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SIPEKNE'KATIK FIRST NATION PROTESTORS RALLY AGAINST ALTON NATURAL GAS PROJECT

Environment Minister's decision on six appeals of the AltaGas project coming soon

Members of the Sipekne'katik First Nation waved signs and drummed in front of the Nova Scotia Legislature Thursday, a protest against a proposed natural gas storage project that comes days before the environment minister must rule on six appeals filed against it. The Calgary company behind the Alton project, AltaGas, wants to store natural gas in three underground salt caverns near Stewiacke. The province approved the application in January. In February, six appeals were filed with Nova Scotia's Environment Department. Environment Minister Margaret Miller has yet to respond to any of them. The deadline to release a decision on the first of the appeals is April 19. All of the decisions are required before the end of April. On April 8, AltaGas announced it would pause construction on the natural gas storage project until the summer. In a news release, the company said "we are committed to working

in good faith to develop long-term relationships with the community and the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia."

Some environmentalists are concerned salty water from drilling the underground caverns will be released into the Shubenacadie River system. Some Mi'kmaq chiefs have expressed concern they were not adequately consulted.

HUSKY OIL AND GAS ASSETS SAID TO ATTRACT TEINE, RAGING RIVER

Husky Energy Inc. has received interest from several parties, including Teine Energy Ltd. and Raging River Exploration Inc., for parts of a package of western Canadian oil and natural gas assets it is selling, according to people familiar with the matter.

The bulk of the interest received by the Calgary-based oil and gas producer has been focused on its light oil Saskatchewan properties, which collectively produce 88 percent liquids, said the people, who asked not to be identified because the matter is private.

The first rounds of bids came in at the end of March, the people said. The properties have been divided

into three main packages and 10 smaller sub-packages. Husky, which is controlled by Hong Kong billionaire Li Ka-Shing, is likely to sell the properties in several transactions in the coming months, the people said. Other players, including Whitecap Resources Inc., Spartan Energy Corp. and Aspenleaf Energy Ltd., are said to have also expressed interest in some of the assets, the people said. Bank of Nova Scotia, Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, and AltaCorp Capital Inc. are advising on the sale of properties that span from northern British Columbia to southeast Saskatchewan, and amount to the equivalent of roughly 59,530 barrels a day of production, according to the marketing materials. Roughly half of the production is liquids. The combined value of the properties is estimated by Morgan Stanley to be worth up to C\$2.1 billion (\$1.6 billion).

Representatives for Husky, Spartan and Aspenleaf declined to comment. Teine and Whitecap representatives weren't immediately available for comment. Neil Roszell, CEO of Raging River, said by phone a confidentiality agreement prevented him from commenting. Rob Symonds, Husky senior vice-president of Western Canada production, declined

to talk about specifics of any potential transactions at a conference in Toronto this week. He said the value for potential buyers in the western Canadian oil and gas assets is that the resources are underdeveloped compared to their neighbors.

"That is, if you like, the value proposition for the buyers," he said. "The rationale for Husky is that we're transforming our western Canadian business from one that has a large number of small plays to being much more focused on fewer plays." Husky is also in the midst of selling a stake in some of its pipelines and storage terminals in Alberta and a package of royalty lands in Western Canada. The company is nearing a sale on the royalty lands after drawing interest from several parties, including Freehold Royalties Ltd., according to people familiar with that process. The package is expected to sell for less than C\$200 million, the people said. A Freehold representative didn't immediately respond to requests for comment. Husky said in January it was taking "decisive action" amid persistently low oil prices. It suspended its quarterly dividend at the time, scaled back spending and pushed forward with its asset sales.

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EXXON MOBIL (NYSE:XOM) SUCCESS IN GUYANA BASIN PUTS SPOTLIGHT ON CANADIAN JUNIOR

Exxon Mobil Corporation (NYSE:XOM)'s discovery of the Liza well in the Stabroek block is the subject of much anticipation by the offshore energy sector, as the super major drills a step-out well that is expected to confirm the presence of a large hydrocarbon reservoir deep beneath the Atlantic Ocean in the Suriname-Guyana Basin. But Exxon Mobil isn't the only company operating in the area; virtually every major oil and gas company in the world is jockeying for participation. Estimates of the Liza-1 well, which was drilled to 5,400 metres in depth, suggest there could be as much as 700 million barrels of oil recoverable, implying a value of US\$28 billion. The well encountered 90 metres of what Exxon describes as "high quality oil-bearing sandstone reservoirs." That's brought one Canadian company to the attention of the majors; JHI Associates, a private company based in Toronto, has a 35 per cent working interest in the adjacent 6,000 square kilometre Canje block in the heart of the basin. The U.S. Geological Survey's World Petroleum Assessment published in 2000 suggests the basin may potentially host as much as 15.2 billion barrels of oil. According to ExxonMobil CEO Rex Tillerson, "Our exploration program continues to add valuable new resource development

opportunities to the resource base. Offshore Guyana, we made a significant oil discovery with the Liza-1 exploration well. Further activities are underway to evaluate the full resource potential of the acreage, including the largest 3D seismic acquisition in the Corporation's history. In Exxon Mobil's March 2016 Analyst Day presentation, the company revealed that it plans to drill multiple exploration wells throughout 2016/17. The United States Geologic Survey ranks the Guyana-Suriname Basin as the 2nd most prospective, under-explored offshore oil basin with an estimated 13.6 billion barrels of oil and 32 trillion cubic feet of natural gas yet to be discovered.

Meanwhile, in Guyana, a delegation from the U.S. embassy that included Deloitte Advisory met with Prime Minister Moses Nagamootoo to discuss regulatory structure for the country's nascent oil and gas industry. Under the U.S. government Energy Governance and Capacity Initiative (ECGI), funding and technical advice are provided to select countries that are poised to become the world's next generation of oil and gas suppliers. Guyana, originally a Dutch colony until it obtained independence in 1966, is the only South American country whose official language is English. The prospective hydrocarbon nature of the Suriname-Guyanese basin is founded on the Mirror Theory of the sub-Atlantic geology, which postulates that the basin's Upper Cretaceous sediment package is a 'mirror image' of that of offshore West Africa, where several billion-barrel plus discoveries have been made in recent years, including the 3 billion barrel Jubilee field offshore Ghana. JHI Associates is still private,

though CEO John Cullen says the company may seek a public listing at some point in the future, if it isn't bought outright before then.

YUKON GOV'T, CANADIAN MINING INDUSTRY AT ODDS OVER CARBON TAX

Mining Association of Canada supports putting a price on carbon

Canada's largest mining association is calling for a carbon tax on all sectors of the economy — something the mining-friendly Yukon government has rejected outright. The Mining Association of Canada (MAC) issued a document on Wednesday, outlining "principles for climate change policy design." It calls for a "broad-based carbon price" for all Canadian industries, including mining.

The association's president and CEO, Pierre Gratton, said a carbon tax is "the most effective and efficient means of driving emissions reductions and making real progress in the fight against climate change." According to the Canadian Industrial End Use Data Analysis Centre (CIEUDAC), total greenhouse gas emissions from operating mines (excluding coal and oil sands mining) accounted for 1.1 per cent of Canada's direct and indirect emissions in 2014. MAC's stand comes a week after Yukon Premier Darrell Pasloski — a vocal supporter of mining in the territory — took pains to denounce a carbon tax as something that "doesn't work" for Yukon or the "northern way of life." "We are not going to punish our resource industries and place them in an uncompetitive position," Pasloski said as he delivered the territorial budget. "To a certain degree I

respect where he's coming from," said Gratton. "You do need to take into account geographical realities that face parts of Canada." MAC's climate change document calls for a carbon tax to be "revenue neutral," by investing money generated through the tax into developing technologies that produce lower emissions. It says any such tax should be "simple, complementary and effective," and should work "in tandem" with provincial efforts.

Gratton said he understands that costs for industry are higher in the North, and so it's harder for the territories to sustain new costs, or afford substantial change. A carbon tax could actually help, he suggests. "It may well be a regime that has parts of Southern Canada enabling Northern Canada to make progress that it can't on its own," he said. "I think all of us have an obligation to do what we can."

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