

**Canadian Nuclear  
Safety Commission**

**Commission canadienne de  
sûreté nucléaire**

**Public hearing**

**Audience publique**

**Saskatchewan Research Council :  
Former Gunnar Mine Site  
*Proposed Environmental  
Assessment Track Report and  
Adoption of the scope as presented  
In the *Proposed Project Specific  
Guidelines and Comprehensive  
Study Scoping Document****

**Saskatchewan Research Council:  
Projet de remise en état de l'ancien  
site de la mine Gunnar – *Rapport  
de suivi proposé de l'évaluation  
environnementale et adoption de la  
portée établie dans la *Proposition  
de lignes directrices spécifiques et  
du document d'établissement de la  
Portée de l'étude approfondie****

**September 17, 2008**

**Le 17 septembre 2008**

Delta Bessborough  
601 Spadina Crescent East  
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Delta Bessborough  
601, Spadina Crescent East  
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

**Commission Members present**

**Commissaires présents**

Mr. Michael Binder  
Mr. Alan Graham  
Dr. Moyra McDill  
Dr. Christopher Barnes  
Mr. André Harvey  
Mr. Dan Tolgyesi

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Mr. Alan Graham  
Dr. Moyra McDill  
Dr. Christopher Barnes  
M. André Harvey  
M. Dan Tolgyesi

**Secretary:** Mr. Marc Leblanc

**Secrétaire:** Mr. Marc Leblanc

**Senior Counsel :** Ms. Lisa Thiele

**Conseiller senior:** Ms. Lisa Thiele



1                   For the record, my name is Joe Muldoon and  
2                   I'm the Vice-president, Environment and Forestry, at the  
3                   Saskatchewan Research Council. With me today I have  
4                   Kenelm Grismer to my right; Mark Simpson, Research  
5                   Scientist. Kenelm is the CLEANS Project Manager. Mark  
6                   Simpson is the Research Scientist and to Mark's right is  
7                   Crystal Smudy, the Chief Financial Officer and Vice-  
8                   President at Saskatchewan Research Council. Behind me I  
9                   have Gloria Drader, Radiation Safety Officer and Wanda  
10                  Nyirfa, Vice-President handling communications.

11                  I will refer to my team for any technical  
12                  questions during the Q&A if I can, please.

13                  We're looking forward to moving this  
14                  project ahead and believe that we have a good-news story  
15                  for the Province in that we plan to manage the cleanup of  
16                  a mine site in northern Saskatchewan that has been closed  
17                  for over 50 years.

18                  The Saskatchewan Research Council or SRC is  
19                  a Treasury Board Crown corporation. We operate across  
20                  several strategic sectors. Our work focuses on five  
21                  areas: agriculture; biotechnology and food; mining and  
22                  minerals; energy, alternative energy and manufacturing and  
23                  environment and forestry.

24                  The Gunnar rehabilitation project falls  
25                  under the environment and forestry portfolio.

1 Environmental rehabilitation is an important part of the  
2 division and this is a major project for us.

3 Environmental sciences has been part of SRC  
4 since our inception in 1947.

5 SRC's mission is to help the people of  
6 Saskatchewan "strengthen the economy with quality jobs in  
7 a secure environment."

8 We do this through research, development  
9 and the transfer of innovative scientific and  
10 technological solutions, applications and services. For  
11 us, safety and security are paramount. Security equals  
12 safety and quality of life. Safety is an overriding  
13 priority at SRC. Commitment to safety means that we do  
14 not take on projects unless we can do them safely.

15 With respect to our expertise, SRC has been  
16 retained by the Government of Saskatchewan to act as the  
17 project manager for the rehabilitation of the Gunnar site.

18 Gunnar is part of a larger project called  
19 Project CLEANS. CLEANS stands for the Cleanup of  
20 Abandoned Northern Sites. Project CLEANS consists of  
21 Gunnar, the Gunnar site, Lorado and 36 satellite mine  
22 sites.

23 Gunnar will be the focus for the remainder  
24 of our presentation.

25 SRC has expertise in areas of project

1 management, engineering, environmental studies, mining and  
2 minerals and safety.

3 Our people and our technology are highly  
4 regarded and respected in both the environmental and  
5 mining industries. SRC will lead the Gunnar project but  
6 will contract out portions of work to industry experts to  
7 utilize best practices, technology and resources. Our  
8 intent is to manage this expertise.

9 SRC currently holds four licences with the  
10 Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission, and the most  
11 significant is the licence for the Slowpoke 2 Research  
12 Reactor.

13 Slowpoke 2 is a small-scale nuclear reactor  
14 housed at the SRC Analytical Laboratories in our  
15 Environment and Forestry Division. It is used as an  
16 analytical tool for the analysis of numerous elements  
17 including uranium.

18 We enjoy an excellent relationship with  
19 CNSC staff and project officers. We've had a longstanding  
20 radiation safety program in place and we feel that we are  
21 well qualified and in a position to lead this project.

22 Now to address some of the specifics around  
23 Gunnar. On the provincial map you'll see the Gunnar site  
24 is located in northwestern Saskatchewan on the  
25 Crackingstone Peninsula. It's a remote location

1 accessible only by air or by water.

2 The Gunnar site itself, there are no  
3 operating uranium mines in the vicinity. The site is  
4 quite isolated. Lake Athabasca is the large water body  
5 immediately adjacent to the site.

6 Protection of people and the environment  
7 are important factors in this project. No permanent  
8 residents live within 15 kilometres of the site;  
9 approximately 100 people live within 80 kilometres of the  
10 site; the majority of which live at Uranium City, 26  
11 kilometres to the north or Camsell Portage to the  
12 northwest.

13 This is a recent photo of the site. During  
14 the operation, the Gunnar site consisted of the open pit  
15 mine which operated from 1955 to 1961. The underground  
16 mine from 1957 to 1963. The mill, the acid plant, the  
17 tailings management area, there was a community there  
18 which included a school, residences, maintenance shops and  
19 recreation centre. The mine operated for nine years and  
20 was officially closed in 1964.

21 The Gunnar pit is 304 metres long, 244  
22 metres wide and 116 metres deep.

23 The open pit was located very close to the  
24 shores of Lake Athabasca. The rim of the pit is separated  
25 from Lake Athabasca by a narrow bedrock ridge. The

1 underground shaft was sunk 600 metres or 1900 feet with 13  
2 levels.

3 Annual production ranged from 700,000 to  
4 785,000 tonnes between '58 and '63. The highest ore grade  
5 was 0.19 percent to  $U_3O_8$ . It's not likely that this mine  
6 would have been run today due to the low grade.

7 The pit was filled in 1964 by blasting a  
8 narrow trench to Lake Athabasca. The closure of the mine  
9 took place that same year with little or no  
10 decommissioning of the facilities.

11 Water flowed directly from the lake into  
12 the open pit, eventually flooding the underground workings  
13 as well.

14 In 1966 the channel was blocked by filling  
15 it with waste rock; that channel that went into Lake  
16 Athabasca there.

17 Here's a slide showing the -- an aerial  
18 photo. The entire community was built onsite. There were  
19 many structures to deal with, in addition to the usual  
20 features consistent with an abandoned mine and mill.

21 There were homes built to the west,  
22 adjacent to the lake. They're not shown on this image as  
23 most of them were moved off the site once the mines  
24 closed, as they were still usable.

25 Currently the buildings are in various

1 stages of dilapidation.

2 The priority areas for the cleanup include  
3 the existing structures and buildings, the tailings, the  
4 waste rock and the pit.

5 This is a photo of the crusher, the mill,  
6 and acid plant. The mill will likely be the largest piece  
7 of demolition work; it contains steel beams and large  
8 pieces of equipment.

9 The acid plant, which was to the right of  
10 the previous photo, is made up of two separate buildings.  
11 In addition to the structure some residual elemental  
12 sulphur is currently exposed. You can see that in that  
13 lower photo there.

14 The town site was developed for a community  
15 of 800 people. There were additional buildings such as  
16 school, shopping centre, residences and then the other  
17 buildings as seen on previous slides.

18 The tailings were deposited in three areas;  
19 Gunnar Main, Gunnar Central and Langley Bay.  
20 Approximately 4.4 million tonnes of tailings were  
21 deposited during operation of the mine and mill.

22 Tailings were first deposited into a  
23 depression 500 metres north of the mill; this area is  
24 called Gunnar Main tailings, it is approximately 14 metres  
25 deep.



1                   Once that area was full, tailings were  
2                   directed to a small depression called Gunnar Central  
3                   tailings, to the east of the main site at a depth of three  
4                   to four metres. From there, tailings flowed further  
5                   downhill into Langley Bay to a depth of two to four  
6                   metres, splitting Langley Bay into what is now known as  
7                   Langley Bay and Back Bay.

8                   Layers of pure organic clay underlay all  
9                   the tailings at various depths.

10                  The waste rock; the majority of the waste  
11                  rock is located in two piles adjacent to the pit area.  
12                  Estimated volume is 2.7 million cubic metres. This  
13                  includes the mine waste rock and overburden from surface  
14                  stripping of the open pit.

15                  The Gunnar pit south, the preliminary  
16                  studies indicate that the lower layer does not mix with  
17                  the upper layer of water in the flooded pit. The upper  
18                  region supports an aquatic environment. Water samples  
19                  collected at the surface meets Saskatchewan's surface  
20                  water objectives.

21                  Community consultation is an essential  
22                  component of the project. SRC want to strive to ensure  
23                  the cleanup is done properly, timely, and according to  
24                  expectations of the regulators and also of those that call  
25                  the area home.

1                   In the last 18 months we have visited the  
2                   community several times to discuss project CLEANs and  
3                   there's a list of the names. We had a variety of meetings  
4                   with multiple groups. In addition, we've made numerous  
5                   visits to the site and have held one-on-one meetings as  
6                   well.

7                   To ensure that we are on track with the  
8                   project, on the public consultation side we've formed a  
9                   group called "The Project Review Committee" or PRC.

10                  The purpose of the PRC is to provide a  
11                  forum for local communities to be informed, provide input  
12                  and advice, as well, to maximize the involvement of  
13                  Northern residents in the project.

14                  The PRC consists of representation from the  
15                  following communities; Uranium City, Camsell Portage, Fond  
16                  du Lac, Stony Rapids, Black Lake, Hatchet Lake, and the  
17                  Athabasca Vice-Chief from the Prince Albert Grand Council  
18                  also sits on the PRC.

19                  The group ratified guidelines in July '08  
20                  and we have a meeting scheduled with them later this  
21                  month.

22                  We are also planning on forming a technical  
23                  advisory committee that will be made up of approximately  
24                  six industry and scientific experts. They will support  
25                  the project by advising on a variety of areas, in

1 particular the decommissioning and rehabilitation  
2 technology and best management practices.

3 We have a website; we welcome feedback at  
4 any point from the public. Our website [www.saskcleans.ca](http://www.saskcleans.ca)  
5 contains a variety of information about the status of the  
6 project and is updated regularly. We're also available by  
7 telephone for those without internet connections.

8 The concept, the logo that we've used for  
9 Project CLEANS -- the concept for the logo was submitted  
10 by a Northern resident, a grade two student from Fond du  
11 Lac submitted artwork that was used in the creation of a  
12 logo which shows all of the environmental pieces, such as  
13 forestry and wildlife preservation that are important to  
14 the project.

15 With respect to next steps, we are looking  
16 forward to working with the CNSC in the development and  
17 implementation of a rehabilitation plant for the Gunnar  
18 site. We're very interested in seeing progress on this  
19 project.

20 Today we are seeking approval of the  
21 project-specific guidelines. Conducting the environmental  
22 assessment will allow us to better understand the site and  
23 the remedial options available to us.

24 In the meantime we continue to maintain the  
25 site, ensuring basic safety requirements are met; we

1 remain committed to the Northern committees and the people  
2 that call this area home and we will be continuing our  
3 dialogue with them.

4 Again, our overall goals are to conduct the  
5 rehabilitation activities in a manner that meets or  
6 exceeds requirements and of course to monitor our efforts  
7 to demonstrate a successful final result.

8 We are dedicated to following the  
9 regulatory process that the responsible authorities set  
10 for us and look forward to working with our project team,  
11 provincially and federally.

12 And that concludes the presentation. We're  
13 happy to answer any questions.

14 Thank you.

15 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Thank you.

16 I would like now to move to the  
17 presentation from CNSC staff as outlined in CMD 08-H17.

18 Dr. Patsy Thompson, the floor is yours.

19

20 **08-H17 / 08-H17.A**

21 **Oral presentation by**

22 **CNSC staff**

23

24 **DR. THOMPSON:** Thank you. Good afternoon,  
25 Mr. President, Members of the Commission.

1                   For the record, my name is Patsy Thompson;  
2                   I'm the Director General of the Directorate of  
3                   Environmental and Radiation Protection and Assessment.

4                   With me today are Mr. Brian Torrie, the  
5                   Director of the Environmental Assessment Division and Ms.  
6                   Heather Nicholson, the Environmental Assessment Specialist  
7                   responsible for this file.

8                   We also have CNSC licensing and specialist  
9                   staff who will be providing support for this environmental  
10                  assessment of the Saskatchewan Research Council's proposal  
11                  to rehabilitate the former Gunnar mine site.

12                  In compliance with the requirements of the  
13                  *Canadian Environment Assessment Act* a comprehensive study  
14                  is being conducted for this proposal resulting in the  
15                  environmental assessment track report which is the focus  
16                  of today's hearing.

17                  CNSC staff's CMD 08-H17 and CMD 08-H17.A  
18                  summarize the recommendations being made to the Commission  
19                  at this stage of the environmental assessment, including  
20                  that the Commission accept the environmental assessment  
21                  track report which recommends to the Minister of the  
22                  Environment that the project continue being assessed as a  
23                  comprehensive study.

24                  At this point I will pass the presentation  
25                  to Mr. Brian Torrie, who will provide an overview of the

1 staff's presentation, as well as information on a project  
2 proposal.

3 **MR. TORRIE:** Good afternoon. For the  
4 record, I am Brian Torrie.

5 In this presentation we will briefly  
6 outline the project proposal; discuss how the *Canadian*  
7 *Environmental Assessment Act* applies; outline the  
8 responsibilities of the Commission at this stage of the EA  
9 process; explain the purpose of the EA Track Report and  
10 provide an overview of its proposed content, including the  
11 appendices. And finally, we will make recommendations to  
12 you on the EA Track Report.

13 To briefly summarize the project, the  
14 former Gunnar uranium mine is located in northwestern  
15 Saskatchewan, on the north side of Lake Athabasca,  
16 approximately 25 kilometres southeast of Uranium City.

17 The mine ceased operations in 1963 and  
18 officially closed in 1964 with little or no  
19 decommissioning of the facilities. Shortly after closure  
20 a trench was blasted between the open pit and Lake  
21 Athabasca which flooded the underground workings and the  
22 open pit. In 1966 the channel was filled with waste rock.

23 CNSC staff flew over the Gunnar site  
24 following a public meeting in Uranium City on May 14<sup>th</sup>,  
25 2008 and took this photo that you see in the slide; a

1 northeast aerial view of the Gunnar pit with mill  
2 facilities to the left and the main tailings area at the  
3 centre left edge of the slide.

4 On April 2007 the Saskatchewan Research  
5 Council submitted a project description for the former  
6 Gunnar mine site rehabilitation project. The proposal to  
7 rehabilitate the site includes the following components:  
8 demolition of existing buildings, facilities and  
9 structures; appropriate disposal of materials resulting  
10 from demolition; installation of an appropriate cover on  
11 all or a portion of the exposed mill tailings;  
12 rehabilitation of existing waste rock piles;  
13 rehabilitation of additional risks, as warranted; general  
14 site cleanup; re-vegetation of areas of the rehabilitated  
15 site as required; and appropriate monitoring during and  
16 after rehabilitation.

17 While these items have been identified as  
18 the key components, the Saskatchewan Research Council  
19 still needs to further develop the project plan and  
20 specific details, so it's unlike similar projects that  
21 have come before the Commission and it's not a detailed  
22 proposal like a mine development would be. As a result  
23 the EA process, as a planning tool, is an important part  
24 of moving this project forward.

25 To authorize the Gunnar project to proceed

1 it will be necessary for the Commission to issue a licence  
2 to the Saskatchewan Research Council to decommission the  
3 site.

4 The Commission can only consider taking  
5 licensing action after an EA has been conducted and the  
6 result is that the project is not likely to cause  
7 significant adverse environmental effects.

8 In terms of the application of CEAA, the  
9 proposed decommissioning of the uranium mine on an  
10 unlicensed site is listed in the paragraph 19(a) of the  
11 Comprehensive Study List Regulations, and consequently, a  
12 comprehensive study EA process is required to be conducted  
13 for the Gunnar project.

14 The CNSC and Natural Resources Canada are  
15 responsible authorities for the assessment. The CNSC is a  
16 responsible authority because it is considering issuing a  
17 licence to decommission under subsection 24(2) of the  
18 *Nuclear Safety Control Act*.

19 Natural Resources Canada is a responsible  
20 authority because it is considering providing funding for  
21 a portion of the project.

22 The federal authorities for the project are  
23 Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Transport Canada, Environment  
24 Canada, Health Canada, and Indian and Northern Affairs  
25 Canada.



1                   The Saskatchewan Research Council is also  
2                   required to conduct an environmental assessment of the  
3                   project under Saskatchewan's *Environmental Assessment Act*.  
4                   Under the 2005 Canada-Saskatchewan Agreement on  
5                   Environmental Assessment Cooperation, federal and  
6                   provincial environmental assessment processes are  
7                   coordinated for projects under joint federal and  
8                   provincial jurisdiction.

9                   In accordance with the agreement, the  
10                  Environmental Assessment Branch of Saskatchewan's Ministry  
11                  of Environment is the lead agency for this assessment.

12                  The Canadian Environmental Assessment  
13                  Agency is the federal environmental assessment coordinator  
14                  because this environmental assessment is being conducted  
15                  under both federal and provincial jurisdiction.

16                  The federal and provincial organizations  
17                  involved in the EA, including the federal authorities,  
18                  together comprise the EA Team and will be referred to as  
19                  such in the latter part of this presentation.

20                  In terms of the Commission's obligations as  
21                  a responsible authority, the CNSC has certain obligations  
22                  under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* at this  
23                  stage of the comprehensive study review process. The  
24                  responsibilities for the Commission include establishing  
25                  the scope of the project; the factors of the assessment

1 and the scope of those factors; consulting the public on  
2 the scope and on the ability of a comprehensive study to  
3 address issues relating to the project; and providing a  
4 report to the federal Minister of the Environment which  
5 recommends whether the EA continue by means of a  
6 comprehensive study or should be referred to a mediator or  
7 review panel.

8 This report is called the EA Track Report  
9 and is the subject of today's hearing.

10 I will now pass the presentation on to  
11 Heather Nicholson to discuss the EA Track Report and the  
12 CNSC staff recommendations.

13 **MS. NICHOLSON:** Good afternoon. For the  
14 record, I'm Heather Nicholson.

15 The EA track report contains information on  
16 the scope, public consultation efforts to date and  
17 assessment of the potential for the project to cause  
18 adverse environmental effects, an assessment of the  
19 ability of the comprehensive study to address issues, the  
20 public comments received to date and the joint  
21 federal/provincial responses.

22 I will start by discussing scope as  
23 presented in the Project-Specific Guidelines and Scoping  
24 Document, which is Appendix 1 of the EA Track Report  
25 attached to CMD 08-H.17.

1                   The Project-Specific Guidelines and  
2                   Comprehensive Study Scoping Document, which I'll refer to  
3                   as the Guideline-Scoping Document, was initially prepared  
4                   by the Province of Saskatchewan and then revised by the  
5                   responsible and federal authorities to ensure that federal  
6                   EA requirements were included.

7                   Its purpose is to provide guidance to the  
8                   proponent on the conduct of technical studies, introduce  
9                   the project to the public for their input and establish  
10                  the scope and methodology to be followed for the EA  
11                  process.

12                  Scope, as defined by the CEAA, refers to  
13                  the scope of the project, the factors of the assessment  
14                  and the scope of those factors.

15                  Section 3.1 of the Guideline-Scoping  
16                  Document contains the proposed scope of the project; that  
17                  is, the components of the proposal that will be considered  
18                  to be part of the project for the purpose of the EA.

19                  I would emphasise that all components of  
20                  Saskatchewan Research Council's proposed project were  
21                  scoped into the assessment. Minor revisions were made  
22                  following the public review of this document and will be  
23                  discussed later in this presentation.

24                  The factors to be considered in the  
25                  assessment and the scope of those factors are provided in

1 sections 3.2.1 and section 3.2.2 respectively. These  
2 refer to the specific information requirements and  
3 methodologies that are to be used to conduct this  
4 assessment.

5 CNSC staff wish to point out that all  
6 requirements under subsections 16(1) and 16(2) of the CEAA  
7 are covered.

8 Section 2.1 of the Guideline-Scoping  
9 document indicates that both the province and the  
10 responsible authorities are delegating the conduct of the  
11 technical studies to the proponent. The responsible  
12 authorities are doing so in accordance with  
13 subsection 17(1) of the CEAA.

14 In terms of public and Aboriginal  
15 engagement, to date there have been multiple opportunities  
16 for the public and Aboriginal peoples to become involved  
17 in this EA.

18 As required under the CEAA, an online  
19 public registry was set up for the public to read about  
20 and comment on the Gunnar project. The Canadian  
21 Environmental Assessment Registry number is 07-03-30100.  
22 Similar information is posted on the CNSC website.

23 The public was invited to review and  
24 comment on a draft Guideline-Scoping Document between  
25 March 28<sup>th</sup> and May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2008. To facilitate and focus

1 questions required at this stage in the EA, a Frequently  
2 Asked Questions comment form was used, which can be viewed  
3 in Appendix 3 of the EA Track Report.

4 Invitations for public comment were  
5 advertised in local and regional newspapers and broadcast  
6 on the radio in English, Cree and Dene. The newspaper  
7 notice is Appendix 2 of the EA track report.

8 The Guideline-Scoping Document was made  
9 available online, sent to public libraries, mailed to  
10 parties who had expressed an interest, and mailed to  
11 Northern communities. The province led this consultation  
12 process.

13 A public meeting was held in Uranium City  
14 on May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2008 and representatives from the EA team  
15 participated, including CNSC staff. It could not be held  
16 during the public comment period, so the deadline for  
17 receiving comments on the Guideline-Scoping Document was  
18 extended to May 30<sup>th</sup> to give participants further  
19 opportunity to submit comments.

20 By May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2008 six written submissions  
21 were received. They will be discussed in the next slide.  
22 A letter dated May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2008 from the Métis Nation-  
23 Saskatchewan, or MNS, was also received by the CEA Agency  
24 on May 28<sup>th</sup>.

25 This letter requested the MNS be added to

1 the distribution list and indicated their interest in  
2 participating in current or future community consultation  
3 regarding the environmental assessment process.

4 The CNSC, the Canadian Environmental  
5 Assessment Agency, Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the  
6 provincial Environmental Assessment Branch met with the  
7 MNS on August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2008 to discuss federal and provincial  
8 EA processes and MNS's proposed consultation framework.

9 With respect to the Gunnar project,  
10 information regarding the EA documentation that had been  
11 prepared up to that date, today's hearing and the Canadian  
12 Environmental Assessment Agency's Participant Funding  
13 Program, which has since been announced, were discussed  
14 during this August 5<sup>th</sup> meeting and in correspondence on  
15 August 7<sup>th</sup>. A follow-up meeting to specifically discuss  
16 Gunnar and other projects is pending.

17 Finally, the opportunity to intervene  
18 during this hearing either in writing or by oral  
19 presentation was also communicated to the public via a web  
20 notice, posted by the Secretariat of the CNSC at the end  
21 of June.

22 Appendix 4 of the EA Track Report is a  
23 table of public comments received to date regarding the  
24 Gunnar project and the EA team's response. The comments  
25 are summarized as the following:

1                   Technical suggestions on how and where to  
2                   rehabilitate the site; concerns about spending too much  
3                   time collecting data and consulting with the public,  
4                   rather than moving the project forward and making the site  
5                   safe; editorial comments to clarify or reinforce wording;  
6                   and concerns about the risk posed by radium-226 and other  
7                   radionuclides.

8                   The Province of Saskatchewan and the  
9                   responsible authorities considered all comments and  
10                  revised the Guideline-Scoping Document to clarify and  
11                  correct deficiencies noted by the public, where  
12                  applicable.

13                  Following the public review period, and as  
14                  described in section 3.4 of the EA Track Report, the scope  
15                  of project was modified to include the wording  
16                  "rehabilitation of pit" and "rehabilitation of mill  
17                  tailings".

18                  The revised Guideline-Scoping Document is  
19                  the proposed final version submitted for the Commission's  
20                  consideration, which is attached as Appendix 1 to  
21                  CMD 08-H17.

22                  Section 5 of the EA Track Report contains  
23                  an analysis of the potential for the project to cause  
24                  adverse environmental effects. CNSC staff wish to  
25                  emphasize that this section represents a preliminary

1 analysis and does not prejudge the outcome of the EA.

2 The analysis was based on the following:  
3 the proponent's project description and baseline  
4 information; public and Aboriginal input to-date; input  
5 from the responsible authorities, the federal authorities,  
6 the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency, and  
7 Saskatchewan's Environmental Assessment Branch; and  
8 professional judgment.

9 Potential adverse environmental effects  
10 from the Gunnar project are described in Table 1, pages 8  
11 and 9 within Section 5 of the EA Track Report. Potential  
12 adverse effects to the atmospheric environment include a  
13 change in air quality from radiological and non  
14 radiological dust produced during decommissioning, such as  
15 from demolition and transport activities.

16 Potential adverse effects to the aquatic  
17 environment include a change in groundwater and surface  
18 water flow; changes in groundwater, surface water and  
19 drainage water quality; changes to sediment quality from  
20 radiological and non radiological sources; loss or  
21 alteration or disturbance of habitat; disruption of the  
22 life cycle of biota or direct mortality.

23 Potential adverse effects to the  
24 terrestrial environment include a change to soil quality;  
25 stress on soil and vertebrates; vegetation stress such as



1 from the deposition of dust; loss, alteration or  
2 fragmentation of habitat; disruption to breeding, nesting,  
3 or the movement of wildlife or direct mortality.

4 Potential adverse effects to human health  
5 include the consumption of contaminated traditional foods,  
6 such as plants, fish and animals; changes to the  
7 availability of Aboriginal traditional foods; reduced  
8 health of workers and visitors due to physical hazards and  
9 exposure to radiological and non radiological  
10 contaminants, such as asbestos, polychlorinated biphenyls  
11 and dust; and reduced safety levels from accident or  
12 malfunction events.

13 Potential adverse effects to land and  
14 resource use, such as fishing, tourism, recreation and  
15 navigation activities, include temporary disruption to or  
16 permanent loss of land or resources currently used by  
17 Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. Potential adverse  
18 effects to physical and cultural heritage include a loss  
19 or destruction of items of historic mining interests such  
20 as machinery.

21 Section 6 of the EA Track Report contains  
22 an analysis of the ability of the comprehensive study to  
23 address issues relating to the project. The analysis was  
24 based on the following: the proponent's project  
25 description and baseline information; public and

1       Aboriginal input to date; the ability of technically and  
2       economically feasible mitigation measures to reduce and  
3       minimize the potential adverse effects to an acceptable  
4       level; input from the EA Team and professional judgment.

5               To summarize the findings of the analysis,  
6       the responsible authorities are of the opinion that a  
7       comprehensive study can address the scientific and  
8       technical issues raised in relation to the project, based  
9       on the guidance provided to the proponent instructing the  
10      conduct of technical studies.

11              CNSC staff wish to emphasize that this  
12      section of the EA Track Report also represents a  
13      preliminary analysis and does not prejudge the outcome of  
14      the environmental assessment.

15              The decision being sought from the  
16      Commission today is the acceptance of the Environmental  
17      Assessment Track Report. By accepting the EA Track  
18      Report, the Commission would also be accepting the scope  
19      of the project, the factors to be considered in its  
20      assessment and the scope of those factors as presented in  
21      the appended Guideline-Scoping Document.

22              Concluding there has been public  
23      consultation and sufficient information received to  
24      report; to the Minister of the Environment on the scope,  
25      public concerns, the potential of the project to cause

1 adverse environmental effects, and the ability of the  
2 comprehensive study to address issues relating to the  
3 project as presented in the EA Track Report.

4 Providing a recommendation to the Minister  
5 of the Environment to refer the environmental assessment  
6 back to the responsible authorities as a comprehensive  
7 study and delegating technical studies to Saskatchewan  
8 Research Council to satisfy the requirements of the  
9 Guideline-Scoping Document and delegating certain public  
10 consultation activities conditional on the Minister's  
11 track decision.

12 In terms of next steps following the  
13 Commission's decision on this hearing, the federal  
14 authorities and Natural Resources Canada, as a responsible  
15 authority, have submitted letters of concurrence addressed  
16 to President Binder, based on the proposed EA Track Report  
17 being considered today.

18 If the Commission makes changes to the EA  
19 Track Report following this public hearing, a new letter  
20 of concurrence will need to be obtained from Natural  
21 Resources Canada as well as from the federal authorities  
22 if their mandate is affected by those changes.

23 Once the Gunnar track recommendation  
24 package is complete, which consists of the CNSC Record of  
25 Decision, all letters of concurrence, the final EA Track

1 Report and a transmittal letter, CNSC staff recommend that  
2 the Commission submits the package to the Minister of the  
3 Environment with a copy to the President of the Canadian  
4 Environmental Assessment Agency, the Province of  
5 Saskatchewan's Environmental Assessment Branch and EA  
6 staff at both Natural Resources Canada and the CNSC.

7 The CNSC will then await the Minister's  
8 Track Decision and proceed with his chosen EA Track  
9 accordingly. This concludes the CNSC staff presentation.  
10 Thank you.

11 **MS. THOMPSON:** Mr. President, we have staff  
12 available to answer questions the Commission may have.

13 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Okay, thank you. So now  
14 we'll open the floor for questioning, starting with  
15 Monsieur Harvey.

16 **MEMBER HARVEY:** Merci, Monsieur Président.  
17 My first question concerns the purpose and need for the  
18 project.

19 Under the federal act there is some  
20 definition about the purpose and need for the project, and  
21 mainly that this need for -- is to establish the  
22 fundamental rationale for the project.

23 I understand that we don't have the EIS and  
24 everything here now, but on page 1 of the SRC's  
25 submission, paragraph 1.2, we have the purpose and the

1       need for the project. This section is pretty short. It  
2       seems that all the project is based on the administrative  
3       or legal requirements.

4               So could you elaborate on that section and  
5       give more information? Maybe we should start with that  
6       and then go to the staff and see what will have to be  
7       included in that, in such a section.

8               **MR. MULDOON:** For the record, my name is  
9       Joe Muldoon. With respect to purpose and need, first and  
10      foremost would be public safety in terms of getting in to  
11      rehabilitate the site, based on the -- there is the  
12      radiological but there's also that the buildings  
13      themselves that have to be torn down, taken down, there's  
14      significant public safety issues that we would want to  
15      address in terms of the rehabilitation.

16              And then there's the environmental risk as  
17      well with respect to how we would manage the various --  
18      the pit itself, the waste rock piles, the tailings  
19      management areas.

20              If we -- those are -- I mean those are the  
21      two major drivers; the public safety side and obviously  
22      the tailings management areas themselves.

23              I think I would leave it at that.

24              If we need to -- you're suggesting that we  
25      -- this area doesn't give a good enough description,

1 doesn't give a broad enough descriptions?

2 **MEMBER HARVEY:** My point was it's very  
3 short and mainly based on the legal requirement and I  
4 think maybe I should ask the question to the -- ask the  
5 staff to respond to that question.

6 What in the EIS should be included in that  
7 section?

8 **DR. THOMPSON:** Patsy Thompson for the  
9 record.

10 I'll ask Heather Nicholson to address your  
11 issue.

12 **MS. NICHOLSON:** Heather Nicholson for the  
13 record.

14 Under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment*  
15 Act "need for" and "purpose of" are established from the  
16 perspective of the project proponent and provide the  
17 context for the consideration of alternatives.

18 So CNSC staff, upon receipt of the EIS  
19 would be look to see what the proponent has provided for  
20 these sections. It's not something that CNSC staff  
21 generate.

22 **MEMBER HARVEY:** But should the proponent  
23 know at that time those needs -- that those needs should  
24 be already expressed before to start the studies and to  
25 spend monies.

1                   **DR. THOMPSON:** Patsy Thompson for the  
2 record.

3                   In a general sense the need for the project  
4 is well known. The site has been a safety and  
5 environmental consideration for quite some time.

6                   In 2000 when the *Nuclear Safety and Control*  
7 *Act* came into force there was an exemption provided for a  
8 period of time to allow planning and the environmental  
9 assessment work to be conducted.

10                  When the environmental assessment studies  
11 are being produced the expectation from staff would be  
12 that -- a need for the project is in sufficient detail so  
13 that the alternatives, the various options to deal with  
14 some of the issues that were identified in Saskatchewan  
15 Research Council's presentation can be properly assessed  
16 from an environmental and safety point of view, as well as  
17 feasibility and other things -- other criteria that would  
18 need to be developed.

19                  **MEMBER HARVEY:** Okay, I realize that there  
20 is much more information than what we have in the document  
21 but for me I would appreciate to have such information,  
22 just to give a more larger picture of the situation there.

23                  Another question is the -- in the CMD H17,  
24 page 9, you can read, the environmental assessment will be  
25 conducted in the planning stages of the proposed

1 decommissioning project.

2                   The objectives of the environmental  
3 assessment will be to define and assess the options  
4 available for rehabilitating the site, as well as a full  
5 inventory requirements considering the develop for risk  
6 acceptable to the public.

7                   Such process is slightly different of what  
8 would be done for all the project. Like I read, you are  
9 going to define the project while evaluating the impacts.  
10 Am I right to think like that? And the project could be  
11 different with the -- in one year or in six months, than  
12 it is today?

13                   **DR. THOMPSON:** Patsy Thompson for the  
14 record.

15                   You're correct. Generally the project  
16 descriptions and the documents that CNSC staff bring to  
17 the Commission are about proponents wanting to develop a  
18 new mine or build a mill, for example. So the project  
19 descriptions are very detailed in terms of what is being  
20 planned, by what methods, what engineering design and  
21 things like that.

22                   In this case it's essentially an  
23 environmental assessment, as Mr. Brian Torrie mentioned.  
24 It's used as a planning tool, essentially. There is a  
25 site that needs to be dealt with and the environmental



1 assessment, looking at alternatives, feasibility of  
2 alternatives, based on information of various  
3 environmental impacts and health impacts in terms of  
4 various options would serve to develop the details of the  
5 project that would then come to the Commission on the  
6 basis of a successful environmental assessment for  
7 specific licensing actions.

8 **MEMBER HARVEY:** Will the option, will it  
9 have been determined before you come in front of the  
10 Commission? Who will decide about the options, when and  
11 ---

12 **DR. THOMPSON:** Patsy Thompson for the  
13 record.

14 Mr. Torrie will provide a response to your  
15 question.

16 **MR. TORRIE:** Brian Torrie for the record.

17 If this proceeds as a comprehensive study  
18 there'd be the environmental impact statement. It would  
19 -- we would -- we're harmonized with Saskatchewan so it  
20 would go out for public review.

21 At the same time there'd be a comprehensive  
22 study report drafted; it would also be commented on and  
23 then when the comments come in we revise that report with  
24 the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency who would  
25 then proceed to give it to the Minister of Environment who

1 would make the EA decision.

2 So in terms of the -- going through that  
3 process, then it would be CNSC staff along with the other  
4 RAs that would look at such things as purpose and need and  
5 other aspects of the EA and then they would make that  
6 recommendation to the Minister of Environment.

7 **MEMBER HARVEY:** So the Minister will take  
8 the decision, even on the details of the project; is that  
9 the case?

10 **MR. TORRIE:** Brian Torrie.

11 Yes.

12 **MEMBER HARVEY:** So when the project will  
13 come back in front of the Commission a decision will not  
14 have been taken. I mean we will have a project with  
15 different options.

16 **DR. THOMPSON:** Patsy Thompson for the  
17 record.

18 Mr. Torrie will answer, sir.

19 **MR. TORRIE:** Brian Torrie for the record.

20 Yes, the next time the Commission would see  
21 this project would be when it comes up for licensing with  
22 the EA decision would be made and it could have options in  
23 it, it depends on what we get in the EIS.

24 **MEMBER HARVEY:** So the project will not  
25 come back in front of the Commission before to go to the

1 Minister?

2 **MR. TORRIE:** Brian Torrie for the record.

3 That's correct.

4 **MEMBER HARVEY:** Okay, thank you.

5 **DR. THOMPSON:** Just to clarify. Patsy  
6 Thompson for the record.

7 There is a possibility that in the  
8 comprehensive study report, the environmental assessment  
9 would determine -- would identify a preferred option. If  
10 that is the case and the project is referred back to the  
11 Commission for licensing action, then there would have  
12 been a preferred action -- preferred option identified.  
13 But we can't prejudge what the assessment will show.

14 **MEMBER HARVEY:** Thank you.

15 **THE CHAIRMAN:** On this particular point,  
16 no.

17 Dr. McDill?

18 **MEMBER MCDILL:** Thank you.

19 My question relates to the consultation  
20 with the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan and how that fits into  
21 the Environmental Assessment Track Report.

22 I don't really want to wait until we get  
23 all the way to the intervenors to address that.

24 For example, in the public comments on page  
25 17, Intervenor Number 2, Item 9, the response of -- is

1 that pre-mine conditions are unknown at the site and I  
2 would suggest that pre-mine conditions might well be known  
3 at the site on the basis of traditional knowledge.

4 There seems to be a disconnect in that  
5 respect and it sort of addresses the comments that are  
6 made in the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan intervention. So  
7 perhaps the history of how that came about or didn't come  
8 about and how that relates to this particular comment and  
9 others?

10 **DR. THOMPSON:** Patsy Thompson for the  
11 record.

12 The specific comment you referred to, our  
13 understanding is that it refers to specific data, pre-  
14 mining.

15 Your point is well taken in terms of  
16 aboriginal groups having pre-mining knowledge of that area  
17 and that's why the environmental assessment guidelines  
18 refer to the use of traditional knowledge and traditional  
19 ecological knowledge, and so the expectation would be that  
20 SRC, through the conduct of the technical studies, would  
21 seek to obtain that knowledge from Métis Nation-  
22 Saskatchewan and other aboriginal groups who may be  
23 holders of that knowledge.

24 **MEMBER MCDILL:** And with respect to their  
25 concern that there was a disconnect in the writing or the

1 development of the Environmental Assessment Track Report  
2 and their involvement early on?

3 **DR. THOMPSON:** Patsy Thompson for the  
4 record.

5 I'll ask Ms. Nicholson to speak to the  
6 engagement of the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan prior to the  
7 development of the guidelines and since then.

8 **MS. NICHOLSON:** Heather Nicholson for the  
9 record.

10 There has been correspondence throughout  
11 the past year with Métis Nation-Saskatchewan. There has  
12 been a desire on both sides to set up a meeting on how to  
13 involve the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan and discuss certain  
14 projects. That meeting was held on August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2008 and  
15 CNSC staff and members of the EA team have a better  
16 understanding of how Métis Nation-Saskatchewan would like  
17 to participate in the EA process now.

18 In terms of specific consultation efforts  
19 with that particular group -- efforts were made in  
20 providing the list of documents for EA documentation that  
21 was out for public comment. A response was received back  
22 and the response was that the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan  
23 would like to participate in the environmental assessment.  
24 So we will be meeting with them fairly shortly about  
25 discussing the Gunnar project in particular.

1                   **MEMBER MCDILL:** Thank you.

2                   And perhaps I'll reserve my other questions  
3 on this until the intervenor is speaking.

4                   **THE CHAIRMAN:** Thank you.

5                   Dr. Barnes, please.

6                   **MEMBER BARNES:** Yes, I had the same comment  
7 on why it wasn't -- I think your answer is "Well, it will  
8 be blended in some way", but given the location, the  
9 activities and so on, I would have thought it might have  
10 deserved a separate part of the organizational structure  
11 of the EIS.

12                   **DR. THOMPSON:** Patsy Thompson for the  
13 record.

14                   Sorry, sir, you're not referring to  
15 engagement of the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan but rather the  
16 use of traditional knowledge and traditional ecological  
17 knowledge specifically in the studies?

18                   **MEMBER BARNES:** Right.

19                   **DR. THOMPSON:** Okay. Patsy Thompson for  
20 the record.

21                   I'll ask Ms. Nicholson to respond.

22                   **MS. NICHOLSON:** Heather Nicholson for the  
23 record.

24                   In terms of incorporating traditional  
25 knowledge in perhaps a more meaningful way when the report

1 is being written, the EIS can definitely be structured in  
2 such a manner to identify traditional knowledge in a  
3 particular section. The EA track report would need to be  
4 revised by the Commission should they wish to change the  
5 way that that information is presented.

6 **MEMBER BARNES:** I am surmising -- and I  
7 struggle a little bit with this document and the process,  
8 probably because it hasn't come to us before in quite this  
9 way. So obviously there was a mine from 1955 to 1963, a  
10 fairly substantial facility, and it has now a footprint,  
11 right? And we're trying to repair that footprint, and  
12 this will doubtless incur considerable amount of funding  
13 to put in place and remediate it.

14 So this may be an inappropriate comment, so  
15 the Chair will rule me out of order if not, and I'll put  
16 it to CNSC staff.

17 But has there been any study of the health  
18 effects on the mine workers during the operation? I know  
19 this is not part of the EIS, but I would like to know  
20 whether the impact of the actual mining for a decade has  
21 -- is there any knowledge of that?

22 **DR. THOMPSON:** Patsy Thompson for the  
23 record.

24 A number of epidemiological studies have  
25 been done of uranium mining workers going back to the

1       fifties. I don't have the specific details of those  
2       studies. I know they involved the -- often called the El  
3       Dorado Worker Cohort Study. So I would need to check back  
4       with our specialist to determine whether that specific  
5       cohort is included in those studies.

6                    But there have been studies of mine workers  
7       from that period and it's those studies that have been  
8       used essentially to set modern radiation protection  
9       standards and limits for current nuclear workers.

10                   **MEMBER BARNES:** I ask simply because the  
11       document indicates there clearly is still some residual  
12       radioactivity and so on. That's the whole purpose of  
13       trying to remediate that, and obviously during the mine  
14       working there must have been substantially more. The very  
15       fact that a significant infrastructure was put in place  
16       almost like a small town operating there and presumably  
17       most of the workers drawn from local areas, that would not  
18       be necessarily a transient population for a decade that  
19       was being impacted by that and many of whom, some of whom  
20       might still be with us. So anyway, it's an oblique  
21       question.

22                    Could you just tell me again -- in the case  
23       you've got two RAs. One is the CNSC and the other is  
24       NRCan. So what is the relationship between when you've  
25       got two RAs in this sort of process? Who controls what?



1                   **DR. THOMPSON:** Patsy Thompson for the  
2 record.

3                   I'll ask Mr. Brian Torrie to respond.

4                   **MR. TORRIE:** Brian Torrie for the record.

5                   Natural Resources Canada is an RA because  
6 they're providing funding. So that's their relationship  
7 to the project. CNSC is an RA because we're providing a  
8 licence, or would provide a licence. So that's why we're  
9 a responsible authority.

10                  Now, it may also, as the projects develop,  
11 turn out that there are other responsible authorities,  
12 such as DFO. For the time being, they're involved in the  
13 project and they may eventually become an RA as well.

14                  **MEMBER BARNES:** But in the case of NRCan I  
15 can understand CNSC's involvement. In the case of NRCan  
16 that quotes "will be providing funding" or may be  
17 providing funding. What is its role in the disposition of  
18 that funding or in its interaction with the whole process  
19 as it goes along? Is it simply a vehicle through which  
20 funding will come from the federal government into the  
21 system, or does it have some say on how that funding is  
22 spent, accountabilities and so on and so on?

23                  **DR. THOMPSON:** Patsy Thompson for the  
24 record.

25                  CNSC staff doesn't have the level of detail

1       you're asking me in terms of how the funding would be  
2       provided and the mechanism for providing that funding.  
3       Our understanding is there is an agreement between  
4       Saskatchewan and NRCan in terms of the provision of  
5       funding to deal with the abandoned uranium mining sites in  
6       northern Saskatchewan.

7                   **THE CHAIRMAN:** Can I piggyback on this?  
8       There is an understanding between the two governments.  
9       Was it an understanding the amount of money to put on the  
10      table? Somewhere along the line I think I saw some  
11      numbers. So is the number the total amount of money  
12      dedicated to this project fixed?

13                   **MR. MULDOON:** Joe Muldoon for the record.

14                   I'll ask Crystal Smudy to speak to the MOU.

15                   **MS. SMUDY:** Crystal Smudy for the record.

16                   There is a Memorandum of Agreement between  
17      the Minister of Natural Resources, Canada and the Minister  
18      of Saskatchewan, and in that regard, the federal  
19      government and the provincial government came to an  
20      agreement as to how the funding for the coverage of these  
21      costs would be paid and there is a table that was a  
22      negotiation between Natural Resources Canada and the  
23      Ministry of Saskatchewan.

24                   **THE CHAIRMAN:** Without disclosing any state  
25      secret is the bottom line -- like what's the total amount

1 of money?

2 **MR. MULDOON:** Joe Muldoon.

3 I'll ask Crystal to deal with that.

4 **MS. SMUDY:** Crystal Smudy for the record.

5 There is a bottom-line number that has been  
6 negotiated between the federal and the provincial  
7 government. That amount has been established in various  
8 documents. There is a clause, however, that allows that  
9 in the event that what we find is beyond what was  
10 anticipated in the early studies, that there may be some  
11 requirement to go back to both the provincial and the  
12 federal government in that event.

13 **THE CHAIRMAN:** You're doing a good dance  
14 here. You're not going to tell us what the number is,  
15 right? If it's in order of magnitude it probably will  
16 constrain the kind of options that environmental  
17 assessment can actually tackle.

18 It's quite a different exercise if you have  
19 \$5 million or \$50 million or \$500 million.

20 So I just don't know if that kind of order  
21 of magnitude was determined and given to the team that are  
22 looking as to what's feasible.

23 **DR. THOMPSON:** Patsy Thompson for the  
24 record.

25 Perhaps the CNSC staff has a document

1 providing the numbers.

2 **THE CHAIRMAN:** You were about to tell us  
3 this deep secret. It might be better to come from ---

4 **MR. MULDOON:** Joe Muldoon for the record.  
5 The current number is \$24.6 million.

6 **THE CHAIRMAN:** I see heads nodding, so I  
7 think this is the number. Okay. So give or take, you  
8 know, with all the ideas you can back over and ask for  
9 more money, you got \$25 million. That's probably putting  
10 somewhat of a constraint on what is doable within a whole  
11 set of options.

12 Is that number sort of taken into account  
13 when you're developing the options?

14 **DR. THOMPSON:** Patsy Thompson for the  
15 record.

16 The expectation is that the proponent would  
17 assess the current level of impacts, look at various  
18 options. The risks, the level of risk reduction from each  
19 option. There is technical feasibility; there are costs,  
20 social acceptability. A number of criteria will need to  
21 be taken into consideration.

22 And then that option analysis would  
23 identify the best combination of options in terms of risk  
24 reduction, feasibility and cost.

25 Overall, the expectation is that in the end

1 the project would not cause significant environmental  
2 effects and would be acceptable to the Commission at  
3 licensing.

4 But we all recognize we're dealing with a  
5 site that has been contaminated and the purpose is to  
6 clean it up. It's not the same process that we would  
7 normally follow for a pristine site with a new licence.

8 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Dr. Barnes.

9 **MEMBER BARNES:** Yeah. That was on my list,  
10 so I'll come back to it.

11 But just as a small one under Heritage  
12 Resources, I got the sense that everyone just wants to  
13 sort of wipe the whole site out, all the buildings and so  
14 on, and call it dilapidated.

15 But I wonder; is that the view of First  
16 Nations in that area that might -- and the people hunting  
17 might appreciate actually one or two relatively innocuous  
18 buildings just left for emergency shelter in something  
19 like this?

20 **DR. THOMPSON:** Patsy Thompson.

21 Heather Nicholson will provide some points  
22 to address your question.

23 **MS. NICHOLSON:** Heather Nicholson for the  
24 record.

25 CNSC staff has heard from either written

1 submission or oral intervention at this hearing that there  
2 is a desire to preserve or commemorate part of the site,  
3 and so in response the EA team included a revision in the  
4 Guideline-Scoping Document requesting the proponent to  
5 identify any historical artefacts that could be preserved  
6 to commemorate mining history.

7 **MEMBER BARNES:** Yes, that was a little  
8 different than my question which was are there some  
9 buildings to be essentially a refuge in bad weather or  
10 downed planes and so on or people hunting in that area  
11 that could serve that function as opposed to a heritage  
12 for the site itself? That would be a perhaps entirely  
13 different kinds of buildings that would be preserved.  
14 It's not a big deal, but it's something which I didn't see  
15 at all in here.

16 **DR. THOMPSON:** Patsy Thompson for the  
17 record.

18 Our understanding from the available  
19 information is that the remaining -- the buildings  
20 remaining on site are in a state where they pose a safety  
21 risk and asbestos is present, in my understanding, all of  
22 the buildings. SRC can confirm the details.

23 And so the feasibility of keeping buildings  
24 in that case would be questionable.

25 **MEMBER BARNES:** Okay. I would just like to

1           come back to this issue which I think is one of the most  
2           important ones on the options because you know we've been  
3           involved as a Commission in a variety of decommissioning  
4           now of mine sites.

5                         This is an old mine site and so it's sort  
6           of a bit late in the day, but nevertheless that's the  
7           process we have to go through. And in this case, it's the  
8           public purse that is having to pay as an afterthought and  
9           there's no regular infrastructure or people there or  
10          equipment and so on to do the work.

11                        In your implementation of rehabilitation  
12          plan on page 17 you give a list of items, anticipated  
13          commencement schedule, estimated manpower skill  
14          requirements, materials, transportation and power  
15          requirements and so on and so on and certainly some of the  
16          interveners asked questions about the options for disposal  
17          of waste rock or mine tailings and so on or disposition of  
18          the mine site itself, what you might put into there and so  
19          on, all of which seems to me to have a huge range of cost  
20          options on how a study like this would approach that.

21                        And you could approach it with an unlimited  
22          budget. You could approach it with giving maximum  
23          protection or you could say what is the minimum we can  
24          kind of get away with, you know, to put it crassly, and  
25          there would be very different kinds of studies or options

1           that you would be recommending.

2                           And I would have thought in the scope, the  
3           outline of the scope, that you would have ended up with  
4           some structure in there that addressed the options which  
5           might have fiscal aspects or cost aspects to it which may  
6           or may then not require going back to the funding agencies  
7           but dealt with it in terms of the safety of the  
8           disposition of this site.

9                           But it seems to me you would sort of go  
10          through this environmental impact statement and then  
11          you're into monitoring follow-up program without really  
12          coming to the big issues which I think this -- presumably  
13          this study leads to, unless I'm out of line here and those  
14          issues of what -- who decides what option and what costs  
15          is done outside of this study.

16                          But it seems to me what I hear is that this  
17          study will make recommendations. So are the  
18          recommendations going to include in depth some of these  
19          options that must obviously have some cost implication?

20                          **DR. THOMPSON:** Patsy Thompson for the  
21          record.

22                          The Guideline-Scoping Document, as you  
23          point out, provides sort of a high-level guidance to the  
24          proponent for this project.

25                          The end result is probably somewhere in the



1 range that you've mentioned from bringing the site back to  
2 pristine conditions to doing the minimal.

3           There is a -- the process of options  
4 identification is a process that is fairly well  
5 established and there is experience both federally and --  
6 and in various provinces in terms of approaching that type  
7 of option analysis for contaminated sites. There are  
8 federal contaminated site programs, for example, that have  
9 been put in place to deal with molybdenum uranium mining  
10 sites but other contaminated sites from federal activities  
11 across Canada. So there is experience that can be drawn  
12 upon in terms of structuring the options analysis.

13           We haven't put that framework essentially  
14 in the scoping document. But that's -- it's certainly  
15 something that is possible but the information is  
16 available to the proponent to identify those various  
17 frameworks for option analysis.

18           **THE CHAIRMAN:** I'd like to jump in. Built  
19 into the process is some creative tensions about competing  
20 objectives. You're going to have the Saskatchewan  
21 government and NRCan and worry about the -- you're going  
22 to have the Department of Fisheries that want best habitat  
23 kind of fishery possibilities. You're going to have CNSC  
24 who was looking at the safety. Health Canada -- I think  
25 there's all kinds of opposing objectives almost with

1       respect to mining.

2                       So there's a built-in check and balances  
3 here I believe that will make sure that we do not -- all  
4 the options will be explored and then there will be  
5 consensus reached, if I could recall some of the studies I  
6 was involved in. At the end of the day, you have to cut a  
7 deal with all the people, all the parties and they may  
8 agree on two or three options that they'll propose to the  
9 Minister.

10                      Dr. Barnes?

11                      **MEMBER BARNES:** But if I could just follow  
12 on the -- you outlined very nicely; it's a very complete  
13 document, I think, for us to look at and you identified  
14 the status, present status of it. And many of those  
15 components, I think, you can kind of probably cost-outfit  
16 easily. You know, the images showed all the barrels  
17 nicely stacked and so on. So, you know, there is many,  
18 many cases in the north where people move barrels out.  
19 They all appear to be empty, et cetera.

20                      You've got buildings which have asbestos;  
21 you could dispose of those. We know perhaps how to  
22 dispose of asbestos things, the head frame and these sorts  
23 of things. So those are basic site demolition kinds of  
24 things or removal which I think presumably one would cost.

25                      To me, the bigger issues are the tailings

1 and the waste rock which are very substantial. I mean you  
2 gave the figures, 2.7 cubic metres of waste rock on 4.4  
3 millions tons of tailings which we see leaking out into  
4 Lake Athabasca, all right?

5 And we have these -- but the document, as I  
6 read it, doesn't really address those sort of options  
7 whether you let those continue to leak, do you say that  
8 the project is way too big for us to do something about it  
9 or we have to move substantial amounts of these tailings  
10 or waste rocks and then dispose of, for example, in the  
11 pit or whatever.

12 And it's as though you're ticking off all  
13 the other, you know, all those components as you would do  
14 an environmental study without saying how you're going to  
15 address that -- the whole issue of tailings and waste  
16 rocks which presumably is the big ticket item that we're  
17 looking at here.

18 **MS. THOMSON:** Patsy Thompson for the  
19 record.

20 You're correct in terms of identifying the  
21 issues of concern that would represent the largest cost  
22 and certainly the largest technical difficulties in terms  
23 of dealing with large amounts of waste on remote sites  
24 with little infrastructure around it. The -- this scoping  
25 document is, as all EA scoping documents are, generic in

1 terms of providing guidance to the proponent to what is  
2 expectant.

3 I believe at this stage it would not have  
4 been appropriate to provide an end state to the proponent  
5 to work from. The proponent has established -- a project  
6 team has in place a framework to consult with local  
7 communities, the various federal and provincial  
8 governments are represented in the environmental  
9 assessment team.

10 And I believe that the -- at the end of the  
11 day, the structure around the options analysis will be  
12 there to deal with the significant health and safety risks  
13 than environmental risks in a manner that is responsible.  
14 But at this stage, it's impossible to set the instate  
15 objective for SRC. The assessments haven't been done and  
16 there's a lot of information missing.

17 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Mr. Graham?

18 **MEMBER GRAHAM:** Thank you.

19 I would like to come at this another way.  
20 I had almost identical the same concerns as Dr. Barnes had  
21 and someone came up with the figure of \$24.5 million.  
22 That wasn't picked out of the air. I mean, there must  
23 have been a menu of things that you were going to do with  
24 the 24.5 million.

25 Could SRC maybe enlighten us on -- is it

1 dealing with the contaminated soils? Is it dealing with  
2 the tailings? Is it dealing with the disposal of PCBs  
3 that may be in the building, disposal of asbestos,  
4 barrels? I don't know what the contents of those barrels  
5 were. If they were only diesel fuel, do they all have to  
6 be cleaned before they're crushed and so on?

7 How did you arrive at 24.5 million?

8 **MR. MULDOON:** Joe Muldoon for the record.

9 In the discussions, there was a list of --  
10 there was dollars laid out and things such as the Gunnar  
11 building demolition, Gunnar tailings and waste rock  
12 reclamation. There were dollars attached to that. Gunnar  
13 final site reclamation; water air monitoring; CNSC  
14 licensing process -- I'm jumping around here a little bit;  
15 assessment of the actual -- in the front end of this, the  
16 actual assessment; the Gunnar site characterization  
17 reclamation option review. So all of these things were  
18 listed in the dollars.

19 In arriving at the \$24.6 million, it  
20 included all of the areas that you've described. What's  
21 not here at this point is -- and because it's not the  
22 actual approaches that are going to be taken or the  
23 options.

24 And the reason for that is because there  
25 still needs to be a good deal of environmental and safety

1 information collected which will then allow all of the SOC  
2 and all of the players, including the public, sit down and  
3 look at those options and say what makes sense. And then  
4 put together a menu of options. And then obviously, these  
5 cost estimates would then have to be revisited to see  
6 whether or not they match up.

7 **MEMBER GRAHAM:** Well, has there been a --  
8 to arrive at that then what you're saying is there has  
9 been a major assessment of the site to see the  
10 contamination of the soils; where the contaminations might  
11 be; how much waste rock whether it's the 2.7 million cubic  
12 metres or all of it or part of it has to be dealt with, or  
13 the 4.4 million tons of tailings; how -- those were all  
14 costed out.

15 So it is going to be an all-encompassing  
16 comprehensive site clean-up that you're going for. Is  
17 that what the scope will be?

18 **MR. MULDOON:** Joe Muldoon for the record.

19 The intent with this project is to do a --  
20 is to rehabilitate the Gunnar site to the standards that  
21 are provided to us ultimately through the regulatory  
22 authorities. That would include demolition of the  
23 buildings dealing with the pit at the waste rock piles;  
24 all of those various areas, the intent is that they will  
25 be -- that site will be rehabilitated.

1                   **MEMBER GRAHAM:** And the methods have to be  
2 done when it's all taken into consideration whether the  
3 pit is drained before you start putting in the tailings or  
4 whether you just dump it over the side; all those  
5 different things are considered?

6                   **MR. MULDOON:** We certainly have. And in  
7 our public discussions, there are a number of options that  
8 have been put forward. And so, basically, there is a menu  
9 of current options.

10                   What we lack is the detailed environmental  
11 information to be able to assess what is the best -- in  
12 each one of those approaches, what are the best options.

13                   But certainly those options, including  
14 using the pit, including covering, et cetera, et cetera,  
15 all of those options are out there.

16                   In providing these numbers, they came from  
17 experts wherever we could get -- wherever we could get  
18 those numbers in terms of getting to that final estimate,  
19 and our intent is to look at all of those areas.

20                   **MEMBER GRAHAM:** I want to get into costing  
21 but I'm afraid that by looking at what -- hearing what  
22 you're saying and looking at the scope at which you're  
23 going and the size of the footprint, that you may be --  
24 everyone's got to know, going into it, that they have  
25 enough money to finish the job. To spend 24.5 million and

1           only have a third of it or half of it done is going to be  
2           another blemish on the whole industry or on the whole  
3           aspect of rehabilitation.

4                        Participation funding; read about that in  
5           the document. Who will provide that participation funding  
6           for different groups that you're going to depend on for  
7           getting information, like the various Aboriginal groups  
8           and so on?

9                        **MR. MULDOON:** Joe Muldoon, for the record.

10                      The funding that -- as an example, bringing  
11           the PRC together, those kinds of costs, where required,  
12           when there's expenses -- to bring those people in, those  
13           dollars are covered from the project.

14                      I don't know, in terms of your definition,  
15           whether it goes beyond -- certainly the public meetings,  
16           any of those public consultations that take place, those  
17           are funded from the project.

18                      **MEMBER GRAHAM:** That's under CEAA funding  
19           then? CEAA will pay for the participation?

20                      **MR. MULDOON:** I'd like to say so.

21                      Joe Muldoon, for the record.

22                      **MEMBER GRAHAM:** Okay.

23                      Mr. Chairman, the other question I'd like  
24           to wait for the intervenors.

25                      **THE CHAIRMAN:** Okay. Monsieur Tolgyesi.



1                   **MEMBER TOLGYESI:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

2                   It's not easy to ask questions when you are  
3 coming to the tail end of it; I am there.

4                   I had a question about costs and I had a  
5 question what everybody was asking. I found that NRCan is  
6 considering providing funding. I suppose they are those  
7 sugar daddies who are behind. If you have more spending  
8 they will supply money.

9                   But we expected that you are coming with  
10 something which you are saying; "This is a problem. This  
11 is how we were done. These are options, these are costs,  
12 and this is the timeframe." Okay?

13                   Saying that, I should say that I'm looking  
14 positively that the governments, Canada and Saskatchewan,  
15 through you guys, they are considering to restore a site  
16 because it's something, I think, which is quite important;  
17 and for the people who are living there and for all of us.

18                   I will have just maybe two questions -- or  
19 three. You are talking about the pit there, which was  
20 filled up with the water and you were saying on the top  
21 the water reached the quality of Saskatchewan standards.  
22 What about the bottom?

23                   Is there something what you could tell that  
24 it's contaminated? Is there some movement for water,  
25 hydrologically?

1                   **MR. MULDOON:** Joe Muldoon, for the record.  
2                   I'll start with this and then I'll pass it  
3                   on to Mark.

4                   The pit itself is -- the water -- there's  
5                   layers; a layering that's taken place and the bottom of  
6                   the pit is basically isolated from the top. So there's a  
7                   distinct separation and the water quality in the bottom of  
8                   the pit -- now, this is with the information that we have  
9                   to date. Of course this will be revisited through the  
10                  environmental assessment process and further data  
11                  gathered.

12                  But the preliminary data that we have would  
13                  indicate that the bottom of the pit has a level of  
14                  contamination much higher than we have at the top of the  
15                  pit.

16                  But I will ask Mark to provide some  
17                  numbers; Mark Simpson.

18                  **MR. SIMPSON:** Mark Simpson, for the record.

19                  Work was done in 2004 by CanNorth. They  
20                  did water sampling, both of the surface water and also  
21                  took samples at depth at four different intervals:  
22                  surface, 50 metres, 85 metres and 108 metres depth.

23                  In general, all trace element metal  
24                  concentrations fell within the guidelines, Saskatchewan  
25                  water quality guideline objectives.

1                   There is elevated levels of uranium and  
2 radium-226. The radionuclides increase somewhat in the  
3 deeper parts of the pit as well. The uranium levels  
4 decrease but they're still above the water quality  
5 objectives.

6                   **MEMBER TOLGYESI:** Yes. Now my question  
7 was, you know, if there's a high contamination and you --  
8 maybe you have something what you would like to do with  
9 that and it will cost something, it is built in in this  
10 24.6 million, and what about the quality of the Back Bay  
11 or, how do you call it, Langley, which right now is  
12 controlled very well by a kind of beaver dam.

13                   The beaver dam, you were saying in the  
14 report, is controlling the quality of the water which is  
15 coming out from the tailing pond, and you were saying what  
16 will happen then. What's the quality of Back Bay?

17                   And the last part was that you were talking  
18 about potential of adverse environmental effects. Do you  
19 have any sense of extent of these effects and how you will  
20 deal or control them?

21                   **MR. MULDOON:** Joe Muldoon, for the record.

22                   Let me start backwards there. We have --  
23 there certainly has -- there's been a number of studies  
24 that have been done over the past years onsite.

25                   So we can speak to this in a general sense

1 but until we carry out or manage the carrying out of the  
2 extensive studies that have to take place, it's premature  
3 for us to be able to comment on the extent of the  
4 environmental footprint that's there.

5 And that certainly is part of the  
6 environmental assessment process; is to gather that  
7 information that would then allow us to make -- all of us  
8 collectively to make the right decisions in terms of what  
9 is the best way to rehabilitate the site.

10 There are numbers and Langley Bay is part  
11 of the -- and has been taken into consideration in the  
12 costing, as has Back Bay where the two bays were split.  
13 The rehabilitation of the site includes the entire area.

14 We really -- until we get in and do -- have  
15 the extensive studies done, even to define how far out  
16 into Langley Bay and exactly what makes sense; should we -  
17 - how much damage is going to be caused by disturbance?  
18 How much -- is there damage, does there continue to be  
19 environmental impacts from the tailings that are in  
20 Langley Bay itself? Those are the kinds of studies that  
21 have to take place.

22 What I will do is I will ask Mark if you  
23 want to cover some of the information on Back Bay versus  
24 Langley Bay.

25 Certainly the level of contamination in

1 Back Bay is significantly higher than it is in Langley  
2 Bay.

3 **MR. SIMPSON:** Mark Simpson, for the record.

4 The water quality analysis that we have  
5 from Back Bay, that is the part of the Langley Bay that  
6 was cut off by the tailings, it exceeds Saskatchewan water  
7 quality objectives for two elements and that is arsenic --  
8 the acceptable level or guideline objective is 5  
9 micrograms per litre and Back Bay, the last sample  
10 indicates 18 micrograms per litre.

11 The other element, the radionuclide  
12 radium-226 exceeds the provincial objectives as well. All  
13 other elements fall below the objectives.

14 In Langley Bay the only element that  
15 exceeds the objectives is the radium-226 level that it met  
16 all of their provincial objectives, including arsenic,  
17 selenium -- well, the entire list.

18 So I guess from the point of view of water  
19 quality it's surprisingly good.

20 **THE CHAIRMAN:** So just to clarify, are  
21 those two bays now connected to the Athabasca?

22 **MR. SIMPSON:** Yes, Langley Bay is directly  
23 connected to Lake Athabasca; there is a fairly -- a very  
24 narrow channel that connects the Bay to the main part of  
25 the lake. It's very shallow as well; I would say three to

1 four metres deep.

2 Back Bay is still connected to Langley Bay  
3 via a -- I'll call it a creek. There is a water passage  
4 running through the tailings from Back Bay to Langley Bay.

5 **THE CHAIRMAN:** And have you tested the same  
6 -- do the same test near -- in Athabasca Lake?

7 **MR. SIMPSON:** Yes, we have. We have.  
8 Well, the water samples were collected both immediately  
9 adjacent to the tailings where they enter Langley Bay and  
10 further out in Langley Bay, essentially where Langley Bay  
11 meets Lake Athabasca.

12 The water quality in Langley Bay adjacent  
13 to the tailings meet all Saskatchewan water quality  
14 guideline objectives with the exception of radium-226 and  
15 the sample collected where Langley Bay enters Lake  
16 Athabasca meets all of the objectives.

17 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Okay, thank you.

18 I think I'd like to move to the  
19 intervention part and then allow for some other questions  
20 from Commissioners.

21 So I would like to start with the first  
22 oral presentation by Mr. Dennis Lawson, as outlined in CMD  
23 08-H17.2 and 08-17.2A and Mr. Lawson, the floor is yours.

24

25 **08-H17.2 / 08-H17.2A**

1       **Oral presentation by**

2       **Mr. Dennis W. Lawson**

3  
4                   **MR. LAWSON:** Good afternoon or good  
5 evening, Mr. Chair and other Commission Members.

6                   My name is Dennis Lawson. I'm here to talk  
7 to you about the big ticket items; reclaiming the tailings  
8 in the waste rock piles.

9                   I am speaking for myself as a citizen of  
10 Saskatchewan who has family living in the North and  
11 working in the North. I am also speaking to you as a  
12 professional engineering geologist in the province and I  
13 was the spokesman for Environment Canada about this site  
14 for some 20 years, basically all of the 1980s and the  
15 1990s before I retired.

16                   So I just decided to put my oars in the  
17 water and to tell you what I thought about the Scoping  
18 Document and -- so I made an intervention and you have  
19 that intervention before you.

20                   There's three components to it. The first  
21 component provides you with a fairly comprehensive list of  
22 the options that could be considered. The next part of  
23 the document indicates how those options could be  
24 evaluated; again in a general way but a fairly  
25 comprehensive way. And the third part of the document

1 just addresses my feelings as to how the public would  
2 perceive these various options.

3 The environmental impact assessment, as I  
4 understand it, will be generally technical scientific and  
5 will have to be followed up with public consultation to  
6 get to options that are indeed acceptable to the public.

7 So I've kind of jumped the gun here and  
8 just given you my initial perspective on what I think will  
9 be acceptable, publicly acceptable options.

10 So what I'm going to go through now is a  
11 PowerPoint presentation and it's basically a collection of  
12 slides on Gunnar and I will explain to you the  
13 geomorphology of the site; how the tailings were  
14 deposited; what happened to them; where they are now and  
15 in my opinion, how they should be reclaimed. I'll do the  
16 same with the waste rock piles.

17 And at the end of this PowerPoint  
18 presentation you'll have an eight-step recommendation of  
19 what I perceive to be as an acceptable public reclamation  
20 plan. Following that, there's about 12 points indicating  
21 how that proposed reclamation plan needs to be further  
22 addressed to see if it is indeed valid.

23 **THE CHAIRMAN:** And you're going to do all  
24 of this in 10 minutes; right?

25 **MR. LAWSON:** No. Well, I'm going to show



1       you some slides; okay?

2                   **THE CHAIRMAN:** Okay, please.

3                   **MR. LAWSON:** So we'll proceed to that.

4       Okay.

5                   So all of these photographs were taken by  
6       myself, around 1984 and again in 1998. Some are from the  
7       Saskatchewan Research Council, others are from  
8       Saskatchewan Public Archives, McMaster University and  
9       Carleton University.

10                  So this is just a cartoon which shows what  
11       can happen at a tailing site; you can have surface runoff  
12       from the site, subsurface seepage or wind.

13                  All of these things are happening at Gunnar  
14       and in addition to that, there was a wooden or rock dam at  
15       the end of what's been called Gunnar main that actually  
16       failed during the operation of the project. At that time  
17       the tailings washed down into Langley Bay and beyond.

18                  Here's a view, microscopic shot of the  
19       tailings that were produced at the El Dorado operations  
20       and you can see the little yellow flashes are where the  
21       radioactivity is. And if you take a close look at that  
22       site you'll see that most of the radioactivity is  
23       associated with the fine tailings.

24                  Those are the ones that have reached  
25       Langley Bay. Those are the ones that are in the stomach

1 contents of the fish and those are the ones that are  
2 providing a dose to the stomach lining of the fish.

3 So this is a location map; I think I'll  
4 just skip over that.

5 Here's a site plan of the site. We've  
6 looked at this already, you see the pit down at the  
7 bottom, the Gunnar Main tailings which went into a lake  
8 called Mudford Lake. The dam there failed at that time;  
9 the tailings went down into Lake Athabasca.

10 It turns out that Lake Athabasca was  
11 several metres above its current elevation. So we have  
12 this raised delta formed in Langley Bay because the water  
13 level was considerably higher.

14 If you go into Langley Bay today and you  
15 stand on those tailings they've actually been eroded down  
16 more than a metre and that metre of tailings plus all the  
17 other tailings that escaped went out into Lake Athabasca.  
18 So there's a large amount of tailings beyond Langley Bay.

19 Here's just an aerial photograph of things;  
20 you see the pit down at the bottom; the Gunnar Main  
21 tailings, the diagram is pointed north. Off to the west  
22 of those Gunnar tailings you see a water covered area, the  
23 top part of the Gunnar tailings was actually on raised  
24 land above the lake level; it's another delta in the  
25 system.

1                   It's dry and wind-blown but there's a  
2 groundwater flow system in it delivering radionuclides to  
3 Langley Bay.

4                   This is looking at the tailings lake at the  
5 Uranium City operations. This is what the Gunnar site  
6 would have looked like during its operation.

7                   Here's the type of delta that is formed;  
8 these are the first tailings disposal systems in  
9 Saskatchewan. The tailings simply were pumped over the  
10 nearest hill and gradually made their way into the lake.  
11 This is what happened at Gunnar.

12                   So looking down the Crackingstone  
13 Peninsula, we're looking west, the Gunnar site is off on  
14 the left-hand side; Langley Bay is off on the right. When  
15 the tailings containment area failed, the tailings were  
16 washed down the system creating Langley Bay extension,  
17 Langley central and Langley Bay.

18                   Just a little closer look now, you can see  
19 the tailings in Langley Bay. You can see the outlet of  
20 Langley Bay that was talked about.

21                   During the EIA consideration will have to  
22 be given as to whether there should be a low weir  
23 constructed across that outlet so as to contain water in  
24 Langley Bay, and radionuclides, or that should be left in  
25 its current state or even deepened to let radioactivity

1 escape into the main lake and be diluted and be disposed  
2 of as a deep lake disposal.

3 Taking a closer look now, you can see the  
4 Gunnar Central tailings there. They are continuing to  
5 erode into Langley Bay, and you see the Langley Bay  
6 tailings.

7 Now, my point is that Langley Bay will  
8 never be successfully claimed until that delta is removed.  
9 Right now, in the spring there's runoff down those creeks  
10 and the creeks continue to erode tailings into the bay.  
11 So the organic matter that's accumulating in the bay is  
12 being mixed with tailings from the site.

13 So in the reclamation, the most important  
14 thing to do is to remove those fine highly-radioactive  
15 tailings from Langley Bay and get them over into the pit.  
16 This is a closer view of the creek.

17 Addressing the waste rock issue, you see  
18 this is an early view of the open pit. You see the two  
19 waste rock piles. The bay there, Zeemel Bay, is highly  
20 contaminated. There's groundwater flow systems in these  
21 piles of rock and springs along the edges, so that if the  
22 waste rock piles are in fact used to cover the tailings,  
23 the groundwater mounds will be removed and the habitat in  
24 this bay will be increased. So that if the Department of  
25 Fisheries and Oceans is concerned about the loss of the

1 fish habitat in the pit, because it seems to me that that  
2 space should be used for tailings disposal, they'll be  
3 concerned about the loss of that habitat. It can be  
4 compensated for by improving the habitat in Langley Bay  
5 and Back Bay and at this bay that we see in front of us  
6 here.

7 So there's the pit itself, about halfway  
8 into the development. Can I go back? I just want to show  
9 you one thing. I hope I'll have time to get to it, but if  
10 you see out there in Mudford Lake, the tailings have  
11 started to be deposited there and there is a small clump  
12 of forest. During the height of the mining activity in  
13 the winter, they went out and cut down those trees, such  
14 that they created a very -- there's a level plain right  
15 across the top of all those trees. Each one of those  
16 stumps becomes an erosion peg. You can actually look at  
17 those stumps today and calculate how much of the tailings  
18 have been eroded. So I hope to show you that.

19 Here's the pit itself during development.  
20 You see there's some seepage coming in on the sides, but  
21 basically the pit walls are largely impermeable, so it  
22 makes a good containment area. This is all igneous,  
23 metamorphic and crystalline rock. This is not sandstone.  
24 These pit walls are stable.

25 We look at the -- this is a schematic.

1 Mr. Muldoon indicated there were about 13 levels. This  
2 particular shot or section shows about eight levels, but  
3 you see the outline of the pit there. And one of the  
4 things that needs to be evaluated if you're placing  
5 tailings in this pit is how much tailings can you get into  
6 the workings below the pit bottom. The pit bottom was  
7 connected to the workings, and those workings were, to  
8 some extent, filled with tailings, but there may be more  
9 storage space within that mine itself for tailings.

10 So just an overview of the site again, you  
11 see the bay at the bottom that could be reclaimed by  
12 removing the waste rock piles and you see the Gunnar Main  
13 tailings with the upper part of the tailings, that whitish  
14 colour being windblown, and the bottom part being  
15 continually saturated because of the groundwater  
16 discharge.

17 Just looking down the tailings again to  
18 Langley Bay, you get some idea of the distances involved.

19 Another view, just showing the  
20 water-covered area. The previous slides were taken in  
21 1984. This was taken in 1998. There is a beaver dam  
22 there, as one of the Commission members noted. It's  
23 causing the water at the lower part of the tailings, but  
24 it's a transient feature. It needs to be removed. The  
25 tailings need to be excavated and placed in the pit. And

1 then the waste rock cover needs to go not on the tailings,  
2 as we see them now, but on the residual tailings that  
3 remain after all of the excavations.

4 You see there's a linear straight feature  
5 pointing north, and to the right of that there's tailings,  
6 but they're vegetated. Those tailings are out of the  
7 drainage system. They're not being eroded, so a decision  
8 could be reached not to cover them or to leave them in  
9 their current state.

10 Right now, at the bottom of the slide you  
11 see that area that's covered with tailings, but there's a  
12 rock berm along there holding back the main part of the  
13 tailings and the vegetation has established.

14 **THE CHAIRMAN:** I really would like to  
15 engage in some discussion. We have copies of these  
16 slides, so we've all seen it. So if you want to give us  
17 some gratuitous advice, please speed it up.

18 **MR. LAWSON:** Okay. Well, maybe I'll stop  
19 showing the slides and I'll just say to you in closing  
20 that the storage space in the pit is extremely valuable.  
21 In my opinion, it should be used to store tailings, in  
22 particular the tailings from Langley Bay, and my greatest  
23 concern is that the funds will be spent mainly on the  
24 demolition of the buildings on the site and that  
25 consideration will be given to disposing of that material

1 in the pit. I believe that would be a big mistake.

2 I think you can bury the demolition  
3 material in sand deposits, and there's lots of them around  
4 the site. The airport, in fact, is constructed on a sand  
5 deposit.

6 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Thank you. Questions?  
7 Comments? Dr. Barnes.

8 **MEMBER BARNES:** I found this extremely  
9 helpful and I think the Commission and everyone is  
10 appreciative of your previous work in bringing this  
11 together.

12 I'm sorry the 10 minutes didn't allow you  
13 to make the full presentation, but I would like to turn it  
14 back to the Saskatchewan Research Council because you  
15 started off just prior to this intervener pointing out  
16 that you would expect to do a whole bunch of studies, and  
17 I think the kind of presentation that we've just heard  
18 indicates maybe the scope of those studies to get to a  
19 better understanding of the tailings issue. The  
20 intervener mentioned that these were highly radioactive,  
21 and he had done another -- we hear that the water quality  
22 in here suggests that the contamination may be quite  
23 modest.

24 We haven't really heard much about actually  
25 where the samples that have been quoted really come from,



1       whether they come just from the water or from the  
2       sediments in the tailings or whether there's any  
3       contamination of the organic material, which is a lot  
4       thicker than the tailings that sit sort of immediately  
5       below, and what that's connected to, the Langley Bay  
6       waters and so on.

7               So, I mean, potentially it's a somewhat  
8       complex thing. So my question though is out of the \$24.6  
9       million, what proportion of that do you anticipate for  
10      studies as opposed to doing the demolition, et cetera?

11             **MR. MULDOON:** Joe Muldoon, for the record.  
12      The information that's been provided is extremely useful  
13      and there are so many areas -- there has been water  
14      quality samples taken. There have been core samples,  
15      sediment samples. There's been a whole range of studies  
16      that have been done, but we haven't yet gotten to the  
17      point -- and this is where this environmental assessment,  
18      the impact studies and so on, we'll be able to pull all of  
19      these together and give us the kind of information that we  
20      need to make the decisions around what is the best  
21      approach in terms of rehabilitation of the site.

22             So I just wanted to start with that, by  
23      indicating that this information and the options provided  
24      certainly will be used in our -- in the decision making,  
25      but there's still a lot of information to be gathered, and

1 current information as well.

2 We do have some current, but there's also  
3 some historical information.

4 With respect to the dollars, this 24.6  
5 million, it's done in a level of detail. The Gunnar  
6 tailings and waste rock reclamation as an example, the  
7 line item there speaks to 6.4 million.

8 The Gunnar building demolition is 3 million  
9 so just to give you an idea that there is a significant  
10 portion of the funds and this is just the first cut. But  
11 there's a significant portion of funds would be dedicated  
12 to the tailings management areas and the waste rock areas.

13 **MEMBER GRAHAM:** Just if I could build up on  
14 my focus of the question though; of the data that you have  
15 available, how much would you say is, in a sense, reliable  
16 data that's relatively recent; that you know the labs that  
17 did it are, you know, that they're valid; you actually  
18 have some good geographic or spatial distribution of the  
19 data as opposed to some grab samples that were taken, you  
20 know, 30, 20, 10 years ago?

21 I'm trying to get a handle on how much --  
22 when you come into this, how much do you -- you must have  
23 a pretty good idea of the scope of new sampling and  
24 analyses that you have to do, relative to the, presumably,  
25 the high quality historical data that you have at hand?

1                   **MR. MULDOON:** Joe Muldoon for the record.

2                   There have been recent studies done that --  
3                   and even in the last decade, the last 10-15 years that we  
4                   feel are very reliable.

5                   Some of that historical information is very  
6                   important in terms of seeing that trend through time that  
7                   the intervenor just spoke about in terms of how things  
8                   have shifted. So that information is also of value.

9                   Part of this assessment process is to go  
10                  back through and look at the data that -- look at the data  
11                  that's been collected and make the appropriate decisions  
12                  in terms of what can we use and where are the gaps.

13                  What data is valuable and what are we  
14                  missing, and therefore, obviously, based on what we are  
15                  missing then we have to go out and get those studies  
16                  completed.

17                  So it's really, -- I'd like to be able to  
18                  answer your question more directly, but it's -- we haven't  
19                  done the amount of work yet to be able to -- that I could  
20                  give you an absolute comment on all of the studies that  
21                  have been done. There has been a lot of work, but we do  
22                  have to assess it and do further studies as well.

23                  **MEMBER BARNES:** Could I just ask, Mr.  
24                  Chair, if the staff have any comment on that last  
25                  question?

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( SHORT PAUSE )

**DR. THOMPSON:** Patsy Thompson for the record.

In terms of additional studies and reliability of existing information, our experience with other sites that have been in operation for a long time is that because of the changes in analytical methods, comparison of information is often difficult.

And in terms of approaching a site like this, the recommended or favoured approach is not to rely on records but to actually do physical work so that we actually know what we're dealing with.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Any other questions?  
Monsieur Harvey?

**MEMBER HARVEY:** Just one question, in your written submission, you can -- on page 1:

"During the restoration of the site we would like to see certain elements of the operation preserved to form a display in appropriate value."

You have been on the site and you observed what is there and you have any idea of what could be preserved or are you just satisfied by the fact -- by what is written in four, five, 12, the department is to identify any historical artefact that could be preserved

1 to commemorate mining history?

2 **MR. LAWSON:** I think you're addressing that  
3 question to me and I think it's actually on the next  
4 intervention ---

5 **MR. HARVEY:** Okay, I'm sorry ---

6 **MR. LAWSON:** --- or following intervention.

7 **MR. HARVEY:** --- I'm sorry. I'm too fast  
8 in my ---

9 **MR. LAWSON:** I can answer it, but ---

10 (LAUGHTER)

11 **MR. HARVEY:** Well, you've been on the site  
12 and you have any idea. I will ask the question to the  
13 next person.

14 **MR. LAWSON:** Well, the main consideration  
15 on the site is public safety. I mean the province is  
16 concerned with the liability at the site. People go to  
17 that site. I've been there myself. I've climbed that  
18 head frame. It's not a very rational thing to do to climb  
19 that head frame. They don't want people climbing that  
20 head frame.

21 Meanwhile, all the professional geologists  
22 and mining engineers in the province would like to have it  
23 preserved. So it's a bit of a controversy.

24 But I myself am in agreement that the head  
25 frame should come down. But that there should be some

1           plaques; there should be some commemoration of the miners  
2           and the people that worked there over time.

3                        So you should -- there should be something  
4           that remains but more of a monument rather than a  
5           retention of buildings. The buildings should be removed  
6           because of public safety.

7                        **MEMBER HARVEY:** Thank you.

8                        **THE CHAIRMAN:** Thank you.

9                        Mr. Graham?

10                      **MEMBER GRAHAM:** Just an observation. I  
11           think Mr. Lawson has gone to a lot of detail and a lot of  
12           -- as an individual to come here today and so on and I  
13           would hope that there would be a consultation process  
14           between the officials and Mr. Lawson with the knowledge  
15           that he has over the years.

16                      And I think it would benefit us all when  
17           you're coming back, if his knowledge is incorporated in  
18           what you've done -- in what you're doing.

19                      **THE CHAIRMAN:** Just to piggyback on that; I  
20           don't think there's -- hope has nothing to do with it.  
21           It's going to be a public consultation process and I will  
22           hope that you will be participating quite extensively in  
23           it.

24                      And to staff, is there anything in this  
25           recommendation that you will not be dealing with in the

1 environmental assessment?

2 **DR. THOMPSON:** Patsy Thompson for the  
3 record.

4 The scoping document doesn't include any of  
5 the details that Mr. Lawson provided, but SRC would  
6 certainly be expected to go through the same process and  
7 identify options and the options that Mr. Lawson  
8 identified would likely surface.

9 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Okay.  
10 Anything else?

11 Well thank you very much.

12 **MR. LAWSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

13 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Sorry, did you want to say  
14 anything, some final comment?

15 **MR. LAWSON:** No, that's fine.

16 I'm pleased with the way the process is  
17 going. I've participated in it many times and ---

18 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Thank you.

19 **MR. LAWSON:** --- it will work out in the  
20 end.

21 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Okay, we're moving on to our  
22 next submission which is an oral presentation by the  
23 Northern Saskatchewan Environmental Quality Committee, as  
24 outlined in CMD 08-H17.3 and we have Mr. Felix McDonald of  
25 Fond du Lac First Nation.

1                   Mr. McDonald, the floor is yours.

2

3           **08-H17.3**

4           **Oral Presentation by the**

5           **Northern Saskatchewan**

6           **Environmental Quality Committee**

7

8                   **MR. McDONALD:** Good evening, President, and  
9 Members of the Commission.

10                   My name is Felix McDonald. I live in the  
11 community of Fond du Lac, Saskatchewan about 800  
12 kilometres north of here and I'm here today representing  
13 the Northern Saskatchewan Environment Quality Committee.

14                   I realize that today has been a very long  
15 day for you so I will keep my comments brief.

16                   The Gunnar mine and milling operation has  
17 been a legend since -- well, before I was born. The  
18 activity level that occurred on this site had operated for  
19 a very short period of time, it is something that a legend  
20 is made of. I hope this -- my hope is that for my  
21 grandchildren, all that will remain of the site will be  
22 legend.

23                   Completing the environmental assessment for  
24 this project is an important first step. Ensuring that  
25 the assessment evaluates all of the possible solutions for



1 the site is also a very important part of my -- of the  
2 project planning process.

3 For this reason, we understand that it is  
4 important for regulators to provide good guidance to the  
5 project proponent to prepare the environment impact  
6 statement. We have had an opportunity to meet with the  
7 staff from the various federal and provincial bodies that  
8 may play in the role in the assessment.

9 We appreciate the fact that they took the  
10 time to come to Uranium City to meet with us and explain  
11 what can seem a very complicated process.

12 One of the things that is still unclear to  
13 us is what the purpose of this project is. We need to  
14 clearly understand whether we are to expect that this site  
15 will be cleaned up and restructured in the way that will  
16 support the pre-disturbance environment or if the project  
17 is only intent to prevent the further transfer of  
18 contamination from the site.

19 To us there is a difference. We would like  
20 to ensure that this difference is clearly identified as  
21 part of the environmental assessment.

22 Secondly, the men and women who worked in  
23 uranium industry during this era played an important role  
24 in the development of the Far North in Saskatchewan.

25 The community I live in was part of the

1 supply chain of uranium ore to the mill in the Uranium  
2 City area. Because of this I would like to see a tribute  
3 to these brave souls who came to our North, employed our  
4 family members and established new trade routes in the  
5 area. During the restoration of this site we would like  
6 to see certain elements of the operation preserved to form  
7 the display in an appropriate venue.

8 We do support the assessment guidelines for  
9 this project and we believe that they should provide  
10 adequate guidance for the project proponent to evaluate  
11 all possible operations for the decommission of this site.

12 Thank you.

13 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Thank you.

14 Comments?

15 Dr. Barnes?

16 **MEMBER BARNES:** Perhaps SRC would like to  
17 provide an answer to the question in the sixth paragraph  
18 there, "One of the things that is still unclear,"  
19 et cetera. There are also two end points there. Are you  
20 going to kind of do the minimum of preventing further  
21 transport of contaminants or are you hoping, which I think  
22 is the case but not maybe completely, to try to rejig the  
23 site so that it becomes rehabilitated, in terms of  
24 vegetation and gets closer -- not identical to, but  
25 somewhat closer to the original setting.

1                   Would that be a fair interpretation or your  
2                   own comment?

3                   **MR. MULDOON:** Joe Muldoon, for the record.

4                   Certainly our intent would be to bring the  
5                   site back to the greatest levels. We'll never get it back  
6                   to what it was, but certainly our intent is not to go in  
7                   and do the minimal amount of work.

8                   Our intent is to go in and certainly  
9                   rehabilitate that site to a standard that meets the  
10                  requirements and meets, certainly, the Northern peoples  
11                  and their needs as well.

12                  **THE CHAIRMAN:** Thank you.

13                  Any other questions?

14                  Okay, thank you very much. We'll move to  
15                  the next submission, which is an oral presentation by the  
16                  Métis Nation-Saskatchewan, as outlined in CMD 08-H17.4.  
17                  We have Mr. Douglas Racine with us.

18                  Mr. Racine, the floor is yours.

19

20                  **08-H17.4**

21                  **Oral presentation by the**

22                  **Métis Nation Saskatchewan**

23

24                  **MR. RACINE:** When I first started writing  
25                  this submission I had "good morning", then it changed to

1 "good afternoon" and now I think it's evening. Good  
2 evening, Mr. Chair and Commission Members.

3 When our submission was being put together  
4 we weren't anticipating the President of the Métis Nation  
5 to attend with us, and he is in attendance today, Mr.  
6 Robert Doucette.

7 As he became aware of the issues he -- he  
8 was supposed to be in Ottawa right now at the 25<sup>th</sup> gala  
9 for the Métis National Council. He cancelled that. He  
10 feels that this is very, very important to be here, after  
11 reviewing the documents and everything else.

12 He has some opening comments that he would  
13 like to provide the Commission and then I have a few  
14 follow-up statements.

15 **MR. DOUCETTE:** Thank you, Mr. President.

16 I will try and keep this to five minutes,  
17 as humanly possible, and I want to applaud your fortitude;  
18 you're as stable as that beaver lodge holding back the  
19 water here, doing a great job today, so I just wanted to  
20 say that.

21 The population most affected by the  
22 abandoned uranium mines are the people in close proximity  
23 to the abandoned uranium mine sites. In this case it is  
24 the community of Uranium City which is surrounded by  
25 approximately 35 of these sites, varying in size from very

1 small operations to larger operations such as Gunnar Mine,  
2 which operated from 1956 to '63.

3 The Métis of Uranium City make up  
4 approximately 30 percent of the local population and the  
5 Métis living in and around Uranium City continue to live  
6 off the land and because of this they are the most  
7 affected by the abandoned uranium mine contaminants.

8 When the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan  
9 became aware that the Nuclear Safety Commission was  
10 conducting a public hearing on the remediation of the  
11 Gunnar mine site, it immediately contacted the Métis  
12 residents in the Athabasca region.

13 These exchanges of information provided the  
14 MNS -- I'll just use the acronym now; MNS means Métis Nation  
15 of Saskatchewan -- the MSN with a wealth of information  
16 from an Aboriginal and, more specifically, a Métis  
17 perspective.

18 For example, we know that trapping, hunting  
19 and fishing is an ongoing practice in the Athabasca region  
20 and then more specifically, Métis trap on all sides of the  
21 Gunnar mine site.

22 You know, just as some of our colleagues  
23 have told you here, people do actually visit that site.  
24 Métis of Uranium City have told us it's a tourist  
25 attraction and, you know, the Métis citizens have also

1 told us that there was no effort to educate the Métis  
2 population on the dangers of radon since the 1970s when it  
3 was discovered that the backfill used around the houses  
4 was emitting high doses of radon.

5 Therefore, it is important that the  
6 remediation of the Gunnar mine site is seen in the proper  
7 context. For example, or firstly, in the project scoping  
8 document, Project-Specific Guidelines and the  
9 Comprehensive Study Scoping Document Former Gunnar Mine  
10 Site Rehabilitation Project, it is clear the Métis Nation  
11 of Saskatchewan and the Métis have had no involvement in  
12 the remediation plan that has been under the sole  
13 stewardship of an administration team made up of  
14 government employees which are, I think, provincial and  
15 federal departments, as has been explained -- Natural  
16 Resources Canada but not the Métis.

17 The scoping document states that there was  
18 contact on 10 occasions between August 2007 and June 2008  
19 with the MNS.

20 It is important to note that the majority  
21 of these communications involve the Clearwater-Clear Lake  
22 Northern Region 2 and not with the Métis Nation-  
23 Saskatchewan regional office, Northern Region 1, that is  
24 responsible for the Athabasca Lake area.

25 The regional president of Region 2

1 confirmed the contacts by the federal government, stating  
2 that some of the 10 contacts involved emails and the one  
3 face-to-face meeting was not on the Gunnar mine  
4 specifically, but on the environmental review process,  
5 because we had some questions about -- we'd been receiving  
6 letters from a lot of the environmental agencies, from the  
7 federal government, like a pipeline down south, and so we  
8 wanted to know, like how can we participate in that? And  
9 that's why we asked them to come to our office.

10 She also stated that one piece of the  
11 correspondence was sent to the Government of Canada and  
12 has not been officially responded to.

13 On August 5<sup>th</sup>, the date that has been  
14 referred to here, we were told of the project. There was  
15 no specific information was given on this project and that  
16 was -- and the next meeting, which has not been scheduled  
17 yet.

18 So there was no specific meeting on Gunnar  
19 mine site. It was a general meeting to talk about how we  
20 can get involved with the environmental assessment process  
21 that regulates things in Canada. It wasn't about the  
22 Gunnar mine site, so let's make that perfectly clear.

23 A notice of the Nuclear Safety Commission  
24 intention to hold a hearing on the SRC proposed  
25 remediation of the Gunnar mine site was apparently posted

1 in hamlet offices in the Athabasca regions. But the Métis  
2 Locals in the region said that they were not aware of the  
3 notice. According to the track report, notices of the  
4 hearing were also published in major newspapers, on the  
5 radios.

6 And in reference to putting public notices  
7 in the hamlet office, Métis of Uranium City have told us  
8 this is problematic. First, the office is only opened  
9 Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1:30 to 4:30. Secondly, it is  
10 rarely visited by the local population unless they have  
11 business there, which we are told is not very often. And  
12 finally, the hamlet office is now closed as the person  
13 running the office has quit and a replacement has not been  
14 provided.

15 And more -- just to make sure that we were  
16 checking our sources, the major person to check to see if  
17 they were posted, there was none posted; we checked. The  
18 president of the Uranium City Métis Local and myself does  
19 not believe that the community was consulted on a  
20 remediation plan properly. The SRC proposal, the scoping  
21 document and the track report were shared with the Métis  
22 Local in early September 2008.

23 However, after reviewing the documents, the  
24 Local President acknowledged that few, if any, of his  
25 community would understand the garbled technical language



1 in the document. And if the SRC wanted the Métis to have  
2 a basic understanding of the documents, they would have to  
3 undergo substantial revision into plain English. The SRC  
4 states in a project proposal they have made significant  
5 efforts to ensure that all activities at the site are  
6 communicated to the public in Uranium City via public  
7 forums and there've been other PA, Stony Rapids, as other  
8 examples.

9 In respect to being consulted on this  
10 project, one Metis resident stated if the SRC considers  
11 one meeting with eight people communicating properly, then  
12 they guess they did.

13 Just a couple of approaches and examples  
14 for the SRC to consider and for the CNSC to consider. The  
15 SRC approach to remediating the Gunnar site, Gunnar Mine  
16 is strictly different than that taken in the case of the  
17 Dene Port Radium Mine in the Northwest Territories. And  
18 they were really involved in this process. So what we've  
19 heard is that the SRC is proposing to hold forums and  
20 update the public about the clean-up.

21 The Métis, however, need to be consulted  
22 first and they need to identify their issues, including  
23 design issues, through a participatory process. First and  
24 foremost, however, the community members must understand  
25 the risks of exposure to radiation, contaminants in the

1 surrounding environment of the mine, and this must be  
2 communicated in a culturally relevant way, using  
3 appropriate methodologies.

4 And based on this participatory process,  
5 the SRC should respond by redesigning their process to  
6 included knowledge of and from the community members in  
7 this case, many who live subsistence lifestyles.

8 Such consultation cannot be done adequately  
9 from, as you have heard, the EQC as proposed by the SRC,  
10 as they are not representatives of the Métis Nation of  
11 Saskatchewan, nor the Métis living in that area.

12 Perhaps, if we could, in my maybe closing  
13 remarks here -- perhaps understanding the consultative  
14 process with the Dene use at Port Radium or the way the  
15 UPAD is with the Navajo in United States, just as an  
16 example, the Dene were given \$400,000 to consult and scope  
17 the issues. The Navajo in the U.S. Midwest have received  
18 millions of dollars for educational programmes to assist  
19 their populations, to address the clean-up issues and to  
20 study the impact.

21 The proposed funding for the Gunnar Mine  
22 clean-up is grossly inadequate, as far as we're concerned,  
23 and does not address these issues, and so I turn it over  
24 to my learned colleague Douglas Racine for final  
25 submissions.

1                   **MR. RACINE:** The Métis Nation of  
2                   Saskatchewan officially started taking a look at the  
3                   documents before the Commission on the 15<sup>th</sup> of August, and  
4                   since that time they've worked hard to understand them.

5                   One of the things that they did was they  
6                   quickly realized that the Navajo had been cleaning up  
7                   uranium mines for a long time. The Navajo have their own  
8                   engineers and everything else and they were contacted.

9                   One of the questions posed to the Navajo  
10                  was that they were asked, "Is there anything that came up  
11                  that you weren't going to be aware of or you weren't aware  
12                  of at the time and that you had to deal with now?" And  
13                  the answer the Navajo gave the Métis Nation of  
14                  Saskatchewan, they said "Yes."

15                  What happened after the uranium mines in  
16                  the -- on the Navajo reserve were abandoned, the  
17                  individuals, tribal members, went on to those sites,  
18                  gathered building materials and built dwellings and other  
19                  buildings. Now, this has resulted in a huge project in  
20                  the U.S. where they are identifying those buildings and  
21                  actually removing those contaminated, destroying those  
22                  buildings and warning people.

23                  The MNS undertook to talk to its members in  
24                  the north and asked if that had indeed been an incident  
25                  that was occurring in the north. And from all indications

1 and information that the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan is  
2 getting, is that this practice was widespread.

3 We would like the Commission and the SRC to  
4 take a look at that. That's a big concern in the  
5 community in the north. If contaminated materials were  
6 removed from the mine sites, were they used in building  
7 materials, and if they come to the conclusion that it  
8 might have been a possibility, they should really take a  
9 look at what the Navajo have done in identifying and  
10 removing those materials from the communities.

11 The second thing that they found out was  
12 that -- or what they're speculating. They read through  
13 the documents and it appears to us, after reading the  
14 documents, and reading a document called -- and I'll just  
15 bring this to your attention. It's called Technologically  
16 Enhanced Naturally Occurring Radioactive Materials from  
17 Uranium Mining; it's published by the United States  
18 Environmental Protection Agency. It was printed, I think,  
19 in April 2008 so it's rather recent. And it's on those --  
20 a very handy document.

21 But it appears to us and to the Métis  
22 Nation of Saskatchewan, and we would like this  
23 investigated but we believe that what the SRC is proposing  
24 is that the mine be remediated to a standard and if I --  
25 and forgive my scientific understanding of this, if I can

1 just read this.

2 The maximum service radiation level  
3 permitted at an American uranium mill site after  
4 remediation is 20 micro Roentgens an hour, and what the  
5 SRC is imposing is 250 micro Roentgens per hour; now,  
6 that's funny because I don't even know how to pronounce  
7 it.

8 But that's 10 times higher than the  
9 equivalent U.S. standard when they remediate mines. And  
10 we would like the -- the MNS feels that the proposed 250  
11 figure standard for radiation dose on the site after  
12 remediation is simply not acceptable.

13 The final health concern that came up was  
14 that, on reviewing those documents, we came across a  
15 document, the 2003 final report of the Athabasca Working  
16 Group Environmental Monitoring Programme. There they had  
17 two rates on testing sites; one beside Uranium City and  
18 one several kilometres away on the shores of Athabasca.

19 The radon level on the one several  
20 kilometres away peaked, in the winter of 2002-2003, at  
21 1,531 becquerels per square metre. At the same time,  
22 there was a peak beside Uranium City of 847 becquerels per  
23 square metre.

24 Now, we would like the Commission to take a  
25 look at this. The Métis Nation of Saskatchewan don't have

1 the scientists to take a look at this but we do know that  
2 Health Canada says that the maximum dose that you -- or  
3 that they consider safe is 200 becquerels. So they  
4 actually had a couple of big peaks there and I think, in  
5 fact, if you look at that document, and we have several  
6 copies here from the Athabasca Working Group, is that  
7 actually Uranium City was over 200 becquerels per square  
8 metre, I think for almost -- well, the way the graph  
9 looks, for almost a year.

10 The Métis Nation of Saskatchewan considers  
11 this a very serious matter. It is possible that those  
12 high radon readings came from one of the other abandoned  
13 mines. We're not sure that it didn't come from the Gunnar  
14 Mine. We are aware that there was other radon testing at  
15 the Gunnar mine site. The Métis Nation of Saskatchewan  
16 would like disclosure of those and would like to have some  
17 type of capacity to understand the dangers.

18 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Can you please wrap up?

19 **MR. RACINE:** Yes. Just a few comments  
20 about the EQC. The MNS has been assured on many occasions  
21 that their traditional and Constitutional rights are  
22 safeguarded by the Northern Saskatchewan Environmental  
23 Quality Committee and of course you'll see that throughout  
24 their documents, that they use them extensively.

25 THE MNS, however, feel that the EQC does

1 not represent the Métis interest and that they are not  
2 elected or appointed by the Métis Nation.

3 In the cases of the Métis in Uranium City,  
4 the representative from Uranium City is not Métis. It is  
5 most likely than not that the EQC representative from  
6 Uranium City knows little of the Constitutional rights  
7 afforded to the Métis and the rights that flow from  
8 traditional use and lands and animals.

9 One final comment on the duty to consult;  
10 Canada has a statutory contractual and common-law  
11 obligation to consult with the Métis. More specifically,  
12 Canada has the duty to consult with the Métis of the  
13 Athabasca Region and therefore with the MNS.

14 In this case the honour of their crown is  
15 at stake as the proposed project clearly violates Section  
16 35 rights of the Métis in the Athabasca Region.

17 With that comment, we do have three very  
18 short recommendations and I'll just let Mr. Doucette  
19 provide those to you.

20 **MR. DOUCETTE:** Thank you, and thank you for  
21 giving us a little bit of extra time.

22 Our recommendations are that -- conclude  
23 that there has been -- given the issues presented in this  
24 paper and again for the record it's Robert Doucette;  
25 President of Métis Nation-Saskatchewan.

1                   Given the issues presented in this paper  
2                   and we can present copies to you, part of our oral  
3                   presentation.

4                   The MNS recommends to the Commission;  
5                   conclude there has been insufficient public consultation  
6                   and that there is insufficient information received to  
7                   report to the Minister of the Environment.

8                   Number two; recommend to the Minister of  
9                   Environment to refer the project to a review panel. Why?  
10                  Because the EQCs are not adequate and the Northern  
11                  municipalities, again, are not our representatives.

12                  Number three; advise the Minister that  
13                  unless there's sufficient capacity building within the MNS  
14                  represent the Métis rights-bearing Aboriginal communities  
15                  of the Athabasca region, the success of this proposal is  
16                  in jeopardy. Just as an example, we have expended \$25,000  
17                  just to try and understand and get our paper to this  
18                  point. And to be quite honest, I don't know how I'm going  
19                  to pay you, Doug, I think I'm going to have to have a  
20                  bannock sale or something. I don't know where I'm getting  
21                  \$25,000 from.

22                  And a final point that I wanted to make is  
23                  that there is a duty to consult and accommodate Métis as  
24                  the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission is an agent of the  
25                  Crown, as is the SRC.



1                   So you know -- one final point, the  
2                   majority of the Aboriginal people who are living on the  
3                   northwest side of the Province of Saskatchewan are Métis  
4                   and I think there needs to be a lot of work. There's no  
5                   understanding of the traditional land use study,  
6                   traditional land use patterns of the Métis and I think it  
7                   would be a travesty if we didn't take all of these things  
8                   into consideration.

9                   Include capacity to help the Métis make a  
10                  proper and good presentation to this Commission. And as a  
11                  matter of fact, if I get capacity I'm going to hire Mr.  
12                  Lawson there because he seems to know what's going on.

13                  **THE CHAIRMAN:** Thank you very much.

14                  **MR. DOUCETTE:** Thank you.

15                  **THE CHAIRMAN:** Question, observation?  
16                  Mr. Graham?

17                  **MEMBER GRAHAM:** I just feel that there's  
18                  been -- even though it is late in the day that this --  
19                  this presentation does bring to light, especially the  
20                  communications. Because when I -- one of my original  
21                  questions when I read all the documents, not this one  
22                  especially, but I wondered how you did communicate in  
23                  Northern communities. Daily newspapers certainly don't  
24                  get there; television, radios, and I think there is a  
25                  message there, and I would ask Saskatchewan Research

1 Council; will you be changing your method of  
2 communicating, especially -- you have now a network  
3 through the Métis Council, will you be changing your  
4 method of communications?

5 **MR. MULDOON:** Joe Muldoon for the record.

6 Yes, we'll certainly be examining what  
7 methods we use to date and if there's ways that we can  
8 improve and involve Métis Nation of Saskatchewan we'll  
9 certainly do so.

10 **MEMBER GRAHAM:** And you will be consulting  
11 further with the Métis Council on the points that have  
12 been brought up today?

13 **MR. MULDOON:** We would -- we would sit down  
14 with Métis Nation, yes.

15 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Any -- just a piece of  
16 advice; we have -- if you're interested in the uranium  
17 business we would hope that you will find our website,  
18 somehow, and keep track of our -- we publish all our  
19 hearings, all our -- you know, in the future hearings, et  
20 cetera, et cetera.

21 So please use this also as a vehicle of  
22 information; there's lots of information on it.

23 The other thing, I just -- you know, what  
24 strikes me about all of this is that here we have an  
25 abandoned mine that after many, many years two government

1       decide they're going to do something about this and we  
2       make it very difficult for this -- that's to go and --  
3       what I assume to be making progress and improving the  
4       site.

5                        So I find it's a bit curious that even in  
6       trying to do something we still got to go through some --  
7       a lot of gates and processes.

8                        Nevertheless, this is the process and I  
9       guess we'll take this under advisement.

10                      So thank you for the submission.

11                      That's -- do we have -- we have one more  
12       written submission.

13                      **MR. LEBLANC:** We have one written  
14       submission which has already been heard earlier today and  
15       it's from the Northern Saskatchewan Women's Network  
16       Incorporated.

17

18       **08-H17.5 / 08-H17.5A**

19       **Written submission from the**  
20       **Northern Saskatchewan Woman's**  
21       **Network Incorporated**

22

23                      There were no questions earlier, any  
24       question from the members?

25

      No.

1                   So in this respect -- or with respect to  
2                   this matter, rather, I propose that the Commission confers  
3                   with regards to the information that it has considered  
4                   today and then determine if further information is needed  
5                   or if the Commission is ready to proceed with a decision.  
6                   We will advise accordingly.

7                   **THE CHAIRMAN:** This has been a long, long  
8                   day and the hearing will resume tomorrow morning at 9  
9                   o'clock with application by Cameco Corporation for their  
10                  renewal of the licence for the Rabbit Lake operation and  
11                  the application by Canadian Light Source for an amendment  
12                  to their licence.

13                  So thank you all for your patience and  
14                  endurance and see you tomorrow.

15                  --- Upon adjourning at 8:07 p.m.