

National Energy  
BoardOffice national  
de l'énergie

NEB File: 9180-W730-1  
21 May 2002

Mr. Bob White  
Project Manager  
WesternGeco  
302, 125 Mackenzie Road  
Box 2313  
Inuvik, Northwest Territories  
X0E 0T0  
Facsimile (867) 678-2556

Dear Mr. White:

**WesternGeco Mackenzie Delta River 2D Seismic Program, 2002  
Mackenzie Delta, Northwest Territories  
NEB Information Request No. 1**

Pursuant to our obligations under the *Canada Oil and Gas Operations Act* and the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*, the National Energy Board (NEB) has initiated a review of the proposed program and finds that further information is required (attached). The information request incorporates comments and recommendations received during the NEB's consultation with federal, territorial and local government agencies and the Environmental Impact Screening Committee. All responses received by the NEB during the consultation have been forwarded to WesternGeco.

The NEB has been notified of the Environmental Impact Screening Committee's (EISC) decision that "the development proposal has deficiencies of a nature that warrant a termination of its consideration and the submission of another project description [IFA Section 11.(13)(c)]". In light of this, the NEB offers the option for WesternGeco to respond to this IR as a separate submission or to include the response in the new project description should WesternGeco decide to resubmit to the EISC. If WesternGeco includes the response in the project description, please indicate clearly where each question is addressed.

We request that you provide your response by **28 May 2002 to Mr. Terry Baker, Chief Conservation Officer, NEB and the individuals copied below.** Should you have any questions or require more time regarding the attached request for information, please contact Laura Van Ham at (403) 299-2769 or at <lvanham@neb-one.gc.ca>.

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Yours truly,



T.M. Baker  
Chief Conservation Officer

**Attachment**

- c.c. Mr. Pete Cott, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, facsimile (867) 777-7501  
 Mr. Stephen Harbicht, Environment Canada, facsimile (867) 873-8185  
 Mr. Clark Norris, Transport Canada, facsimile (780) 495-6472  
 Ms. Zoe Posynick, Government of Northwest Territories, Resources, Wildlife and Economic  
 Development, facsimile (867) 873-0114  
 Ms. Linda Graf, Environmental Impact Screening Committee, facsimile (867) 777-2610

**WesternGeco Mackenzie Delta River 2D Seismic Program, 2002  
Mackenzie Delta, Northwest Territories**

**NEB Information Request No. 1**

The following Information Request (IR) refers to the Project Description for the WesternGeco Mackenzie Delta River 2D Seismic Program 2002 (WesternGeco 2002). This IR incorporates comments and recommendations received during the National Energy Board's (NEB) consultation with federal, territorial and local government agencies and the Environmental Impact Screening Committee (EISC). All correspondence sent to the NEB have been forwarded to WesternGeco. This IR is in addition to safety and operational matters previously addressed between Rick Turner, NEB, and WesternGeco.

We request that, if possible, you respond no later than 28 May 2002 to Mr. Terry Baker, Chief Conservation Officer, NEB and the individuals copied on the cover letter. Should you have any questions regarding this request for information or require a copy of the correspondence referred to in this IR, please contact Laura Van Ham at (403) 299-2769 or at [lvaham@neb-one.gc.ca](mailto:lvaham@neb-one.gc.ca). Please note that the information submitted in response to this IR would be available on the public registry.

1.1 Preamble: Section 4.2.5 Waste Management, p. 19 – WesternGeco indicates that the Henry C and Tug Marjory will follow NTCL procedures for waste management.

Request: Please provide these procedures.

1.2 Preamble: Section 4.2.6 Fuel Storage and Supply, p. 19 – WesternGeco indicates that refueling would take place in reasonable weather conditions in compliance with Transport Canada Arctic Waters Oil Transfer Guidelines. The NEB notes that detail regarding these procedures is not provided.

Request: Please provide WesternGeco's detailed fuel storage, supply and refueling procedures specific to the seismic and support vessels proposed for the Mackenzie Delta River 2D Seismic Program.

1.3 Preamble: Section 4.2.10 Spill Response and Emergency Response, p. 20 and Appendix V Emergency Response Plan and Spill Contingency Plan, p. 9 – WesternGeco makes reference to Oil Spill Preventative Measures in Appendix V. The NEB notes that spill contingency measures in Appendix V are limited to a pollution response flowchart. The chart makes reference to Maritime Shipboard Contingencies Manual and Shipboard Oil Pollution Emergency Plan, neither of which are provided. The NEB notes that the flowchart is lacking program specific detail on possible spill scenarios, proposed measures to be taken in the event of a spill, company and spill reporting contact names and numbers and spill equipment and material that would be available onsite.

**See also:**

Environment Canada's (EC) letter to the NEB dated 3 May 2002 – comments under Fuel Storage and Supply;

Government of Northwest Territories Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development's (RWED) letter to the NEB dated 16 May 2002 – comments under Spill Contingency Plan.

Transport Canada's (TC) letter to the NEB dated 2 May 2002 – comments 4, 5, 9.

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**Request:** Consider the comments provided by the NEB, EC, RWED and TC and please provide WesternGeco's detailed spill contingency plan specific to the activities proposed for the Mackenzie Delta River 2D Seismic Program. Include in this submission all relevant manuals or plans that are referenced in the spill contingency plan and any previous approvals obtained for such manuals or plans. If the manuals or plans are lengthy, consider providing them outside of the Project Description report to the NEB, EC, RWED and TC. Include, for example, preventative measures, descriptions of the equipment and spill handling material that will be onboard vessels or vehicles involved in the program or readily available in the event of a large spill or release.

**1.4 Preamble:** Section 6 Cumulative Effects, Section 6.1 Spatial and Temporal Boundaries, p. 23 – WesternGeco indicates the spatial boundary for the cumulative effects assessment extends for 1 km on either side of the channels in the Delta where the project will run. The NEB notes that this spatial boundary does not include the applied for WesternGeco Mackenzie River 2D Seismic Program or the Northern Rivers Survey Ltd. Liard River 2D Geophysical Program proposed for the Mackenzie and Liard rivers during a similar summer / fall timeframe. The NEB also notes statements made by WesternGeco that suggest the various stretches of the Mackenzie and Liard rivers fulfill habitat requirements of several species of fish and wildlife and that fish and wildlife exhibit daily and/or seasonal movements potentially spanning the three proposed program areas.

**Request:** Please provide a revised cumulative effects assessment that assesses the cumulative impact of this program in combination with other proposed river seismic program(s), or other projects or activities, that have the potential to impact fish and wildlife that move between the various program/activity areas.

**1.5 Preamble:** Section 12.3 Mitigation and Monitoring, p. 74 – WesternGeco indicates that a monitoring program is currently being developed.  
See also:  
DFO's letter to the NEB dated 13 May 2002 - Specific Comments #17, 20, 26  
RWED's letter to the NEB dated 16 May 2002 - Wildlife

**Request:** Please provide WesternGeco's proposed monitoring program. Include in the monitoring program the results of discussions that WesternGeco has undertaken with DFO and RWED for the development of the program. Also include a description of the summary report that would be provided to the NEB, DFO and RWED when the monitoring program is undertaken.

**1.6 Preamble:** Section 12.3.6 Acoustic and Overpressure Measurements, p. 77 – WesternGeco proposes to take pressure and sound measurements at varying distances from the airgun array during its testing to evaluate the performance of the equipment and perform a safety check. DFO and RWED indicate an interest in such measurements being undertaken, see:  
DFO's letter to the NEB dated 13 May 2002 - Specific Comment #21  
RWED's letter to the NEB dated 16 May 2002 - Wildlife

**Request:** Please provide the detail on WesternGeco's proposed sound and pressure measurement study. Include in the description the results of discussions that

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WesternGeco has undertaken with DFO and RWED for the development of the study. Also include a description of the summary report that would be provided to the NEB, DFO and RWED in the event the study is undertaken.

1.7 Preamble:

Section 12.3.3 Communication, p.76 – WesternGeco indicates that an ISR community liaison would visit communities a few days after the seismic vessels have passed to determine and address any concerns that may have arisen as a result of the project.

Section 12.3.5 Onboard Observations, p. 77 – WesternGeco indicates that environmental monitors from the ISR would be onboard program vessels and scout boats to identify and report on any environmental conflicts.

Request:

In the event an authorization is issued for this program, please commit that WesternGeco would provide to the NEB copies of the documentation produced with respect to these commitments as soon as practical during and following program operations.

1.8 Preamble:

The NEB notes that mitigation measures for the seismic operation are provided throughout Section 12 without a comprehensive summary. The NEB also notes that responsibilities for ensuring that mitigation measures are implemented are not clearly outlined in all cases where commitments to mitigation are made.

Request:

Please provide a clear outline of the individuals responsible for ensuring implementation of the various proposed mitigation measures during the seismic operation. Also, clearly indicate how individuals would be made aware of their responsibilities.

1.9 Reference:

Fisheries and Oceans Canada's (DFO) letter to the NEB and the Environmental Impact Screening Committee (EISC) dated 13 May 2002.

Preamble:

DFO's letter provided comments and questions in respect of the project.

Request:

Please provide WesternGeco's responses to these comments and questions.

1.10 Reference:

Transport Canada's (TC) letter to the NEB dated 14 May 2002.

Preamble:

TC's letter provided comments and questions in respect of the project.

Request:

Please provide WesternGeco's responses to these comments and questions.

1.11 Reference:

RWED's letter to the NEB dated 16 May 2002.

Preamble:

RWED's letter provided comments and questions in respect of the project, including comments raised in question 1.3 of this IR above.

Request:

Please provide WesternGeco's responses to these comments and questions that are not already addressed the response to question 1.3 above.

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**1.12 Reference:** Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT) letter to the EISC dated 9 May 2002.  
Inuvialuit Game Council letter to the EISC dated 10 May 2002.  
Fisheries Joint Management Committee letter to the EISC dated 13 May 2002.

**Preamble:** The referenced letters provide comments and recommendations in respect of the Project.

**Request:** Please provide the results of discussions WesternGeco has had with each department or committee regarding their respective recommendations and/or commitments that WesternGeco would undertake with respect to the recommendations.