



la Convention
de la Baie James
et du Nord québécois

Comité d'examen des répercussions sur l'environnement et le milieu social

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MINUTES OF THE

407th MEETING OF THE REVIEW COMMITTEE

(Adopted)

DATE: 407 A: September 20, 2022
407 B: September 30, 2022
407 C: October 11, 2022

PLACE: Video conference (Teams)

PRESENT: Luc Lainé, Chairman
Daniel Berrouard, Québec
Robert Joly, Québec
John Paul Murdoch, CNG

Sophie Cooper, Executive Secretary

1) Call to order and adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted as presented.

2) Adoption of the minutes of the 406th meeting

The minutes of the 406th meeting were adopted as presented.

Action: Translate and file the 406th meeting minutes

3) Correspondence and follow-up action

Correspondence and follow-up action from July 27 to September 20, 2022 are presented in Appendix A.

4) Eastmain-1-A and Rupert diversion project

Ref. No.: 3214-10-017

- a) Monitoring of the integrity of the Waskaganish water intake – 2013 monitoring report
- b) Monitoring of the integrity of the Waskaganish water intake – 2018 monitoring report
 - For information

WHEREAS on July 5, 2016 and June 28, 2022, respectively, the Review Committee (COMEX) received, for information purposes, the 2013 and 2018 monitoring reports on the integrity of the Waskaganish water intake. The monitoring was a requirement of condition 6.7 of the certificate of authorization issued on November 24, 2006 and condition 1 of the amended certificate of authorization issued on July 28, 2008.

The objective of the monitoring was to assess the condition of the intake pipes at the Waskaganish pumping station after a series of hydraulic modifications were conducted to partial divert the Rupert River and the following remedial work carried out during the winter of 2011-2012. The 2018 monitoring report coincides with the last year of monitoring provided by Hydro-Québec under the 2007-2023 Environmental Monitoring Program.

Based on the topographic and bathymetric surveys, including a series of underwater digital images, the 2013 report suggested that the integrity of the main and secondary water intakes were intact, that the intakes were in good condition and that there had been no changes since the enhancements performed in 2011-2012. In 2018, surveys could not be conducted in certain parts of the area covered by the 2013 monitoring campaign, in particular bathymetric surveys, due to hydrologic conditions. In addition, high water turbidity resulted in low quality of the underwater digital images taken in 2018 and, consequently, the integrity of the water intakes could not be properly assessed. However, all of the data collected suggest that the main and secondary water

intakes were in good condition and that no significant changes had occurred since the 2013 monitoring.

WHEREAS the COMEX members reviewed the documents submitted by the proponent and consider that the monitoring conducted achieved the set objective of ensuring the integrity of the Waskaganish water intake and that the monitoring results do not warrant further field campaigns. However, it is recommended that the proponent maintain relations with the manager of the water treatment plant so that the latter can report any future problems with the installations (erosion, pumping plant, silt build-up, etc.) so as to ensure the continued integrity of Waskaganish's water supply.

#2022-0920-01: *write to the Provincial Administrator to inform him that the COMEX members reviewed the documents submitted by the proponent and recommend that the proponent maintain relations with the manager of Waskaganish's water treatment plant.*

Action: **Write to the Provincial Administrator**
 c.c. the Regional Administrator

- c) Monitoring of the integrity of the protective structure and slopes adjacent to the Waskaganish water intake – 2018 monitoring report

WHEREAS on June 28, 2022, the Review Committee (COMEX) received, for information purposes, the 2018 monitoring report on the integrity of the protective structure and slopes adjacent to the Waskaganish water intake. The monitoring was a requirement of condition 6.7 of the certificate of authorization issued on November 24, 2006 and condition 1 of the amended certificate of authorization issued on July 28, 2008.

The main objectives of the monitoring were to ensure the integrity and effectiveness of the intake protective structure that was built in 2009 and underwent work in 2011-2012, as well as evaluate the stability of the adjacent slopes. These components had been monitored in 2010 and 2013. The report shows no physical change in the main riprap protective structure since its installation to protect the clay embankments located near the intake facilities.

WHEREAS the COMEX members reviewed the document submitted by the proponent and consider that the monitoring conducted achieved the set objective of ensuring the integrity of the Waskaganish water intake and its protective structure. The COMEX members have no comments to submit at this time.

#2022-0920-02: *write to the Provincial Administrator to inform him that the COMEX members reviewed the document submitted by the proponent and have no comments to submit at this time.*

Action: **Write to the Provincial Administrator**

- d) Monitoring of the spawning grounds at KP 203 and KP 207 on Eastmain River – 2016 monitoring report

WHEREAS on October 31, 2018, the Review Committee (COMEX) received, for information purposes, the 2016 monitoring report on the developed spawning grounds at KP 203 and KP 207 on Eastmain River. The monitoring was a requirement of conditions 5.3 and 5.33 of the certificate of authorization issued on November 24, 2006 and condition 1 of the amended certificate of authorization issued on July 28, 2008.

The developed spawning grounds at KP 203 and KP 207, downstream of the Eastmain-1 dam, were primarily designed for lake sturgeon, but their features make them suitable spawning sites for other species as well, including walleye and lake whitefish. The monitoring objectives in 2016 were to assess the effectiveness of the developed spawning grounds at KP 203 and KP 207, assess the physical integrity and utilization of the developed multispecies spawning grounds, estimate the spawning potential of the sites located near the developed spawning grounds, and assess all of the environmental monitoring and follow-up conducted to ensure the integrity and utilization of the developed spawning grounds.

Based on the results of environmental monitoring, the spawning grounds are stable, since no change in the substrate composition or signs of silting have been noted over the years. The monitoring results suggest that suckers, walleye and lake whitefish use both of the developed spawning grounds or their immediate surroundings on a recurring basis. Lake sturgeon appear to spawn only in the area of KP 207. The overview report describes the extent to which Cree knowledge was integrated into every monitoring campaign.

WHEREAS the COMEX members reviewed the document submitted by the proponent and have no comments to submit at this time.

#2022-0920-03: *write to the Provincial Administrator to inform him that the COMEX members reviewed the documents submitted by the proponent and have no comments to submit at this time.*

Action: Write to the Provincial Administrator

- e) Monitoring of the fish pass at KP 207 on Eastmain River – 2016 monitoring report

WHEREAS on January 14, 2020, the Review Committee (COMEX) received, for information purposes, the 2016 monitoring report on the fish pass at KP 207 on Eastmain River. The monitoring was a requirement of condition 5.33 of the certificate of authorization issued on November 24, 2006 and condition 1 of the amended certificate of authorization issued on July 28, 2008.

The report communicates the results of utilization of the fish pass by fish with a passive integrated responder (*PIT tag*) obtained by the detection system installed at the KP 207 fish pass. The primary monitoring objective was to present the 2016 run data to show utilization of the fish pass by species inhabiting Eastmain River under varying hydraulic conditions. The report confirms utilization of the fish pass by several fish species, in particular suckers, lake sturgeon, northern pike and walleye.

WHEREAS the COMEX members reviewed the document submitted by the proponent and consider that the monitoring conducted achieved the set objective. The COMEX members have no comments to submit at this time.

#2022-0920-04: *write to the Provincial Administrator to inform him that the COMEX members reviewed the document submitted by the proponent and have no comments to submit at this time.*

Action: Write to the Provincial Administrator

- f) Monitoring of fish communities and population dynamics in the Rupert diversion bays – 2016 monitoring report

WHEREAS on January 14, 2020, the Review Committee (COMEX) received, for information purposes, the 2016 monitoring report on fish communities and population dynamics in the Rupert diversion bays. The monitoring was a requirement of conditions 5.4 and 5.5 of the certificate of authorization issued on November 24, 2006 and condition 1 of the amended certificate of authorization issued on July 28, 2008.

The general objective of the monitoring was to describe changes in fishing yields and fish communities as a result of alterations to the aquatic ecosystem in the Rupert diversion bay sector. The proponent was required to compare the results for abundance, biological characteristics and population dynamics in 2016 against the results in 2011 and 2014 and the baseline (2002 and 2008). The report finds that the overall impact of the creation of the diversion bays on the biological characteristics and population dynamics is in keeping with the changes observed in several reservoirs of the La Grande complex and is generally in line with the impacts predicted in the proponent's environmental impact statement. However, long-term monitoring will be required to get a better idea of the general trends in fish communities.

WHEREAS the COMEX members reviewed the document submitted by the proponent and have no comments to submit at this time. COMEX is waiting to receive the monitoring reports for 2018 and 2021, and if necessary, 2023, before completing the review process.

#2022-0920-05: *write to the Provincial Administrator to inform him that the COMEX members reviewed the document submitted by the proponent and have no comments to submit at this time.*

Action: **Write to the Provincial Administrator**

- g) Longnose sucker monitoring in the Rupert River estuary and bay – 2016 monitoring report

WHEREAS on December 13, 2017, the Review Committee (COMEX) received, for information purposes, the 2016 report on longnose sucker monitoring in the Rupert River estuary and bay. The monitoring was a requirement of conditions 5.29 of the certificate of authorization issued on November 24, 2006 and condition 1 of the amended certificate of authorization issued on July 28, 2008.

In accordance with Hydro-Québec's commitments detailed in the 2007-2023 Environmental Monitoring Program, growth of longnose suckers in the Rupert River estuary and the freshwater sections of Rupert bay was required due to a significant decrease in total organic carbon (TOC) uptake in the Rupert estuary had been documented following diversion of the Rupert River. The monitoring objectives were to compare growth parameters (age-length relationship) before and after diversion of the Rupert River, describe longnose sucker feeding behaviour in the estuary based on stomach contents and compare the results against the 2009 results.

The monitoring results suggest no significant difference in longnose sucker growth in the mouth of the Rupert River before and after the river's partial diversion. The growth curves based on catch age and length are very similar. The decrease in TOC intake as a result of the river's diversion does not seem to have translated to a change in longnose sucker growth at the mouth of the river. In addition, there does not appear to be a link between the number of organisms in the digestive tract and sucker condition and growth, no significant difference having been found in growth between the two monitoring years concerned (2009 and 2016).

WHEREAS the COMEX members reviewed the document submitted by the proponent and have no comments to submit at this time.

#2022-0920-06: *write to the Provincial Administrator to inform him that the COMEX members reviewed the document submitted by the proponent and have no comments to submit at this time.*

Action: **Write to the Provincial Administrator**

- h) Monitoring of the integrity and utilization of natural and developed lake char spawning grounds – 2017 monitoring report

WHEREAS on January 14, 2020, the Review Committee (COMEX) received, for information purposes, the 2017 monitoring report on natural and developed lake char spawning grounds. The monitoring was a requirement of condition 5.6 of the certificate of authorization issued on November 24, 2006 and condition 1 of the amended certificate of authorization issued on July 28, 2008.

The proponent had offset the loss of lake char spawning habitat by developing man-made spawning grounds in three former lakes in the Rupert forebay (lake RP062, lake RP030 and lake Cabot). The monitoring objectives in 2017 were to verify the physical integrity of the natural and man-made spawning grounds and their utilization by lake char. In addition, the proponent was required to identify lake char aggregation sites during the spawning period and describe thermal stratification in the three lakes as well as in Des Champs lake.

The monitoring results confirm that lake char still inhabit the Rupert diversion bays and show that lake char populations seem to be dispersed throughout the aquatic habitat that has become accessible since impoundment of the diversion bays. However, based on the monitoring results, lake char appear to have been gradually leaving the natural spawning grounds over the years and that, despite the proponent's efforts, no eggs have been found in the man-made spawning grounds, which suggests that lake char do not use them or use them very little.

WHEREAS the spawning grounds developed for lake char honour Hydro-Québec's commitment because they were intact during every monitoring campaign. However, the fact that the species do not utilize the spawning grounds and are deserting the old natural spawning grounds suggests that the lake char community has been significantly affected by the diversion of Rupert River.

WHEREAS the COMEX members reviewed the document submitted by the proponent and have not comments to submit at this time, but may submit comments at a later date. COMEX is waiting to receive the 2020 monitoring report before completing the review process.

#2022-0920-07: *write to the Provincial Administrator to inform him that the COMEX members reviewed the document submitted by the proponent and have no comments to submit at this time.*

Action: **Write to the Provincial Administrator**

5) Dewatering of the J-4 and 87 pits on the former Troilus mine site, Troilus Gold Corp.

Ref. No.: 3214-14-025

- a) Application to amend the certificate of authorization
 - For recommendation

WHEREAS on August 11, 2022, the Review Committee (COMEX) received, for its recommendation, an application to amend the global certificate of authorization issued on July 29, 2020.

The proponent wants to extend, to December 31, 2023, inclusively, the authorized time limit for beginning the dewatering process. No other changes to the CA and its conditions are requested. The proponent means to carry out the project as authorized, and to honour its commitments and the conditions of the CA issued on July 29, 2020, as well as those in the amended CA issued on February 11, 2022.

WHEREAS the COMEX members reviewed the document submitted by the proponent and recommend that the Provincial Administrator authorize the requested amendment to the CA by extending the start date of the pits J-4 and 87 dewatering project to December 31, 2023, at the latest. However, COMEX recommends keeping the deadline for completing the dewatering, that is, no later than 10 years from the date of issuance of the CA, that is, July 29, 2020.

#2022-0920-08: *write to the Provincial Administrator to inform him that the COMEX members reviewed the document submitted by the proponent and recommend that he authorize the requested amendment to the certificate of authorization.*

Action: Write to the Provincial Administrator
Transmit a recommendation

6) Rose Lithium-Tantalum Mining Project, CELC

Ref. No.: 3214-14-053

- a) Environmental and social impact assessment
- b) Additional information (answers to questions and comments)
- c) Additional information (answers to questions and comments)
- d) Follow-up on public hearings - Questions and comments
- e) Additional information (answers to questions and comments)
- f) Review report (revision and approval)
 - i) For recommendation

WHEREAS in July 2017, the Review Committee (COMEX) received, for its recommendation, the first environmental impact assessment study (EIAS) for Critical Elements Lithium Corporation's (CELC) Rose Lithium-Tantalum Project. After conducting a feasibility study of the project, the proponent submitted a substantial update to the EIAS in January 2018.

After reviewing the EIAS and the update, COMEX sent the proponent three (3) sets of questions and comments, in April 2018, June 2018 and May 2020, respectively. The proponent sent its answers to the questions and comments in February 2019, January 2020 and July 2020, respectively. In February 2021, COMEX held a series of hybrid public hearings (in-person and online) in Matagami, Eastmain and Nemaska.

Following the public hearings, COMEX sent the proponent two (2) sets of questions and comments in June and October 2021, respectively, to clarifying certain aspects of the project. The proponent submitted its answers to the questions and comments in September 2021 and January 2022, respectively.

WHEREAS the COMEX members reviewed the documents submitted by the proponent with respect to this project and recommend that the Provincial Administrator authorize the project, subject to conditions. The review report will be enclosed with the letter and will stipulate the conditions governing the project. One of the conditions relates to the mining camp, because the proponent is still unable to say where the workers will be lodged or assess the related environmental impacts of the mining camp. Consequently, construction of the mine cannot begin until the Provincial Administrator has received the information pertaining to the camp and authorized the camp on COMEX's recommendation.

#2022-0920-09: *write to the Provincial Administrator to inform him that the COMEX members reviewed the information provided by the proponent and recommend that he authorize the project, subject to conditions (conditions set out in the review report).*

Action: **Write to the Provincial Administrator**
 Transmit a recommendation

7) Other business

a. Possible creation of a committee on cumulative impacts of mining transport in James Bay

Sophie Cooper and Martin Pelletier (MERN coordinator for the Comité directeur interministériel sur la réfection de la route Billy-Diamond) discussed the possible creation of a committee on cumulative impacts of mining transport in James Bay. Ms. Cooper explained the needs for such a committee, what COMEX expects and the possible objectives of the committee. She will remain in contact with Mr. Pelletier about organizing a meeting between COMEX and the major stakeholders in this issue.

b. Forest roads H and I: New developments

COMEX is still waiting to receive more documents, including the woodland caribou report by Martin Hughes St-Laurent (UQAR), before continuing the review process. COMEX will invite Mr. St-Laurent to its meeting on November 2, 2022 to discuss the main findings of his report (to be released).

Action: Write to Mr. St-Laurent
Invite him to meet with COMEX

c. Interview request: Sébastien Girard Lindsay, University of Ottawa

Daniel Berrouard briefly went over his meeting with Sébastien Girard Lindsay, a doctoral candidate at the University of Ottawa, regarding remediation work at the Principale mine in Chibougamau.

d. Projects on the agenda for the meetings in October and November

- James Bay Lithium Mine Project, Galaxy Lithium Inc.
- Eastmain-1-A and Rupert diversion project
- Bachelor Mine Project, Bonterra Resources (waiting for answers from the proponent)

8) Next meetings

The next COMEX meetings will be held by video conference on November 2 and December 5, 2022.

9) 407-B Meeting: September 30, 2022, at 3:30 p.m.

James Bay Lithium Mine Project, Galaxy Lithium Inc.

Ref. No.: 3214-14-055

- a) Environmental and social impact assessment
- b) Additional information (answers to questions and comments)
- c) Additional information (answers to questions and comments)
- d) Additional information (answers to questions and comments)
- e) Additional information (answers to questions and comments)
- f) Additional information
 - For recommendation

WHEREAS, after reviewing the additional information submitted by the proponent on September 2, 2022, the Review Committee members decided to hold public hearings in Eastmain and Matagami during the week of November 21, 2022. Sophie Cooper will officially begin organizing and will announce the hearings in Eastmain and Matagami, which should be held no later than October 23, 2022. The committee will write to both the Provincial Administrator and the proponent to inform them of COMEX's decision to hold public hearings on the project.

COMEX is still waiting to receive the full report on Kapisikama lake, the air quality modelling report and additional information from Wood concerning the dike study.

#2022-0920-10: *write to the Provincial Administrator and the proponent to inform them of COMEX's decision to hold public hearings on the James Bay Lithium Mine Project.*

Action: **Write to the Provincial Administrator**
 Write to the proponent, Allkem/Galaxy Lithium Inc.
 Announce the public hearing

10) 407-C Meeting: October 11, 2022, 2:30 p.m.

James Bay Lithium Mine Project, Galaxy Lithium Inc.

Ref. No.: 3214-14-055

- g) Environmental and social impact assessment
- h) Additional information (answers to questions and comments)
- i) Additional information (answers to questions and comments)
- j) Additional information (answers to questions and comments)
- k) Additional information (answers to questions and comments)
- l) Additional information
 - For recommendation

WHEREAS, further to the request by the community of Eastmain and Chief Cheezo, the COMEX members decided to amend the decision made at the September 30, 2022 meeting and hold public hearings in Eastmain and Matagami in the week of January 23, 2023 instead. The community wants to hold more consultations with the proponent

before going ahead with the public hearings. Once the community has contacted the proponent to inform its decision, COMEX will write to the Provincial Administrator and the proponent to inform them of COMEX's decision to hold public hearings on the project.

#2022-0920-11: *write to the Provincial Administrator and the proponent to inform them of COMEX's decision to hold public hearings on the James Bay Lithium Mine Project during the week of January 23, 2023.*

Action: **Write to the Provincial Administrator**
 Write to the proponent, Allkem/Galaxy Lithium Inc.
 Announce the public hearing

Appendix A Correspondence and follow-up: July 27 to September 20, 2022					
Project	From	To	Document	Date	Action - Comments
Rose Lithium-Tantalum Mining Project, Critical Elements Corporation Ref. No.: 3214-14-053	Ann Garbor CEC	Marc Croteau Deputy Minister MELCC	Additional information – Archaeological survey (May 2022)	Sent: August 2, 2022	<i>For information</i>
	Maud Ablain MELCC	Luc Lainé COMEX		Sent: August 4, 2022 Received by COMEX: August 5, 2022	
COMEX Annual Report 2021-2022	Sophie Cooper COMEX	Marc Croteau, Deputy Minister, MELCC Isaac Voyageur, Regional Administrator (CNG) Mélicca Gagnon, Julie Rodrigue, Maud Ablain and Ian Courtemanche, MELCC JBACE HFTCC CQFB CTA CNG EIJBRG ARBJ	COMEX Annual Report 2021-2022	Sent: August 16, 2022	
James Bay Lithium Mine Project, Allkem/Galaxy Lithium (Canada) Inc. Ref. No.: 3214-14-055	Luc Lainé COMEX	Marc Croteau Deputy Minister MELCC	Request for additional information	Sent: August 16, 2022 Acknowledgement of receipt: August 22, 2022	<i>For recommendation</i>
	Maud Ablain MELCC	Caroline Morissette Allkem/Galaxy Lithium (Canada) Inc.		Sent: August 24, 2022 Received by COMEX: August 24, 2022	
Extension of Route 167 north to the Otish Mountains, Ministère des Transports du Québec (MTQ) Ref. No.: 3214-05-077	Luc Lainé COMEX	Marc Croteau Deputy Minister MELCC	Follow-up on conditions of the certificate of authorization – Request for additional information	Sent: August 18, 2022 Acknowledgement of receipt: August 22, 2022	<i>For information</i>
	Mélicca Gagnon MELCC	Danielle Fleury MTQ		Sent: August 19, 2022 Received by COMEX: August 19, 2022	

Appendix A Correspondence and follow-up: July 27 to September 20, 2022					
Project	From	To	Document	Date	Action - Comments
Eastmain-1-A and Rupert diversion project, Hydro-Québec Ref. No.: 3214-10-017	Luc Lainé COMEX	Marc Croteau Deputy Minister MELCC	Follow-up on conditions of the certificate of authorization	Sent: August 18, 2022 Acknowledgement of receipt: August 22, 2022	<i>For information</i>
Éléonore Mine Project, Goldcorp Canada Ltd. Ref. No.: 3214-14-042	Andrée Poirier Goldcorp Canada Ltd.	Marc Croteau Deputy Minister MELCC	Environmental and Social Monitoring Report, 2021	Sent: July 27, 2022	<i>For information</i>
	Maud Ablain MELCC	Luc Lainé COMEX		Sent: August 18, 2022 Received by COMEX: August 18, 2022	
Whabouchi project: development and operation of a spodumene deposit in the James Bay territory, Nemaska Lithium Inc. Ref. No.: 3214-14-052	Denis Isabel Nemaska Lithium Inc.	Marc Croteau Deputy Minister MELCC	Restoration plan – Follow-up on condition 20	Sent: February 22, 2022	<i>For information</i>
	Maud Ablain MELCC	Luc Lainé COMEX		Sent: September 8, 2022 Received by COMEX: September 8, 2022	
Whabouchi project: development and operation of a spodumene deposit in the James Bay territory, Nemaska Lithium Inc. Ref. No.: 3214-14-052	Denis Isabel Nemaska Lithium Inc.	Marc Croteau Deputy Minister MELCC	Changes made to the temporary work camp and wastewater and drinking treatment systems	Sent: February 10, 2022	<i>For information</i>
	Maud Ablain MELCC	Luc Lainé COMEX		Sent: September 8, 2022 Received by COMEX: September 8, 2022	
James Bay Lithium Mine Project, Allkem/Galaxy Lithium (Canada) Inc. Ref. No.: 3214-14-055	Denis Couture Allkem/Galaxy Lithium (Canada) Inc.	Marc Croteau Deputy Minister MELCC	Additional information	Sent: September 2, 2022	<i>For recommendation</i>
	Maud Ablain MELCC	Luc Lainé COMEX		Sent: September 8, 2022 Received by COMEX: September 8, 2022	