

REASONS FOR DECISION  
WATER USE LICENCE MN99-025  
VILLAGE OF TESLIN

The Yukon Territory Water Board ("the Board") has concluded deliberations pertaining to application MN99-025 which is a renewal of licence MN89-002, a type A licence for municipal undertaking.

Water Use Licence MN89-002 was issued in 1990. It permits the Village of Teslin to provide water by truck. Sewage is collected by eductor truck and disposed of in a four cell lagoon system that discharges first to a wetland and then to Fox Creek, a tributary of Teslin Lake. There has been only one discharge from the lagoon system since the licence was issued.

In application MN99-025, the Village of Teslin requested a twenty year licence, with similar terms and conditions to the existing licence. Minor amendments were requested regarding flow rates, and the Village asked to be relieved of the requirement to conduct an LC<sub>50</sub> bioassay test during discharge.

Notice of public hearing was provided in accordance with the requirements of the Yukon Waters Act ("the Act"). The Board received interventions from

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada ("DIAND"), and  
Environment Canada

No party requested a public hearing and, in accordance with the provisions of the Act, the hearing was cancelled. The Licensee submitted a written response to the interventions.

Prior to making the licencing decisions, a review of the application pursuant to the requirements of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (CEAA) was undertaken by DIAND. The determination was as specified in Section 20 (1) (a) of the Act, that is that taking into account the implementation of any mitigation measures that the responsible authority considers appropriate, the project is not likely to cause significant adverse environmental effects and may proceed. All of the recommendations contained in the CEAA screening report are reflected in the licence.

In making the licencing decisions pertaining to the application, the Board took into account the information contained in the application and the information and recommendations contained in the interventions.

These reasons address only those areas where the licence differs from the application and/or the recommendations of the interveners, or where the Board determined that further elaboration would be helpful.

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The Village of Teslin requested the removal of a requirement for bioassay testing of treated effluent after its treatment in the wetland area and prior to its entry into Fox Creek. The Board concluded that even though there is little or no expectation that the bioassay will fail, the requirement for a once per year bioassay test during the discharge period is not onerous and that a requirement for bioassay testing is consistent with other licences for municipal undertakings. DIAND recommended that the sampling point for the bioassay testing be moved upstream from the outlet of the wetland treatment area to the outlet from the lagoon. The Board concluded that moving the sampling point to the lagoon outlet would not recognize that the wetland is an integral part of the treatment system. Accordingly, the sampling point and frequency of testing for the bioassay remains the same as in the previous licence.

Similarly, DIAND Water Resources recommended that the water quality objectives which were contained in the previous licence for monitoring station T4, located at the outlet of the lagoons, should be changed to water quality standards for the new licence. DIAND's rationale was that the outlet of the lagoon is the last point of control in the treatment system and that it is difficult to obtain effluent samples at the outlet of the wetland, because there would be no way to control the flow and no way to control the additional level of treatment in the wetland. As with the bioassay, the Board concluded that moving the water quality standard to the outlet of the lagoon would not recognize the wetland as being part of the treatment system. Given that there has been only one discharge to the wetland since it was licenced in 1990, the difficulty in collecting effluent samples at the outlet of the wetland is based on only very limited experience and is therefore difficult to assess. It is possible that the difficulty in obtaining samples may also be due to the very low flows and losses due to infiltration and evaporation. With regard to controlling flows, the Board notes that the lagoon outlet and the pipeline to the wetland treatment area are equipped with valves and a weir to control and monitor flow.

As recommended by DIAND and Environment Canada, a monitoring station identified as T8 has been added to the licence. Station T8 is the groundwater well known as MW1 which was installed down gradient of the lagoons in 1990.

The requirement for testing the quality of the raw and treated water supplies has been removed as the Board considers that this is a public health issue more appropriately addressed by other agencies.



Brian Lendrum, Vice-Chairperson

May 24, 2000