

NIRB Application for Screening #125071

Pilot Study - Hovercraft Implementation in Nunavut

Application Type: Amendment
Project Type: Other
Application Date: 2/9/2017 3:09:58 PM
Period of Operation: From 2017-07-01 to 2025-12-31
Proposed Authorization: From 2017-07-01 to 2025-12-31
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DETAILS

Non-technical project proposal description

English: Pilot Study- Hovercraft Implementation in Nunavut. The Nunavut territory is a significant part of Agnico Eagle's business and is expected to remain a key component of Agnico Eagle's operations for several decades to come. As Agnico Eagle's Nunavut platform currently spans an area that is well over 400km in length, improving the ability to move people and equipment more freely within this area would have an immediate and significant impact on the company's long term strategy and success in Nunavut, primarily in the areas of logistics and exploration. In this context, Agnico Eagle has identified an opportunity to enhance the potential of its assets in Nunavut. Hovercrafts have resolved numerous logistical and transportation problems in Northern and Arctic territories of Siberia and the Far East. It is expected that they will also be applicable in Nunavut and may have future all- season benefits for Nunavummiut. The hovercrafts, by design, can be interchangeably used on water and land, while transporting people or industrial loads over small and large rivers, lakes, swamps, snow soil, packed ice bogs, tundra, and coastal seas throughout the year. Noise levels for one unit are about the same as two snowmobiles, the low ground pressure prevents impacts to the terrestrial environment and aquatic environment. Agnico Eagle is proposing to purchase and transport 2 hovercraft units (3 tonnes) to the Meadowbank site in the third quarter of 2017 summer sealift season to be used to transport personnel and light cargo on the Amaruq Exploration Access Road (AEAR), on the approved winter roads and designated trails to drilling properties on the Amaruq property on a year round basis. The intent is to perform a one-year pilot program starting in the summer of 2017 continuing through the winter of 2017/2018 until the end of 2018 to validate its operational performance, to demonstrate its viability for search and rescue activities in the area around Meadowbank and to de-risk the later stages of a larger implementation strategy. Depending on the success and findings of the pilot study, the operation of these two hovercrafts is expected to continue beyond 2018. Compared with alternatives assessed, Agnico Eagle feels that the implementation of the hovercraft technology is the most cost-effective and best overall alternative for exploration from an environmental and economic perspective.

French: Étude Pilote - Implantation d'Aéroglesseur au Nunavut. Le territoire du Nunavut est une partie importante des affaires d'Agnico Eagle et devrait rester un élément clé de ses opérations durant plusieurs décennies à venir. Comme le territoire d'Agnico Eagle au Nunavut s'étend actuellement sur une zone au-delà de 400km de longueur, améliorer la capacité de déplacement des personnes et des équipements plus librement au sein de ce territoire aurait un impact immédiat et significatif sur la stratégie à long terme de l'entreprise et son succès au Nunavut, surtout dans les domaines de la logistique et l'exploration. Dans ce contexte, Agnico Eagle a identifié une opportunité d'accroître le potentiel de ses actifs au Nunavut. Les aéroglesseurs ont résolu de nombreux problèmes de logistiques et de transport dans les territoires du Nord et de l'Arctique de la Sibérie et l'Extrême-Orient. Il est prévu qu'ils seront également utilisables au Nunavut et pourront avoir tous les bénéfices de saisons pour le Nunavummiut. Les aéroglesseurs, par leur design, peuvent être utilisés sur l'eau et la terre, transporter des personnes ou des charges industrielles sur de petites ou de grandes rivières, lacs, marécages, neige, tourbières gelées, toundra et des mers côtières tout au long de l'année. Les niveaux de bruit pour un aéroglesseur sont sensiblement les mêmes que deux motoneiges et la faible pression au sol empêche les impacts à l'environnement terrestre et le milieu aquatique. Agnico Eagle se propose d'acheter deux (2) aéroglesseurs (3 tonnes) et de les transporter au site de Meadowbank au cours du troisième trimestre de 2017 durant la saison de la barge. Les aéroglesseurs serviront au transport de personnel et de matériel sur la route d'exploration d'Amaruq, sur les routes d'hiver approuvés et sur les différents sentiers pour le forage sur la propriété Amaruq sur une base annuelle. L'intention est d'effectuer un programme pilote d'un an à partir de l'été de 2017 jusqu'à l'hiver de 2017/2018 pour valider ses performances opérationnelles, pour démontrer sa viabilité dans les activités de recherche et de sauvetage dans les environs de Meadowbank et à écarter les risques d'une stratégie de mise en œuvre plus grande. Dépendamment du succès et des résultats de l'étude pilote, l'utilisation de ces deux aéroglesseurs devrait se poursuivre au-delà de 2018. Comparativement aux alternatives envisagées, Agnico Eagle estime que l'utilisation de la technologie de l'aéroglesseur est la plus rentable et la meilleure option pour l'exploration du point de vue environnemental et économique.

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Personnel

Personnel on site: 4

Days on site: 365

Total Person days: 1460

Period of operation: from 2017-07-01 to 2025-12-31

Proposed term of operation: from 2017-07-01 to 2025-12-31

ACTIVITIES

Project Activities

Location	Activity Type	Land Status	Site History	Site Archaeological or Palentological Value	Proximity to the nearest communities and any protected areas
Amaruq	Other	Inuit Owned Surface Lands	Historical exploration drilling of the Amaruq site (formerly the IVR project) began with Cumberland in 2008. In 2013, an exploration drilling program using winter roads and helicopters was initiated at Amaruq by Agnico Eagle. The results of the drilling showed promising gold mineralization and continues today with the potential as a satellite pit to Meadowbank. The hovercraft pilot study will allow for transportation of personnel and material to support further exploration at Amaruq	Hovercraft operations will occur on the AEAR and approved winter roads, for which archaeological assessments have been carried out. Archaeological concerns on these roads, and on portages where roads intersect with waterbodies, were mitigated by avoidance or systematic data recovery as part of the assessment and approval process. No new ground disturbance is expected as a result of the Pilot Study, removing the potential for chance finds of buried archaeological resources.	The Amaruq Exploration Property is a 408-square kilometre which supports an exploration camp site located on Inuit Owned Land approximately 150 kilometres north of Baker Lake and approximately 50 kilometres northwest of the Meadowbank mine. There are no protected areas within the area of use for the proposed hovercraft pilot study.

Community Involvement and Regional Benefits

Community	Name	Organization	Date Contacted
Rankin Inlet	Agnico Eagle Public Information Sessions	The general public	2016-06-06
Baker Lake	Agnico Eagle Public Information Session	The general public	2016-06-07
Baker Lake	Agnico Eagle Public Information Sessions	The general public	2016-10-25

AUTHORIZATIONS

Project Locations

Kivalliq

Project Authorization

Authorizing Agency	Authorization Description	Current Status	Date Issued / Applied	Expiry Date
Kivalliq Inuit Association	KVCL314C01 Amaruq commercial lease	Active		2025-08-15
Nunavut Water Board	8 BC - AEA1525 for the construction, operation and closure of the Amaruq exploration access road	Active		2025-12-31
Kivalliq Inuit Association	KVRW11F01 - Amaruq winter road access right	Active		2017-05-16

	of way			
Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada	N2013F0030 - Amaruq winter access road land use permit	Active		2017-04-15
Nunavut Water Board	Type 2BB-MEA1318 - Advanced Exploration at Amaruq	Active		2018-03-06

MATERIAL USE

Equipment to be used (including drills, pumps, aircraft, vehicles etc.)

Equipment Type	Quantity	Size - Dimensions	Proposed Use
Information is not available			

Detail Fuel and Hazardous Material Use

Fuel / Material	Type	Number of Containers	Container Capacity	Total Amount	Units	Proposed Use
Diesel	fuel	0	0	0	Liters	There will be no additional fuel storage. The hovercrafts will be resupplied at the existing Meadowbank and Amaruk fuel storage facilities
NA	hazardous	0	0	0	Liters	NA

Project Water Consumption

Daily Amount (m3)	Proposed Water Retrieval Methods	Proposed Water Retrieval Location
0	NA	NA

WASTE

Waste Management

Project Activity	Type of Waste	Projected Amount Generated	Method of Disposal	Additional Treatment Procedures
Other	Hazardous waste	20 L/mth	Stored at Meadowbank HAZMAT and shipped south	Shipped south and disposed of at a certified hazwaste facility
Other	Other, Contaminated soil	20 m3	Shipped to the Meadowbank Landfarm	NA

Environmental Impacts

Agnico Eagle is proposing to purchase and transport 2 hovercraft units to transport personnel and light cargo on the approved Amaruk Exploration Access Road and on the approved winter roads to the Amaruk property. The intent is to perform a pilot project with an aim to validate hovercraft operational performance, demonstrate their viability for search and rescue activities in the area around the Amaruk Property. The low ground pressure generated by hovercraft operation creates a lesser impact to the terrestrial and aquatic environments than conventional, wheel- or track-based equipment, and noise levels are roughly equivalent to the operation of two snowmobiles. Compared with alternatives assessed this technology is the best overall alternative for exploration with few expected environmental impacts. Environmental effects from the use of hovercraft will occur over the short-term pilot study period, reversing at the end of operations, and are low to moderate in magnitude.

Description of Existing Environment: Physical Environment

Description of Existing Environment: Biological Environment

Description of Existing Environment: Socioeconomic Environment

Identification of Impacts and Proposed Mitigation Measures

Cumulative Effects

IMPACTS

TABLE 1 - IDENTIFICATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

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CONSTRUCTION																							
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OPERATION																							
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DECOMMISSIONING																							
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(P = Positive, N = Negative and non-mitigatable, M = Negative and mitigatable, U = Unknown)