

# Dodds-Roundhill Coal Gasification Project

## Community Newsletter

### February 2007 - March 2007

This is our second newsletter in this series that covers our recent activities relating to the Dodds-Roundhill coal gasification project. The intention of these newsletters is to allow us to keep in touch with the community and share information about the progress we are making. Hopefully this newsletter will help to address some of your questions and concerns.

## Community Meetings

### *Draft Mine Plan*

Sherritt held its fourth public meeting on March 22nd in the Ryley Community Hall to provide the community with an opportunity to view the initial draft mine plan for the project and to receive your initial reactions to the plan. The meeting was comprised of an Open House from 3 pm to 7 pm followed by a short Town Hall meeting. Between 400 and 500 people participated in the Open House and/or the Town Hall meeting and although over 400 copies of the draft mine plan were distributed at the meeting, we are including another copy of the plan with this community update to help ensure the widest possible distribution.

### *Incorporating Your Concerns*

The final mine plan will, wherever feasible, take into account the issues and concerns of the community. In previous meetings, two areas of concern raised by a number of individuals were the protection of churches and cemeteries, and the preservation of Amisk Creek. The initial mine plan addresses these two concerns. We realize that numerous other questions will continue to arise as the community becomes more familiar with the plan and as a result, we intend to continue to seek and incorporate, wherever practical, additional input from the community into the mine plan as it continues to evolve.

### *Land Acquisition*

Land acquisition is clearly a key issue for the community and a significant source of uncertainty. Our vision is to develop, in consultation with you, a comprehensive set of Land Acquisition Principles. To be effective, these Principles will need to be sensitive to the realities of modern lifestyles and farming operations. They must also be designed to provide the community with a clear framework regarding how, where and when the land required for the Project will be acquired.

We are committed to bringing these Principles to the community as quickly as possible and, to that end, will set up an initial meeting with community leaders in the next few weeks and a public meeting with the entire community shortly afterwards.

### *Plant Location*

The location of the plant is also of significant concern. However, selection of a plant location is not a simple task. It requires, among a number of other items, a better understanding of the area's geology. This is necessary since provincial government rules require that, to the extent possible, the plant should not be located over economically recoverable coal.

In addition, it is critical that the location have the appropriate geology and soils needed to support the large structures and vessels that will make up the gasifier. We are still in the process of collecting and analyzing this site-specific information; however, we are also committed to sharing with the community the whereabouts of our preferred plant location as quickly as possible.

### ***Other Meetings***

A number of other meetings were held throughout the community during February and March. In addition to the numerous one-on-one meetings to discuss possible access to land for scientific studies, we met with the Salem Mennonite Church Elders (March 20<sup>th</sup>), the Bardo Community Association (March 21<sup>st</sup>), elected officials from Tofield (March 22<sup>nd</sup>) and the County of Camrose (March 26<sup>th</sup>). We also made a presentation to the Rotary Club of Camrose (March 27<sup>th</sup>) and met with Ducks Unlimited (March 29<sup>th</sup>). A meeting with other area industries (e.g. oil and gas, sand and gravel, among others) is scheduled for April 17<sup>th</sup>, and similar meetings with the full range of community stakeholders will continue into the foreseeable future.

## **Application Review Process**

### ***EIA Terms of Reference***

The official period for public comment on the Terms of Reference for the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) closed at the end of February and Alberta Environment (AENV) has advised us that they received over forty submissions. AENV will now review those comments and provide Sherritt the final draft of the EIA Terms of Reference. We will then have one last opportunity to comment before the final Terms of Reference is issued.

It is important to note that, even though the public comment period for the draft Terms of Reference has closed, Sherritt will remain open over the course of the application process to receive and address any additional concerns that the community may have with respect to the potential social, economic and environmental impacts of the project. In fact, your local knowledge of the region will be invaluable to ensuring that our scientists have truly captured and assessed all of the potential effects of the project on both local and regional infrastructure, industry and the environment.

Please do not hesitate to contact us either by e-mail at [Dodds-Roundhill@sherritt.com](mailto:Dodds-Roundhill@sherritt.com) or by calling toll-free at **1-888-438-9401** to provide us with any additional feedback on the Terms of Reference or any other element of the EIA.

## **Land Access**

Over the last three months, we have met with many landowners within the proposed study area to ask for permission to conduct field studies on their land. We have been granted access to the lands needed to initiate the environmental field studies in the areas of groundwater, wildlife, and hydrology. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the community for its willingness to work with us.

We still require access to some additional lands to carry out the studies in their entirety and will continue to work on this through the spring and early summer.

## Environmental Field Studies

A range of environmental studies are now underway or planned, including:

**Groundwater:** The various monitoring wells have been drilled, and water well sampling will begin in May.

**Wildlife:** The aerial ungulate survey was completed the week of March 19th. Nocturnal owl surveys have now begun throughout the study area. Each survey, conducted in two vehicles, will involve stopping at pre-determined locations and broadcasting owl calls between 7:00 pm and about 2:00 am., and will be repeated two more times over the next month.

**Hydrology:** With the beginning of snowmelt, consultants will be in the area to observe current runoff patterns. An aerial survey of runoff (using a fixed wing aircraft) will be conducted at the same time. Gauges will be installed at selected locations to monitor water levels.

**Water Quality:** Winter water quality sampling was completed in early March. Spring sampling at selected locations is expected to coincide with spring runoff (late March, early April).

**Soils and Historical Resources:** Soil sampling and shovel tests are expected to commence in mid April or early May, depending on ground conditions.

**Vegetation:** Vegetation surveys are expected to commence in the spring after vegetation has emerged.

**Geological Drilling:** The geological drilling program was interrupted due to the early thaw. Drilling will resume in the fall after the crops have been harvested.

## Policy Development

### ***Draft Water Replacement Policy***

In addition to a corporate position with respect to Land Acquisition Principles, we are also working on a draft Water Replacement Policy. This policy will clearly establish Sherritt's obligations towards addressing any changes in water quality or quantity that may result from the development of the project. Again, we hope to have this document ready for broader discussion with the community in the next two months. Attached to this newsletter is the handout on water studies for the EIA that we distributed at the open house on March 22.

## Contact Us

At Sherritt, we are committed to working with you and listening to what you have to say. If at any time you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

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