

**COMPREHENSIVE STUDY REPORT**

**BRUCE HEAVY WATER PLANT  
DECOMMISSIONING PROJECT**

Prepared by:

Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission

March 2003

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### APPENDIX A:

Responses from Expert Federal Authorities Signifying Agreement that the CRS is Considered Complete for the Purpose of Submission for Public Review Pursuant to Section 22 of the CEEA

### SUPPORT DOCUMENT

Ontario Power Generation, December 2002, *“Bruce Heavy Water Plant Decommissioning, Environmental Assessment Study Report”*

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) staff ensured the conduct of a comprehensive study and the preparation of this Comprehensive Study Report (CSR) for the proposed decommissioning of the Bruce Heavy Water Plant (BHWP), located at the Bruce nuclear site near Tiverton, Ontario. The proponent of the decommissioning project is Ontario Power Generation (OPG). The Comprehensive Study Report was prepared for submission to the Minister of Environment and the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency to fulfill CNSC obligations as a Responsible Authority (RA) under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* (CEAA) in the assessment of the environmental effects of the proposed project, pursuant to section 21 of the CEAA. The CSR will allow for full review and decision making by the federal Minister of Environment pursuant to sections 22 and 23 of the CEAA.

The CSR was prepared to meet the environmental assessment requirements and the scope of the assessment for the BHWP decommissioning project under the CEAA. The preparation of technical support studies for the comprehensive study, as well as the conduct of public consultation activities, were delegated to OPG by CNSC staff pursuant to section 17 of the CEAA. OPG established several opportunities for input from local communities, aboriginal peoples, the general public and other interested stakeholders during the conduct of the environmental assessment. The results of the studies and consultations conducted by OPG were documented in an Environmental Assessment Study Report (EASR) submitted to CNSC staff. The EASR was independently reviewed by technical experts of the CNSC staff and the expert Federal Authorities, before being accepted by CNSC staff as the basis for the completion of the CSR. The Comprehensive Study Report is comprised of this environmental assessment overview document and the attached Environmental Assessment Study Report prepared by OPG entitled “*Bruce Heavy Water Plant Decommissioning, Environmental Assessment Study Report (December 2002)*”. The overview document highlights the key aspects and results of the comprehensive study, and references more detailed supporting information provided in the attached EASR.

## **2.0 BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Project**

The Bruce Heavy Water Plant is located on the Bruce nuclear site, on the east shore of Lake Huron, about midway between the towns of Kincardine and Port Elgin. The BHWP is sited in a fenced area on the western side of the Bruce nuclear site. Figures 1 and 1.2 of the EASR show the location of the Bruce nuclear site and the BHWP.

The BHWP was in continuous operation from April 1973 until March 1998, for the purpose of producing reactor-grade heavy water. The facility is no longer in operation. OPG (formerly Ontario Hydro) is the owner and operator of the facility. The facility consisted of two plants (A and B) which included enriching units, finishing units and associated auxiliary systems and buildings needed to support heavy water production. Construction of a third plant (D) was suspended in 1978 and that plant did not proceed to operation.

In 1997, Ontario Hydro (now OPG) decided to permanently shut-down the heavy water producing facilities. All of the hydrogen sulphide was removed from facility systems or disposed of by controlled flaring. Structures were placed in a safe mothballed state, or demolished for safety reasons. Chemicals associated with the production of heavy water were disposed of using approved conventional methods. At present, there are no active production facilities on the site.

Subsequent to the shut-down, OPG notified the Atomic Energy Control Board (AECB, now the CNSC) of its intention to apply for regulatory approval to decommission the facility. The decommissioning proposal involves permanently retiring and removing the remaining heavy water production facility, and includes the following primary components:

- (i) the removal or demolition of buildings, structures and equipment used for heavy water production, except for infrastructure required for maintaining site service system integrity for other separately licensed facilities on the Bruce nuclear site;
- (ii) the remediation of the site (removal of demolition debris and clean-up of contaminated soil) to a state suitable for general industrial land uses;
- (iii) the recycling of any reusable and recyclable materials and equipment; and
- (iv) the management of solid and liquid wastes generated during the conduct of the decommissioning project.

The decommissioning activities are proposed to take seven to eight years to complete, with environmental monitoring continuing for up to three years following completion of the work.

## **2.2 Purpose of Decommissioning Project**

The purpose of the decommissioning project is to permanently retire the BHWP from service as a nuclear facility licensed for the production of heavy water. All heavy water plant buildings, structures and equipment would be removed or demolished, and the site restored to a state suitable for industrial purposes unrelated to the production of heavy water.

### **2.3 Regulatory Requirements**

The BHWP currently is regulated by the CNSC under a Heavy Water Plant Operating Licence issued pursuant to the *Nuclear Safety and Control Act* (NSCA). A portion of the facility, for which construction was started but never completed, is governed under a Construction Approval issued by the AECB in 1980. These authorizations provide for the continued maintenance of the BHWP in its current shut-down state.

The decommissioning proposal cannot proceed without the prior licensing approval of the CNSC pursuant to section 24 of the NSCA. OPG has applied for regulatory approval to decommission BHWP, and has supported the application with a Detailed Decommissioning Plan. CNSC staff has initiated a licensing assessment process designed to provide recommendations to the Commission on the issuance of a decommissioning licence.

### **3.0 APPLICATION OF THE *CANADIAN ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT ACT***

CNSC staff determined that, pursuant to paragraph 5(1)(d) of the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* (CEAA), regulatory approval of the proposed decommissioning project would require that a prior environmental assessment of the project be completed pursuant to provisions of the CEAA. Specifically, it was determined that the CNSC, as a Responsible Authority for the project, would be required to ensure that a comprehensive study be conducted and that a Comprehensive Study Report be prepared and submitted to the federal Minister of Environment and the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (Agency), pursuant to section 21 of the CEAA.

CNSC staff subsequently established and managed an environmental assessment process for this purpose. Pursuant to section 12 of the CEAA and the *Federal Coordination Regulations* under the CEAA, Environment Canada and Health Canada declared themselves as expert Federal Authorities with interests in the decommissioning project. Fisheries and Oceans Canada initially indicated an interest in participating as an expert Federal Authority, but subsequently withdrew when it determined that there were no environmental assessment issues associated with the project that were relevant to their mandate. CNSC staff further determined that there are no provincial environmental assessment requirements under the Ontario *Environmental Assessment Act*.

### **4.0 SCOPE OF PROJECT**

The scope of the BHWP decommissioning project was established pursuant to section 15 of the CEAA. The scope of the project includes the following decommissioning activities:

- (i) demolition of the above-grade components of the BHWP within the area covered by the CNSC licence, except for those components and infrastructure required to maintain site service system integrity for other separately licenced facilities on the Bruce nuclear site;
- (ii) segregation, preparation and transport off-site to appropriate locations, of any reusable and recyclable materials and equipment;
- (iii) disposal of some non-hazardous waste at the Bruce nuclear site landfill;
- (iv) segregation and transport off-site to authorized waste management facilities, of all remaining hazardous and non-hazardous waste; and
- (v) remediation of the facility to a condition suitable for general industrial land uses.

A description of the proposed decommissioning project that elaborates on the scope of the project is provided in Section 3.0 of the attached Environmental Assessment Study Report.

## **5.0 SCOPE OF ASSESSMENT**

### **5.1 Environmental Assessment Factors**

The scope of the environmental assessment, including the factors considered in the assessment, was established in accordance with section 16 of the CEEA. These factors, along with an identification of the sections of the attached EASR where they are addressed in the CSR, include:

- (i) the environmental effects of the project, including the environmental effects of malfunctions or accidents that may occur in connection with the project (section 8.0 EASR) and any cumulative environmental effects that are likely to result from the project in combination with other projects or activities that have been or will be carried out (section 9.0 EASR);
- (ii) the significance of the effects referred to in (i) (section 11.0 EASR);
- (iii) comments from the public that are received in accordance with the CEEA and its regulations (section 5.0 EASR);
- (iv) measures that are technically and economically feasible and that would mitigate any significant adverse environmental effects of the project (sections 8.0 and 9.0 EASR);
- (v) the purpose of the project (section 2.2 EASR);
- (vi) alternative means of carrying out the project that are technically and economically feasible and the environmental effects of any such alternative means (section 2.0 EASR);

- (vii) the need for, and the requirements of, any follow-up program in respect of the project (section 10.0 EASR); and
- (viii) the capacity of renewable resources that are likely to be significantly affected by the project to meet the needs of the present and those of the future (section 8.5 EASR).

Pursuant to paragraph 16(1)(e) of the CEAA, and to enable adequate consideration of the above factors, the CNSC included the following in the scope of assessment:

- (i) a description of the project (section 3.0 EASR);
- (ii) a description of the existing environment that may be affected by the project activities (section 6.0 EASR);
- (iii) a description of the environmental assessment methodology (section 4.0 EASR); and
- (iv) likely effects of the environment on the project (section 8.4 EASR).

## **5.2 Environmental Assessment Methodology**

A description of the methodology used in the environmental assessment is provided in Section 4.0 of the EASR. The methodology is consistent with that required to conduct a federal environmental assessment pursuant to the requirements of the CEAA, and with the definitions of “environment” and “environmental effects” contained in section 2 of CEAA. In summary, the methodology involved:

- (i) identification and assessment of alternative means for carrying out the decommissioning;
- (ii) defining and describing the project works and activities;
- (iii) identifying relevant environmental components, Valued Ecosystem Components (VECs) and Valued Social Components (VSCs);
- (iv) identifying project/environment interactions;
- (v) consideration of local community, aboriginal peoples, governmental and other stakeholder comments;
- (vi) assessment of likely environmental effects and mitigation;
- (vii) assessment of likely cumulative effects and mitigation;
- (viii) assessment of significance of residual environmental effects; and
- (ix) determination of the need and scope of environmental assessment follow-up and monitoring.

## **6.0 ALTERNATIVES**

An assessment of alternative means for carrying out the decommissioning project is provided in section 2.0 of the EASR. The assessment included: (i) an evaluation of five decommissioning strategies for the purpose of selecting a preferred option; (ii) a determination of the most effective means of carrying out the preferred option; and (iii) an assessment of decommissioning methods for specific components of the project.

Four broad criteria relating to safety, environmental protection, cost and schedule were considered in the analysis. The preferred option that was selected from this process involves the demolition to grade of all structures, buildings and site services, followed by site remediation.

## **7.0 PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION**

Section 5.0 of the EASR describes the public and stakeholder consultation program conducted by OPG during the environmental assessment. A number of consultative activities involving local communities, aboriginal peoples, government departments and other stakeholders were conducted. Communication activities included project notification letters, public information open houses, newsletters, tours of the site, and project briefings to stakeholder committees. The consultation occurred in three periods: (i) an initial period from September 1998 to December 1998; (ii) an interim period from January 1999 to June 2002 that primarily involved governmental consultation; and (iii) a third period from July 2002 to September 2002 which involved distribution of a preliminary draft of the EASR to interested stakeholders in the local community for comment.

Issues raised by stakeholders during the consultation, and the consideration of these issues in the assessment, are identified in section 5.0 of the EASR. No public concerns associated with the decommissioning project were identified which would warrant a need to have the project referred to a mediator or review panel pursuant to section 25 of the CEAA.

## **8.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Section 3.0 of the EASR describes the proposed decommissioning project that was assessed.

The current status of the site is described, including an identification of the structures and buildings associated with the BHWP (eg., enrichment and degassing towers, pipe racks); site services (eg., surface water treatment facility, process effluent lagoons, sludge lagoons); and substances (nuclear, chemical) remaining on site.

The proposed decommissioning project works and activities are described in Section 3.0 of the EASR, including:

- (i) demolition methods;
- (ii) decommissioning of structures;
- (iii) decommissioning of buildings;
- (iv) decommissioning of site services;
- (v) land remediation; and
- (vi) management of wastes generated during the project.

The regulatory compliance programs that will be in effect during the decommissioning project are described in Section 3.4 of the EASR, including those relating to radiation protection, health and safety, environmental protection, emergency preparedness, security and quality assurance.

Section 3.5 of the EASR outlines the proposed schedule for the decommissioning project. The work is scheduled to begin in 2003, and to consist of three primary phases: (i) preparatory; (ii) demolition/remediation; and (iii) follow-up. The demolition/remediation phase includes demolition activities, waste management, post-demolition monitoring and site remediation. The follow-up phase would continue for up to three years following completion of the demolition/remediation phase. A description of the decommissioning end-state is provided in section 3.6 of the EASR.

## **9.0 EXISTING ENVIRONMENT**

Section 6.0 of the EASR provides a description of the existing environment of the BHWP and the regional and local study areas. This information is presented in terms of the following environmental components:

- (i) atmospheric environment (climate and meteorology; air quality; ambient noise);
- (ii) hydrology and surface water quality;
- (iii) aquatic environment (water bodies; fish communities; aquatic habitat);
- (iv) terrestrial environment;
- (v) geology, hydrogeology and seismicity (including ground stratigraphy, soil quality, and groundwater flow and chemistry);
- (vi) radiation and radioactivity;
- (vii) land use and transportation;
- (viii) physical and cultural resources;
- (ix) socio-economic conditions; and
- (x) aboriginal interests.

Section 6.11 of the EASR identifies the VECs and VSCs that were defined for the purpose of the environmental assessment.

## **10.0 ASSESSMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS**

The results of the assessment of environmental effects arising from the BHWP decommissioning project are presented in Sections 8.0, 9.0 and 11.0 of the EASR.

### **10.1 Effects of the Project**

The assessment included an analysis of the following for each of the environmental components that were considered in the study:

- (i) project/environment interactions;
- (ii) likely environmental effects;
- (iii) identified mitigation measures;
- (iv) residual effects; and
- (v) significance of residual adverse effects.

The analysis also included consideration of the likely environmental effects of accidents and malfunctions that may occur in connection with the project (section 8.3 EASR). No events that could result in either a significant adverse environmental effect or have serious implications for worker or public health and safety were identified.

Section 8.7 summarizes the mitigation measures that are proposed to be implemented to address potential adverse effects from the BHWP decommissioning project. These measures were determined from the analysis of the likely environmental effects of the project (section 8.2 EASR). The mitigation measures are primarily intended to deal with temporary, short-term effects which are related to construction-type activities.

No direct residual adverse environmental effects on VECs or VSCs from project works and activities were identified after mitigation in the analysis. Consequently, the assessment did not identify any significant adverse environmental effects likely to be caused by the BHWP decommissioning project. Nevertheless, some monitoring and follow-up activities are proposed to ensure that the conclusions of the assessment are valid for potential air quality (dust) and noise effects.

Several positive effects were identified, including removal of contaminated soil, consequent reduction of the potential for water quality contamination in Lake Huron, availability of land for new industrial use and aesthetic improvement of the visual landscape.

## **10.2 Effects of the Environment on the Project**

Potential effects of the environment on the project are considered in Section 8.4 of the EASR. Potential events considered were: (i) flooding and wave run-up; (ii) temperature extremes; (iii) high winds and tornadoes; (iv) severe rains, thunderstorms and lightning; and (v) seismic events. It was determined that there are no events that could result in either a significant adverse environmental effect or have serious implications on worker or public health and safety.

## **10.3 Effects on Sustainable Use of Resources**

No significant adverse effects on the capacity of renewable or non-renewable resources are anticipated as a result of the decommissioning project (section 8.5 EASR).

## **10.4 Cumulative Environmental Effects**

Twenty-two other projects on or in the vicinity of the Bruce nuclear site were considered in the assessment of potential cumulative environmental effects associated with the BHWP decommissioning project. These other projects are identified in Table 9.2 of the EASR. Although no residual adverse effects were identified in the study, two potential direct effects (dust, noise) were considered (Section 9.0 EASR). No adverse cumulative effects are anticipated as a result of the decommissioning project.

## **11.0 FOLLOW-UP AND MONITORING PROGRAM**

The proposed design of the environmental assessment (EA) follow-up and monitoring plan for the project is described in Section 10.0 of the EASR. The purpose of the EA Follow-up Program is to verify the accuracy of the EA predictions, determine the effectiveness of any measures taken to mitigate the effects of the project, and provide ongoing information about the status of the project and the site.

The proposed follow-up program would be conducted in three phases:

- (i) the pre-demolition phase;
- (ii) the demolition/remediation phase; and
- (iii) the end-state phase.

The proposed scope of the program at each phase is identified in Tables 10.1 to 10.3 of the EASR. Follow-up activities will include monitoring, surveillance, inspection, data collection, analyses, evaluations and reporting.

In addition to the information an follow-up provided in the EASR, the proponent will be required, as part of the Follow-up and Monitoring Program, to monitor noise at the southern boundary of the BNPD site, adjacent to Inverhuron Provincial Park. Information obtained from the monitoring during the site demolition activities will be used to verify that noise resulting from those activities is not having a significant adverse environmental effect on wildlife, in particular breeding birds in Inverhuron Provincial Park.

Should the decommissioning project be approved, the EA Follow-up Program will be further developed in more detail during the licensing assessment of the detailed Decommissioning Plan submitted in support of OPG's licensing application pursuant to the NSCA. The EA Follow-up Program would be referenced as a condition of the decommissioning licence for the project, should the project be approved. The results of the Program would be submitted to the CNSC staff for review in a manner and at a frequency specified through the decommissioning licence.

## **12.0 CONCLUSIONS**

CNSC staff concludes that the proposed Bruce Heavy Water Plant Decommissioning Project is not likely to cause significant adverse environmental effects, taking into account the proposed mitigation measures. Should the decommissioning project proceed to licensing, the CNSC will ensure the implementation of a follow-up program in accordance with the commitments and the proposed program design detailed in this CSR.

The expert Federal Authorities for this project have signified their agreement that the CSR is considered complete for the purpose of submission for public review under the CEAA. The CNSC, as the Responsible Authority for the project under the CEAA, is satisfied that the Comprehensive Study Report meets the requirements of the CEAA, and that it may be forwarded to the Minister of Environment and the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency for review and decision pursuant to sections 22 and 23 of the CEAA.

**APPENDIX A:**

**Responses from Expert Federal Authorities Signifying Agreement that the CSR is Considered Complete for the Purpose of Submission for Public Review Pursuant to Section 22 of the CEAA**

- Environment Canada
- Health Canada



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Canada

Environnement  
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June 30, 2003

Larry Chamney  
Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission  
P.O. Box 1046, Station B  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1P 5S9

**RE: Request for “Sign-Off” on the Comprehensive Study Report (CSR) for the Bruce Heavy Water Plant Decommissioning Project**

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This is in response to your letter dated January 27, 2003, pursuant to section 12(3) of the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* (CEAA) regarding the above mentioned project. As per Environment Canada's May 10, 2002 letter (J. Clarke, EC to L. Chamney, CNSC) we are in possession of specialist or expert information and knowledge in relation to the assessment of this project.

In context of our role as an expert Federal Authority per section 12(3) of CEAA, we have reviewed the CNSC's Comprehensive Study Report (CSR) for the Bruce Heavy Water Plant Decommissioning Project (January 2003) and OPG's Bruce Heavy Water Plant Decommissioning Environmental Assessment Study Report (December 2002), and are providing comments with respect to the following areas of EC's mandate:

- section 36(3) of the *Fisheries Act*
- *Canadian Environmental Protection Act*;
- *Department of Environment Act*;
- *Migratory Birds Convention Act*;
- National Accord for the Protection of Species at Risk, which commits all provinces to the protection of species at risk as listed through the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC);
- *Canada Wildlife Act*, which provides information on species at risk as designated by COSEWIC;
- A Wildlife Policy for Canada, which aims to maintain and restore ecological processes and the diversity of ecosystems, species and genetic variability within species;
- Federal Policy on Wetland Conservation, which is a shared federal responsibility that directs all departments to sustain wetland functions in the delivery of their programs, services or expenditures;
- Canadian Biodiversity Strategy, which is in response to United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity;
- Environment Canada's Sustainable Development Strategy;
- *Canada Water Act*, which provides information on surface hydrology, water quality, hydrogeology; and
- any other federal policies respecting environmental matters.

This does not relieve the proponent from meeting the requirements of the federal *Fisheries Act*, including section 36(3), the *Migratory Birds Regulations*, or any regulations made under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999 that are applicable to the project or to any effluent or discharge that may result from the project. Information and comments provided here should not be construed as a fettering of the government's ability to make decisions and/or enforce any applicable regulations.

Our May 10, 2002 letter identified a number of areas that we suggested the CNSC should resolve during the public review of the EA Report. We are generally satisfied with the proponent's response to our comments, as summarized in Table C.4.2(b). However, we would like to provide the following two comments.

### **Terrestrial Environment**

Our May 10 letter noted that demolition activities, including the felling of towers, is expected to take place over a period of two years, during which time the proponent indicated that it would adhere to the Ontario Ministry of the Environment noise guidelines. We indicated that compliance with provincial noise guidelines would not necessarily ensure that there would be no adverse environmental effects on wildlife, in particular breeding birds in Inverhuron Provincial Park. We asked that residual noise generated by the felling of the towers in the adjacent habitat areas be assessed in the same manner as residual noise on local communities.

The December 2002 EA Study Report selects only human receptors as VECs, and does not appear to acknowledge potential impacts on wildlife, including breeding birds (p. 8-10). The noted "shielding effect" of forests in noise dissipation would not be applicable to species living near the edges of the forest. However, given the ~ 2 km separation between the Heavy Water Plant site and the nearest forest receptor, we do not expect that there is a likelihood of significant adverse environmental effects.

We would suggest however that this potential effect be monitored through the follow-up program. Noting that the proponent has indicated that a "fence-line" locations will be used for the noise monitors, we would request that such a monitored be installed at the southern boundary of the BNPD site, adjacent to Inverhuron Provincial Park.

### **Contaminated Soil and Groundwater**

The December 2002 EA Study Report indicates that all soils that exceed applicable soil quality guidelines will be identified through additional soil sampling, and that soils exceeding these guidelines will be removed from the site. We further note that the "End State Follow-up Program" (Table 10.3) includes additional soil samples upon completion of the demolition and decommissioning work to ensure that no soils exceeding applicable guidelines remain. Noting that the CNSC's CSR indicates that the follow-up program will be further developed in more detail during the licensing assessment of the detailed Decommissioning Plan, we would like to request that the CNSC provide EC with a copy of the Soils, Geology and Hydrogeology Demolition/Remediation Phase Monitoring and End State Follow-up monitoring programs.

We trust that the above information is satisfactory. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned at (416) 739-4636.

Sincerely,

Kathy Yew Woon  
Environmental Contaminants Officer  
Environmental Contaminants Nuclear Programs Division  
Environmental Protection Branch – Ontario Region, Environment Canada

cc: John Clarke  
Edwina Lopes



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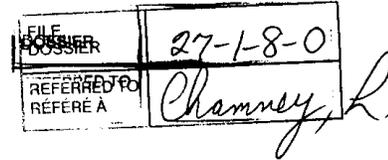
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Your file Votre référence

Our file Notre référence  
CS02-002

February 13, 2003

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**Subject: Request for "Sign-off" on the Comprehensive Study Report for the Bruce Heavy Water Plant Decommissioning Project, January 2003**

Dear Mr. Chamney,

Thank you for your letter of January 27, 2003, and a copy of the "Comprehensive Study Report for the Bruce Heavy Water Plant Decommissioning Project, January 2003" prepared by staff of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission and the support document prepared by the proponent Ontario Power Generation "Bruce Heavy Water Plant Decommissioning Environmental Assessment Study Report, December 2002".

Health Canada staff have reviewed these documents as a federal authority under subsection 12(3) of the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* (CEAA). We are in agreement that this comprehensive study report is acceptable for submission to the Minister of Environment and the CEA Agency for public review. We wish to point out that the Environmental Assessment Study Report is excellent. It is well organized, detailed, yet concise. Our review of the information, including health impacts and occupational health and safety, was facilitated by the excellent documentation.

Yours sincerely,

*Diane McClymont Peace*  
Diane McClymont Peace

cc. R. Kwiatkowski  
A. Baweja

18 FEB '03 8:45

Canada