

Minister
of Natural Resources



Ministre
des Ressources naturelles

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0E4

FEB 28 2017

Mr. Ronnie Leblanc
Warden
Municipality of Clare
P.O. Box 458
Little Brook, Nova Scotia B0W 1Z0

Dear Mr. Leblanc:

My colleague, the Honorable Dominic LeBlanc, forwarded to me your correspondence of June 10, 2016, about oil and gas exploration in the Canada–Nova Scotia offshore area.

I appreciate hearing your concerns with respect to Parcels 3 and 4, which were on offer in the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board's (the Board) 2015 Call for Bids. As the regulator for the Canada-Nova Scotia offshore area, the Board undertook a comprehensive process to determine areas for their inclusion.

The economy and the environment go hand in hand and we can no longer talk about the development of Canada's natural resources without talking about environmental responsibility. Any development of our offshore oil and gas resources must be done in a responsible way. Part of this responsibility includes giving proper consideration to other industries that operate in the area, including the fishing industry. The protection of sensitive marine environments, such as the Scotian Shelf, is also a key consideration. Canada has a strong regulatory regime in place to protect these marine environments, which is informed by sound scientific evidence and input from the public and Indigenous groups.

In areas where exploration licences have been issued, it is essential to note that before any offshore activity can take place, licence holders must undergo a rigorous application. Exploration licence holders would need an approved Operations Authorization and approval to drill a well from the Board. An Operations Authorization is comprised of various requirements, which includes but is not limited to, a safety plan, a spill response plan, and proof of financial responsibility.

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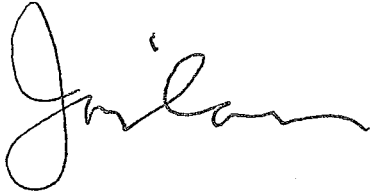
Le Canada

An Environmental Assessment is also required, and should an exploration licence ever be issued in these areas, you would have the opportunity to participate in consultations as part of the Environmental Assessment process. Authorizations would only be granted after the Board is satisfied that any proposed program would be conducted safely, and would be unlikely to cause significant adverse environmental effects.

We are working to ensure the safe, responsible, and sustainable development of Canada's natural resources. We want to hear feedback from Canadians about how to make this more achievable, and how we can continue to strengthen our offshore oil and gas regulatory regimes.

Thank you for writing.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Carr". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

The Honourable Jim Carr, P.C., M.P.

c.c.: The Honourable Michel Samson
Minister of Energy, Government of Nova Scotia

Mr. Stuart Pinks
Chief Executive Officer, Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board

The Honourable Dominic LeBlanc, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard