
INFORMATION BULLETIN

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Ministry of Environment
Environmental Assessment Office

Murray River Coal project granted environmental assessment approval

VICTORIA – Environment Minister Mary Polak and Energy and Mines Minister Bill Bennett have issued an environmental assessment certificate to HD Mining International Ltd. for the Murray River Coal project, which is located 12 kilometres south of Tumbler Ridge.

The decision was made after considering a review led by British Columbia's Environmental Assessment Office. The ministers have issued the certificate with legally-enforceable conditions that have given them the confidence to conclude that the project will be constructed, operated and decommissioned in a way that ensures that no significant adverse effects are likely to occur directly from the project. A record of the factors that the ministers considered in making their decision can be found in the Reasons for Ministers' Decision at: <http://tinyurl.com/ptt79cq>

There are 24 conditions that are part of the environmental assessment certificate. Design requirements are specified in the certified project description. Each of the conditions and the certified project description are legally-binding requirements that HD Mining must meet to be in compliance with the certificate.

The certificate conditions were developed following consultation and input from First Nations, government agencies, communities and the public. Key conditions for the project require HD Mining to:

- Hire an independent environmental monitor to determine whether HD Mining is complying with the conditions in the environmental assessment certificate;
- Develop a plan to address the risk and impacts of subsidence;
- Develop a suite of management plans for matters that include wildlife, fish and fish habitat, wetlands, air quality, noise, groundwater and surface water and impacts from invasive plants;
- Develop plans to support healthy communities and identify measures to mitigate economic and social effects;
- Continue to participate on the Murray River Aquatic Cumulative Effects Assessment Framework Steering Committee; and
- Develop a plan to share information between HD Mining and First Nations and to identify measures to avoid impacts on Treaty 8 rights.

In addition, based on comments from First Nations and government agencies during the environmental assessment, HD Mining decided to construct a production decline under the Murray River instead of constructing an overland conveyor. The decline will reduce impacts on wildlife.

The Murray River Coal project will require federal environmental assessment approval and

various federal and provincial permits to proceed. The Environmental Assessment Office will coordinate compliance management efforts with other government agencies to ensure that the office is satisfied that certificate conditions are met throughout the life of the project.

The Murray River Coal project is an underground coal mine, with an estimated capital cost of \$668 million and a 25-year operating life, which will create 780 jobs during operations. The mine will produce up to 4.8 million tonnes of clean coal per year.

British Columbia's environmental assessment process involves a rigorous, thorough review that provides for significant opportunities for First Nations, government agencies and the public to influence the outcome of environmental assessments by providing input on the potential for environmental, economic, social, heritage and health effects from a proposed project.

Media Contact:

Communications
Ministry of Environment
250 953-3834

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