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BAB 3990-35

Darren Hicks
Environmental Analyst
Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board
140 Water St., 4th Floor
St. John's, NL A1C 6H6

Dear Mr. Hicks

Subject: Fisheries and Oceans Canada Review - Environmental Assessment of GXT's LabradorSpan 2-D Seismic, Gravity and Magnetic Survey, 2013-2015

As requested, DFO has reviewed the document entitled "*Environmental Assessment of GXT's LabradorSpan 2-D Seismic, Gravity and Magnetic Survey, 2013-2015*" dated March 2013. The following comments are provided for your review and consideration.

General

- Please be advised that the "Statement of Canadian Practice with respect to the Mitigation of Seismic Sound in the Marine Environment" (SOCP) specifies the mitigation requirements that must be met during the planning and conduct of marine seismic surveys, in order to minimize impacts on life in the oceans. These requirements are set out as minimum standards to be implemented during the planning and conduct of seismic programs. As such it is advised that the proponent adhere to all relevant minimum mitigations outlined in the SOCP including the Planning Seismic Surveys, Safety Zone and Start-up, Shut-down of Air Source Array(s), Line Changes and Maintenance Shut-downs, Operations in Low Visibility and Additional Mitigative Measures and Modifications sections of the SOCP.
- The report indicates that surveys may occur at anytime from June to November from 2013-15, with surveys ranging in duration from 30-120 days. While the proponent does acknowledge that *Species at Risk Act (SARA)* requirements could change over this timeframe and that they will reassess accordingly, DFO would like to note that changes to the *SARA* could include additions to species on Schedule 1 of *SARA*, changes in species status, new recovery strategies, action plans and/or management plans and identification of critical habitat. Please continue to refer to the Species at Risk Public Registry (www.sararegistry.gc.ca) to get the most up to date information.
- As is common practice sightings data for marine mammals and sea turtles should be forwarded to DFO.



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Please see the attached excel sheet that was included with this correspondence for project specific comments and questions.

Thank you for providing DFO the opportunity to comment on this document. Should you have any questions or comments regarding the above, you can contact me by phone at 772-2508 or by e-mail (john.orourke@dfo-mpo.gc.ca).

Regards

John O'Rourke
Fisheries Protection Biologist
Fisheries Protection Branch