



September 24, 2010

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Sent via e-mail: [chubert@reviewboard.ca](mailto:chubert@reviewboard.ca)

**Subject: Natural Resources Canada's (NRCan) response to the 'Clarification on information requests issued July 23, 2010 and an additional information request to Government parties' regarding the Environmental Assessment of the Prairie Creek Mine EA0809-002**

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In response to the August 26 2010 letter from the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board (the Board), Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) is providing the following additional information regarding the Prairie Creek Mine Environmental Assessment.

- *A list of permits, licenses or other authorizations administered by them that may be issued in respect of the proposed Prairie Creek Mine development by the regulator (NRCan)*

NRCan issues licences for the manufacture of explosives at an explosives factory and for the storage of explosives an explosives magazine pursuant section 7(1)(a) of the *Explosives Act*.

Note that, for a mining project such as the Prairie Creek Mine, NRCan would typically expect to receive a licence application from an explosives contractor, rather than the owner / operator of the mine.

- *The purpose and intent of each regulatory instrument*

The purpose and intent of regulation of explosives manufacturing and storage of explosives is to:

- Ensure worker safety by having safe operating procedures in place;
- For public safety;
- Enhance the security of explosives; and
- Prevent spills from occurring and having spill contingency plans in place.



- *A brief description of how each regulatory instrument may be used to mitigate adverse effects of the Prairie Creek Mine*

Licences for explosives manufacture and storage can mitigate adverse environmental effects of the Prairie Creek Mine in two ways: 1) by ensuring proper procedures for handling are in place for worker safety, which includes disposal of materials; and, 2) addressing the spill of materials into the environment from the licensed facility, through requiring that spill contingency plans are in place.

The preamble to the Board's specific requests asks "*how the party's concerns may be addressed through its regulatory instruments*". As the Board is aware, NRCan provides expertise in the geosciences (e.g., hydrogeology, seismic hazards, permafrost, and environmental geochemistry), mining / mineral technology and other areas within our mandate. The department provides this expertise and specialist knowledge to support environmentally sound, evidence-based, sustainable development decisions by other federal and territorial government departments and agencies. Thus, while expertise provided is outside the scope of our regulatory mandate for explosives, through cooperating and collaborating with other parties issues raised by NRCan can often be addressed through other regulatory instruments.

Should you have any questions regarding NRCan's additional information please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Sincerely,

***Original Signed By***

John Clarke

cc: Laurent Tardif, NRCan MMS  
Isabelle Gagné, NRCan MMS