



Virtual Open House Q & A Document

Nepisiguit Falls Generating Station
Life Extension Project



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LA CENTRALE DE

NEPISIGUIT FALLS

GENERATING STATION

The following is a summary of the questions received during the Nepisiguit Falls Generating Station Life Extension Project virtual open house held on July 20, 2021 and corresponding responses.

GENERAL PROJECT

1. Why not simply decommission the Station?

This is a long-term investment for New Brunswickers to have clean, reliable energy at competitive prices. Nepisiguit is located at a natural barrier (waterfall) therefore fish migration through the dam is not a concern. Nepisiguit's structure is in good shape. With these upgrades and replacements, the station will be able to produce 13.2 MW to serve the next generation of New Brunswickers needs.

2. How many customers currently rely on the station?

Currently Nepisiguit produces enough energy to power approximately 8,000 homes. With the upgrade the number will be increased to approximately 10,000 homes.

3. What is the estimated cost of this project?

The estimated cost of the project is between 20 and 25 million. This includes the Forebay Bridge Refurbishment, the Sluiceway Bladder and Unit 1 Replacement. This estimate does not include Units 2 and 3, structural repairs or the Forebay Bladder Replacement.

4. How long is the bypass road?

NB Power is examining two options when it comes to addressing the current situation with the bypass road. One option is to build a new road which would be approximately 250 m long. The other option is to repair an existing woods road for public use. The second option would be longer and only involve vegetation management work.

5. Will the project be tendered out in phases and when approximately will tenders start going out?

The project will be tendered out in phases. Material and equipment are expected to be tendered the year before construction unless the lead time is longer. Material and equipment contracts are expected to go out as early as fall 2021. It is expected that installation contracts will be bid in the winter of 2022, the year before execution. All contracts will be tendered under the Crown Construction Contracts Act or the Procurement Act unless using pre-existing agreements i.e., NMA.

6. Will the replacements of units 1, 2 and 3 be performed under NB Powers NMA agreements, or will this work be done through public tenders?

Yes, the major electrical work and major mechanical work will be completed under NB Powers NMA agreements. Nepisiguit's current NMA agreement expires December 31, 2021 and the new bid is expected to go out in the fall of 2021.

7. How many people are currently employed at the station?

We currently have seven employees at the station: five operators, one supervisor and one labourer.

8. Is this open house a consultation or a presentation?

This open house is part of the consultative process that we do with the members of the public, stakeholders, right holders and landowners to make sure that they are aware of the project details and have the opportunity to ask questions and raise any concerns. An in person open house was held with Pabineau First Nations on July 22, 2021 which is also part of this consultation and engagement.

9. Have the people of Pabineau First Nation been consulted specifically regarding this project?

The project team began communications with MTI (Mi'gmawe'l Tplu'taqnn Inc) in July and August 2020. MTI is the consultative body for all the Mi'gmawe'l First Nations in the province of New Brunswick. The Project Team went to Pabineau First Nations in June of 2021 and had a meeting with the Chief and his counselors on this project. On July 22, 2021 the project team met with the Pabineau First Nations community for an in person open house. First Nation Monitors from MTI have been invited to all environmental surveys and have participated to the extent possible. Pabineau First Nations was also invited to take part in the July 2021 environmental studies relating to the project work. Communication with both MTI and Pabineau First Nations will be ongoing through out the Project..

10. Can you talk a bit about how this project accounts for the recent fiscal results NB Power posted? What measures are you taking throughout the project to help improve NB Power's fiscal situation?

The Nepisiguit Life Extension Project would have had no impact on NB Powers Fiscal Year 2020 statistics.

ENGINEERING

11. What is causing damage to the bladders? Just environmental degradation?

There are a number of factors that can cause degradation to these bladders. Two (2) of the major ones would be the contraction and expansion which is necessary to spill water, and the other being the bladders exposure to the sun.

Overtime this degradation effects the materials elasticity, tensile strength and other physical property of the bladder. These bladders are similar to tires on a car in that as they degrade more and more, it is more likely that damage will occur to it. These bladders could be damaged by rubbing against concrete or being impacted by items such as ice or trees. However, if we keep within the range of the recommendations for the elasticity, tensile strength and a couple of other physical properties and parameters, damage would be less likely for these bladders.

12. Will the scroll cases be replaced or is it part of the penstock refurbishment?

The scroll cases will be replaced as part of the Unit Replacement Project. As part of our fluid dynamics analysis for the operating of the new units it will require a change to the scroll case to optimize the flows for the new turbines and runners.

13. According to your predictions, what will be the duration of the temporary drainage and water quality problems in the basin?

The cofferdam for the 15ft bladder replacement is expected to be in place for no longer than 6 months. This means that the area would be dewatered for no more than six months as well. During the unit replacements we would also dewater our units. However, dewatering these units occurs on a regular basis and is done in a way that there is no impact of the upstream or downstream flow.

The nature of these activities is such that the main concern would be the release of sediment and suspended solids from the construction activities of the cofferdam. Mitigation will be in place in the form of erosion and sedimentation controls and various other mechanisms to prevent releases.

There is no project activity that we expect would change water quality in the river. There are no chemicals being used, there are no transformation processes. We are basically playing in the dirt by building cofferdams. We may generate some suspended solids that we will have to carefully manage through erosion and sedimentation controls.

Water quality sampling was done to establish a baseline when we collected the fish and fish habitat information in July 2021. We are awaiting those results from the laboratory.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND PERMITTING PROCESS

14. What are the ecological impacts of the bypass road? Will this be considered during the EIA?

The bypass road itself will proceed outside of the EIA. It is important to have the road in place, it needs to be constructed before the other activities can take place.

The trigger under the EIA Regulation for roads is 5 km or more, so there is no requirement to have the bypass road as part of the EIA as it is shorter than 5 km.

To come through any undisturbed land has some implications. We must understand what vegetation will be removed, what birds are using this area as well as any other flora and fauna that might be present. We've done all those surveys already. There are no species at risk that have been identified in the area of the bypass road. Therefore, those construction activities can take place just with normal good housekeeping construction practices.

Due to safety concerns, we ask the member of the public that use the trail system to avoid the project site whenever heavy equipment is in use and lay down areas are being used.

15. With this life extension project extending over several years, will the approval process happen in stages?

That is correct. The EIA takes place up front this year for all the project components. However, the permits will be applied for and approved the year before the activity takes place. For example, for any project activity that takes place in 2024 we would go back and do the field work for that activity and apply for the permits in 2023. Completing the field work and permitting a year before the activity makes sure that we remain within the regulatory framework. The regulatory framework changes overtime. For example, there were changes to the Fisheries Act in 2019 and there is no guaranteeing that change will not occur again.