

**Golder Associates Ltd.**

9-4905-48<sup>th</sup> Street  
Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, X1A 3S3  
Telephone (867) 873-6319  
Fax (867) 873-6379



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06-1328-014/8500

Dezé Energy Corporation  
206, 5102 50<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Yellowknife, NT  
X1A 3S8

Attention: Mr. Darren Huculak

RE: Impacts to Rare Plants by the Taltson Expansion Project.

Darren,

As a requirement for the Taltson Expansion Project Environmental Assessment, it will be necessary to determine the potential impacts of the Project to rare plants, which could be disturbed during construction and operations. To assist with this requirement, a desktop study was completed to identify federal and territorial listed plant species and their associated habitats that may occur in the Project area. These habitats were then correlated with broad land cover types, through classification of Landsat imagery, to determine areas with moderate to high rare plant potential. As a follow-up to this desktop assessment, the need to conduct a field survey to search for rare plants within the Project area is evaluated here.

Based on the desktop study, six land cover classes were identified to have moderate to high potential to support rare plants. These land cover classes include the riparian tall shrub, esker complex, deep and shallow water (margins only), and two wetland habitats (wetlands and aquatic vegetation). Excluding the interior portions of the water bodies, it is estimated that these land cover classes represent less than 5% of the proposed power transmission line corridor and associated infrastructure.

The following points were considered in assessing the requirements for a field survey to search for rare plants:

- Land cover classes with high rare plant potential will be avoided during construction.
- As the right-of-way clearing for the transmission line will only include vegetation over 3 m in height, direct impacts to wetlands will be limited or avoided.
- None of the rare species that could potentially occur grow up to 3 m in height.
- Soil disturbance will be restricted to the power transmission line footings, which represents a small soil disturbance footprint.



- Investigations of the proposed winter road route, laydown areas, and barge landing sites will be conducted to avoid land cover classes with high rare plant potential.
- Wetlands and margins of water bodies provide poor footing for transmission line towers, and will be avoided when selecting sites for tower placement. The degree of leeway to select the exact transmission line alignment and tower placement sites during construction is understood to range up to 50 m along the length of the transmission line, and a few hundred metres laterally, allowing some flexibility to avoid rare plant habitats.

Based on these considerations, the Project is predicted to have a limited impact to rare plants. Conducting ground-level rare plant surveys would not be practical for based on the points mentioned above, and may not be effective due to the small vegetation patch sizes found on the Taiga Shield, and the uncertainty in the final transmission line and tower placement locations. Once the barge landing sites, winter road, laydown areas and tower locations have been selected, direct effects to listed plant species could be determined and mitigated by completing pre-construction surveys at moderate to high potential sites, and should be included in the Mitigation, Monitoring, and Adaptive Management Plan for the Environmental Assessment.

Yours very truly,

**GOLDER ASSOCIATES LTD.**



Darrin Nielsen  
Terrestrial Ecologist



John Virgl  
Associate, Senior Environmental Scientist



Damian Panayi  
Wildlife Biologist