



**Environment and Climate Change
Office of the Minister**

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File No.: 10700-40-332
10700-40-59481

July 13, 2023

Donald Chisholm
President
Nova Construction Co. Ltd.
3098 Post Road
Antigonish, Nova Scotia
B2G 2K3

Dear Donald Chisholm:

RE: Environmental Assessment – Nova Construction Co. Ltd., Seabrook Quarry Expansion Project, Digby County Nova Scotia

The environmental assessment registration document for the proposed Seabrook Quarry Expansion Project in Digby County, Nova Scotia has been reviewed.

This letter is to advise that, pursuant to Section 13 (1)(a) of the Environmental Assessment Regulations, I have determined that the environmental assessment (EA) registration document provided is insufficient to allow me to make a decision, and as a result, additional information is required to evaluate potential environmental effects that may be caused by the project.

Please provide additional details for the water resources assessment with accompanying analysis of potential effects to surface water quality and quantity, groundwater quality and quantity, wetlands, fish and fish habitat, including related mitigation measures and follow-up monitoring that includes:

1. Groundwater Quality and Quantity

- a. Complete a hydrogeological study to adequately assess potential impacts to the surrounding aquifer(s) and water resources due to quarrying below the water table over the 40-year lifespan of the Project. The study shall include identifying the predicted zone of influence (ZOI) as a result of dewatering in consideration of quarry progression and the final quarry floor depth/elevation, and how the potential impacts will be avoided or mitigated.

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- b. Provide an updated groundwater monitoring program to ensure impacts are not occurring outside the predicted ZOI. Install monitoring wells in the Project Area with depths representative of the anticipated 25 metre depth to the quarry floor and conduct monitoring to establish baseline conditions, across seasonal fluctuations.
- c. Based on the findings of the hydrogeological study and the updated groundwater monitoring program; provide an updated assessment of the potential risks to nearby potable wells, watercourses, and wetlands from dewatering activities due to the quarry expansion. Include potential impacts to fish and fish habitat from potential reduced baseflow and thermal regime changes in affected watercourses.
- d. The hydrogeological study, subsequent updated groundwater monitoring program, and risk assessments shall be designed by a qualified professional hydrogeologist licensed to practice in Nova Scotia.
- e. Provide initial sample results for Acid Rock Drainage (ARD) to satisfy the Sulphide Bearing Material Disposal Regulations.

2. Surface Water Quality and Quantity

- a. Update the water balance assessment to include both watersheds (WS-1 and WS-2 in the registration document) and include field monitoring data to validate the selected model. The assessment and analysis shall be designed by a qualified professional engineer licensed to practice in Nova Scotia.

This information must be submitted by Nova Construction Co. Ltd. by July 13, 2024, as an addendum to the original EA registration document. Upon submission of the information, I will have 50 days to make my decision. Registration of the Addendum will require publication of a Notice to inform the public of the 30-day Addendum public comment period.

If you have any questions regarding this project, please contact Bridget Tutty, Manager, Environmental Assessment Branch, at (902) 452-7891 or via email at Bridget.Tutty@novascotia.ca.

Sincerely,



Honourable Timothy Halman, MLA
Minister of Environment and Climate Change

cc: Bridget Tutty, Environment and Climate Change