

# The Environmental Assessment of the proposed Raven Underground Coal Project

*The 40 day Public Comment Period on the draft Application Information Requirements/ Environmental Impact Statement Guidelines (AIR/EIS Guidelines)*

## PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### 1. Q: *What is an Environmental Assessment?*

A: The BC environmental assessment process assesses the significance of potential impacts of a proposed project on a range of environmental, economic, social, health and heritage values. The federal environmental assessment process assesses whether a project will likely result in significant adverse environmental effects prior to the federal government taking action in connection with it.

When a project requires a provincial and federal environmental assessment, the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (CEA Agency) and the BC Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) work together to collect and assess the information they need while retaining their respective decision-making powers.

For the Raven Underground Coal Project, a coordinated environmental assessment process will ensure that the issues and concerns of all interested parties are considered, and that the proposed project, if it is to proceed, will do so in a sustainable manner. In order for the proposed project to proceed, the cooperative environmental assessment must be completed and the proposed Project must receive approval by both the provincial and federal governments.

### 2. Q: *What are the roles of the CEA Agency and the EAO for the environmental assessment of the Raven Underground Coal Project?*

A: The CEA Agency and EAO are responsible for managing the environmental assessment for the Project, in accordance with the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* and the *BC Environmental Assessment Act*, respectively. The CEA Agency and the EAO conduct the environmental

assessment using the advice from federal and provincial experts, representatives of local governments, First Nations and the public. The CEA Agency and EAO conduct an analysis of all information and prepare reports that provide the findings of the provincial and federal environmental assessment. The reports, along with the Proponent's submission, are referred to the provincial and federal ministers for decision.

### 3. Q: *What is the AIR/EIS Guidelines document?*

A: It is a joint CEA Agency-EAO document that describes what information will need to be collected by Compliance Coal Corporation (the Proponent of the proposed project) as part of the environmental assessment. The AIR/EIS Guidelines specifies the baseline studies and information needed to describe the proposed project's predicted environmental, economic, social, health and heritage impacts, and the proposed measures to avoid, reduce or manage those impacts. Once approved, the Proponent must collect the information and undertake the analyses required in the AIR/EIS Guidelines and provide it to the CEA Agency and the EAO for review.

### 4. Q: *I have concerns about the Raven Underground Coal Project; how can I make them heard?*

A: You can provide comments on the nature of your concern during the public comment period. This can be accomplished by attending public meetings or submitting written comments directly. Details for submitting comments are provided in the notification media advertisements announcing the public comment period which can be viewed on the CEA Agency and EAO Web sites.

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**5. Q: A number of people have stated that the Raven Underground Coal Project should not proceed, and not even be allowed to enter an environmental assessment. Why is it still going forward?**

A: Environmental assessments are conducted in accordance with applicable laws. In this case, the proposed project is subject to review under both the BC *Environmental Assessment Act* and the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*. The CEA Agency and the EAO are responsible for ensuring a fair and transparent process that assesses the potential impacts of the proposed Project and submitting a report to their respective Ministers.

**6. Q: I believe that the Raven Underground Coal Project will help the economy of this part of the island by creating much needed jobs. Is my vote in favour of the project going to be taken into consideration?**

A: The CEA Agency and the EAO are requesting comments pertaining to the draft AIR/EIS Guidelines document rather than a position for or against the proposed Project. A 'vote' for or against a proposed Project, rather than comments on the draft AIR/EIS Guidelines, has only limited value as it does not provide information for the environmental assessment. Before a decision can be made by the federal and provincial Ministers, a rigorous technical environmental assessment needs to be completed.

**7. Q: How are my comments going to be considered?**

A: The CEA Agency and the EAO will review all written comments submitted during the public comment period and comments made verbally during the public meetings. The Proponent will then create a table which tracks the issues raised by the public and the Proponent's response. The CEA Agency and the EAO will direct the Proponent to respond to comments related to the proposed Project and the information needed to study potential environmental, economic, social, health

If you have questions about the environmental assessment, please contact either Rachel Shaw (EAO) at 250-952-6501 or [Rachel.Shaw@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Rachel.Shaw@gov.bc.ca) or Andrew Rollo (CEA Agency) at 604-666-2458 or [Andrew.Rollo@ceaa-acee.gc.ca](mailto:Andrew.Rollo@ceaa-acee.gc.ca).

and heritage impacts. This draft tracking table will be available for public comment for two weeks. The CEA Agency and EAO will ensure that the Proponent's responses are adequate before finalizing the AIR/EIS Guidelines document.

**8. Q: What if I am not satisfied with the response provided by the project Proponent to my comment?**

A: You can ask for clarification during the public meeting sessions or during the two week period allotted to the public review of the draft tracking table.

**9. Q: Where do I go if I need more information about the proposed Project?**

A: The CEA Agency and EAO Web sites provide information on the status of the proposed Project and the environmental assessment process and can be visited at [www.eao.gov.bc.ca](http://www.eao.gov.bc.ca) and [www.ceaa.gc.ca](http://www.ceaa.gc.ca) respectively. You can also stay up-to-date by signing up for the EAO's Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feed or the CEA Agency email list. Setup information for RSS is available on the EAO's Web site, while subscribing to the emailing list can be done by writing to [raven@ceaa-acee.gc.ca](mailto:raven@ceaa-acee.gc.ca).

**10. Q: What comes next?**

A: The CEA Agency and the EAO will consider all comments received before finalizing and approving the AIR/EIS Guidelines. The Proponent must then meet the requirements specified in the AIR/EIS Guidelines document when developing its Application/EIS. The CEA Agency and the EAO will then undertake a review of the Application/EIS, which will include consultation with the public, technical experts, local government and First Nations on the potential impact of the proposed Project and the measures needed to avoid, reduce or mitigate potential effects.