



Prairie and Northern Region    Région des Prairies et du Nord  
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Edmonton, Alberta T5J 4C3    Edmonton (Alberta) T5J 4C3

November 10, 2020

Amy Lintick  
Operations Manager  
Great Sandhills Railway

Sent via email: [alintick@gsrailway.net](mailto:alintick@gsrailway.net)

**RE: Designation Request pursuant to the *Impact Assessment Act* for the Great Sandhills Railway Switching Operation at North West Terminal Project**

Dear Ms. Lintick:

On October 21, 2020, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change (the Minister) received a request to designate the proposed railway yard expansion at North West Terminal under subsection 9(1) of the *Impact Assessment Act* (IAA).

**Designation Request**

Under subsection 9(1) of IAA the Minister may, by order, designate a physical activity that is not prescribed in the *Physical Activities Regulations*. The Minister may do this if, in the Minister's opinion, the physical activity may cause adverse effects within federal jurisdiction or adverse direct or incidental effects (resulting from federal decisions), or public concerns related to those effects warrant the designation. In accordance with subsection 9(4) of IAA, it is expected that the Minister will respond, with reasons, to the request by January 19, 2020.

Additional information regarding the process for designation requests can be found at the following link: <https://www.canada.ca/en/impact-assessment-agency/services/policy-guidance/designating-project-impact-assessment-act.html>.

The Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (the Agency) will review information about the railway yard expansion, including the revised track design provided by Great Sandhills Railway Ltd. on October 9, 2020, hereafter Great Sandhills Railway Switching Operation (revised design) at North West Terminal Project (the Project); any concerns expressed (that the Agency is aware of) from the public and Indigenous groups; expert advice from federal authorities; and input from provincial ministries in order to inform the Minister on whether to designate the Project. If designated, to proceed with the Project, Great Sandhills Railway Ltd. would be required to submit an Initial Project Description to the Agency, thereby commencing the planning phase of IAA. In that case, the planning phase



would include the Agency determining whether a federal impact assessment is required.

**The Agency understands from our meeting of October 27, 2020 that the revised track layout provided to the Agency on October 9, 2020 is the final design that Great Sandhills Railway Ltd. intends to advance. If this is not the case, please confirm your plans for the expansion to us as soon as possible.**

At this time, the Agency also requests available information regarding the following by November 20, 2020:

1. any changes or updates to information previously submitted to the Agency with respect to the Project purpose, project activities, or regulatory approvals, as a result of the revised track design;
2. any update on steps you have taken and plan to take to engage with the public and Indigenous communities, during all phases of the Project;
3. any update on public and Indigenous community concerns in relation to this project that you are aware of, including those of the requester, and an overview of the key issues and the way in which (in general terms) you plan to address these matters;
4. any other comments in relation to environmental effects and how you intend to address and manage those; and
5. your views on whether the Project should be designated under IAA.

In the coming days, a Registry page for the Project will be available on the Canadian Impact Assessment Registry Internet site and include the incoming request to designate the Project.

**Important Note:** All records produced, collected or received in relation to the designation request process – unless prohibited under the *Access to Information Act* or *Privacy Act* – will be considered public and may be released. Should you wish to provide any comments or documents that contain confidential or sensitive information that you believe should be protected from release to the public, please contact the Agency before submitting the information. Information marked as confidential will not be accepted without prior contact made with the Agency.

If you have any questions, I can be reached at (587) 357-6484 or by e-mail at [Shelly.Boss@canada.ca](mailto:Shelly.Boss@canada.ca).

Sincerely,

<Original signed by>

Shelly Boss  
Project Manager, Prairie and Northern Region