operations should consider nesting locations between April 15 and August 15 in this region. The Canadian Wildlife Service of the Environment and Climate Change Canada requests that species-at-risk sightings be



reported to ec.scfatldonneesei-cwsatliadata.ec@ec.ac.ca . For further information, please contact the Canadian Wildlife Service at (709) 777-4221.

Transport Canada advises that the proposed Project will involve the demolition of bridges over Junction River and Little Junction River, which are non-scheduled waterways under the Canadian Navigable Waters Act. You are advised to review the Navigation Protection Program and self-assess to determine your obligation under the Canadian Navigable Waters Act. For more information, please visit <https://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/canadian-navigable-waters-act.html>