

**REASONS FOR DECISION
MINISTERIAL APPROVAL
PURSUANT TO SECTION 16(2)(a)
THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT ACT**

**YARA BELLE PLAINE INC.
FERTILIZER PLANT EXPANSION**

Introduction

The Environmental Assessment Act (hereinafter referred to as the Act) states that where a proponent has received Ministerial Approval to proceed with a development and the proponent intends to make a change in the development that does not conform to the terms or conditions contained in the approval, the proponent must receive Ministerial Approval prior to making those changes.

On April 16, 2013 Yara Belle Plaine Inc. (hereinafter referred to as the Proponent) submitted a request (hereinafter referred to as the Proposal) to the Minister for approval under section 16 of the Act for changes to the approved Belle Plaine fertilizer plant to expand current fertilizer production and add an additional product. The Proponent's Proposal addressed the effects related to the expansion.

Application of The Environmental Assessment Act

When a proponent wishes to make a change to an approved development, the proposed change has to be reviewed to determine the application of section 16 of the Act. In seeking approval to expand, the Proponent has, in accordance with section 16(1) of the Act, informed the Minister of the proposed change before proceeding with it, and is seeking approval to proceed with the expansion.

I am therefore satisfied that the Proponent has met the requirements of subsection 16(1) of the Act.

Under section 16(2) of the Act, once notice of a proposed change to an existing approval has been received, a Ministerial decision is required. This decision determines the scope of the environmental assessment required to review the proposed change.

Ministerial decision options under section 16(2) of the Act are:

- (a) approve the proposed change and impose any terms and conditions that are considered advisable;
- (b) refuse to approve the change in development; or
- (c) direct the proponent to seek approval for the proposed change in the manner prescribed in sections 9 to 15 of the Act.

The Environmental Assessment Branch reviewed the Proponent's Proposal to expand their Belle Plaine fertilizer plant and this review was used in making my decision under section 16(2) of the Act.

Proposed Changes

The Proponent wishes to expand the existing Belle Plaine fertilizer facility to increase production of ammonia by 100% and urea by 108% and to add a new fertilizer, urea ammonium sulfate (UAS), to the product line. The proposed expansion will consist of new ammonia and urea plants, UAS granules storage and ammonia storage facilities, a UAS synthesis and 2 granulation units, a sulphuric acid storage tank and a sulphuric acid unloading station (railcars), water treatment facilities, a stormwater pond, a new central control building, expanded rail line facilities, a urea and UAS granules loading area (railcars and trucks) and other associated infrastructure.

The plant will continue to be a zero wastewater discharge facility. Any additional wastewater will be treated and reused internally or piped to Mosaic to be used in their potash extraction process, as is currently done.

Environmental Assessment of the Proposal

Review of the Proponent's Proposal to expand the Belle Plaine fertilizer plant did not identify any specific environmental effects that were not already addressed through the existing EIS approval and terms and conditions.

The Ministry is satisfied that the mitigation and environmental protection measures outlined in the Proposal are consistent with public expectations that both the Proponent and government will ensure all reasonable steps are taken to protect the environment.

I have concluded that any adverse environmental effects associated with the expansion are negligible and that the overall environmental impacts of the change are well understood in relation to the original EIS. I am also satisfied that the environmental effects that may occur are acceptable given the benefits that will result. I have also concluded that the proposed change is fundamentally sound.

These conclusions are based on the Proponent's commitments as documented in the Proposal, on my ability as the Minister of Environment to impose specific conditions at this time, and on the knowledge that any additional environmental protection requirements can be imposed through terms and conditions forming parts of the permits, licences, and approvals required by provincial legislation.

Duty to Consult

The Branch considers there to be no potential impact to Treaty and/or Aboriginal rights and/or traditional use. No notification is required beyond what is typically provided to the public or as required by legislation.

Summary

This proposed change allows the Proponent to expand the existing Belle Plaine fertilizer facility to increase production of ammonia by 100% and urea by 108% and to add a new fertilizer, urea ammonium sulfate (UAS), to the product line. The proposed change will not cause additional environmental impacts not already addressed in the original EIS.

My decision to approve the expansion of Yara Belle Plaine Inc.'s fertilizer plant is based on my conclusions that:

1. the proposed change will not significantly impact the environment in ways that differ in nature from those already identified and addressed in the previous approval;
2. the proposed change can be regulated through the terms and conditions of the previous approvals, the terms and conditions attached to this approval, and the terms and conditions forming parts of the permits, licences, and approvals for the change required by other provincial legislation; and
3. further public review is not necessary given the limited nature of the changes.

My decision to grant this approval was made with the knowledge that any specific concerns identified during the environmental review of the Proposal can be addressed as conditions of the additional permits, licences and approvals issued pursuant to regulations under The Environmental Management and Protection Act, 2002 and other legislation.

Dated at Regina, Saskatchewan this 31st day of May, 2013

Original signed by:
Ken Cheveldayoff
Minister of Environment