



Environment
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Environmental Stewardship Branch
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May 6, 2010

File No.: 4194-10

Darren Hicks
Environmental Analyst
Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board
5th Floor, TD Place
140 Water Street
St. John's, NL
A1C 6H6

RE: ExxonMobil Hebron Field – Geohazard Survey Program 2010

EAS 2009-056G

Dear Mr. Hicks:

As requested in your letter dated March 18, 2010, Environment Canada (EC) has reviewed the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the above-noted project.

From the information provided, it is understood that the proponent intends to undertake a geohazard survey in the Herbon Significant Discovery License (SDL) area over the site of the proposed Herbon Platform, in the Jeanne d'Arc Basin on the Grand Banks of Newfoundland and Labrador. The geohazard survey program includes the acquisition of data using single-beam echosounder, multibeam echosounder, dual frequency (approximately 100 / 500 kHz) side-scan sonar, chirp / pinger sub-bottom profiler, Hunttec boomer / sparker (or equivalent) sub-bottom profiler, magnetometer and 2D high-resolution multi-channel seismic. Environmental baseline survey requirements for these surveys include seabed Day (or equivalent) grab samples and drop camera / video equipment. Basic geological applications require an approximately 3 m gravity core (optional) and large volume grab sampler (IKU or equivalent).

Overall, the EA is very comprehensive and we are pleased to see that the recommendations made in our initial Federal Coordination Regulations (FCR) response are incorporated in the document. Furthermore, the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) is satisfied with the assessment of effects on migratory birds and species at risk. The document indicates that a seabird observation program will be carried out and the CWS provides the following comments regarding data collection for the seabird observations.

Seabird Data Collection

The proponent has indicated in Section 3.1 that they will be carrying out seabird surveys according to CWS protocols, however this should also be indicated in Section 6.11 Monitoring and Follow-up.

In an effort to expedite the process of data exchange, the Canadian Wildlife Service would appreciate that the data (as it relate to migratory birds or species at risk) collected from these surveys be forwarded in digital format to our office following completion of the study. These data will be centralized for our internal use to help ensure that the best possible natural resource management decisions are made for these species in Newfoundland and Labrador. Metadata will be retained to identify source of data and will not be used for the purpose of publication. The Canadian Wildlife Service will not copy, distribute, loan, lease, sell, or use of this data as part of a value added product or otherwise make the DATA available to any other party without the prior express written consent.

I trust that this information will be of assistance in your review of this project. If you wish to discuss these comments or have further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 709-772-4313 or via email at Shelley.Decker@ec.gc.ca at your convenience.

Yours truly,

Original Signed by Shelley Decker

Shelley Decker
Environmental Assessment Analyst
Environmental Protection Operations Directorate- Atlantic

Attachment

Cc: G. Troke
J. Corkum