Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission

Commission canadienne de sûreté nucléaire

Public Hearings

Audiences publiques

July 13, 2005

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280 Slater Street
Ottawa, Ontario

Le 13 juillet 2005

Salle d'audiences publiques
14e étage
280, rue Slater
Ottawa (Ontario)

Commission Members present

Ms Linda J. Keen, President
Dr. Moyra McDill
Mr. Michael Taylor

Commissaires présents

M^{me} Linda J. Keen, présidente
M^{me} Moyra McDill
M. Michael Taylor

General Counsel: Mr. Jacques Lavoie

Secretary: Mr. Marc A. Leblanc

Conseiller général: M. Jacques Lavoie

Secrétaire: M. Marc A. Leblanc

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Ottawa, Ontario

--- Upon commencing on Wednesday, July 13, 2005
at 1:00 p.m.

Opening Remarks

M. LEBLANC: Bonjour, mesdames et messieurs. Bienvenu à l'audience de la Commission canadienne de sûreté nucléaire. The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission is about to start one public hearing today.

Mon nom est Marc Leblanc. Je suis secrétaire de la Commission et j'aimerais aborder certains aspects touchant le déroulement de l'audience.

L'audience est enregistrée et transcrite textuellement. La transcription se fait dans l'une ou l'autre des langues officielles, compte tenu de la langue utilisée par le participant à l'audience publique. The transcripts will be available on the website of the Commission as early as next week.

To make the transcripts as meaningful as possible, we would ask everyone to identify themselves clearly before speaking.

As a courtesy to others in the room, please silence your cell phones.

Madame Keen, présidente et première dirigeante de la Commission va présider l'audience publique d'aujourd'hui.

Madame Keen.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Good afternoon and welcome to the hearing of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission.

I would like to begin by introducing the members of the panel that are with us today. This is a panel of the Commission today. On my right is Dr. Moyra McDill and on my left is Mr. Michael Taylor. As well as the Secretary of the Commission, Mr. Marc Leblanc, I would also like to welcome Jacques Lavoie who is the General Counsel to the Commission.

I would like to note that the Commission is still on enhanced security status, as are many of the facilities that we regulate and, as such, we will take measures necessary to ensure that security matters of a sensitive nature are not discussed in public and we will, if necessary, move in camera at any time to discuss security matters of a sensitive nature.

Before adopting the agenda, please note that there were two supplementary Commission Member Documents, or CMDs, added to the agenda for the hearing after its publication on June 21st, 2005, and these are

listed in the updated agenda.

With this information, I would like to now call for the adoption of the agenda by Commission Members. The agenda is outlined in Commission Member Document 05-H15.A.

05-H15 / 05-H15.A

Adoption of Agenda

THE CHAIRPERSON: Do I have the concurrence of the Members?

For the record, I note that the agenda has been adopted.

On the agenda today is a One-Day Hearing in the matter of the Application by COGEMA Resources Inc. for the amendment to the McClean Lake Operation's Uranium Mine and Mill Operating Licence to allow summer sensitive work for the Sue E Project.

M. LEBLANC: This is a One-Day Public Hearing. The Notice of Public Hearing 2005-H9 was published on April 20th, 2005. The public was invited to participate either by oral presentation or written submission.

June 13th, 2005 was the deadline set for filing by intervenors. The Commission received no request for intervention.

July 6th, 2005 was the deadline for filing of supplementary information. Supplementary information has been filed by COGEMA Resources and CNSC staff.

For the record, I note that the Commission has rendered a decision yesterday approving the Environmental Assessment Screening Report for the McClean Operation Sue E Project. The decision has been sent to the participants at the June 29th hearing on that matter and will be available on the CNSC website in approximately two weeks, once it will have been translated.

THE CHAIRPERSON: On that basis then, I first turn to COGEMA Resources Inc. for their presentation as outlined in Commission Member Documents 05-H16.1, 05-H16.1A, and I will turn to Mr. Bob Pollock, Vice-President of Environment Health and Safety.

Mr. Pollock, the floor is yours, sir.

COGEMA Resources Inc.:
Application for an amendment to
The McClean Lake Operation's
Uranium Mine and Mill Operating
Licence to allow summer
Sensitive work for Sue E pit

05-H16.1 / 05-H16.1A

Oral presentation by

COGEMA Resources Inc.

MR. POLLOCK: Thank you, and good afternoon, Madam Chair and Members of the Commission.

For the record, I am Bob Pollock, Vice-President, Environment Health and Safety for COGEMA Resources Inc. Also present today on behalf of COGEMA Resources is Jim Corman, General Manager of McClean Lake Operation.

We are here today to support our application to amend the uranium mine operating licence for McClean Lake Operation to allow COGEMA Resources to conduct weather-sensitive preparatory activities for future mining of the Sue E open pit.

Our company appreciates that this panel of the Commission has been convened for consideration of this application at this One-Day Hearing.

This slide provides an outline for today's presentation. Our written submission, CMD 05-H16.1, provided a summary of McClean Lake operation and an overview of mining operations in the Sue mining area to provide context for this request for an amendment for approval of Sue E preparatory activities.

Given that consideration of the entire Sue E Project will take place at a Two-Day Commission Hearing

scheduled for August the 17th and October the 20th, 2005, our presentation today will focus on the specific activities which are the subject of this amendment request.

Jim Corman will describe the background to our request and then discuss the weather-sensitive preparatory activities for which we are requesting Commission approval. I will then discuss the programs for protection of environment health and safety and updating our preliminary decommissioning plan and financial assurance before concluding our presentation. Jim Corman will now continue.

MR. CORMAN: Thank you, Bob.

For the record, I am Jim Corman, General Manager of the McClean Lake Operation.

As Commission Members recall, McClean Lake Operation consists of three main areas; namely, the Jeb area where the mill, tailings management facility and camp are located, the Sink/Vulture Treated Effluent Management System in the middle of this figure and the Sue mining area at the south end of the lease area.

The licence amendment being requested involves only the Sue mining area.

This slide focuses on the Sue mining area. Here, the proposed Sue E pit and associated facilities

have been superimposed onto the satellite image of the Sue site. The Sue E pit is located about 500 metres south of the Sue C pit and immediately adjacent to the western edge of the Sils Lake.

Similar to Sue C, the Sue E deposit will be developed using conventional open-pit mining methods. Clean waste rock will be stockpiled to the northwest of the Sue E pit and overburden will be used to displace the water from the portion of Sils Lake adjacent to the future pit.

Given the short summer season in Northern Saskatchewan, the CNSC has been requested to give special consideration to this overburden placement and to several other items of weather-sensitive preparatory work in advance of licensing consideration of the entire Sue E Project.

As noted earlier, COGEMA Resources appreciates that this panel of the Commission has been convened for consideration of this work today.

Sils Lake is a small, shallow, non-fish-bearing lake that commonly freezes to the bottom during the winter months. As can be seen in this drawing, the western edge of Sils Lake is in close proximity to the eastern brow of the proposed Sue E pit, so it is necessary to backfill a portion of the lake in order to enhance the

pit wall stability during future mining of the pit.

Specifically, Sils Lake must be partially dewatered and the remaining water contained with a physical barrier. To accomplish this, it is planned to draw down the water level by pumping it to the Sue C pit and place the overburden excavated from the E pit into Sils Lake as a physical barrier between the remaining lake and the pit. These activities are best performed prior to freeze-up to ensure the integrity of the physical barrier.

The main weather-sensitive preparatory activities are listed on this slide. Roads must be constructed to access the Sue E area and Sils Lake. As a minimum, adequate access to Sils Lake will be required to initiate dewatering activities.

As well, it is preferable to construct the road required to access the Sue E pit during warmer months to facilitate proper compaction of road bed material and efficient grading of materials when the material is not frozen.

Water from Sils Lake will be transferred via pipeline to the Sue C pit. Water from the Sue C pit is then treated at the Sue Water Treatment Plant prior to release to the environment.

The installation of transfer pipelines must be carried out in advance of Sils Lake dewatering

activities. Again, proper grading of pipelines is best achieved during warmer months when the material being excavated is being placed to attain the desired grading is not frozen.

Further, the fusion of pipeline joints is better achieved when there is less temperature differential between the pipe weld and the surrounding atmosphere.

Approval is requested for construction of all dewatering pipelines, including those to Sils Lake and to the future Sue E pit.

To establish a safe physical barrier between the Sue E pit and Sils Lake, the north basin of the lake will be substantially filled in with low permeability overburden material from Sue E. Overburden refers to the surficial material that lies above the bedrock horizon. It can be further classified as organic topsoil and underlying glacial tills.

Under the requested amendment COGEMA will remove overburden material until the underlying bedrock is reached. These materials, if spread over the entire north basin of Sils Lake, would reach a height of six to eight meters above the current water level.

It should be noted that this section was not in our original text in that the final design from the

consultant included in a report which we recently received and forwarded to CNSC earlier this week, recommends that a higher lift thickness of 15 meters be used to displace the thin layer of organic sediments ahead of the advancing face of the overburden as it is placed. This will still leave the infilled area well beyond the minimum recommended distance from the pit.

Initially, an area of glacial till with little organic material will be excavated and placed first at the north end of Sils Lake. Organic topsoil will then be segregated as it is encountered and stockpiled on top of this initially placed till.

To support the design of the physical barrier geotechnical analysis of pit wall stability and hydro-geological analysis of the groundwater system have been conducted by a geotechnical consultant. The four scenarios identified on this slide were used in the final analysis. The results of the analysis suggests that the stability of the slopes will not be significantly influenced by moderate groundwater pressures or seepage on the slope face. However, higher seepage rates and forces may cause erosion of the slopes. Consequently, it would be preferable to limit the groundwater pressures immediately behind the slopes.

The predicted hydraulic head distribution

for each scenario shows little difference in predicted hydraulic heads and groundwater pressures between simulations one and two. Simulations of scenarios three and four indicate that diking Sils Lake a distance of 165 metres to the east of the pit crest or draining it completely would result in a significant reduction in the elevation of the water table at the pit wall, thus reducing seepage and groundwater pressures. There was little difference in the modelled results between these two scenarios. Consequently there are advantages to pushing the lake back at least 165 meters from the east edge of the pit.

This figure shows options for placement of a dike across Sils Lake to contain the remaining water. A vertical line is shown at a distance of 165 meters from the lake edge which corresponds to the minimum recommended distance for a dike to contain the remaining water. An analysis of the particle size distribution of the Sue E overburden material indicates that there is adequate fine grain material to provide a suitable low permeability barrier without the need for a dike. A collection ditch and sump will be established between the placed overburden and the Sue E pit to collect and divert any potential seepage away from the pit.

The geotechnical impact on the Sue E pit

wall stability of placing both the overburden at Sils Lake and the waste rock stockpile to the northwest has been assessed. Geotechnical test pit investigations have been completed to confirm the characteristics of the materials present. The results provided recommendations for the design of the waste rock stockpile and for infilling of Sils Lake, and confirm that the foundations of the proposed waste rock and overburden stockpiles will be stable. Further, Sils Lake can be backfilled with overburden materials and the waste rock stockpile placed to the northwest of the pit without compromising the stability of the pit walls.

Coinciding with the previously described work COGEMA proposes to conduct some other minor site preparation activities which are best conducted in favourable weather in advance of the Sue E mining. These earth work activities include the excavation of ditches and installation of culverts, septic facilities and signage. Also, we note for the Commission's information, that the existing SaskPower powerline must be moved from its present location as it currently transects the proposed Sue E pit. This type of work is also typically best carried out during summer months.

Bob Pollock will now continue with our presentation.

MR. POLLOCK: Thank you, Jim.

For the record, I am Bob Pollock, Vice President; Environment, Health and Safety.

Programs for environmental protection, radiation protection, occupational health and safety, emergency preparedness and training have been established for McClean Lake operation. These programs support all ongoing activities performed at McClean Lake.

Performance in these areas has been described to the Commission in previous submissions made during the recent hearing for the re-licensing of McClean Lake operation. These established programs, which successfully operated throughout the mining of the Sue C open pit, are equally applicable to the mining of the Sue A open pit and will similarly extend to the proposed Sue E open pit development, including the summer preparatory activities.

The McClean Lake operation Preliminary Decommissioning Plan and Financial Assurance document has been updated to include the future decommissioning of the Sue E open pit and associated stockpiles. The plan has been submitted to CNSC and Saskatchewan Environment staff for review and acceptance. The decommissioning plan includes detail sufficient to ensure that the proposed plan is, in light of existing knowledge, technically

feasible and appropriate in the interest of health, safety, security and protection of the environment.

The proposed level of financial assurance remains at $35 million Canadian based on the recent recalculation of decommissioning costs. Generally, the increases in decommissioning costs related to the excavation of the Sue E pit were offset by the reduced backfill volumes required for the JEB TMF which resulted from the increased tailings deposit from the processing of Sue E ores. Subsequent to the filing of this supplementary information we have received a letter from Saskatchewan Environment indicating that they are in agreement with the updated plan and the amount.

Completion of this weather sensitive preparatory work before freeze-up will enable mining to commence in late 2005 upon completion of the licensing process for the general Sue E Project.

Partial draining and backfilling of a portion of Sils Lake is particularly important. This will establish a secure physical barrier between the remaining open waters of Sils Lake and the Sue E pit to ensure safe future mining conditions. Summer construction is needed to ensure earth work quality and construction efficiency and for the associated water management activities. Related items such as roads and pipelines are also best

completed during the summer. Conducting the work described in this submission in the summer also has advantages in terms of occupational safety and environmental protection. Delays in the Sue E project would increase the risk of not having a continuous supply of ore for the JEB Mill prior to the anticipated future delivery of Cigar Lake ore. Lack of a continuous ore supply would have serious social economic implications to our workers and suppliers and negative operational economic implications for the company.

In conclusion, COGEMA Resources request an amendment to the CNSC operating licence for the McClean Lake operation to allow weather sensitive preparatory work, as listed in this slide, to be conducted in preparation for the future mining of the Sue E open pit. We will be pleased to answer any questions which members of the Commission may have.

This concludes our presentation, Madam Chair.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you very much.

I will turn to the presentation from CNSC staff outlined in CMD documents 05-H16, 05-H16.A, and I will turn to Mr. Barclay Howden, the Director General responsible.

Mr. Howden, you may proceed.

05-H16 / 05-H16.A

Oral presentation by

CNSC staff

MR. HOWDEN: Thank you. Good afternoon, Madam Chair and Members of the Commission. For the record, my name is Barclay Howden.

With me today are Mr. Kevin Scissons, Director of the Uranium Mines and Lands Evaluation Division; Mr. Rick Forbes, Project Officer within the same division, and the rest of the CNSC's licensing team for the project.

COGEMA has applied for an amendment of the McClean Lake Uranium Mine and Mill Operating Licence to allow them to proceed with required activities in preparation to mine the Sue E pit. COGEMA is requesting this early hearing prior to the Day 1 hearing on August 17th stating that these activities are necessary to do in the summer and fall prior to mining the Sue E pit. This presentation contains an assessment of the Application and staff's recommendation for the amendment of the licence.

I will now ask Rick Forbes to present an overview of the information and recommendations prepared by CNSC staff.

MR. FORBES: Good afternoon, Madam Keen, and Commission Members.

My name is Rick Forbes. I am the CNSC's Project Officer for the McClean Lake Operation.

This presentation will provide an overview of the approved activities and their requested amendment activities. The issues associated with this Application will be discussed, followed by CNSC's staff's program assessment, an assessment of the requested activities. I will then present CNSC's staff's conclusions and recommendations.

The approved activities in the current uranium mine and mill operating licence for McClean Lake Operation UMOL MINEMILL McCLEAN.01/2009 include mill ore at an annual rate of 3.6 million kilograms per year of U_3O_8. Mine Sue A and B pits produce and ship a uranium concentrate and modify the JEB Mill for the proposed Cigar Lake ore milling.

Since the issuing of the McClean Lake licence in May 2005 COGEMA has supplied the remaining information regarding the Mine Equipment Development Project which had been briefly presented to the Commission as an information item at the Public Hearing Day Two on April 6, 2005 but was not part of the Commission's decision.

The Mine Equipment Development Project is an underground mining method test that could be done from

surface. This would involve a maximum of five holes in the McClean underground ore body during the 2005 summer season.

The application information was assessed by CNSC staff and found acceptable. The designated officer considered and approved the proposal on June 10th, 2005, resulting in the current licence.

The requested activities in this current Application are: prepare a road from Sue C to the Sue E to allow access from the Sue mine site; to partially dewater the Sils Lake which is adjacent to the Sue E ore body; to relocate the SaskPower powerline which is presently in the Sue E footprint -- this would be done by SaskPower -- to commence stripping of the overburden of the Sue E open pit and placement of the material in the dewatered Sils Lake to act as a berm to keep the remaining water at a safe distance from the pit.

The picture is of the proposed Sue E site looking south from the north side. You can see the Sils Lake in the centre of the picture.

COGEMA had previously applied for an amendment to its McClean Lake licence to allow for mining of the Sue E ore body. A One-Day Commission Public Hearing was held June 29th, 2005 to consider the Environmental Assessment Screening Report, CMD 05-H13.

In the Reasons for Decision issued July 12th, 2005 the Commission concluded that the project, taking into account the mitigation measures identified in the screening report, is not likely to cause significant adverse environmental effects.

COGEMA's licence amendment application for mining of the Sue E ore body is scheduled to be heard by the Commission on August 17th and October 20th, 2005, not October 19th, 2005 as stated on the slide. COGEMA had requested to have the Commission review this application for preparatory weather-sensitive work prior to these hearings.

If the decision to allow the weather-sensitive work to be done was delayed until the Commission decision on the Sue E mining application, the preparatory work would have to be done during winter or postponed until the summer of 2006.

COGEMA's application states the work needs to be done during the summer months because freezing conditions would hinder the dewatering of Sils Lake, the placement of overburden in the lake bottom and the relocation of the powerline by SaskPower. CNSC staff accepts these technical reasons. COGEMA also states that this scheduling difficulty could cause problems with the continuous ore feed to the mill.

Staff conducted a program assessment over the review period of September 1st, 2001 to October 1st, 2004 for CMD 05-H2 to determine whether the applicant is qualified and has made adequate revision for the protection of the environment, health and safety of persons and maintenance of national security and international obligations.

Nine program areas were considered in the assessment. The Commission was updated at the Day Two hearing held April 6, 2005 with CMD 05-H2A.

COGEMA has been making satisfactory progress on the quality assurance, training and radiation protection audit findings. Staff is presently reviewing COGEMA's documents at this time.

The ratings for each program are summarized in this table. What should be noted is that all program areas had the program rated as "B". All programs with the exception of quality assurance had a "B" rating for implementation. The quality assurance had a "C" rating for implementation. As previously mentioned, COGEMA is making satisfactory progress.

There have been no other changes to these program areas or their implementation.

The CEAA process was followed involving the preparation of an environmental assessment screening

report, heard by the Commission on June 29th, 2005 with the Commission decision July 12th, 2005. A systematic approach was used to assess the licence application for the requested modifications.

For this Application the following key program areas were assessed to determine if the applicant is qualified to carry out the requested modifications and to determine if the applicant is expected to continue to make adequate provisions for the protection of the environment and health and safety of persons.

The program areas are as follows: radiation protection; environmental protection and non-radiological health and safety.

As earlier stated, the Commission's decision on the Sue E EA Screening Report was issued July 12th, 2005 which stated that the Commission therefore will proceed under the *Nuclear Safety and Control Act* with its consideration of COGEMA's licence application.

COGEMA's reason for the partial dewatering and infilling of Sils Lake with Sue E pit overburden is based on the fact that Sils Lake is adjacent to the Sue E pit. COGEMA states this work needs to be done prior to freezing conditions.

The lake is a potential safety hazard to the pit because of its proximity. COGEMA's Geotechnical

Consultant's Report states that there is potential slope stability problems if the pond of water is not moved away from the pit crest. This requires partial dewatering of the lake and effectively backfilling to displace the lake bottom sediments to provide a barrier to the water. The lake is a shallow water body that is slightly over one metre deep and contains no fish. COGEMA has technically explained that this work needs to be done before freezing conditions cause problems with dewatering and effective fill placement.

CNSC staff has reviewed this information and accepts the technical reasons.

The following key programs are relevant to this application: COGEMA has an effective radiation protection program in place that will be used in the mining of Sue E pit. However, these requested activities do not have any work associated with radiation. Therefore, there are no changes of the program required.

As for environmental protection, the Sue E Pit Application has undergone an Environmental Assessment Screening Report heard by the Commission on June 29th, 2005 that has included the assessment of the partial dewatering of the Sils Lake.

Using the Sue C pit as a settling pond as well as surge capacity improves and protects the

performance of the Sue water treatment plant.

CNSC staff and Saskatchewan Environment staff have worked effectively together in the Environmental Assessment and in the Environment Program Assessment.

CNSC staff has no environmental concerns with this proposal.

COGEMA has an effective occupational health and safety program that meets the requirements of the non-radiological health and safety program.

The occupational health and safety program meets the requirements and is also monitored by Saskatchewan Labour.

CNSC staff and Saskatchewan Labour staff have worked effectively together in the assessment of the non-radiological health and safety program, including discussions on the pit design.

Based on CNSC staff's assessment in the CMD CNSC staff concludes that COGEMA is qualified to carry on the activities, including the requested activities that the proposed amended licence will authorize.

COGEMA made and is expected to continue to make adequate provision for the protection of the environment and the health and safety of persons.

COGEMA made and is expected to continue to

make adequate provision for the maintenance of security and the implementation of international obligations, and the proposed activities have already been included in a recently approved environmental assessment.

It is recognized that a decision to approve this request for weather-sensitive work cannot and will not prejudge any decision the Commission may make on the application to mine the Sue E ore body, as per the hearings scheduled for August and October, 2005.

To conclude, CNSC staff recommends that the Commission proceed with a course of action consistent with paragraph 20(1)(a) of the CEAA. That course of action would be consideration by the Commission under the NSCA of the application by COGEMA to proceed with the weather-sensitive work to the Sue E Project, accept CNSC staff's assessment that the applicant is qualified to carry on the activities that the amended licence will authorize and will make adequate provision in carrying out those activities for the protection of the environment, the health and safety of persons and the maintenance of national security and measures required to implement international obligations to which Canada has agreed and amend the current uranium mine operating licence, UMOL Mine Mill McClean .01/2009, to allow the preparatory weather-sensitive work for the Sue E project to proceed.

It would include these three items. The first is the activity which states:

> "Partial dewatering and partial infilling of Sils Lake; overburden stripping of Sue E pit and associated preparatory 2005 weather-sensitive work."

The second is a condition which states:

> "The licensee shall obtain approval of the Commission or a person authorized by the Commission for the final design of the partial dewatering and partial infilling of Sils Lake before commencing that work, as referenced in paragraph (h) of section 4, Licensed Activities."

The third is the inclusion of updated Appendix B documents.

I would now like to turn it back to Mr. Howden.

MR. HOWDEN: Thank you.

Madam President and Members of the Commission, that concludes our presentation and staff is available to respond to questions.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Mr. Howden.

Now the floor is open for questions from Commission Members and I will start with Mr. Taylor.

MEMBER TAYLOR: Thank you, Madam Chair.

My first question is for COGEMA. For the record, I would like you to confirm that you clearly understand and accept the point that staff made at the end of that presentation; namely, that the discussion today does not prejudge in any way any decision that the Commission may make on the mining of Sue E ore body.

MR. POLLOCK: Bob Pollock, for the record.

Yes, we both understand and accept that position.

MEMBER TAYLOR: Thank you.

My second question is for the staff and then perhaps for COGEMA.

One point five (1.5) of section V of the licence says:

> "The licensee shall obtain approval of the Commission or a person authorized by the Commission for the final design of the partial dewatering and partial infilling of Sils Lake before commencement of the work."

It is not clear to me whether or not we have reached a final design. Could you clarify what the

situation is with respect to partial dewatering and infilling of Sils Lake?

MR. FORBES: Rick Forbes, for the record.

That has to do with the geotechnical report that is forthcoming, and we have just received it, that details the soil sampling so that the design can be completed.

MEBMER TAYLOR: Okay. Then perhaps I can ask COGEMA. It is not clear to me, despite your presentation, what the determined sequence of events is.

Are you going to build a dike across this lake and dewater behind that, or just drop the fill into the lake?

MR. POLLOCK: Bob Pollock, for the record.

It was originally thought that a dike would be necessary, but the test pit results, which we received only very recently and which are included in this final report, show there is sufficient fine material that the material itself will provide a sufficient barrier.

I can ask Jim to elaborate slightly on that.

MR. CORMAN: Jim Corman, for the record.

As Bob mentioned, the new test pits indicate that the till material is relatively low permeability.

The sequence of events will be dewatering of Sils Lake will pull approximately an equal amount of water out of Sils equivalent to what we are going to displace with the till and then place the till into the lake. So it will just be essentially starting from the shore of the lake and working away past that 165 minimum distance.

MEMBER TAYLOR: Thank you.

I do not want to prejudge your final decision about this process, since you have only just received the proposal, but is it, from your point of view, acceptable to just pour the fill into the water rather than removing the water before you do that?

MR. NGUYEN: For the record, my name is Son Nguyen, a specialist with the Waste and Geosciences Division.

As you know, we have not reviewed that report yet. We just received it yesterday. But, technically, this -- depending on the permeability and the fine content of the overburden material, this technique is feasible and has been done somewhere else.

MEMBER TAYLOR: Thank you.

And to get on to the meat of the request about them doing work in warmer weather, it is fairly evident that it is difficult to pump the lake out when it

is frozen, but some of the other things, welding the pipes, building roads, grading the pipeline, those other areas, does staff clearly accept that these things are necessary to be done before the mining licence is considered by the Commission?

MR. FORBES: Rick Forbes, for the record.

For the pipelines, the pipelines have to be in place to dewater the Sils, so that is assumed. But, from personal experience, yes, it is much better and safer to have pipes that are welded during the summer.

Road access is also necessary for access to the proposed pit and to the Sils Lake area for dewatering.

MEMBER TAYLOR: Thank you.

THE CHAIRPERSON: If I could, just a supplementary on that, because it really is an issue of the health and safety aspects of doing this weather-sensitive work. And I just would feel that there is some elaboration on Mr. Taylor's question.

The words that are used continually through here are things like "it's best completed," or "it's preferable," or whatever, and I think the CNSC has to decide -- the Commission has to decide on whether this work, from a health and safety point of view, not an economic point of view, not as sort of what is best, or preferable, but what is the health and safety reasons to

do this, either occupational health and safety or environmental aspects or what is under our jurisdiction and mandate that makes these activities to proceed on this amendment.

I guess I'm not sure we've got enough evidence from the reply to Mr. Taylor.

So I would like to start then with COGEMA in terms of the list that you've got. The list that is the most complete in my mind is page 3 of CMD 05-H16, which is a staff CMD.

But I guess my first question to COGEMA is item 2.2 of CMD 05-H16, which is page 3. Is that a correct representation of the activities for which you are seeking this licence amendment?

MR. POLLOCK: Yes, it looks complete except that as we have -- sorry, Bob Pollock, for the record.

It looks complete except that as we have indicated in our response to Mr. Taylor's earlier question, the till dike was there in the first place on the assumption that the material would not be adequate on its own as a barrier and the test pit results have shown we don't need those till dikes, or at least that is our judgment. I acknowledge that has yet to be evaluated and confirmed by staff.

There is a certain amount of the pipelines

and road work is absolutely required. You can't get at Sils Lake and you can't pump it out without pipelines and road work, so that regardless -- not counting the benefits from an occupational health and safety and environment perspective, there is a certain amount of this infrastructure that simply has to be there to get at the critical activities.

THE CHAIRPERSON: So perhaps we could just do this in a step-wise fashion.

So there are seven elements there and you would remove number 6; is that correct, if the staff approves of the study that has been approved -- that has been submitted. Is that correct?

MR. POLLOCK: Yes. Bob Pollock, for the record.

Yes. And again, that is conditional on the staff coming to the same conclusion that we have. Should they come to the conclusion that dikes are required, it is not a particularly formidable task to put the dikes in. So I wouldn't want to see, this summer, where we get into some sort of, well, we took the dikes out but then it turned out they were needed but we didn't have the approval then. So we would be reluctant to ---

THE CHAIRPERSON: So leave it in?

MR. POLLOCK: --- get into that position.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Right.

Okay. So now I would like to just kind of take apart the questions of the summer-sensitive work in terms of going through this. I think this is, to me, one of the very important questions that we have to answer today.

So in terms of looking -- I respect the fact that this is sort of a continuity of some items are required to do some of the other work. I accept that.

But I think it's important for us to have a sense of exactly what are the advantages of the summer-sensitive work in terms of occupational health and safety and protection of the environment and whatever else would be the benefits that we would accrue because of the summer-sensitive work with regards to our mandate under the Act. That is really critical.

So I would appreciate some degree of detail and then I will go to the staff on that.

For example, you talk about the integrity. One of the first items in COGEMA's slides was with regards to the integrity of the -- I am trying to find it now. It is one that is renumbered, number 6, preparatory work for mining Sue E, weather-sensitive work, and then you say:

> "These activities are best performed prior to freeze-up to ensure the

integrity of the physical barrier."

So would that be then considered an issue to do with protection of the environment or occupational health and safety, or what is the advantage of doing that?

So that is just an example of the degree of detail that I would like to do as we go through this.

So, Mr. Pollock, would you like to start?

MR. POLLOCK: Maybe if we had the slide -- it is number 6. We have it on our screen. Perhaps if we had it? This is the one you are referring to, Madam Chair? If we just walk through that, is that the best way to proceed?

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes. And it is the other slides as well, and I am trying to gauge for slides 6 and 7 and 8 the particular reason to go ahead with this weather-sensitive work, not socioeconomic, but in fact, assuming that the project goes forward, what exactly would be the advantages that would be accrued in terms of the health and safety and protection of the environment mandate?

So starting then with -- you don't really need, in my view -- perhaps the other Members would like it, but the -- I don't necessarily need to see slide 6. I just need to have it addressed. What does integrity of the physical barrier do under our mandate?

MR. POLLOCK: Bob Pollock, for the record.

I guess it does two things. One is related from an occupational health and safety and environment side. One, from the occupational health and safety side, the whole reason for doing this is to enhance the stability of the pit wall by reducing the water table as much as practical with this barrier, to reduce the water table at the pit wall and reduce the amount of water pressure behind the pit wall to eliminate and reduce seepage so that the better the barrier, the more effect of that. So that underlies the whole reason for doing this.

From an environmental point of view, once one has drawn down the lake and then placed the material and the lake comes back up to approximately its original level, it would be preferable then not to have it drain out or have the water levels decrease.

As well, it may not be a very significant contribution to the overall site water balance, but basically, if more water drains into the pit, then more water has to be treated, so one minimizes water treatment requirements as well by minimizing the amount of seepage that might take place.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I will go on to my colleagues. Well, first of all, I would like to have the staff's view with regards to that particular item and then

I imagine -- I don't want to take my colleagues' questions in terms of these areas, but I think we want to walk through them somehow during this afternoon and walk through the various issues.

So starting with that item, would staff wish to comment?

MR. HOWDEN: Yes, Barclay Howden. I will pass it to Kevin Scissons in just a moment.

Our main focus, Madam Chair, is on health and safety and the integrity of this pit to protect workers who could be mining at some future time, if the Commission approves it, is the key. From our view, protecting the integrity of the pit, then there is just a cascading effect that leads to the other things, but the ultimate is health and safety -- future health and safety of people who could be working in that pit.

And I will ask Mr. Scissons to expand upon that.

MR. SCISSONS: Good afternoon. Kevin Scissons, Director, Uranium Mines and Lands Evaluation Division.

Just to expand on that, the topic on the safety and integrity of the whole pit is very key to this and it's also paramount that any activity, including this weather-sensitive work should also be undertaken in a safe

manner.

And that's why, if we can perhaps go to our slide 4, it will just hit those same components that are important. So if the dewatering of the lake and infilling of that component of the lake for the integrity of the pit is paramount to be done under this, so is the -- to undertake that kind of work, you need access to the Sue site, and that includes the roads.

And why I am going to slide 5 is it shows you that the area there and the muskeg and the environment of Northern Saskatchewan, to have 25-tonne trucks, for instance, traversing to and from the site, you have got to build a proper road or an access and a safe access to and from the area for the men and equipment that undertakes there. So that is the first thing about the access.

Any water lines that are going to be installed to relocate water from Sils Lake and on through have to be installed and properly done. We don't want any temporary pipelines. If they are going to put in a pipeline, it will be there. They might as well construct one and do it in the summer when it is safe and usable for the long term.

The relocation of the powerline is a preference by SaskPower, the provincial government, to do this preferably in the summer period or non-winter period.

That is safety for their own workers and that makes sense to us as well.

Of course, the overburden stripping and primarily the depositing of that material into Sils Lake continues to isolate that water from the pit as the development occurs.

So all of these things are clearly linked together and they are important for safety, if not on long-term safety of the pit itself but for the summer work as well being undertaken in a safe manner so it can be accomplished to achieve the ultimate goal of safe operations of the Sue E pit, if indeed that work does proceed.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. That is very complete.

Dr. McDill.

MEMBER McDILL: Thank you.

I gather freeze-up is mid-October, early November, somewhere in there? So we have less than six months to talk about here?

MR. POLLOCK: Bob Pollock, for the record.

Well, it starts to get snow on the ground for the winter in October. Clearly one doesn't get into sort of the mid-winter conditions, 40 below type of thing, until a bit later than that, or at least hopefully a bit

later than that.

MEMBER McDILL: Thank you.

Am I correct in assuming the land outside the surface lease limit is provincial Crown land and there is no objection from the landholder?

MR. POLLOCK: All of our work is within our surface lease, including any effect on where we are putting the material in Sils Lake.

MEMBER McDILL: I understood that the lake level wouldn't change. I just wanted to make sure that -- I guess maybe staff can concur that the EA doesn't affect -- this is not going to affect the land south of the leaseholder?

MR. SCISSONS: Kevin Scissons.

Yes, that environmental assessment confirmed that, yes.

MEMBER McDILL: Thank you.

I realize there is no effect on the fish because there are no fish in this very shallow lake. Small mammals, large mammals, nothing is going to be displaced through this small amount, 16 hectares, or to that effect? COGEMA?

MR. POLLOCK: Yes, it's not a fish-bearing lake and the plan would be to simply pull the water level down enough that when we put the overburden material back

in the north basin, that we come back to the -- we will only take out as much water as we are going to displace with the material we put back in. An animal drinking water from the lake might have to walk a little bit further, but we would not plan to totally drain the lake.

MEMBER McDILL: Thank you.

Now, with respect to timing, I would have found it helpful to have seen a timeline perhaps, particularly since the design of the berm, dike, whatever it is, is not confirmed.

But perhaps you could roughly outline for me the timing that would take us from now until when weather-sensitive work would stop. So how long would it take to put in the pipeline? You are going to have to do a proper pipeline, so how long to build the bed? How long to put the pipes in? How long to affect the fusion welds on the pipelines and then to rebury them, et cetera?

MR. POLLOCK: I will ask Jim Corman to elaborate on that.

MR. CORMAN: Jim Corman, for the record.

It will take approximately a month to install the infrastructure required for the dewatering activities and the dewatering of Sils Lake itself will be done within the first month after receiving approval.

Following that, we will be able to have two

months of overburden removal and placement of the physical barrier in Sils Lake. So the first month would be infrastructure, some roads, pipelines, the dewatering. The last two months would be the physical barrier.

MEMBER McDILL: Is that staff's understanding as well?

MR. FORBES: Rick Forbes, for the record.

Yes, it is, once we have approved the final design.

MEMBER McDILL: How many people are going to be involved in this work from now until it's done?

MR. CORMAN: Jim Corman for COGEMA.

The work will involve earthworks movement, pipeline work, a total of approximately 20 to 30 employees working on this.

MEMBER McDILL: And I think my final question in this round has largely been answered, but there is a potential design that has been analyzed and is getting ready for approval.

When would this dike, if it's a dike, or berm if it's a berm, or pile of rock if it's a pile of rock, be removed?

MR. CORMAN: Jim Corman, for the record.

Again, we would be putting the till material into Sils Lake in the second month after

approval, so hopefully sometime in September.

MEMBER McDILL: I am taking it, all the way to the end of its lifetime?

MR. CORMAN: The dike itself will not -- if there is a small dike, it would be removed at the end of the mining activities. The placement of till into Sils Lake will be left there until it is needed for decommissioning activities to put till covers on top of the beds.

MEMBER McDILL: And that is staff's understanding as well?

MR. FORBES: Rick Forbes, for the record.

Yes.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I have some questions with regards to the financial guarantee, perhaps some questions about the update.

I believe we have some people with us from Saskatoon, and that includes Saskatchewan Environment; is that correct?

Sorry. I should have given you a warning, I guess. I believe there is a gentleman there from Saskatchewan Environment; is that correct?

MR. MOULDING: For the record, it's Tim Moulding from Saskatchewan Environment.

Yes.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Good afternoon.

I was just checking the time. I see your clock. It is just about afternoon.

With regards to this letter, COGEMA stated that they were in receipt of a letter from Saskatchewan Environment, if I understood that correctly, that confirmed your acceptance of the update to the preliminary decommissioning plan and the financial guarantee, if I am correct? That is what I wrote in my notes.

Is that correct in terms of a letter has been sent by Saskatchewan Environment?

MR. MOULDING: Yes, that is correct. It would have went out at the end of last week.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Has staff received a copy of that letter?

MR. FORBES: Rick Forbes, for the record.

We left on Monday, so I don't know if it's there yet.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I will expect that staff will receive a copy of that.

So in terms of any details, could COGEMA perhaps elaborate a little bit on the changes that happened to the preliminary decommissioning plan and to the financial guarantee as a result of this summer work, just in general, some sense of what the changes were?

MR. POLLOCK: Bob Pollock for the record.

I will ask Jim to elaborate, but basically the work that we are asking permission for is preparatory work that would be done at some point in time, assuming approval was given for the Sue E pit. So it's a question of timing, not on scope.

So I don't think that there is anything that we are doing in this preparatory work that is not part of the overall requirements for decommissioning the Sue E, the full project, which is what this update is predicated on.

I will ask Jim to elaborate a bit.

MR. CORMAN: Jim Corman, for the record.

As Bob mentioned, the updated decommissioning plan includes the entire mining activities, taking into consideration all the mining activities of Sue E. So this preparatory work is included in that package.

Specifically, for an update for Sue E, what was included was the covering of our clean waste rock stockpile to the northwest of the Sue E pit. The removal of the till material out of Sils Lake for placement as a cap on top of the placed special waste material in the Sue C and potentially Sue E pit, and then the removal of all the surface infrastructure, the additional pipelines and

roads.

THE CHAIRPERSON: To Mr. Moulding from Saskatchewan Environment, is that your understanding?

MR. MOULDING: Yes, that is our understanding as well.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Is that the staff's understanding as well?

MR. FORBES: Rick Forbes for the record. That is our understanding, but the document is under review by us at this point in time and we will update the Commission.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Update the Commission ---

MR. SCISSONS: It's Kevin Scissons. I will elaborate. We propose, under our current review, when we go to the Commission for the August 17th hearing, to have that review complete. If I can just add to it, we are doing a joint review with Sask Environment on this and we were waiting for their acknowledgement, as the financial guarantee is actually made out to Saskatchewan Environment. So we have to have their first nod on it before we can finalize our review. Now, as Mr. Moulding has confirmed, that review will assist us to complete our review and the intent is to bring that to the Commission, that update,

for the proposed August 17th hearing.

In the interim, as we stated in our CMDs, the present financial assurance is sufficient to cover the requested work for this Sue E summer-sensitive or weather-sensitive work. Thank you.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you.

While we have Saskatchewan there, Mr. Becker, you have heard the comments and the submission by COGEMA and the comments by CNSC staff with regards to the preference for this work to be done sooner than later in the weather-sensitive area, and its implications for occupational health and safety.

Mr. Becker, do you agree with that and are there any comments that you would like to make with regards to your views of working in Northern Saskatchewan in various seasons of the year, specifically in terms of this project?

MR. BECKER: Ernie Becker, for the record, Saskatchewan Labour.

Our regulations require that any open pit has to be constructed according to engineering standards. If the engineering consultant has identified that the pore water pressure presents a safety problem, then we would not allow that open pit to go ahead unless that pore water pressure problem has been rectified. It seems to me that

requires reducing the water table at the edge of the pit and you can't do that if it's all frozen.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you.

Now, my question for COGEMA is to elaborate, really, on Mr. Taylor's initial question with regards to the nature of the hearing today and its impact on the subsequent hearings that are already booked, because as Mr. Taylor has said, it is important that there not be a prejudging, based on the decision today, of any decision on the further amendments to the licence that the Commission may make on the application to mine the Sue E ore body, which is the next -- is already booked as a hearing.

But I guess to forward that, if you wish to comment further on that -- but Mr. Taylor has discussed that.

But the further issue is if you did not receive this summer-sensitive work -- we have heard a little bit from Mr. Becker, particularly with regards to the impact on that -- so what would be the impact on the project from, again, more of a health and safety point of view?

And secondly, if you did this work that is allowed for under this amendment, if the Commission did decide to let you go ahead with this and, subsequently,

the later amendment was not agreed to in terms of the mining, what would exactly be the impact in terms of mitigation or reversibility, or whatever would be the appropriate comments to this project?

I hope that is clear in terms of the question.

MR. POLLOCK: Bob Pollock, for the record.

There actually seem to be two or three questions embedded within that. Let me try and deal with them one by one.

Perhaps from the overall perspective of going ahead with work at our own risk, this is by no means the only time we have been in that situation. For example, we have received approval to construct modifications to the JEB Mill that are substantially more expensive than the work we are talking about today without any guarantee that we will have a licence to receive the ore that those modifications are intended for. And I could go all the way back a number of years to doing things like constructing the JEB TMF without guarantee or assurance that we would actually get to use it.

So the concept of doing things at our own risk is by no means new to us.

THE CHAIRPERSON: But, Mr. Pollock, I want to make sure that you understand for this project, because

within this licensing hearing, I think that needs to be substantiated that you do understand that you were proceeding without any prejudice to the Commission in terms of the licensing that will take place in the further licence amendment.

MR. POLLOCK: Yes, I confirm the answer I gave to Mr. Taylor's question a few minutes ago that we quite understand this is at our risk. We believe that the decommissioning financial assurances provide the funds, even if we didn't do the work, that the funds are there to have it done to restore the area. The updated decommissioning plan is based on all of the activities for Sue E. So certainly it includes those activities that we would be doing in the short term.

THE CHAIRPERSON: And in terms of the ability to -- what I am getting at here is the impact if the amendment to mine the ore, say that that decision was not in favour of COGEMA, so one would have to go back to the Sue E Project, the weather-sensitive work that is before us today, and seek to -- reverse, I know, is not an applicable word in this case, but mitigate or seek to mitigate the site.

Has COGEMA -- and then there will be a question for the staff -- looked at this possibility in terms of exactly what would be the impact on health and

safety and the environment of the necessity to do that?

MR. POLLOCK: Bob Pollock, for the record.

Clearly, one possible outcome would be that the project would be delayed for the better part of a year. If one can't do weather-sensitive work this summer, then one needs to -- if we delayed it until the weather is fine next year, that puts close to a year's delay into the project and significantly increases the risk of a lack of ore supply to the JEB mill.

I acknowledge that the obvious impact of something like that is socioeconomic, but there also are environmental implications. For example, we have to collect and treat water, which leads to admittedly low levels of release, but nevertheless releases, and we have to collect and treat water whether we are producing ore or not, so that if one delays the overall schedule for a year, in the fullness of time, it will ultimately lead to a greater release of treated effluent and some increase in the contaminants involved. It also extends the overall life of the project in a sense which, on a statistical basis, leads to some level of release of increased probability for occupational injuries so that it's not totally without consequence or not totally just a socioeconomic matter to delay it. The other possibility would be to look seriously at whether we could do all this

in the winter or not and we have not looked closely. I mean, clearly we do many activities in the winter but we have not looked hardly -- or not of the view that that is a desirable course of action. So I guess we would like to see today's outcome before I speculated on where we would go as plan B. Do we wait a year or do we attempt to obtain approval for the winter which would not necessarily be forthcoming?

THE CHAIRPERSON: But I would like to suggest another alternative which is you talked about delays or you talked about delays in the project totally, if I get your answer correctly, or we talk about delaying, not having the approval on this amendment but having the approval on the broader project, but I would offer that the third one is that in fact we cannot prejudice the Commission's decisions on the second part. So if you received this amendment -- you received a favourable decision on this amendment and you didn't receive the decision on the second part, the bigger project, I guess what I am coming back to is just exploring the understanding of the -- it's not just the financial risk. It's the fact that you would not be doing this Sue E Project, period, if I can be very blunt about this. That is in fact the alternative that we have to look at which would mean that you wouldn't need the road. You wouldn't

need the powerline. You would be removing to overburden that you would have to -- well, that's for you to say what you would do and the process to isolate the stockpile overburden from the open water of the lake. So that is in essence the alternative that I am discussing.

MR. POLLOCK: Bob Pollock, for the record.

Well, I think the negative aspects that I outlined -- I guess the preparatory work delayed -- also apply equally if the whole Sue E Project is delayed. I would expect that if we failed to obtain approval for the project we would wish to understand what was the reason that underlie that and to address the deficiency that led to the lack of approval.

I doubt that we would rush out and get rid of the infrastructure unless and until it became clear that this deficiency was something that simply couldn't be remedied. It's not obvious to me at the moment what that might be. We believe the Environmental Assessment was based on a fundamentally sound project and we believe our performance overall is fairly satisfactory. So it's not clear to us what could be a fatal deficiency that we couldn't address.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I suppose, and perhaps it would be seen as belabouring this, but I think this is really important is we've had -- the Commission is doing a

one-day hearing in terms of looking at this weather sensitive but we cannot be prejudicing the licensing hearing, because if a company goes ahead with the ideas either from a socioeconomic point of view or from a lack of a mitigation strategy that in fact this decision encumbers the decision of the Commission in the long run; that is, that it is not possible.

So I guess what I am seeking in simple terms to understand is has COGEMA looked at the fact that you cannot burden the Commission. You cannot pre-judge the Commission on the bigger project. So therefore perhaps the word "mitigation" or "undue" or something is not the right term but one cannot assume that the Commission will go ahead, that the Commission will decide on the bigger project.

So that's what I am just seeking, is the fact that you do understand this is a separate amendment and that if the second amendment is not agreed to that you will have to address the fact that this first amendment was done and that the impact on the environment has to be looked at in terms of things can't be left half done in certain areas, and I have no idea what that impact is. So we will go to staff later but we will still rest with COGEMA for a moment.

MR. POLLOCK: Bob Pollock, for the record.

Well, clearly, I don't see anything that we are doing that isn't reversible so if it has to be reversed so be it. It shall be.

THE CHAIRPERSON: That's the answer I was looking for.

CNSC staff, please.

MR. SCISSONS: Kevin Scissons.

Again, if I can trouble you for our slide 4 we can just touch on those again briefly. The activities proposed here for this summer-sensitive work and without prejudging what may ever happen with the Sue E pit, basically the activities here are on the access road being built out there, the powerline being relocated and some of the work on Sils Lake, the overburden stockpile and organics, that is part of the summer-sensitive work. The large Sue E pit we see here and the waste rock stockpile will only occur under that process really for the August and October Day 1 and Day 2 hearing process.

So if you are to not have those on the picture and just looking at the overburden I am confirming what COGEMA is saying about reversibility. This is overall only a very small component of the footprint of that facility. For environmental reasons there would be short term impacts to have the dewatered lake and stockpiled in Sils Lake and then have it removed and down

the road, literally to have the road removed, and the powerline eventually relocated when necessary at the conclusion of the project or sometime during an operating licence phase could still occur. The financial resources are in place. The guarantees are there and this small or short-term impacts on the overall picture of the McClean Lake site are reversible and doable.

Thank you.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you very much.

Further questions? Mr. Taylor.

MEMBER TAYLOR: Page 15 of your presentation and in the associated text, you said that "conducting the work described in this submission in the summer has advantages in terms of occupational safety and environmental protection". You reference the fact that getting on with this might reduce the amount of discharge that you have to make. Are there any other advantages to environmental protection for doing this work early?

MR. POLLOCK: Yes, Bob Pollock, for the record.

Certainly, pipelines that are built in the summer would be less likely to leak in future, not that we can't respond to leaks but better to avoid them in the first place.

Also, we would like to effectively strip

off what is in many places a very thin layer of organic -- in effect topsoil. We don't have a lot of it up there and we would like to strip that off and stockpile it separately so it's very useful for future reclamation. That's much easier. In fact, it's not really practical if it is frozen hard. It is too thin a layer. So to strip organics you need to do it in the summer and stockpile them separately, you need to do that in summer as well.

MEMBER TAYLOR: Thank you.

I have one question for staff. Will CNSC staff be visiting the site during the summer period?

MR. FORBES: Rick Forbes, for the record.

We have got at least one inspection scheduled and probably a second one for this time period.

MEMBER TAYLOR: So you will see firsthand this work in action?

MR. FORBES: That's correct.

MEMBER TAYLOR: Thank you.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Dr. McDill.

MEMBER McDILL: Thank you, a couple of last quick questions.

The dewatering pipeline will remain active for the duration of the project; is that correct, only be used when the lake is not frozen, I assume?

MR. CORMAN: Jim Corman, for the record.

The dewatering pipeline, there will be a pipeline from Sils Lake to dewater it temporarily until we get the fill placed in and then it will be removed. The pipeline from Sue E pit to Sue C will be in for the duration of the mining.

MEMBER McDILL: I'm sure that this has been dealt with. What is going to prevent flooding of the lake with massive amounts of spring runoff if there is nothing to continue it from flooding over?

MR. CORMAN: Jim Corman, for the record.

The lake itself is essentially a perched lake without an outflow to it. We are not looking at changing the outflow of this lake or anything with that so whatever is happening with the spring runoff now will happen in the future.

MEMBER McDILL: Thank you for letting me know it is a perched lake.

Staff, are you in agreement with that when you have removed that much catchment?

MR. FORBES: Rick Forbes, for the record.

We will have to review the design that they have submitted with the geotechnical report to analyze that, but that is one of the things that we will be watching for, is making sure that that water is kept far enough away from the pit edge.

MEMBER McDILL: Thank you.

I am concerned about the pore water pressure, but I am also concerned about flooding elsewhere. I realize there is nothing there, but still, flooding is flooding.

MR. FLAVELLE: For the record, I am Peter Flavelle, with the Waste and Geoscience Division.

The potential flooding of the lake with spring runoff or any large storm events is one of the things that we will look at in the design of the operation of having the lake infilled for this period of time. Our surface water hydrologists will be looking at those issues as part of our technical review of what we have just received.

MEMBER McDILL: So that will occur presumably before mid-August. If this is granted COGEMA is going to go ahead with the beginning of the infrastructure and about a month from approval they are going to start putting stuff in Sils Lake. So that has to be resolved before then; is that correct?

MR. POLLOCK: Bob Pollock, for the record.

Should there be either uncertainty or a need, it is quite practical to leave the pipeline there to maintain it in service to further dewater the lake to maintain levels, should that be necessary.

MEMBER McDILL: Thank you.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I just would like to go back to staff comments. COGEMA mentioned about the segregation of the organic topsoil in this summer work project and stockpiling it.

Has staff any comments with regard to that process and benefits or concerns that you would have about that?

MR. BIRD: Glenn Bird, for the record, Environmental Protection.

The saving of the topsoil by COGEMA for future reclamation is the acceptable practice and it is to be encouraged. There is a shortage of organic material up in the north and for remediation work in terms of covering areas and vegetation you need to salvage whatever till and fine material and organic layers that you can for future use, for decommissioning.

THE CHAIRPERSON: So in fact, from COGEMA's point of view, the process and the life of this mine site is such that the preservation of this organic topsoil is feasible, it is technically feasible, for the life of the mine in order to have it for reclamation later?

MR. POLLOCK: Yes, we separate these organic topsoils and put them in a separate stockpile so that they will be there many years in the future when we need to go back and do reclamation work and re-vegetation.

We also try to do ongoing reclamation work with those areas that have been disturbed and they are not going to be disturbed ever again over the future life of the mine. You know, one can do reclamation in those areas sooner rather than later, which is to be preferred as well.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Are there any further questions?

Therefore, this completes the record for the public hearing on the matter of the Application by COGEMA Resources Inc. for the amendments to the McClean Lake operations, Uranium Mine and Milling Operating Licence to allow summer sensitive work for the Sue E Project.

Thank you very much.

--- Upon adjourning at 2:46 p.m.