

FISHERIES AND OCEANS CANADA'S ROLE IN THE NORTHERN PULP NOVA SCOTIA EFFLUENT REPLACEMENT PROJECT

Background:

- Northern Pulp Nova Scotia (the proponent) operates a kraft (paper) mill located in Abercrombie Point, New Glasgow, Nova Scotia. The mill has been in operation since 1967 and currently produces bleached softwood kraft market pulp.
- The Nova Scotia Government initially agreed to build and operate a treatment facility for the mill's process effluent. In 1995, the system was refurbished to meet newly introduced legislation under Environment Canada's Pulp and Paper Regulations, under Section 36 of the *Fisheries Act*.
- In May 2015, with the enactment of the *Boat Harbour Act*, the use of the provincially owned treatment facility for the treatment of effluent from the mill will not be permitted past January 30, 2020.
- To be in compliance with the *Boat Harbour Act*, Northern Pulp plans to construct a new treatment system that would involve a new water treatment facility on land and a pipeline with an outfall into the marine environment.
- Northern Pulp intends to install a new effluent treatment system that will involve the construction of a new submerged pipe and associated marine outfall to be located in the Northumberland Strait.
- In May 2017, DFO received a Request for Review application from the Northern Pulp for the construction of a new submerged pipe. Upon DFO's initial review of the application, it was determined that there was missing information and was considered incomplete.
- DFO is still awaiting additional information from the proponent.

DFO's Role:

- Under Section 35 of the *Fisheries Act*, DFO's role is to review physical impacts from proposed construction projects to determine if there could be serious harm to fish or fish habitat which are a part of a commercial, recreational or Aboriginal fishery. The DFO review of the proposed effluent treatment facility would be limited to the potential impacts to fish habitat from the placement of the pipe in marine waters and would not include any review of effluent impacts from the pipe.
- Environment and Climate Change Canada administers Section 36 of the *Fisheries Act*, the key pollution prevention provision, prohibiting the deposit of deleterious substances into waters frequented by fish, unless authorized by regulations under the *Fisheries Act* or other federal legislation. A deleterious substance can be any substance that, if added to any water, would degrade or alter its quality such that it could be harmful to fish, fish habitat or the use of fish by people.
- Questions or concerns regarding potential impacts from effluent should be directed to Environment and Climate Change Canada or Nova Scotia Environment.