

March 14, 2008

AMMONITE SHELL INFORMATION BULLETIN 2008-01

Subject: Issuance of Ammonite Shell Agreements

This Information Bulletin is an update on the status of issuing Ammonite Shell Agreements.

Following proclamation of the revised *Ammonite Shell Regulation* in July 2004, the Department of Energy began accepting applications for ammonite shell agreements in September 2004 (Information Letter 2004-18 and Ammonite Shell Information Bulletin 2004-02.)

In September 2005, the department suspended issuance of new agreements until December 31, 2007 to allow time for consultation on commercial development of ammonite shell between the cross-ministry Aboriginal Consultation Coordination Group and the Blackfoot First Nations. Agreement applicants were advised individually.

Due to a need for further consultation, issuance of new ammonite shell agreements will continue to be held in abeyance until December 31, 2008. The department will continue to hold existing applications and accept new applications. At the end of this period, the department will determine whether to resume issuing of agreements. Existing ammonite shell agreements are not affected by this extended consultation period.

The Government of Alberta's *First Nations Consultation Policy on Resource Development and Land Management* commits Alberta to consult with First Nations where land management or resource development may infringe First Nations rights and traditional uses. In this instance, the purpose of consultation is to address the potential for the disposition of ammonite shell for commercial exploitation to infringe on First Nation rights because of the significance of ammonite to Blackfoot ceremonial life.

During this extended period, the Aboriginal Consultation Coordination Group will consult with the Blackfoot First Nations in Alberta in support of developing recommendations to manage this resource in a manner in keeping with recent case law and Alberta's *Consultation Guidelines*.

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