



Prairie and Northern Region
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May 14, 2020

ELECTRONIC MAIL

Brian Gregg
VP of Engineering and Environmental
Coalspur Mines (Operations) Ltd.
P.O. Box 6146, 110 McLeod Avenue
Hinton, AB T7V 1X5

Dear Mr. Gregg,

On May 1, 2020, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change (the Minister) received two requests to consider the proposed Vista Test Underground Mine Project and the proposed Vista Coal Mine Phase II Expansion Project together for designation under subsection 9(1) of the *Impact Assessment Act* (IAA).

Under subsection 9(1) of IAA the Minister may, by order, designate a physical activity that is not prescribed in the *Physical Activities Regulations*. The Minister may do this if, in the Minister's opinion, the physical activity may cause adverse effects within federal jurisdiction or adverse direct or incidental effects (resulting from federal decisions), or public concerns related to those effects warrant the designation.

The Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (the Agency) is assessing the applicability of the IAA to the Test Underground Mine and Phase II Projects if considered together (hereafter referred to as the Coalspur Vista Coal Mine Expansion Phases Project). If the Agency determines that the Project is not a designated activity under the *Physical Activities Regulations*, the Agency will review information about the Project to advise the Minister on whether to designate the Project. If designated, to proceed with the Project, Coalspur Mines (Operations) Ltd. would be required to submit an Initial Project Description to the Agency, thereby commencing the planning phase of IAA. In that case, the planning phase would include the Agency determining whether a federal impact assessment is required.

In accordance with subsection 9(4) of IAA, it is expected that the Minister will respond, with reasons, to the designation requests by July 30, 2020.



Additional information regarding the process for designation requests can be found at the following link: <https://www.canada.ca/en/impact-assessment-agency/services/policy-guidance/designating-project-impact-assessment-act.html>

In accordance with subsection 9(3) of IAA, and to inform its advice to the Minister, the Agency requests available information regarding the following by May 27, 2020:

1. Confirm if the information previously provided to the Agency regarding Vista Phase I and Phase II projects on May 30, 2019, August 9, 2019 and September 10, 2019 is still current. If there have been any changes to plans and information, please provide updated details, including whether the increase in production capacity due the Vista Test Underground Mine results in any changes to components of Phase I or Phase II.
2. Confirm if the information submitted to the Alberta Energy Regulator regarding the Vista Test Underground Mine (available online at https://dds.aer.ca/iar_query/ApplicationAttachments.aspx?AppNumber=1927365) is the most current and accurate information on this project, including with respect to the potential environmental effects, or provide the most current information.
3. Confirm if the information in Table 1-1 of the application for the Vista Test Underground Mine (linked above) is current and accurate or provide the most current information.
 - a. Confirm if the additional 2.85 ha of haulroads and access roads attributed to the Vista Test Underground Mine includes only roads used to bring raw coal to the plant (or run of mine conveyor) from the pit, and truck turn around areas. Please provide an updated estimate for haulroads and access roads associated with the Vista Test Underground Mine that meets the above description if required.
4. Provide a list of all regulatory approvals (federal, provincial, municipal, other) and any federal financial assistance that would be required for the Vista Test Underground Mine and the associated project components or activities.
5. Provide any relevant updated information on steps taken or planned, to engage with the public and/or Indigenous groups.
6. Provide any other comments in relation to environmental effects or impacts to the public or Indigenous peoples and how you intend to address and manage those.
7. Explain your views on whether the Project should be designated under IAA.

Coalspur Mines (Operations) Ltd. is strongly encouraged to contact the Agency in the next few days to discuss how much time will be required to produce the information.

In the coming days, a Registry page for the Project will be available on the Canadian Impact Assessment Registry Internet site. Please use the *submit a comment* feature on the Project's Registry page to provide the Agency with information regarding this file. Letters can be uploaded using this feature. If you have difficulties using this feature, please immediately contact Shelly Boss at 587-357-6484 or shelly.boss@canada.ca.

Important Note: All records produced, collected or received in relation to the designation request process – unless prohibited under the *Access to Information Act* or *Privacy Act* – will be considered public and may be released. Should you wish to provide any comments or documents that contain confidential or sensitive information that you believe should be protected from release to the public, please contact the Agency before submitting the information. Information marked as confidential will not be accepted without prior contact made with the Agency.

Further questions regarding this request can be directed to Shelly Boss by telephone or email.

Sincerely,

<original signed by>

Barbara Pullishy
Regional Director, Prairie and Northern Region

cc. Shelly Boss, Project Manager