



FOR RELEASE
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Amendments to *Yukon Oil and Gas Act* will raise standards, bring opportunities

WHITEHORSE—Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources Brad Cathers tabled amendments to the *Yukon Oil and Gas Act* today in the legislature. The proposed amendments will revise the act to be consistent with other jurisdictions, increase operating standards for industry and bring it in line with common law on First Nations consultation.

"We believe that a strong and stable regulatory system provides environmental safeguards while also providing Yukoners with the benefits of local energy development," Cathers said. "The proposed amendments to the *Yukon Oil and Gas Act* reflect the most current science and regulatory standards, and improve opportunities for all Yukoners to benefit from oil and gas activity."

The proposed amendments underwent public consultation in 2009 and an additional round of consultation with First Nations in fall 2012.

The proposed amendments include: changes to ensure liability continues to be held among all previous, current and new disposition holders; changes to allow regulators to suspend activities until financial assurances are received; changes to the definition of "gas processing plant" to allow for the storage, handling and vaporization of liquefied natural gas; changes to ensure parties with a working interest can be held responsible for well abandonment, and; a repeal of Section 13 of the Act, which requires consent from First Nations without Final Agreements before any new oil and gas activity can occur in their Traditional Territory.

"All First Nations will continue to be consulted on any oil and gas activity within their Traditional Territory, as is consistent with common law," Cathers added. "The proposed repeal of Section 13 will ensure that the three First Nations who have not signed Final Agreements are no longer given more power than the eleven First Nations who have signed land claim and Self-Government Agreements."

Proposed amendments to the act will also enable the development and amendment of oil and gas regulations, including those that govern production techniques such as hydraulic fracturing.

"We will continue look for opportunities to receive public input when oil and gas regulations are amended in the future," Cathers added.

The *Yukon Oil and Gas Act* was first enacted in 1997, a year before the federal government transferred responsibility for the management of oil and gas resources to the Yukon government. It was amended in 2004.

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