



File: 30050-20/PNGL-05-06

Reference: 357316

April 21, 2020

SENT VIA EMAIL

Joe Mazza
Vice President, Operations and Engineering
Pacific Northern Gas Ltd.
2550-1066 West Hastings Street
Vancouver BC V6E 3X2
jmazza@png.ca

Dear Joe Mazza:

I am writing in response to Pacific Northern Gas Limited's (PNG Ltd.) letter to the Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) dated March 25, 2020, regarding the Pacific Northern Gas Looping Project (PNGL). In the letter, you informed the EAO that you want PNGL to be transitioned to the *Environmental Assessment Act* (2018) (Act).

As noted in your letter, PNG Ltd. and the EAO met on January 16, 2020 and February 20, 2020 to discuss the next steps in the Environmental Assessment (EA) of PNGL. During these meetings you indicated that delays associated with commercial arrangement negotiations and engagement with Indigenous nations on required studies have resulted in PNG Ltd. not being able to advance the development of its Application for an Environmental Assessment Certificate (Application) under the British Columbia *Environmental Assessment Act* (2002). In your letter you state that the COVID-19 pandemic has further hampered your ability to engage Indigenous nations. Given the current situation, you have requested that the EAO delay transitioning PNGL to the Act for six months.

The EA of PNGL will occur under the Act. In our discussions, the EAO also indicated that PNGL could transition to the Act after the Readiness Decision (that is, a decision under Section 18 of the Act and before the Process Planning phase, provided the necessary information is provided to the Chief Executive Assessment Officer).

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In order to enter the process after the Readiness Decision and at the start of the Process Planning Phase under the Act, the following items must be provided to the EAO to support a successful Process Planning phase, and support the decision of the Chief Executive Assessment Officer as to what stage the project would transition to:

- An updated draft Application Information Requirements (AIR) that includes the Section 25 required assessment matters of the Act and, any new Valued Components that may have been brought forward through your engagement with Indigenous nations, government agencies and technical experts. The EAO will provide the new AIR Guideline to PNG Ltd. to assist in updating the AIR, when it is available (anticipating early May). PNG Ltd. can use the approved AIR for PNGL, as its starting point for the updated AIR;
- An updated list of required permits for PNGL and PNG Ltd.'s expected permit application submission dates. This information will support the EAO's development of a Regulatory Plan. The Regulatory Plan outlines the required permits for the project and describes how issues that are identified in the EA will be addressed, either through the EA, subsequent permitting or other regulatory processes or government initiatives; and
- An updated Aboriginal Consultation Plan with the new engagement and consultation activities identified in your recent quarterly reports. The EAO will identify PNG Ltd.'s consultation reporting requirements in the Process Order.

These items are required to support a successful Process Planning phase, given the limited time provided in the Act for Process Planning, namely 120 days. The EAO understands that PNG Ltd. intends to submit the identified items in September 2020. The items will be reviewed once the EAO receives them to determine whether it would be appropriate to start the Process Planning phase. Once the EAO determines the items to be acceptable, the EAO will inform the Chief Executive Assessment Officer that it has adequate information to start the Process Planning phase and will then recommend that the Chief Executive Assessment Officer issue an order under Section 78(7) of the Act to transition PNGL to the Act at the start of Process Planning.

The Process Order, issued by the EAO at the end of the Process Planning phase, would prescribe the procedures and methods for the EA and include PNG Ltd.'s expected Application submission date.

The EAO is looking forward to working with you. Please feel free to reach out to me or Fern Stockman if you have any questions or concerns respecting this letter.

Yours truly,

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

Bernard Achampong
Executive Project Director

cc: Fern Stockman, Project Assessment Director
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