

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Department of Works, Services and Transportation (WST) is proposing to construct a two-lane, all-season gravel surface highway from Cartwright Junction to Happy Valley-Goose Bay. This highway section is Phase III of the Trans Labrador Highway (TLH) and will link the existing TLH highway sections to the east (Phase II) and west (Phase I). The TLH - Phase III project is currently undergoing an environmental assessment under both the Newfoundland and Labrador *Environmental Protection Act* and *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* (CEAA). As part of the environmental assessment, detailed study was required on waterfowl in the vicinity of the proposed route for the highway.

Following submission of the waterfowl component study to the Department of Environment, the document was examined to determine whether it fulfilled the requirements of the guidelines. Before a final decision can be reached on the project, the requirement for further information has been identified. A deficiency statement outlining comments and requirements for further information on waterfowl was provided to WST in April 2003. The deficiency statement outlines the specific requirements for further information. In addition, WST was advised that any alternative route determined to be viable upon review of the alternative methods for carrying out the project must have a waterfowl component study completed for that alternative route.

This addendum addresses questions and comments as outlined in the deficiency statement, presenting a response to each individual comment and question. Deficiency statement comments were addressed using in-house sources and data and, where necessary, communication/interviews with representatives from various resource management agencies. The topics covered by the addendum include those related to:

- general comments;
- study area;
- aerial surveys;
- regional population status of ducks;
- broods/moultling;
- fall staging;
- wetland size versus waterfowl abundance;
- probability of occurrences of waterfowl versus wetland areas;
- wetland and riparian habitat potential for waterfowl; and
- editorial revisions.



The waterfowl component study for the alternative route, which was determined to be a viable alternative to the preferred route, is presented as Appendix B to the addendum. The alternative route, subject to further study, was the route identified by the Newfoundland and Labrador Outfitters Association, referred to as the outfitter route. Only a portion of the outfitter route was covered during the field surveys described in Appendix B, as the remainder of the route overlapped with segments of the route that had been previously assessed. The new study focused on the section of the outfitter route (i.e., the section identified as A13 in the environmental impact statement and comprehensive study report for the preferred route) that had not been assessed. Appendix B provides details on the field surveys carried out along the outfitter (A13 section) route and the results of those surveys.

