

1 **COGEMA Resources Inc.:**
2 **Environmental Assessment**
3 **Guidelines for proposed**
4 **Ferric-sulphate production at**
5 **McClellan Lake**
6
7 **06-H110**
8 **Written Submission from**
9 **CNSC staff**

10

11

12

13

THE CHAIRPERSON: The next hearing on the agenda is the Environmental Assessment Guidelines for the proposed ferric-sulphate production at McClellan Lake.

14

15

I believe we have Dr. John Rowsen joining us from Saskatoon; is that correct, sir?

16

Are you there? He's not there.

17

(SHORT PAUSE)

18

19

THE CHAIRPERSON: Dr. Rowsen, are you with us?

20

DR. ROWSEN: Yes, I'm here.

21

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you very much.

22

23

24

25

We are here to do the environmental assessment guidelines for the proposed ferric-sulphate production at McClellan Lake. I would like to note that with us this afternoon is Mr. Alan Graham and Dr. James

1 Dosman, as well as myself as panellists.

2 **DR. ROSEN:** Good afternoon.

3 **THE CHAIRPERSON:** We have the secretary of
4 the Commission Marc Leblanc and the General Counsel for
5 the Commission Jacque Lavoie with us as well.

6 I would like to note that the Commission
7 Members have read the written submission filed by CNSC
8 staff as outlined in Commission Member document 06-H110.
9 I would like to begin by asking the CNSC staff if they
10 have any comments to make which to add to the written
11 submission and, Mr. Rinker, do you have any comments, sir?

12 **MR. RINKER:** Good afternoon, Madam
13 President and Members of the Commission.

14 CNSC staff has no additional information to
15 present on this matter but are available to answer any
16 questions.

17 **THE CHAIRPERSON:** With that, are there any
18 comments that COGEMA Resources would like to make at this
19 time with regards to this application?

20 **MR. HUFFMAN:** Dale Huffman for the record.
21 We have no further comments. We are
22 available to answer questions.

23 **THE CHAIRPERSON:** Thank you very much.
24 So then we'll start by opening the
25 questions. Dr. Dosman, would you like to start, sir?

1 **MEMBER DOSMAN:** Madam Chair, I wonder if I
2 just might ask Mr. Huffman, I take it that instead of
3 trucking the product presumably from Saskatoon to the
4 mine, that the company will be trucking the iron and also
5 sulphuric acid. I'm just wondering whether you can
6 satisfy me that bringing in the additional quantities of
7 sulphuric acid will pose any threat to workers or to the
8 environment?

9 **THE CHAIRPERSON:** Perhaps we could just
10 reword that, Dr. Dosman, to say will the environmental
11 assessment look at those factors ---

12 **MEMBER DOSMAN:** Thank you.

13 **THE CHAIRPERSON:** --- such that we will
14 receive the data required in the report.

15 **MEMBER DOSMAN:** Yes. Thank you for that
16 clarification.

17 **MR. HUFFMAN:** Dale Huffman for the record.

18 We have an acid plant on site at McClean
19 Lake so we truck in sulphur and produce sulphuric acid at
20 McClean Lake now so there won't be transportation of
21 sulphuric acid to site. And you're correct, the
22 magnetite, the iron ore will be trucked to the site
23 instead of trucking liquid ferric-sulphate and we'll put
24 magnetite together with our sulphuric acid produced on
25 site to produce the liquid ferric-sulphate.

1 **MEMBER DOSMAN:** And Madam Chair -- is it
2 your view, Mr. Huffman, that the scoping will adequately
3 account for what I take would be considerably increased
4 necessity of production of sulphuric acid on site?

5 **MR. HUFFMAN:** Yes, I believe the scoping
6 will take that into account. There will be more sulphuric
7 acid produced on site that doesn't necessarily result in
8 greater environmental emissions. It means longer run
9 times for our sulphuric acid plant which means fewer stops
10 and starts, and most of the emissions are related to the
11 starts and stops of the plant. So this will be assessed
12 and the environmental assessment will adequately capture
13 that, yes.

14 **THE CHAIRPERSON:** Perhaps, Dr. Dosman, if
15 you agree, we could ask staff who are responsible for this
16 from their view?

17 **MR. RINKER:** Mike Rinker for the record.

18 I concur with COGEMA's assessment. This
19 environmental assessment will focus on the production of
20 ferric-sulphate on site and include transport of the iron
21 ore to site. That's the primary aspect of the CEAA so I
22 think they will be adequately covered.

23 **MEMBER DOSMAN:** Madam Chair, may I ask
24 staff, in particular will the scoping adequately account
25 for what will I take be a considerable increase of

1 sulphuric acid production and will it account for
2 environmental effects and worker effects, in your view?

3 **MR. RINKER:** Mike Rinker for the record.

4 There will be an increase in the
5 requirement for sulphuric acid production on site. It is
6 within the realm of what can be produced on site so there
7 will be no additional requirement to modify the sulphuric
8 acid plant. However, the additional production of
9 sulphuric acid will be also weighed against the need to
10 restart and shutdown a sulphuric acid plant which has its
11 own sort of emission. So yes, it will be adequately
12 covered.

13 **THE CHAIRPERSON:** Mr. Graham.

14 **MEMBER GRAHAM:** Yes, the construction of a
15 ferric-sulphate circuit will be new to that site. Will
16 the scope also cover the training and all of the aspects
17 with regard to physically handling -- workers physically
18 handling that type of material and so on in producing it
19 in the circuit?

20 **MR. RINKER:** Mike Rinker for the record.

21 The procedures that COGEMA would require in
22 place to ensure health and safety and adequate training,
23 for example, would be required in their description of
24 mitigation measures, for example, and also in their
25 assessment of potential malfunctions and accidents. Quite

1 often, it's procedures that they have in place to avoid
2 those malfunctions and accidents, are the measures that
3 they would describe.

4 **MEMBER GRAHAM:** Also, in the scope is the
5 transport of iron ore to the site, but it doesn't say
6 anything about the storage and the possible protection
7 against runoffs and so on. Will that also be addressed
8 within the scope?

9 **MR. RINKER:** Mike Rinker for the record.

10 The scope of project does include the pad
11 that would be required to store iron ore. So that is
12 going to be assessed as part of the project. It is on the
13 mill terrace, which means that all effluent that could run
14 off from that pad would be collected and, again, the
15 results of that potential and the potential for
16 environmental effects would be assessed.

17 **MEMBER GRAHAM:** Environment Canada wrote a
18 letter, and it is part of the attachment, regarding air
19 emissions with regard to the project would increase from
20 the current values although they would remain within the
21 provincial Air Quality Standards. Now, would air
22 emissions be part of this scope also?

23 **MR. RINKER:** Mike Rinker for the record.

24 Yes, air emissions will be part of the
25 scope. However, I would reserve judgment on the effects

1 of those air emissions or whether they would increase or
2 not until the environmental assessment study report is
3 provided.

4 Environment Canada did provide a thorough
5 review of the project which I have attached for
6 information. However, there were no requests to modify
7 the Environmental Assessment Guidelines from Environment
8 Canada.

9 **MEMBER GRAHAM:** So in the scoping the
10 monitoring of water and the water used in the mill and so
11 on and the by-product waters, will that also be part of
12 the scope in that monitoring?

13 **MR. RINKER:** Mike Rinker for the record.

14 I would seek clarification on your
15 question, please, of the waters used in the mill?

16 **MEMBER GRAHAM:** The very last paragraph in
17 Environment Canada's letter was:

18 "Molybdenum and selenium are elements
19 that effluent can present problematic
20 qualities".

21 It goes on; it goes:

22 "Environment Canada expects the water
23 recycling in the mill to be a process.
24 To process the ore would be monitored
25 for quality."

1 And that was the very last in which
2 Environment Canada was wanting to ensure that the water
3 used in the mill would be monitored. Will that be part of
4 the scope?

5 **MR. RINKER:** Mike Rinker for the record.

6 Should the production of a ferric-sulphate
7 solution and any water that would result as waste water
8 from that process or the ferric-sulphate solution itself
9 contain such constituents that could be problematic, that
10 would be part of the scope of the project.

11 However, water recycle in general within
12 the mill is a current operation that would not be part of
13 the scope of the project.

14 So if it's an existing concern it would not
15 be included. If it's an issue that is raised as a part of
16 the production of ferric-sulphate then, yes, it would be.

17 **MEMBER GRAHAM:** I also notice that road
18 travel will be decreased, which is a positive result.

19 The whole operation, though, there will be
20 no new land. Am I understanding on page 6, number 8,
21 "Process", the EA Screening Report, there is no new land
22 disturbances required to put the 1,000 tonne ore pad in
23 and so on? That's all within the site now? There will be
24 no new disturbances there?

25 **MR. RINKER:** Mike Rinker for the record.

1 I'll answer. I think it's a twofold
2 question.

3 The transport of iron ore will be assessed
4 even though there is a decrease from the current
5 requirement for transportation of ferric-sulphate. In an
6 accident scenario, for example, for transporting iron ore
7 would pose a different -- potentially less, but still a
8 different risk, so that would be assessed.

9 The pad itself is proposed to be located on
10 existing mill terrace, the terrace being the land that is
11 currently disturbed for the mill facility and contains
12 already the berms and the catchments to manage water. So
13 new lands would be disturbed.

14 **THE CHAIRPERSON:** Is there any further
15 questions?

16 **MEMBER DOSMAN:** Yes, Madam Chair.

17 I'd just like to address on page 8, 9.2.3
18 the question of the VECs and the views of the
19 Environmental Quality Committee. I'm just wondering if I
20 ask Mr. -- could ask Mr. Huffman the nature of the
21 consultations that the company has conducted with the
22 Environmental Quality Committee?

23 **MR. HUFFMAN:** Dale Huffman for the record.

24 We had a meeting with the EQC, I guess it's
25 a couple weeks ago now, and presented the ferric-sulphate

1 project to them and showed them the site itself and
2 explained why we are doing this project, et cetera, and we
3 continue to keep them updated on our projects.

4 John Rowsen was actually the person up
5 giving the presentation. If you have any more detailed
6 questions, perhaps John can answer them, but this is a
7 standard part of our consultation process is to discuss
8 with the EQC and those aspects of the EA.

9 **MEMBER DOSMAN:** Thank you.

10 And so you're confident that the
11 Environmental Quality Committee is in agreement that the
12 VECs previously identified for McClean Lake would continue
13 to be used for this assessment. What was the meeting
14 like? How many people were there and so on?

15 **MR. HUFFMAN:** I think it would be best if
16 John answered that question.

17 **DR. ROWSEN:** This is John Rowsen from
18 COGEMA.

19 The meeting was held on March the 16th at
20 the McClean Lake site. There were five EQC members from
21 the Athabasca Basin present as well as the CNSC Project
22 Officer and the Sask Environment Project Officer and the
23 Northern Mines Secretariat. Present also at the meeting
24 were the General Manager of the McClean Lake Mine and the
25 Superintendent of EH&S.

1 I gave perhaps a 35-minute presentation on
2 the project, describing the need, the purpose of it;
3 describing the project itself I also concluded with a
4 discussion of the environmental, health and safety
5 implications that the project might have.

6 **MEMBER DOSMAN:** One last question, Madam
7 Chair.

8 May I ask staff, is staff satisfied that
9 the interests in those VECs identified by the
10 Environmental Quality Committee that the scoping
11 adequately protects those interests?

12 **MR. RINKER:** Mike Rinker for the record.

13 CNSC staff did attend the information
14 meeting as observers and also interviewed the Northern
15 Mines Secretariat on their thoughts of the information
16 package the following day to understand if there would be
17 any concerns.

18 We did not find any concerns related to
19 this project. There was some interest, but mostly because
20 members of the EQC had some operational experience in this
21 type of project at other mines and they had some interest
22 to discuss it, but not an interest related to
23 environmental concerns.

24 In terms of the VECs we have an agreement
25 with EQC to use a standing list of VECs and not to

1 continually consult them on those VECs but to use the list
2 that's in existence until told otherwise.

3 So we would not want to go against that
4 agreement and consult them on the VECs for this particular
5 project.

6 **MEMBER DOSMAN:** Thank you.

7 **THE CHAIRPERSON:** This was a discussion
8 that we had when we were in Lac La Ronge. The EQCs felt
9 that they were being over consulted and that they
10 specifically made this request at that time.

11 **MEMBER DOSMAN:** Thank you.

12 **THE CHAIRPERSON:** I'd just like to -- I
13 have a question for staff with regards to the
14 recommendations they make on page 7 of H10, number 9.

15 The first question is CNSC staff recommends
16 that technical studies not be delegated to COGEMA. Could
17 you explain your reasoning there?

18 **MR. RINKER:** Mike Rinker for the record.

19 The scope of this environmental assessment
20 is not the use of ferric sulphate but simply its
21 production on site. So it's the environmental effects
22 related to that scope and the scope of the project
23 required under assessment is not very large.

24 In addition, COGEMA provided a project
25 description that contained a thorough description of the

1 project and, in addition, information on the environmental
2 effects of the proposed project that, although not
3 complete, would satisfy, in large part, the need to write
4 a screening report.

5 There will be additional information
6 requirements, but staff are not of the opinion that it
7 would warrant the development of a separate EA study
8 report that would then go out to federal authorities for
9 review, followed by the development of a screening report
10 which would then go out to federal authorities for review,
11 but rather go directly to a screening report, provide all
12 of the information that would be, for example, contained
13 in a study report and have that reviewed as one single but
14 small document.

15 **THE CHAIRPERSON:** Thank you.

16 My second question is that the comment
17 should be that -- the recommendation on page 7 was that
18 should the Commission approve the Guidelines that the
19 screening report would be at a closed hearing, not a
20 public hearing of the Commission.

21 Could you give the reasoning behind this
22 recommendation, please?

23 **MR. RINKER:** Mike Rinker for the record.

24 This project does not involve nuclear
25 substances. It involves the transport of a relatively

1 benign material and involves processes that we are
2 familiar with.

3 The Environmental Quality Committee who we
4 believe is a good representation of northern communities
5 we value quite strongly is aware of this project and
6 indeed is aware of the technology behind the project and
7 they, at this point, do not have concerns.

8 We will consult with them on the results of
9 the Environmental Assessment Screening Report and we will
10 consult with other key stakeholders. So there will be
11 consultation on the results of the environmental
12 assessment and, therefore, we do not see an additional
13 public hearing that would facilitate interventions as
14 necessary.

15 **THE CHAIRPERSON:** So in summary, what I
16 gather is when you consulted on the Guidelines, there was
17 comments from the EQC which were almost sort of a nil
18 comment and then there wasn't really any further interest
19 in this particularly, as I understand.

20 Am I correct?

21 **MR. RINKER:** Mike Rinker for the record.

22 Yes, you are correct. COGEMA may wish to
23 elaborate because although we were observers, they were
24 facilitating the consultation.

25 The interest, from what you can see, was to

1 provide COGEMA with operational advice on how best to
2 operate this project because they had their own experience
3 and not an interest in -- or not concerns related to the
4 environmental effects, which to me means the environmental
5 -- they do not have concerns related to the environmental
6 assessment at this time.

7 **THE CHAIRPERSON:** I guess my interest is
8 more on the people that weren't EQCs. So I will ask
9 COGEMA if there was any -- I can read the report. I don't
10 really see anything, but was there anything particular
11 that was raised by stakeholders other than the EQC?

12 **MR. HUFFMAN:** No, not to my knowledge.
13 Perhaps John could elaborate if there is anything
14 additional.

15 **MR. ROWSON:** No, there were no other
16 comments. I think Rick Forbes of the CNSC asked a
17 question about sulphuric acid consumption, which I dealt
18 with at the meeting.

19 One EQC member had a question about how
20 many workers that this circuit would employ, but there
21 were no concerns related to the environment from the
22 presentation.

23 **THE CHAIRPERSON:** Thank you.

24 Are there any more questions from panel
25 members?

1 This completes the record for the hearing
2 on the matter of the Environmental Assessment Guidelines
3 for the proposed ferric-sulphate production at McClean
4 Lake. The Commission will deliberate and will publish its
5 decision in due course.

6 Thank you very much, all of you, for
7 joining us this afternoon.

8 We will just take a few-moments break
9 before we start the next hearing. So thank you very much.

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9