

An Overview of the Integrated Resource Management Geology Activities from 2017 to 2019

A. Tizzard

Introduction

Under the Department of Energy and Mines, the Integrated Resource Management (IRM) Geologist (the “Regional Geologist”) worked collaboratively with the Department of Lands and Forestry to provide geological expertise for activities and transactions involving Crown land and general public enquiries. The IRM Geologist also played an integral role in coordinating access to Crown land for prospectors and mineral exploration companies through either a “Permit for the Purposes of Prospecting on Crown Land” or a “Permit for Mineral Exploration on Crown Land”, both issued by the Department of Lands and Forestry. The primary difference between the permit types is whether any significant ground disturbance is involved. For example, a prospecting permit enables access for reconnaissance, mapping, sampling by non-mechanical means, flagging of trees, etc. Work such as drilling, trenching, line cutting, and trail building is considered a disturbance activity and a mineral exploration

permit is required. Prior to issuing a mineral exploration permit, proposed programs are reviewed and advised by the Lands and Forestry Integrated Resource Management team, consisting of the regional geologist, foresters, biologists, surveyors, technicians, and other relevant parties. The IRM team is overseen by the Lands and Forestry Regional Resource Manager.

Crown Land Transactions

In 2019, the IRM geologist provided recommendations on 169 Crown land transactions (e.g. coastal permits, land grants, purchases, leases, easements, etc.) (Fig. 1). This number is down from 2018, when Lands and Forestry requested geology recommendations on 188 files. In 2017, geologist recommendations were requested on 49 files. From 2017 to 2019, the majority of these transactions were concentrated in the central and eastern regions of the province.

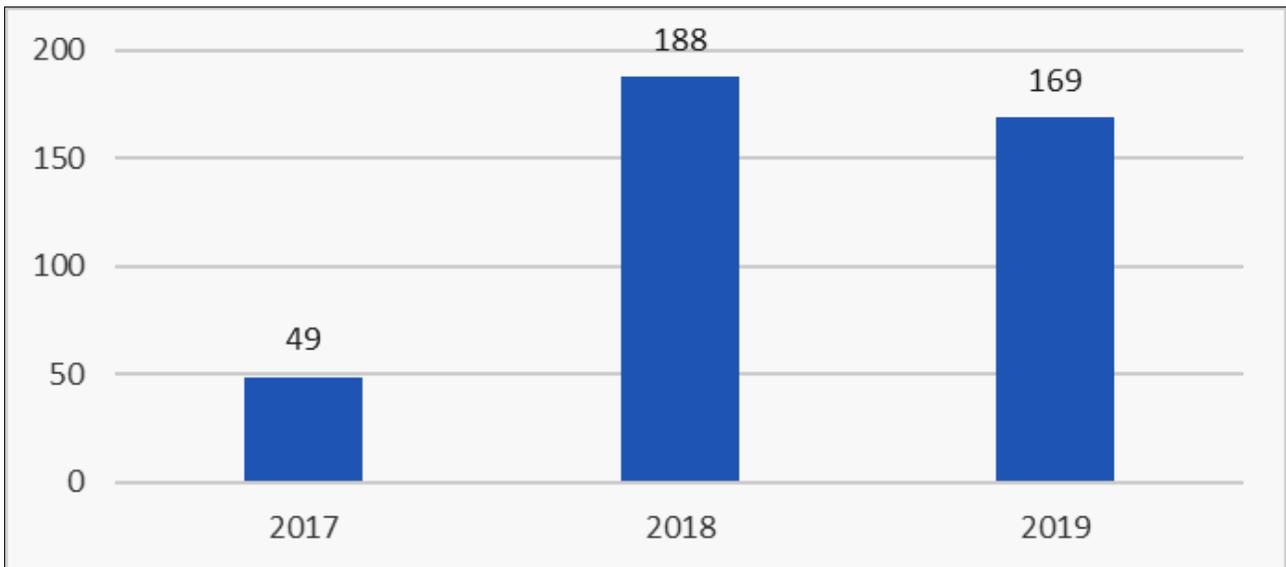


Figure 1. Requests for geologist recommendations on Crown land transactions.

Permit for the Purposes of Prospecting on Crown Land

A total of 67 Permits for the Purposes of Prospecting were issued by Lands and Forestry in 2019. Permit holders consisted of 30 different individuals or mineral exploration companies (Fig. 2). In comparison, in 2018, 45 prospecting permits were issued by Lands and Forestry to 18 different individuals or mineral exploration companies. In 2017, 27 prospecting permits were issued to 12 different individuals or companies.

Permit for Mineral Exploration on Crown Land

For mineral exploration on Crown land involving ground disturbance, requests can be divided into the following categories: new permits, amendments to existing permits, or clarifications. Like prospecting permits, mineral exploration access permits are issued by the Department of Lands and Forestry. Proposed activities, however, are thoroughly reviewed by the IRM team prior to

approval and issuance. Mineral exploration permits are also subject to security bonds that assist in ensuring permit conditions are met and that satisfactory reclamation work has been completed.

To date, security bonds range from zero to \$75,000, with the valuation dependent on the nature of the work program and degree of ground disturbance. Regular monitoring of approved work programs was performed by the IRM Geologist and Lands and Forestry technicians to confirm compliance with permit conditions. Inspections were also completed at the end of the permitted program to confirm that the site has been rehabilitated per permit conditions or to determine if additional reclamation work is required. If reclamation requirements have been met, a recommendation to release the security bond is made to the Lands and Forestry Regional Resource Manager.

In 2019, 39 new Mineral Exploration on Crown Land permits were issued by Lands and Forestry, in addition to 32 amendments and 11 clarifications (Fig. 3). In 2018, 43 new permits, 11 amendments and 2 clarifications were recorded. In 2017, 15 new

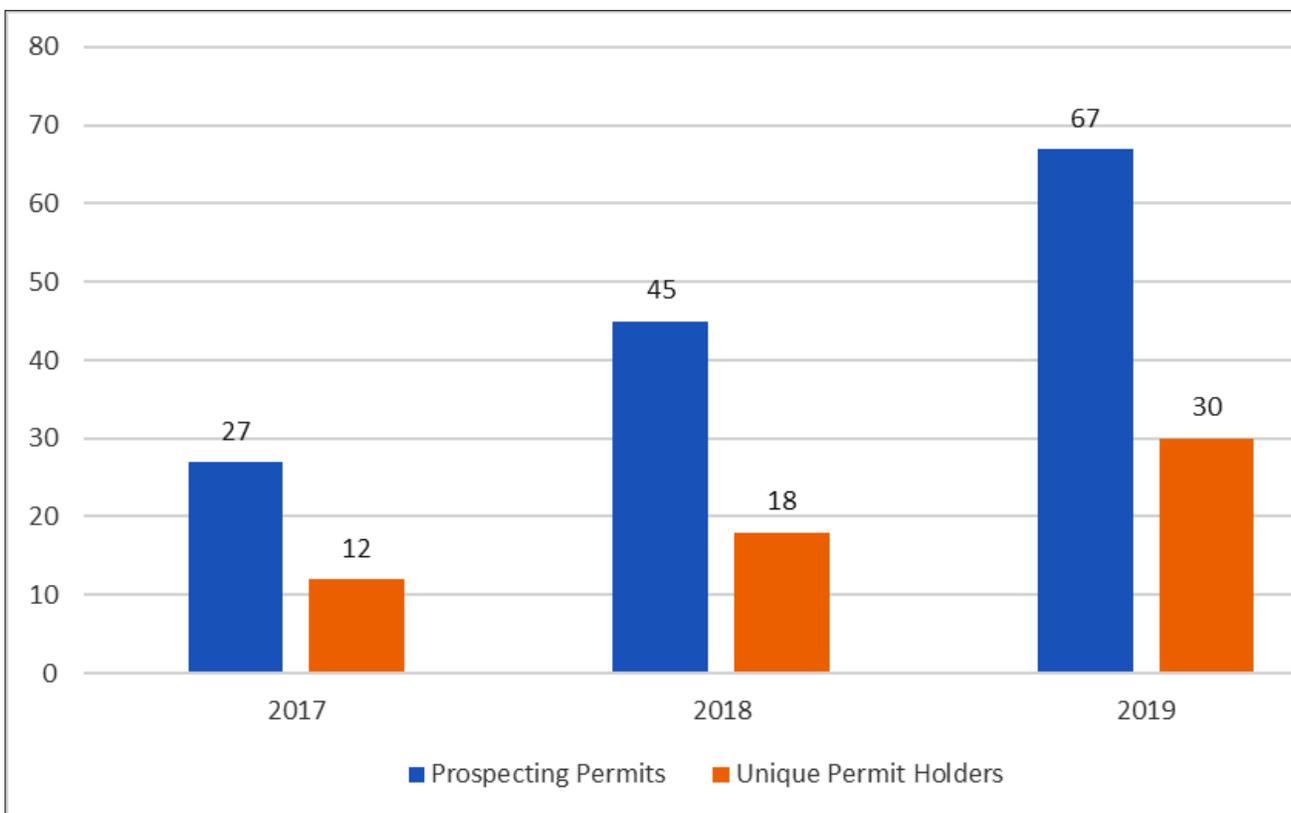


Figure 2. Summary of permits for the purposes of prospecting, 2017-2019.

permits and 1 clarification were completed. Not included in this summary are numerous requests that resulted in a denied permit application, withdrawn permit applications, and applications currently under review and not issued at the end of 2019 (approximately 53). There were 18 different private individuals or companies seeking Crown land access for mineral exploration in 2019.

Future Plans

The cumulative requests for access to Crown land for both prospecting and mineral exploration have increased considerably from 2017 to 2019. Careful planning of program activities by the applicant and the submission of coherent supporting information is vital to the efficient processing by the Lands and Forestry IRM team. Sufficient lead time for approvals before planned project start-ups is essential.

Plans for 2020 include developing a standardized application form for both prospecting and mineral exploration access on Crown land, as well as additional training for Lands and Forestry technicians on all aspects of mineral exploration activities. Industry and prospectors can continue to contact the IRM geologist with any questions relating to the permitting process on Crown land.

Contact information:
 Amy Tizzard, P.Geol.
amy.tizzard@novascotia.ca
 c 902-774-1411

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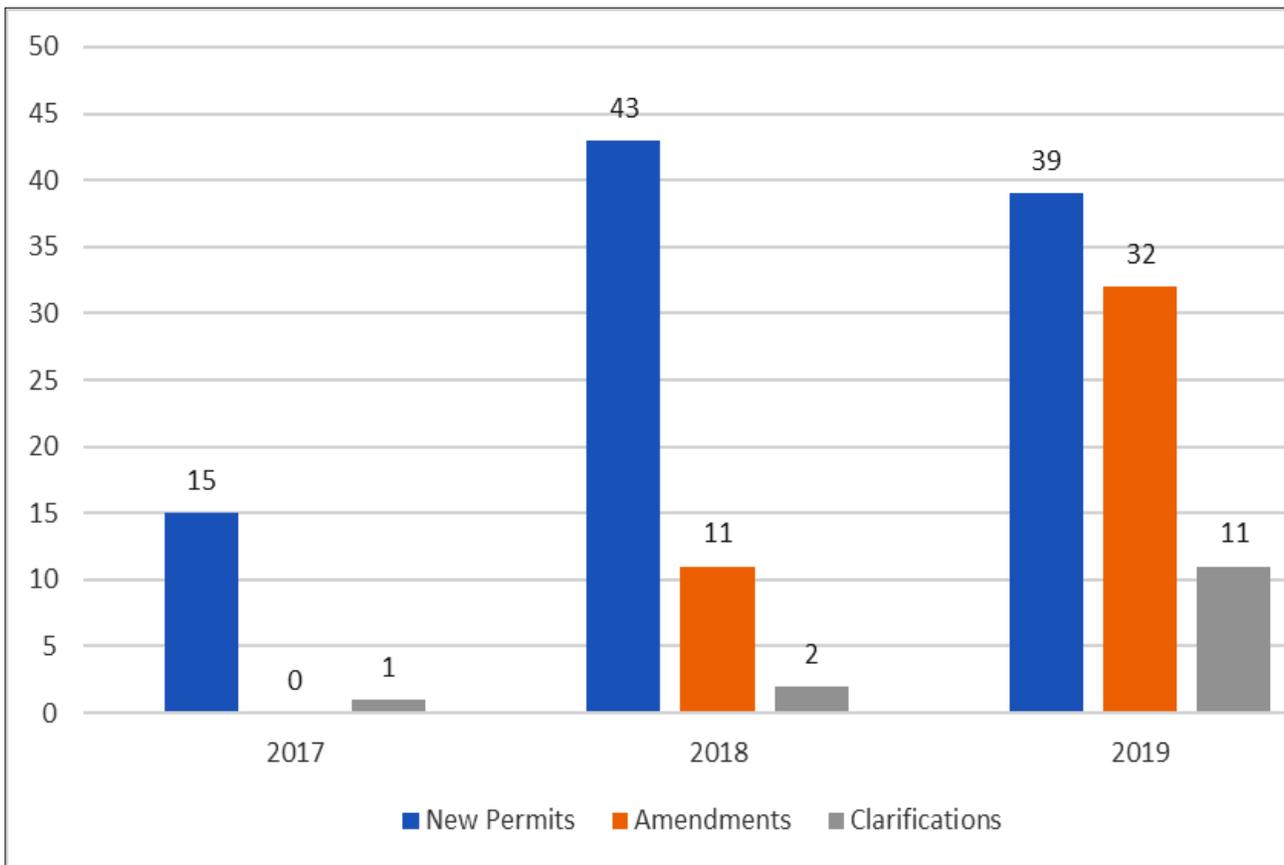


Figure 3. Summary of permits for mineral exploration on Crown land.