

**Project CLEANS
Summary of Public Meeting
Uranium City, SK, May 6, 2009**

PRESENT:

Project Review Committee Members/Representatives

Harold Grasley: Chairperson, Uranium City
Andy Schultz: President, Métis Nation of Saskatchewan, Local #50

Guests

Vina Powder: Council Member
Shelley Murphy: Nurse
Joanne Larocque: Resident
Wayne Augier: Resident
Lawrence Larocque: Resident
Ken Mercredi: Part-time Resident
Dean Classen: Resident
Duane Larocque: Resident
Courtney Bougie: Resident
Kevin Lewandoski: Uranium City Contracting
Josh Lewandoski: Uranium City Contracting
Margaret Powder: Resident
Allen Augier: Vice-President, Métis Nation of Saskatchewan, Local #50
*Three other residents whose names were not legible on the sign-in sheet.

Saskatchewan Energy and Resources

Keith Cunningham: Senior Industry Analyst

Saskatchewan Environment

George Bihun: Environmental Protection Officer

Saskatchewan Research Council

Aaron MacDonell: CLEANS Project Manager
Mark Simpson: Research Scientist
Erin Taman Athmer: Communications Manager

<<Meeting started at 3:10 pm in the gymnasium at Ben McIntyre School.>>

Welcome

Aaron MacDonell, CLEANS Project Manager welcomed everyone and introduced the SRC and provincial government representatives. He noted that the purpose of the meeting was to share information about the sites that are scheduled for cleanup this summer and to answer any questions the community has regarding the summer 2009 work plan.

Presentation

Nine sites in total will be addressed in summer 2009. Of the nine, there are two shafts that require caps. Three types of closure methods will be used including: polyurethane foam,

backfilling and capping. The backfill depth is two times the height so if the height is 10 feet, the backfill has to go in at least 20 feet to the top of the adit.

Safety requires that nobody enter the adit.

The fill material must be suitable material so no garbage or non-hazardous waste because it could cause slumping in the future.

Foam is a new closure method that has not been used in the area. Depth – how far the foam goes down, is the same as the smallest dimension of the opening. There will likely be the need to build some cribbing or mesh for the holes as well.

Stainless steel cap – this is a closure method approved by the Saskatchewan Ministry of Advanced Education, Employment and Labour.

Mr. MacDonell mentioned that he is new to SRC and the project but that the last time he was in the community he heard concerns about disposal of wastes and whether it will be separated into hazardous and non-hazardous materials. The hazardous materials will be stored in a fenced area at Lorado. The local landfill will not be used.

He added that there is a possibility that additional work will be done this summer – likely light duty work. Mr. MacDonell is working with Mr. Bihun on this. Mr. Simpson from SRC will also be in the community doing site assessments around the end of May. There may be some funding available to complete some light work duties this summer (2009).

Mr. MacDonell invited participants to view posters that contained maps and photos of the sites that will be worked on this summer. They are also available on the website www.saskcleans.ca.

Questions/Comments from the public
(Answers provided by SRC unless otherwise noted.)

Q: Have there been any studies on shafts and venting?

A: All shafts and adits will be vented.

Q Vented where?

A: They all will have venting for water.

Q: There are diamond drill holes all over the place leaking. Can you guarantee these will be capped?

A: These adits would have natural drainage already so that would continue to happen. There is no contamination from this drainage. There have been a couple of occasions where adits have discharged. We took samples and there are no problems with them coming back in excess of Saskatchewan water quality guidelines. At Lorado, there is a big stain at the top of the hill. There is an issue of acid rock drainage at that location which will be handled separately. Current stands for diamond drill holes would say they have to be sealed, but back then, they were not sealed.

Q: Closure at Strike Lake – Barb Bliske wrote up something to give to you. She voices some concerns. *(Andy Schultz provided written letter from Ms. Bliske.)*

A: There is an adit next to Rod Atton's cabin and George Bihun has spoken with him and the discussions with Mr. Atton earlier were that this is not an issue.

George Bihun – Our concern is that if something happens to Rod or someone going in there then who is the responsible party? There are some areas in this country where people have mines for tourism and then that is not a problem if they provide a closure plan and financial plan that is okay. If we leave it open, who is the owner? Who's responsible if someone gets hurt and who is providing the money for when it does need to be closed? Someone needs to maintain it. If someone wants them then who looks after them and what is the long term plan. Flin Flon (Manitoba) is looking at growing marijuana underground in a shaft. The U of S is growing some there.

Q: She said close it up at the end of the project. Just leave it to the end?

A: Keith Cunningham – Then it is not as big an issue as it is not long-term. There is some liability once the whole project is done we need to close up that liability and someone needs to take responsibility for it. If there is a wish to leave it for a bit more, then it is not a big issue.

SRC - That opening is not a major problem. Mr. Atton is close by and it is closed somewhat.

George Bihun - The closing sequence doesn't matter to us.

Keith Cunningham – The initial program was the order you wanted in terms of what you want done. SRC does not have a big issue changing the year that it is done.

SRC - There is no big safety issue there so the order could be adjusted.

George Bihun – We could just put a foam plug in so he could still use it as a cellar.

Q: What are the plans for Gunnar this year?

A: SRC will perform a site assessment and evaluate. There is a need to collect scientific data and assess the environmental impact of closure activities. SRC is currently in the process of hiring an environmental engineering consultant and once they collect data, we will come back to discuss options.

Q: When is it due? Is it open now?

A: The closing date is May 11.

Q: Styrofoam - how long is it good for? Can it be used as backfill?

A: George Bihun – This is a new closure method for SRC. The foam has been used on some smaller sites that are inaccessible and in the United States before. You use it in remote sites where you are not expecting a big load. Foam has been used for 25 years. When a site is closed up and we don't have money or equipment to get in, we use a foam plug and seal it off from fire. Once that's done then there is a monitoring program. Money is set up and put aside so when the time comes to replace it, there is money for it.

Q: Is the foam fire proof?

A: No. We will cover it with 12 or 18 inches of dirt.

Q: Is it the same stuff (foam) that is used around windows and doors? After three or four years it shrinks if left exposed to the sun.

A: We keep it out of the sun. If you look at old houses in town with stucco on them, they have a concrete cover to keep the sun off it. This is a different type of foam. The ideal way to close these is to fill them in with rock and put it back to the way it was, but that is not always possible. It would be nice to fill it all in but the rock may not be there and it is expensive to get it there. There are also concrete costs and you need sand for concrete so that is another cost factor. Six feet of foam would be tough to chip through. The government has approved foam to use in a couple of instances because there will not be people driving on them. They are all raises and are small in diameter. Most are on the top of a hill so there is no surface access to them. Also, it does not make much sense to cut a road in to pour concrete in a vertical hole that would require a lot of fill material to get down to the bottom. This way (using foam), we can build something eight feet wide, add the foam and cover it with two feet of earth materials to protect from radiation from the sun and from fire. Mines in Colorado have developed and marketed foam as a permanent mine closure method. George Bihun has used it before. States such as Utah have used it in the past.

Q: Will it decay?

A: The info that we've been provided with indicates it is a permanent closure.

George Bihun – We are estimating it will last 100 years. With concrete, some lasts, and some does not so we've put a time frame on it and money will be put aside to replace it. The province's Institutional Control program has two funds – there is long-term monitoring and an unforeseen events fund. The closures are only as good as the engineers are that design them. This money is the insurance to build it back up again if we need to. The Department of Labour looks at the caps. They are the engineers and they design them so they can be turned back to Institutional Control and long-term monitoring.

Keith Cunningham – After SRC goes in and fills them with foam and with soil, they will monitor to make sure they are not shrinking or sagging before we move it into the Registry. SRC pays into the Registry to keep going back to set it up for monitoring every five and 10 years - as long as we live. There is money in there to replace the foam if need be. We set the monitoring program to go out and if it is failing or someone comes back and tells us it is failing, we will go back and fix it.

Q: This is a multi-million dollar contract. Why can't you fix it for good?

A: The foam will last. There is more information on their website www.foamconceptsinc.com.

George Bihun - There has to be money to go back to these sites and check them. Filling them is the best way, but it is not always possible. Once you start dealing with shafts, you don't know what is under there to sustain the rock. You never know when it will open up again. There could be timbers, ice, etc. In Flin Flon, we did this. It was an active mine that we being decommissioned and they still put a cap on top.

Q: What is the cost to fill in one raise?

A: Installation takes one day. Two people can do it with a quad runner. Approximately \$5,000-7,000 for materials to fill a raise. If it is at surface and you have no waste rock and access, you can build a road and bring waste rock in to fill it. That would be \$100,000. If we have to push roads in, we're hurting the environment. Research indicates that this material is suitable and we'll use it and monitor it.

George Bihun – They can only use the foam on certain things. There has to be no road access.

Q: If it will cost \$7,000 to fill one – why did you award a contract for a million dollars?

A: There are four raises that we'll do with foam. The others will be backfilled and there are eight other raises to be dealt with. It is not the only thing that is being done. If you just look at the financials, then foam is the cheaper way. We're filling four with foam and they are very small. Some are as small as two feet by one foot. Baska Dot and Pitch Ore are quite large but still less than two meters square. They are carrot shape – they narrow as you go down – cone shaped.

Q: Can you specify what would be considered a hazardous material and what is non-hazardous with examples?

A: A battery would be hazardous. Abandoned vehicles with transmission fluid or hydrocarbons in an engine need to be collected in a drum and stored at a secure site and would ultimately be disposed of at an engineered landfill or another option that would be approved. This is nothing different than you would run across down the street. Asbestos shingles need approved asbestos handling procedures.

George Bihun – Our big concern was if you started on a project and then you have to stop it, what happens to progress? (He provided an example where a mechanic knocked over an asbestos shelf and a plane had to be chartered to bring in someone to clean it up, stopping the project in the meantime). Asbestos is an occupational hazardous waste. At Cinch, someone burned a pile of copper wire and it needs to be treated as wire burn. There, they scooped up six inches of soil and stored it in a drum. It will end up in Quebec. Really SRC needs a place to store this until it can be removed. They have applied for a place.

Q: Why do you go through all that expense and then put hydrocarbons (foam) two feet away?

A: Foam is chemically inert.

George Bihun - most of the material has been aged and the hydrocarbons that are left are the same as what's on a paved road. Foams are one type of carbon and they still have a use. That is what you will see when they say hazardous waste storage. We are not moving rock – it will stay on-site. There will not be much but we want a secure place to put it. We will need a fence with a sign to keep things out. Your bulk fuel storage site in town here is a hazardous waste site. You just need to put up a fence and a sign with a contact person.

SRC – The only thing we won't handle would be old blasting caps. The RCMP explosive people will handle that.

Q: You want to store the contaminated steel and garbage including drums at Eagle Point until Gunnar gets going?

A: If steel is picked up at various sites and there is not enough waste rock on-site to bury it, the steel will go to Eagle as there is lots of waste rock there and a confined watershed. We are proposing to bury steel at the Eagle site. Hazardous materials will be stored there for the interim until they can be shipped out.

George Bihun – Some steel will go to Eagle such as the two 1,000 gallon tanks from the Virgin Lake site. We are saying take them there, compact them, and we will bury them there as we're not adding more to the Uranium City landfill.

SRC asked the questioner to clarify what they meant by “contaminated” steel? Questioner indicated that they meant steel with increased gamma readings.

A: George Bihun – When we ripped down the Lorado mill, once we cleaned off the timbers, they were good to leave site unless they had dust particles penetrating them. The stuff here is all low-level and low-grade. Cameco's McArthur river mine is a lot hotter.

SRC – We will scan the materials leaving site.

Q: Shouldn't you be putting a liner and berm on the ground?

A: Keith Cunningham – It is meant only as temporary storage.

George Bihun – All that is going in is steel. We are only adding in more iron. It is not close to a water body. The iron will break down and you will get rust that will dissolve into the water and migrate a bit. Most of it will be covered with waste rock. There are many spots in southern Saskatchewan or over at the Bible Camp where you can drink the water and taste iron.

Q: When are you starting this year?

A: In a week or two.

Q: Will the contractor be hiring any local people?

A: It is in the contract.

Kevin Lewandoski - They asked me and I actually put names in. One guy has already left town for a different job and I will find someone to replace him and have these guys (SRC) okay him.

SRC - Mark Simpson will be back soon for assessments. We hope to cut some trail at a minimum this summer.

George Bihun – I will be coming back at the end of May to do assessments for future work and if you want to come along to see the areas let me know. SRC will come back in the fall and tell you what they found and what they plan to do and see if there any comments or questions before the new work goes to tender. If you want to come along or have info about them or want to share information, come along and see them. I will be around the end of May for about 10 days. There are two sites with big surface areas.

Q: When they start, will you have a local person to supervise them?

A: We are looking into it. We will have SRC presence to verify the quality of work according to the Ministry of the Environment and we will look at local presence too. I don't see why we couldn't do spot checks.

George Bihun – We want one of their staff monitoring most of the time especially on work on openings and closings.

SRC – We want to provide transparency to you guys so we are looking at it very seriously right now.

Q: Will there be more jobs?

A: We are looking at permits, assessing the other sites and are confident that we'll have some more money this summer. We can't say how many sites, but we do have a number in mind.

Q: The tailings at Lorado are a hazard. Animals are grazing on the willows growing there. A hunter killed a moose with pus and a doctor requested something be done. People are driving across it.

A: SRC has submitted letter of intent to CNSC for the Lorado site. They have to review with CEAA and the provincial government and then will give us some assessment guidelines. We want to make sure that we are sure of the impacts of what we do. There have been other companies and individuals that haven't taken the time and cared and ended up making it worse. We need to do the assessment to make sure that what we're doing is not making it worse in the long-term. We only get one shot so we need enough data. We'd be more than welcome to take tissue samples.

George Bihun – In the past, Lorado was all tied up in that the government didn't want to put the money into it. The federal and provincial governments are cost-sharing on uranium site cleanups. In the interim, when Encana took over the site, a deal was struck with them as the owner and it took some time to negotiate. Now there is money for Gunnar and Lorado in a separate pot. However, we're not sure if it is enough. These things are not easy. It has taken a long time for Lorado to get where it is at. SRC has submitted paperwork to CNSC and us. More studies will be needed. I understand Cameco will be here next week to talk about Beaverlodge. The Lorado site is finally starting to happen. SRC has already gone through Gunnar and is hoping that they can catch up to each other in regulatory process so when it is time to do the work, we can save a bit. Snow fencing was put up and it is checked once a year. We don't want people crossing the land bridge. We don't want Nero Lake flushing. We check the bridge and look for slumps. Some risk assessments have been done. If you want more data, we can get you data. If there are other ideas more than signage, we're here to listen to them. On Gunnar, SRC is required to put signs up and they are trying to keep people out of the buildings. They made attempts to weld and secure but people do break in. I'm not sure how much more we can do in the interim. If you have suggestions or concerns let us know.

Q: Will you hire a watchman?

A: No. We do have lots of data but we need to review it, consolidate and review it and pull it all together. CNSC and CEAA give us guidelines and they have to consult on them and if we have to do an EA, then we have to consult on that too.

Q: Gunnar or Lorado which is first?

A: Gunnar is a best guess right now.

Q: Some are saying Lorado should come first as it is the most hazardous.

A: Both are going through the regulatory process. Gunnar was started first.

Keith Cunningham – All sites have been on the radar since panel hearings of the 1990s. When we moved forward and I started being involved in 2001 we were pushing the federal government to cost-share cleanup costs. That's when the federal government was asking the province how much we were in for and we started in 2001-03 a study of abandoned mine sites in northern Saskatchewan including the sites in this project. We were stuck in the process negotiating with the federal government for two more years before we got them on board and Encana was identified. The process is now up and running. SRC submitted a Letter of Intent on Gunnar and it has been going through the EA process for two years now since they first submitted. In the meantime, we negotiated with Encana over responsibility of that site and keeping it out of the courts, we settled. From there we hired SRC on as the contractor for Lorado and submitted a Letter of Intent (LOI) for Lorado and are now almost two years behind.

George Bihun – Once we found the third party, they didn't step up right away and that delayed Lorado. If there was nobody there it would have been parallel. There may be a way for Lorado

to not go for a full hearing and for it to go faster in the process. We are hoping to fast-track it. CNSC wants these cleaned up. We have to wait for their official hearing. Encana had done some work themselves. They had Golder up here and they presented on Lorado a few years ago.

SRC - If the issue is access and the road runs right over the hill and is a bypass road, that's an option. We don't need to wait for CNSC to put in a road that bypasses or limits access to the site. They won't authorize cleanup of the site until all studies have gone through.

George Bihun – They have to come up and talk to communities and organizations. All those processes take a long time.

Q: You said you would have to clean up these nine mines before the government would issue a work order?

A: Keith Cunningham – The smaller sites are already exempted by CNSC so there is no federal trigger process. SRC has to submit an application to the Saskatchewan Environment Assessment Branch and Regina does a review. Once we say we're fine with them, we will assign you a permit to do work according to George's branch so they have done provincial screening and they have to follow George's rules. Gunnar and Lorado have federal triggers – an entirely different process and it will take an entirely different time line.

Q: How long do the contractors have?

A: This summer season – before the snow flies. There is no deadline.

Q: How can you bid if you are not sure of what's there? There was no direction on what the job is.

A: We have the applications we sent to George Bihun. You should assume there will be scope changes.

Kevin Lewandoski – We bid on what is in the scope of work.

Keith Cunningham – I agree. The closing requirements for an adit are to go in and pack it twice the height.

SRC: We have scopes of work and applications for permits and we can share them.

Q: What about the hotel steel?

A: George Bihun – Approval for that comes from us.

SRC – That has nothing to do with us. We have quality control outside SRC to make sure it happens properly and will look at industry standards for quality control. If you see something going wrong take some pictures and get some proof and email them out to the proper people.

Q: George got an email about the dump. SRC took contaminated waste to our dump. There are pictures.

A: Kevin Lewandoski – SRC told me to do it and that's what they told me to do.

SRC - We made a mistake and we took the blame.

Kevin Lewandoski – It was brought up at the meeting that it was to be taken to landfill.

Harold Grasley – But the assistance of Adam was required.

Kevin Lewandoski – Adam pushed it into the pile so they couldn't retrieve it. He knew it was coming. Harold knew it was coming.

George Bihun – There was some rock brought in on the weekend. We looked at it, took samples and we're telling them to put a little more quality control on it. Mistakes happen and we will try and stop them from happening again. Miscommunication will happen and we try and minimize and move forward.

Q: Why was there no legal action?

A: Keith Cunningham – SRC made an offer to remove the materials from site and acknowledged a breakdown in communication and timing. SRC took every step they could and offered to go in and remove all materials deposited there. George was called in to do a full inspection and any remediation that would be needed, Sask. Environment would have required them to remove it if required, but a decision was made that it was not required.

George Bihun – The only thing that ended up in the dump was some waste rock because it was scooped up instead picked up by hand. They identified it to us. They offered to remediate it. Nobody is trying to hide a thing. It happened on a weekend.

Q: When is the next meeting?

A: CNSC is here tentatively here on June 8 and might do some public consultation at the same time? We need to meet with the PRC as well but they are busy. We need to get them as they represent the region.

Q: I thought they pulled out?

A: No. CNSC is coming up here. Two of them are coming in June to see the sites. They will want to talk to Harold, Métis and if there are other groups who want to meet one-on-one, let them know. When Claude comes, he can mention and explain the whole regulatory process.

Q: Is it going to take another ten years?

A: I hope not.

Q: What is the radiation level? Still no answer on that or arsenic on Lorado?

A: George Bihun – Golder was here doing the work. Now we have to go to licensing and to the regulators and specialists and talk to communities to see what they want.

SRC - Arsenic in the North is very dangerous but that is not what is at Lorado. It is like comparing apples to oranges. The stuff in Yellowknife is different as it is a different chemical species. Lorado will be done but the consultation is important. It has started but it will not stop.

George Bihun – We're in town tonight and SRC is here most of the summer. Call us or come and see us.

SRC – Aaron MacDonell has left business cards.

Q: When is the next PRC meeting?

A: We have to talk to all the Chiefs and agree on a time and date. Sooner rather than later.
<<Meeting adjourned at 4:36 pm.>>