

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS / RECOMMENDATIONS

PROPONENT: Town of Neepawa and Springhill Farms Inc.
PROPOSAL NAME: Town of Neepawa Industrial Wastewater Treatment Facility
CLASS OF DEVELOPMENT: Class 2
TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT: Wastewater Treatment Facility
CLIENT FILE NO.: 2755.1

OVERVIEW:

On July 16, 2008 Manitoba Conservation received an Environment Act Proposal from the Town of Neepawa to upgrade Neepawa's existing industrial wastewater treatment facility (IWWTF) dedicated to the treatment of wastewater from the existing Springhill Farms hog processing facility, with the release of treated wastewater to be directed into the Whitemud River. This was followed by the submission of additional information on July 31, 2008.

On August 8, 2008, copies of the Proposal were sent to the applicable members of the inter-departmental Technical Advisory Committee, and to interested federal departments via the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (CEAA), for their review and comment. As well, copies of the proposal were placed into the Main Registry at the Union Station (Main Floor) in Winnipeg; the Millennium Public Library; Manitoba Eco-Network; and the Western Manitoba Regional Library (Brandon). The closing date for comments was set at September 19, 2008.

On August 15, 2008, the Proposal was advertised in the Neepawa Banner, and also posted on MB Conservation's Environmental Assessment and Licensing's web-site.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:

No comments or inquiries were received from the public in response to the advertisement.

COMMENTS FROM THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE & CEAA:

Sustainable Resource Management of Manitoba Conservation commented that they had no concerns with the Proposal.

Environmental Services of MB Conservation commented that they identified no concerns.

Historic Resources Branch commented that they have no concerns with regard to the project's potential to impact heritage resources, but indicated that if significant heritage resources are recorded in association with the affected lands, they may require an acceptable heritage resource management strategy to be implemented by the developer.

Disposition:

The Proponent agreed.

Manitoba Agriculture Food and Rural Initiatives commented that they have no objections or concerns with respect to the Proposal.

Parks and Natural Areas Branch of Manitoba Conservation commented that they have no comments to offer the Proposal.

Intergovernmental Affairs commented that they have no concerns with regard to the Proposal, but added that since this Proposal is an expansion of the existing wastewater treatment facility, it will require a new conditional use from the Town of Neepawa, which will take into consideration any impact of a constant effluent release from the facility upon the local golf course.

Disposition:

The Proponent advised that:

- 1) no negative impacts to the gulf course are anticipated, and that the effluent will be discharged into the original low lying wetland, and that drains into the Whitemud River; and
- 2) the Proponent advised that the proposed IWWTF site is located on land zoned MH-Industrial Heavy Zone under the Town of Neepawa Zoning By-Law No. 2650 whereby sewage treatment and lagoon facilities are conditionally permitted. The Town of Neepawa has received a new conditional use approval under that By-law.

The Western Region of Manitoba Conservation commented that they have no concerns with regard to the Proposal.

Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation commented that they had no objections to the Proposal provided that (1) no damage is caused to PTH 16 by heavy equipment turning into and out of the construction site; and (2) no changes be caused by the proposed Development to the drainage patterns on PTH 16.

Disposition:

The Proponent agreed to the conditions.

Manitoba Health commented that consideration should be given to leachate and groundwater monitoring.

Disposition:

The proponent advised that the sludge cells will include a double liner with a monitoring sump. Process tankage at the site will be composed of engineered steel tanks on structural concrete slabs that will allow visual observation of the tanks' exterior. This will be augmented with a network of groundwater monitoring wells in connection with a groundwater monitoring and reporting plan.

Manitoba Water Stewardship Department (WSD) commented that:

- the Proponent needs to establish that if the Proposal in question advocates any activities captured under The Water Rights Act, including drainage, that would necessitate an application for a Water Rights Licence to construct water control works;

Disposition:

The Proponent advised that no water control works will be constructed.

- the Proponent needs to be informed that if the Proposal in question advocates any construction activities, erosion and sediment control measures should be implemented until all the sites have been stabilized;

Disposition:

The Proponent advised that erosion control measures will be maintained until the affected sites have stabilized.

- the WSD is concerned about recent fish kills in the Whitemud River caused by low dissolved oxygen levels in the waterway, and is concerned about further degradation of the Whitemud River in comparison to the river's upstream water quality, and recommends that dissolved oxygen levels in the Whitemud River be monitored closely at a point just downstream of the mixing zone, whereby alarms would be activated if the dissolved oxygen level were to fall below the instantaneous minimum level identified in the Manitoba Water Quality Standards, Objectives and Guidelines, 2002;

Disposition:

The Proponent responded that, as described in Section 6.4.2, and Section 6.2 and 6.3 of Appendix E, and as shown in the Proposal, the IWWTF will have little, if any, measurable effect on background DO concentrations in the river. Also, due to the projected improvements to both the industrial and municipal effluents, the discharge of both effluents simultaneously will have less impact on DO in the river than the discharge of either effluent under existing operation. The proposed improvements are expected to ameliorate conditions, to some extent, w.r.t. DO, fish kills and downstream recreational uses of the river.

- WSD recommended that the effluent quality meet:
 - a 5-day carbonaceous biochemical oxygen limit of 25 mg per litre;
 - a total suspended solids limit of 25 mg per litre;
 - an ammonia limit based on the MB Water Quality Objectives for ammonia;

Disposition:

- the Proponent agreed to abide with the effluent quality criteria in the prevailing E.A. Licence.

- WSD recommended that the proponent be required to demonstrate, on a quarterly basis, that the effluent quality is not acutely lethal as per Environment Canada's "Biological Test Method for Determining Acute Lethality of effluents to Rainbow Trout;

Disposition:

- the Proponent responded agreed to abide to such monitoring requirements as would laid out in the Licence.

- WSD requested an estimate of concentration of fats, oils and greases (FOG) in the effluent;

Disposition:

- the Proponent advised that the concentration of FOG would be less than 15 mg/L.

- WSD recommends daily effluent monitoring for: CBOD5, TSS, total N, total P, ammonia nitrogen, total pH, temperature, fecal coliform and Escherichia coli;

- WSD recommends the daily measurement of the volume of wastewater discharged each day;

Disposition:

- WSD recommends that the water quality of the Whitemud River be monitored for 3 years;

Disposition:

The Proponent offered no comment.

- WSD recommends that an Environment Act Licence require the proponent to actively participate in any future watershed based management study, plan/and or nutrient reduction program approved by the Director of the Water Science and Management Branch;

Disposition:

The Proponent offered no comment.

- WSD recommended that an Environment Act Licence designate a discharge period for the municipal lagoon from June 15th to October 15th to further minimize any potential effects on fish during the spring spawning period.

Disposition:

The proponent pointed out that the aquatic assessment was based on a 16 week discharge period for the combined municipal and industrial discharge period.

Disposition:

WSD revised its recommended discharge period for the lagoon to the period of June 15 to October 31 (of any year).

- WSD commented that in respect of the Proponent's "Biosolids Management Plan" relative to the Manitoba's Nutrient *Management Regulation* :

1) it is noted that Nutrient Management Zone N4 is proposed to be excluded from land application;

2) Nutrient Management Zones N1, N2 and N3 do not come into effect under the Nutrient Management Regulation until 2011;

3) Nutrient Buffer Zone setbacks came into force on January 1, 2009, and must be followed whether or not a Nutrient Management Plan is submitted;

4) Effective January 1, 2011, a Nutrient Management Plan must be registered with WSD if nutrients will be applied to any field resulting in soil test phosphorus measuring 60 ppm or more within Nutrient Management Zones N1, N2 and N3; or if nutrients will be applied to any field resulting in soil test phosphorus measuring 60 ppm or more within Nutrient Management Zones N1, N2 and N3 and the phosphorus application rates listed in Appendix 'A' can not be met.

Disposition:

The limited scope and delayed application of the regulation will require any unregulated issues to be specifically addressed in the E.A. Licence for the I-WWTF, or in a stand-alone Environment Act Licence.

Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (CEAA) coordinated federal responses to the Proposal, and determined that, based on the federal responses to the Proposal, the application of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act would be required for this project. In that respect:

Environment Canada commented that:

- the Proposal did not invoke a trigger under Section 5 of the CEAA;

- the IWWTF would be captured under the "Meat and Poultry Products Plant Liquid Effluent Regulations and Guidelines" which would require the effluent to be tested for acute lethality to fish, and to be non acutely lethal;

Disposition:

The Proponent argued that since the IWWTF is being designed to service other future occupants of Neepawa's industrial area, and since funding is being provided to the municipal body of the Town of Neepawa, the Meat and Poultry Products Plant Liquid Effluent Regulations may not apply.

- no detail was provided w.r.t. the frequency of groundwater monitoring at the IWWTF;
- whereas continuous discharge is proposed, no continuous monitoring of the effluent is proposed;

Disposition:

The Proponent will develop a groundwater quality monitoring program in consultation with MB Conservation

- whereas the Proposal includes a lift station, new E.C. proactive precautions are recommended be implemented in order to minimize spills due to the malfunction of a lift station;

Disposition:

The Proponent advised that the raw wastewater pumping station will be equipped with a second redundant pump, whereby each single pump will be sized to handle 100% of the anticipated wastewater flows. In case the power failure, the pumps at the kill plant would also be rendered inactive.

- whereas biosolids will be produced and applied to land, no detail is provided w.r.t. their disposal. Drainage off the land being used for the application of biosolids is subject to Section 36(3) of the Fisheries Act.

Disposition:

The proponent advised that the management and disposal of the hog manure would be addressed through the Livestock Manure and Mortalities Regulation, which would capture the issue of potential contaminated runoff from lands receiving the manure or biosolids).

Health Canada commented that based on the information provided, they are not a Responsible Authority with respect to this project.

RECOMMENDATION:

Given that no concerns have been raised by the local public, and no major outstanding concerns remain with the TAC and with CEAA, and since the implementation of the Proposal will result in an improved environmental effect upon the Whitemud River, local I recommend that an Environment Act Licence be issued to the Proponent. To that effect, attached is a draft Environment Act Licence for consideration and approval.

Prepared by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Clemens Moche', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Clemens Moche, P.Eng.
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January 7, 2009

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