

FAX TRANSMISSION SHEET

Northwest Territories Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development

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Date: July 11, 2002

To: Joe Acom
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This fax contains _6 page(s), including the cover sheet.

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Comments:

FYI Joe. RE: WesternGeco Test Program

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Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development

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JUL 11 2002

MACKENZIE VALLEY
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT
REVIEW BOARD

July 11, 2002

Marty Swagar
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Dear Mr. Swagar and Mr. Johannesen:

**9180-W730-1 & 9180-W730-2 WesternGeco
Mackenzie River Valley and Delta 2-D Seismic Test Program**

Thank you for your letter dated July 8, 2002, providing additional information to the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development (RWED). RWED has carefully considered the proposed test program and is providing the following comments to clarify expectations for a revised version of the test program.

Many questions and concerns regarding the potential impacts of the proposed 2D seismic program remain unanswerable. Hence, RWED concurs with the use of a test program to assess predictions and hopefully resolve uncertainties.

The Presently Proposed Test Program

1. The current test program is designed under the assumption that there will be limited encounters with aquatic mammals and birds along the Mackenzie River. Therefore, the test program provides only for an observation-based, aquatic wildlife, monitoring program. A Wildlife Research Permit is not required for an observational test program. That said however, RWED expects that the planned observation program will be designed to record observations of wildlife and birds consistently.



The current description of the test program describes mitigation that includes a shut-down radius for encounters. RWED generally finds this approach appropriate. However, the proposed chasing of wildlife may constitute harassment and is not condoned by RWED. If wildlife must be forcefully removed from the test/project area, RWED recommends that the proponent discuss alternatives with Regional RWED staff.

Please provide a revised copy of the test program that describes the following: procedures to be employed for recording the wildlife and bird behaviours before, during and after the program; number and approximate locations of the monitors; training for monitors; radio contact procedures for monitoring; follow-up; and procedures if wildlife mortalities or injuries are noted.

As well please provide information on community consultation and participation in a monitoring or other capacity.

Data Sheet Review

2. RWED appreciates the opportunity to review the observation data sheets once they have been completed. Please ensure they provide for the reporting of important information such as (but not limited to): species observed; directional movement; activity at time of encounter; and reaction to disturbance.

Furthermore, RWED would be pleased to attend the test program start-up meeting tentatively scheduled for July 17, 2002.

RWED Involvement

3. RWED appreciates the opportunity to involve Regional staff in the test program. It is hoped RWED staff could participate throughout the test program, subject to timing and availability. In addition to broadening RWED's understanding of the proposed undertaking, this would enable the provision of on the spot decision-making and advice.

RWED requests that a revised schedule for the test program be provided to the Regional Offices as soon as possible to ensure that personnel are available to participate in the test program. Also please provide confirmation of RWED Regional consultation and participation in the revised test program.

Provisions for Further Testing

4. Should the test program reveal that encounter numbers are greater than expected, or predictions are otherwise not supported, the RWED Regional staff could consider it necessary to discontinue the testing program and require that an appropriate research program be designed to effectively study the effects of seismic energies on aquatic fur-bearing wildlife.

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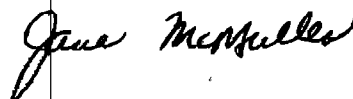
RWED would anticipate this research program would include activities such as radio-tagging and necropsies. For this type of program, a Wildlife Research Permit is required.

Please provide written provision in the revised test program design (item 1) for the potential discontinuance of the test program. A description of the criteria that would trigger the development of a research program should be provided for RWED's review. RWED Regional staff would be pleased to assist in the development of these standards.

RWED promotes sustainable development for the Northwest Territories, and encourages industrial activities that support regional benefits and ensure minimal disturbance toward wildlife and environment. Please do not hesitate to contact the Regional Offices or the Headquarters Environmental Assessment office for further information regarding permitting and environmental impact assessment processes, or to have timely dialogue for input regarding the design of the test program. Enclosed please find a contact list for the RWED Regional Offices.

If you have any questions or require any clarification regarding these comments, please do not hesitate to contact Zoë Posynick, Environmental Assessment Technician at (867) 920-6392, or myself at (867) 920-8069.

Sincerely,



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