



NWT OFFICE OF THE REGULATOR OF OIL AND GAS OPERATIONS

Office of the Regulator of Oil and Gas Operations

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Bill Peterson
Senior Vice-President, Development Operations
Canadian Natural Resources Limited
Suite 2100, 855 – 2ND ST SW
CALGARY AB T2P 4J8

December 15, 2020

Dear Bill Peterson:

Decision –
Deferral of Abandonment Program, Fort Liard Area (OA-2018-005-CNRL)

On October 5, 2020, the Office of the Regulator of Oil and Gas Operations (OROGO) received a letter from Canadian Natural Resources Limited (CNRL) requesting to defer its 12 well abandonment program in the Fort Liard area until the first quarter of 2022. This request was based on the potential risk of COVID-19 transmission by CNRL personnel entering the NWT to conduct the well abandonment program. CNRL noted that although it has developed “comprehensive procedures” to deal with COVID-19 in the workplace, the risk of transmission to NWT residents cannot be eliminated.

In a letter dated October 8, 2020, OROGO requested that CNRL submit a COVID-19 Plan to the NWT Chief Public Health Officer (CPHO) for conducting the required well abandonments in accordance with relevant Public Health Orders and guidance. CNRL submitted a COVID-19 Plan to the CPHO for consideration on November 15, 2020.

On November 27, 2020, CNRL and OROGO participated in a teleconference to discuss the potential deferral of the abandonment program and it was determined that both CNRL and OROGO would wait to receive guidance from CPHO on CNRL’s COVID-19 Plan before making a final determination on deferral of the well abandonment program. CNRL wrote a letter to the CPHO on December 1, 2020, requesting a status update on the review of its COVID-19 Plan and noted that deferral of the well abandonment program is an alternative to minimize the risk from COVID-19.

On December 11, 2020, the CPHO issued a letter to CNRL stating that she is fully supportive of the well abandonment program being deferred and that OROGO should make the necessary adjustments to compliance deadlines to accommodate deferral until 2022.

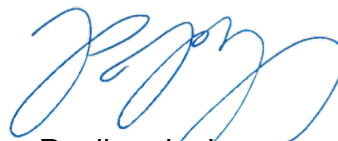
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I hereby approve CNRL's request to defer the abandonment program authorized under OA-2018-005 CNRL until the first quarter of 2022. OROGO will review the conditions of OA-2018-005-CNRL, the associated Well Approvals and well inspection and monitoring requirements in light of this decision.

CNRL has advised OROGO that well inspections were completed on December 3, 2020 with completed well inspection reports to be submitted to OROGO no later than January 3, 2021. OROGO will review these inspection reports and contact CNRL to discuss any additional steps that may need to be taken to ensure these wells remain secure until the 2022 operating season.

If you have any questions, please contact Peter Lennie-Misgeld, Senior Advisor, Legislation and Policy at (867) 767-9097 or by email at orogo@gov.nt.ca.

Sincerely,



Pauline de Jong
Regulator

- c. Dr. Kami Kandola, Chief Public Health Officer
Ryan N. Munro, Manager, Abandonment Engineering, CNRL