

Bulletin 2009-02

February 3, 2009

ERCB Issues *Directive 074: Tailings Performance Criteria and Requirements for Oil Sands Mining Schemes*

The Energy Resources Conservation Board (ERCB), Alberta Environment, and Alberta Sustainable Resource Development are pleased to announce that the ERCB has issued *Directive 074: Tailings Performance Criteria and Requirements for Oil Sands Mining Schemes*. The directive was developed after conducting assessments of tailings management at existing and approved schemes and considering tailings performance. The ERCB, Alberta Environment, and Alberta Sustainable Resource Development have worked together to develop desired objectives associated with tailings management and establish performance-based criteria. Cross-regulatory involvement has been key to ensuring government contribution and support for this directive.

On June 26, 2008, the ERCB released *Bulletin 2008-28*, announcing that a draft directive to manage fluid tailings accumulation in the mineable oil sands was available on its Web site and inviting feedback from the industry and the public, with a deadline for input of September 15, 2008. Two workshops were held later in September to collect information, hear concerns, and solicit further input from industry and the public. The ERCB has summarized the information collected in matrix-style assessments, which, along with *Directive 074*, are available on the ERCB Web site www.ercb.ca under Project + Issues: Tailings Management. The ERCB used these assessments to revise the draft directive and finalize the document.

Directive 074 is the first component of a larger initiative for regulating tailings management. This directive specifies performance criteria for the reduction of fluid tailings and the formation of trafficable deposits. Requirements will be phased in and adapted, as appropriate, to take account of particular mining and tailings plans, facilities, and the status of a project.

Directive 074 is available from ERCB Information Services, 640 – 5 Avenue SW, main floor; telephone: 403-297-8311; fax: 403-297-7040; e-mail: infoservices@ercb.ca. The directive is also available on the ERCB Web site www.ercb.ca.

If you have any questions with regard to *Directive 074*, please contact Richard Houlihan, ERCB Fort McMurray Regional Office, by telephone at 780-743-7338 or by e-mail at richard.houlihan@ercb.ca.

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