

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS

PROPOSER: MR. ALAN W. JOHNSON
PROPOSAL NAME: HUDSON BAY PORT COMPANY
CLASS OF DEVELOPMENT: 1
TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT: BULK HANDLING - GRAIN ELEVATOR
SEWER DISPOSAL SYSTEM
MARINE TANK FARM UPGRADE
CLIENT FILE NO.: 4410.00

OVERVIEW:

On December 29, 1998, Manitoba Environment received a Proposal dated December 15, 1998, to upgrade and operate a bulk materials storage/handling facility, to install a grain elevator dust control system, a hopper car handling conversion, a sewer disposal system, some concrete restorations, some fire and safety upgrades, and a marine tank farm upgrade located on Townships 112 and 113, Range 20 EPM on the East Peninsula, Town of Churchill, Manitoba. The Port of Churchill is located at Churchill in northern Manitoba on the southwest coast of Hudson Bay. The Port, consisting of a grain terminal, wharf, rail yard, harbor and associated facilities, commenced operation in 1931. In 1997 the Port, previously operated by the National Harbors Board, then the Canada Ports Corporation, was transferred to the Hudson Bay Port Company, a private sector company under OmniTRAX Canada Inc. The transfer agreement stipulated that an Environmental Management Plan be prepared to address environmental issues at the port which included the obtaining of a Manitoba Environment Act Licence.

No public concerns were received in response to the advertisement of this proposal in the Thompson Nickel Belt published on Monday January 11, 1999. The proposal was placed in the Public Registries at the Centennial Public Library, Churchill Public Library, Manitoba Eco-Network, and the Environment Library (Main). The proposal was distributed to TAC on January 7, 1999, with the closing date for TAC and Public comments on February 5, 1999.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:

No public responses were received.

COMMENTS FROM THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency state that Transport Canada and Public Works & Government Services will be conducting an environmental assessment under *The Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* with respect to this proposal and are requesting additional information. They also state that Environment Canada and Western Economic Diversification have offered to provide specialist advise in accordance with section 12(3) of the Act.

In regards to the bulk handling, Environment Canada states that the facilities described are the same as was used for the trial concentrate shipment in 1998. They are seeking results and evaluation of that operation in terms of the predicted effects and effectiveness of proposed mitigation. Some of the proposed bulk materials are toxic and must be properly contained to prevent entry into the aquatic environment. They question what alternatives have been considered. They feel asphalt is rough and difficult to clean, as well as being susceptible to cracking, especially under extreme temperature conditions of Churchill. They state the preferred method is to store under a covered structure on a concrete pad. Although the list of potential environmental effects is thorough, the proposed mitigation measures are not described in sufficient detail. In addition they question the wharf's structural capacity for stockpiling bulk materials; the baseline conditions in the soil and surface water in the vicinity of the wharf; the preparation of procedural guidelines for monitoring related handling and stockpiling bulk materials; and the upgrading of the Port of Churchill's emergency response plan.

In regard to the proposed Sewage Disposal, they find the information disjointed and confusing. It is not clear whether the Town of Churchill's treatment plant can handle the waste from the Port and where or how ships ballast and bilge waters are to be handled. In regard to the Town's Waste Disposal Plant, there is no information about how the plant was assessed. In addition, information about the organic capacity, the treatment performance, the general operating conditions, and the final effluent quality is lacking. The seasonal nature of the Port's wastewater flows and their effect on the treatment plant should be addressed.

Disposition:

The information and concerns have been provided to the proponent for response. Additional information has been submitted by the consultant on behalf of the proponent.

Culture, Heritage and Recreation - Historic Resources state this proposal has the potential to impact above and below ground heritage resources. The above ground resources consist of the extant buildings which are described in Section 5.3.12 of the Environmental Evaluation. The buildings which were evaluated in 1996 by the Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office (FHBRO) are no longer under their control since the facility was transfer to the Hudson Bay Port Company. With no caveat in place to ensure protection of the buildings, Historic Resources Branch requests they be contacted instead of FHBRO in the event that major structural repairs or demolition is required. They further state that given these structures are no longer under Federal jurisdiction, they would be subject to provisions of Manitoba's *Heritage Resources Act*. Section 12(2) of the Act states that if heritage resources or human remains are known, or thought likely to be present, on lands that are to be developed, then the owner/developer may be required to conduct a heritage resource impact assessment and mitigation.

Historic Resources also stated that a large number of below ground heritage resources have been recorded on the Churchill West Peninsula on the west bank of the Churchill River, but to date none have been recovered from the Port of Churchill side. The Branch requests notification by the proponent in the event that heritage resources are exposed at which time a mutually acceptable management strategy could be implemented.

Disposition:

The information and concerns have been provided to the proponent for response. The proponent recognizes the concerns of Historic Resources and will comply with their requests.

Natural Resources - Policy Coordination Branch have reviewed this proposal and state that Johnson's plant community descriptions are based on Richie (1956) and do not include lichens, mosses or liverworts which are significant in the region. They state the reports finding of thirty provincially rare plant species should be 95 rare species with one (Lepage's flax) being nationally rare. They feel that vegetation loss/stress is significant as the time required for native species to colonize bare ground in the Churchill area takes several years. They believe that reference in the Environmental Evaluation should have been made to "Dynamics of Weed Populations in a Northern Sub-Arctic Community" by Staniforth and Scott (1991), Canadian Journal of Botany, regarding the issue of weed invasions related to grain handling.

Disposition:

The concerns and information have been provided to the proponent.

Rural Development advise that the Thompson Community Economic Development Services has no land use or development concerns regarding this proposal.

Highways & Transportation state they have reviewed the Environmental Act proposal and have no concerns.

Environmental Management Water Quality has reviewed the proposal and has the following quality concerns. Although there is reference to ship-borne waste in several locations in the report, it is not clear how bilge and ballast water will be treated. In regard to mitigation measures, Water Quality would like to receive any and all testing of surface waters in regard to surface runoff from handling bulk materials. Regarding the disposal of toxic runoff from stockpiled bulk materials, a procedure should be in place to handle this material and approved disposal sites identified. This concern also applies to vessel cleaning wastes and toxic barge cleaning wastes. They question whether licensed treatment/disposal facilities have been identified and procedures developed. They also state that a copy of all baseline and monitoring studies regarding the Marine Tank Farm Upgrade should be provided to Manitoba Environment as they are generated. Warning and action levels of hydrocarbon levels should be addressed early in the process.

Land Use Approvals state that providing the upgrading activities are carried out as proposed, and that monitoring and follow up activities take place, the proposal should have a positive impact on the environment in and adjacent to the Port of Churchill.

Municipal & Industrial Approvals notes the Environmental Evaluation identifies two wastewater flows: shore based waste and ship-borne waste. The report mentions that ship-borne waste consisting of sanitary wastewater, bilge and ballast water has been collected by pumper trunk and disposed of in a Town of Churchill lagoon facility. The Client File database has no record of a lagoon listed for the Town of Churchill or the LGD of Churchill. The report in one area states that the Town of Churchill's sewer treatment plant has sufficient capacity to accept present and future waste from the Port of Churchill including ship-borne waste. The report also references

previous investigations that conclude the treatment plant is overloaded. Further detailed information is required to determine the capability of the sewage treatment plant. They suggest that the LDG. Of Churchill's sewage treatment plant licence may require amendment and the lagoon may require licencing. In addition the details of the sewer line extensions should be reviewed under MR 331/88R for Minister of Health approval.

Disposition:

The information was provided to the proponent for information and response. Additional information has been provided by the consultant on behalf of the proponent.

Environmental Operations state that.the Marine Tank Farm Upgrade can be dealt under the terms and conditions of MR 97/88R the *Storage and Handling of Gasoline and Associated Products Regulation* and the *Contaminated Sites Remediation and Consequential Amendments Act* and its associated regulation.

In regard to the sewage disposal, they agree with the proponent that the Port tie in with the Town's existing treatment system. They state the Town system has been performing well and its effluent meets licence quality limits. In regard to ship-borne waste being collected and disposed in a lagoon, they confirm there is no licenced lagoon in the Churchill area. They state further that the lagoon referred to is a single cell previously known as the Akudlik Sewage Lagoon. The Town is only permitted to dispose of its sludge from their sewage treatment plant in this facility.

Under Bulk Handling they state the information presented in the Environmental Evaluation only described the Port's "*initial trial operation*" and does not form the basis for a permanent operation. Some bulk materials mentioned included nickel sulfide and copper sulfides which are principle constituents of "*acid mine drainage*" in Canada. This material is typified by acidic run-off waters with high concentrations of heavy metals and can be toxic to aquatic life and terrestrial vegetation. Handling these materials in the open where they are subject to Churchill's climate including winds presents the potential to create environmental degradation. They state their past experiences with bulk materials such as sulfur confirms the need for additional controls such as enclosed structures.

Disposition:

The concerns and information has been supplied to the proponent for information and response. Additional information has been supplied by the proponent and the concerns are addressed in the Draft Licence.

PUBLIC HEARING:

No public hearing will be conducted.

RECOMMENDATION:

TAC concerns are addressed in the draft licence.

The responsibility for enforcement of the Licence should remain with Approvals Branch until the proponent complies with Clauses 2, 5, 7, 16, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25 and 27.

A draft Environment Act Licence is attached for the Director's consideration.

PREPARED BY:

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