



ERCB TAILINGS DIRECTIVE WORKSHOP

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Tailings Management and Regulation to Date

- ❖ **1970s: Fluid tailings accumulation identified as an issue requiring industry and regulators to work on**
- ❖ **1980+: Applications make commitments to improve tailings management, reduce fluid tailings, and reclaim fluid tailings**
- ❖ **1990s: Approval holders required to work on reducing and reclaiming fluid tailings and report to regulators on efforts and progress**
- ❖ **1990s: Considerable R&D effort and progress (fundamental studies; promising technologies identified and field tested)**



Tailings Management and Regulation to Date (cont.)

- ❖ **1996+: Technology solutions applied with limited success**
- ❖ **Continuing need to increase tailings containment capacity**
- ❖ **2003: ERCB directs staff to develop performance criteria, but lack of support and escalating workload precluded development**
- ❖ **2004: Concerns escalating as oil sands production and industry profile grows**
- ❖ **2007: ERCB proposes first opportunity for enforceable performance criteria required. ERCB works with government departments to develop tailings performance criteria**



The Landscape Has Changed

- ❖ **Expectations respecting tailings management are on the rise**
 - Issues of concern are items such as seepage contamination, fugitive emissions, tailings containment, final reclamation, progressive reclamation, concern regarding intergenerational transfer of liability, and development moratoriums
 - The main concern, however, remains the ever-increasing area under active tailings ponds
- ❖ **The status quo is no longer acceptable**
- ❖ **Neither the public nor the government is prepared to continue to accept commitments that go unfulfilled and result in potential increased liability to the Crown and the public**



ERCB/CAPP Meeting, Sept. 3, 2008

- ❖ **ERCB regulation by tailings directive will be implemented in the fall of 2008**
- ❖ **ERCB continuing consultation in the Sept. 9 and 24 workshops**
- ❖ **ERCB will hold one-on-one discussions as required**



ERCB/CAPP Meeting, Sept. 3, 2008

Alignment by all the parties, including senior company representatives, on two items:

❖ Not IF, but HOW

❖ Not WHEN, but NOW



ERCB/Industry

Technical Workshop, Sept. 9, 2008

- ❖ **Technical Issues discussed in a collaborative environment**
- ❖ **Good communication exercise**
- ❖ **Feedback received from the industry**
- ❖ **Work in progress on compiling the workshop contents and response to the industry**



Questions Raised

- ❖ **Public concerns about tailings deposition in end-pit lakes (EPLs)**
 - Directive is the first step in regulating fluid tailings
 - ERCB objective is to minimize and eventually eliminate long-term storage of fluid tailings in the reclamation landscape
 - EPLs approved in “concept” by the ERCB, subject to successful demonstration



Questions Raised (cont.)

❖ **Public has concerns about tailings accumulations in the past exceeding projected volumes. Is that issue going to be a planned recurrence?**

- Enforceable performance criteria is the main objective of the directive
- Directive is the first step – sets a minimum requirement on reduction of fluid tailings
- ERCB and the GOA see the need to do more on tailings
- Additional impoundments will not be viewed favourably



Questions Raised (cont.)

❖ Public desires aerial limits and progressive reclamation

- Aerial limit imposed in True North application
- Considered afterwards in other applications; however, deferred to criteria development
- Directive puts limits on reclamation of CT or equivalent deposits – first step

❖ Public is unclear on what a full life-cycle of CT or equivalent deposit represents

- Trafficable and reclaimable to dry land as a performance milestone



Questions Raised (cont.)

- ❖ **Public is concerned that once specific criteria are set forth through regulatory limitations, would there be any consequences to industry if they don't comply?**
 - Criteria for the directive: fluid tailings consumption and trafficability
 - In case of noncompliance: ERCB Compliance Assurance Directive 019
 - Example: Suncor's North Steepbank Mine Extension condition of approval



Questions Raised (cont.)

❖ Public is expressing a preference for dry tailings

- Long sought-after objective
- Subsequent revisions to the directive will drive towards this end point
- More studies and field testing are required into alternative technologies
- CT is what industry has committed to, and the directive holds them to it or equivalent fluid tailings reduction



Questions Raised (cont.)

- ❖ **Reports on any irregularities, exceedances, leaks, spills, breaks in berms, etc.? Will these reports be publicly accessible?**
 - Need to work on form of public reporting
- ❖ **Wildlife entering the ponds, groundwater monitoring, air quality, remediation of groundwater, and waste management**
 - Important issues; however, separate forums exist – AENV & SRD
- ❖ **Limits on land disturbed, limits on progressive reclamation, limits on makeup water**
 - General discussion



ERCB Tailings Regulation

- ❖ **Development of the directive is a regulatory priority and will be done by incorporating active consultation**
- ❖ **Input from consultation, including the workshops and one-on-one discussions, will be assessed and the directive revised; the assessment and revisions to the directive will be considered by the ERCB**
- ❖ **Other workshops will be considered**

