

2021 Year in Review Summary **Alton Community Liaison Committee (CLC)**

The following Project Update provides information on activity for 2021 regarding the Alton Natural Gas Storage Project (the Project).

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Overview

The lingering impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic contributed to ongoing challenges for everyone in 2021. While restrictions on gathering necessarily limited participation by Project team members in community activities, the team remained open to community engagement as circumstances allowed.

In 2021, the decision was made to decommission the Project. Local engineering consultants and advisors from Nova Scotia contributed their expertise to the planning for decommissioning and the development of a Decommissioning Plan that was shared with the public in December 2021.

Looking ahead to 2022, it is expected that activities related to decommissioning will be the focus for the Project.

Decommissioning Plan

On October 22, 2021, we announced the decision to decommission the Project. It was determined that a new Industrial Approval is required to undertake the Project decommissioning. On December 8, 2021 a new Industrial Approval Application was submitted to the Nova Scotia Department of Environment and Climate Change which included the Decommissioning Plan being submitted to the Province of Nova Scotia for review and a public comment period that launched in December 2021.

Members of the community were able to provide feedback by email or letter to the project team during the public comment period which closed on January 25, 2022. Feedback submitted by members of the community was shared with the Province of Nova Scotia in February 2022.

On the Alton website, the public can easily access the Decommissioning Plan, Appendices and supporting materials at www.altonnaturalgasstorage.ca

Site activities

Planned activities at our site have been minimal and consist of care and maintenance to ensure the safe and proper upkeep of our facilities, per the direction in the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia decision from March 24, 2020. A [copy of the Court decision](#) is available on the Alton website. Alton Natural Gas Storage will continue to comply with the Court's decision and order.

In March 2019, Alton successfully obtained an interlocutory injunction from the NS Supreme Court to allow the company safe and full access to its property by preventing trespass activity by unauthorized third parties at the river site.

Given our recent decision to decommission the Alton Project, we will not be pursuing the Court matter regarding trespassing at the project's river site. The matter has been resolved by the parties. It is important to note that as agreed by the parties, the injunction for the river site remains in place and will continue to be in effect until the decommissioning is completed. That means that for safety and security reasons only Alton staff and approved contractors may access the project's river site during the decommissioning phase.

Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia

Alton Natural Gas Storage remains committed to ongoing, open dialogue with the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia about the Project. We continue to be supportive of Mi'kmaw involvement in the Project during the decommissioning phase.

From October to December 2021, Alton provided information regarding decommissioning to Sipekne'katik First Nation, Millbrook First Nation, the Kwi'mu'kw Maw-klusuaqn Negotiation Office (Mi'kmaq Rights Initiative), the Native Council of Nova Scotia, the Mi'kmaw Conservation Group and the Atlantic Policy Congress.

As part of the review activities for the Decommissioning Plan (the Plan), support was made available to the Mi'kmaq to assist with the review of the Plan.

Ongoing biological research re: the Shubenacadie River Estuary

The river monitoring research led by Dalhousie University continued in 2021 supported in part by funding the Project had provided previously. The research has been ongoing since 2008, and continued to amass significant data on the Shubenacadie River, and seasonal variation in flows, salinity, and fish utilization of the river. As part of their research and monitoring, the researchers identified the first Striped bass eggs on May 21, 2021.

Alton Natural Gas Pipeline

On March 11, 2021, the Project made the request of the Department of Environment & Climate Change to extend Condition 4.1 of the Alton Natural Gas Pipeline Environmental Assessment. The condition was regarding the requirement to develop a compensation plan for potential impacts to the proposed Stewiacke River Wilderness Area.

As the overall in-service date for the project was delayed, given legal and other considerations including the March 2020 court decision requiring an additional 120 days of consultation between the Crown and Sipekne'katik First Nation, as well as delays resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, an extension to 4.1 provided additional time to consult with officials and stakeholders on the development of the plan.

In a letter dated April 21, 2021 from the Hon. Keith Irving, Minister of Environment & Climate Change, a two-year time extension was granted to condition 4.1 requiring the development and implementation of the compensation plan by May 21, 2023.

Given the Project decommissioning, it is not anticipated that a compensation plan will need to be developed.

Alton website

The Alton website www.altonnaturalgasstorage.ca was updated in 2021 to include information on the Project decommissioning, with postings on October 21, 2021 and December 16, 2021. Updates on the decommissioning process for the Project will be shared with the public via the website.

In 2021, the [Funded Projects section of the website](#) was updated to include information and a photo about the trailer that was funded for Brookfield Fire and Emergency Services.

Community engagement activities

Information regarding the activity of the CLC is shared on the Alton website, www.altonnaturalgasstorage.ca in the Community section.

Given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, in person community engagement was necessarily limited in 2021. However, Alton encourages and is available to arrange alternative forms of community engagement with stakeholders whenever possible.

In 2021, Alton representatives participated in events organized by the Truro & Colchester Chamber of Commerce and the Maritimes Energy Association.

Alton CLC Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference for the CLC were confirmed by the members as of December 13, 2021.

It was noted that due to the pandemic, quarterly meetings were not held in person, rather updates were shared with CLC members by telephone calls, by email in January and March 2021 and a virtual meeting of the Committee held in December 2021 to discuss the Project's Decommissioning Plan.

Members of the CLC were asked if they want to carry on through the decommissioning process for the Project and none asked to leave the committee.

It is hoped that as the impacts of the pandemic begin to ease in 2022, in person engagement with the CLC will be able to resume.