

COVID-19 Pandemic Relief for Early Exploration Proponents

Temporary Procedure for the Authorization of the Continuation of Ongoing Exploration Projects and Activities

INFORMATION

The Ministry of Energy, Northern Development and Mines (ENDM) has developed this temporary procedure to guide proponents, stakeholders and Aboriginal communities through the process of reapplying for early exploration activities that had been authorized prior and during the COVID-19 Pandemic. This procedure will address circumstances where authorizations expired or may expire and the ability to complete the authorized exploration activity was disrupted due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Objective:

Proponents that had authorizations for early exploration activities may have been unable to implement and carry out exploration activities due to the impacts of the COVID pandemic. The Ministry has prepared this temporary procedure to provide an opportunity to re apply for those expired or expiring plans and permits. The Ministry will also continue to ensure that the Crown's duty to consult and, where appropriate, accommodate is being met.

Scope:

The temporary procedure applies to current and recently expired early exploration authorizations and is only applicable where the replacement plan or permit is limited to the previously-approved activities.

The work must have been previously authorized but could not be conducted during the COVID-19 Pandemic period beginning March 1, 2020. This procedure will remain available until March 31, 2021 to enable impacted activities to be reauthorized and completed through the spring and summer of 2021.

The procedure will allow for new early exploration plan submissions and permit applications under strict conditions. It is only intended to extend previously authorized activities. It will allow previously authorized work to continue for a period up to, but not exceeding, one year. The procedure applies to and extends the time for completion of all or any portion of the previously authorized exploration activities.

Consultation on proposed re-authorization of exploration activities:

As noted above, this temporary procedure is limited to early exploration activities that were previously authorized and as a result, will have been the subject of prior consultation with potentially affected Aboriginal communities. ENDM will carry out consultation with communities regarding the re-authorization of exploration activities under this procedure. The Ministry will take into account prior consultation, and the fact that the nature and location of the exploration activities will remain the same and is limited to a re-authorization of a period up to one year.

ENDM's objective is to conclude any new consultation within approximately 30 days, subject to becoming aware of any new information that may require additional time to consider, before any re-authorization of exploration activities.

How to Apply for the Continuation of Ongoing Exploration Projects and Activities as outlined in this temporary procedure.

Proponents must submit a new plan or apply for a new permit through the MLAS Application for a term of no more than a one-year duration. The submission or application must include a statement in the Activity Details Report (ADR) and maps stating the application is for the continuation of previously authorized activities and must reference the plan or permit number that previously authorized the activities. The ADR and Maps may describe the same or reduced activity as previously authorized, and any or all activities must be on the same land and area as previously authorized. No new planned work may be included and if so, the permit will not be re-authorized.