



December 11, 2020

Bill Peterson  
Senior Vice President, Development Operations  
Canadian Natural Resources Limited

Dear Mr. Peterson:

**Canadian Natural Resources Limited (CNRL) COVID-19 Plan**

Thank you for your letter and for the submission of your COVID-19 plan to Protect NWT. I appreciate the detailed information you have provided and the comprehensive plan you have prepared.

I have reviewed your December 1<sup>st</sup> letter, and have taken into consideration the additional option you have presented. Given the potential risk of COVID-19 importation, I am offering my full support of the deferral of the winter abandonment program until the following season, when we anticipate the risk of severe impacts of COVID-19 should be greatly reduced. As you have pointed out, the number of COVID cases continues to rise in most jurisdictions at an alarming rate, which increases the importation risk of COVID-19 in the Northwest Territories (NWT). While here in the NWT we have been so far able to remain in a containment stage with only 20 travel-related cases to-date, this could change in an instant and quickly overcome our health care system's capacity to respond. It is for these reasons that we have put into place travel restrictions and self-isolation requirements for incoming travellers, and have strongly recommended that all non-essential travel be avoided both in and out of the territory.

While there is a Public Health Order Directed at the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Industry, which is intended to allow for the ongoing operation of our diamond industry, Norman Wells – Imperial Oil Mine site, and projects in the lifecycle of mineral and petroleum resource projects, we are still encouraging work on only those projects that are absolutely essential. As you have described in your letter, the wells to be worked on are safe and secure and can be appropriately-managed until a December 2021-March 2022 program. I also understand that CNRL has entered into similar deferral arrangements with other jurisdictions, and given the particular vulnerabilities of the NWT and its residents to the impacts of COVID-19, we would fully support the same deferral arrangement.

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While we recognize that as an industry leader, Canadian Natural has in place thorough COVID-19 procedures, it is impossible to fully reduce the risk of COVID-19. The prospect of 60 workers coming from out-of-territory at this critical juncture in our pandemic response is not something we would support unless it was absolutely necessary. Therefore, I am strongly encouraging that the planned abandonment work be delayed until the next season and would ask that the Office of the Oil and Gas Regulator make the necessary adjustments to the compliance deadlines to support this deferral.

Finally, I am supportive of the actions and interim measures you have outlined to support the responsible management of these inactive wells by use of visual inspections. Please continue to reach out to my Office if you require further guidance or information related to the Public Health Orders and conducting work in the NWT during the pandemic.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'K. Kandola'.

Kami Kandola, MD, MPH, CCFP, FCFP, ACBOM,  
DTM&H, ABPM  
Chief Public Health Officer

C. Pauline De Jong,  
Regulator of Oil and Gas Operations, OROGO