



March 2, 2026

EA2425-01
EA2425-02

Benjamin Fraser
Imperial Oil Resources NWT Limited
Station M
Calgary, AB T2P 3M9

Josh Hutchings
Imperial Oil Resources N.W.T Limited
750 Mackenzie Drive, Bag 5000
Norman Wells, NT X0E 0V0

Via email:

RE: Request for cancellation granted for the Line 490 Replacement and Norman Wells Operations environmental assessments.

Dear Mr. Fraser and Mr. Hutchings,

The Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board (Review Board) met on February 26, 2026, to consider Imperial Oil Resources N.W.T Limited's (Imperial) request to cancel both the 1) Norman Wells Operations and 2) Line 490 Replacement environmental assessments. The Review Board grants Imperial's request to cancel both environmental assessments. The Review Board's *Reasons for Decision* are attached to this letter.

Please contact Mark Cliffe-Phillips, Executive Director at mcliffephillips@reviewboard.ca should you have any questions.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "JoAnne Deneron".

JoAnne Deneron
Chairperson

Copy:
Charles McNeely, Chairperson, Sahtú Secretariat Inc
Directors, Sahtú Secretariat Inc.
Robert Jenkins, Deputy Minister, Environment and Climate Change (GNWT)
Ron Pankratz, Regional Director General, Northwest Territories (CIRNAC)
Frederick (Sonny) Blake Jr., Grand Chief, Gwich'in Tribal Council





Reasons for Decision on the
cancellation of Imperial Oil
Resources N.W.T Limited's Line
490 Replacement and Norman
Wells Operations
environmental assessments

EA2425-01

EA2425-02

March 2, 2026





1. Summary of decision – cancellation of the environmental assessments

On January 30, 2026, Imperial Oil Resources N.W.T Limited (Imperial) requested that the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board (Review Board) cancel the environmental assessment (EA) of its Line 490 Replacement Project (EA2425-01) and Norman Wells Operations (EA2425-02).¹

The Review Board met on February 26, 2026, and passed a motion to approve the cancellation of the EAs once the Sahtú Land and Water Board (SLWB) and the Canadian Energy Regulator (CER) provided notice of the cancellation or closure of the associated regulatory proceedings. The SLWB and the CER provided the required notice,^{2,3,4} and the **Review Board has granted the request to cancel the EAs.**

This *Reasons for Decision* describes the Review Board's rationale for the cancellations. It also outlines the process that would be necessary if, at some point in the future, Imperial decides to apply to replace Line 490 or continue operations and production of oil at its Normans Wells oilfield.

2. Reasons for cancellation of the environmental assessments

The Review Board's rationale for cancelling both environmental assessments is as follows:

1. Imperial has withdrawn its regulatory applications, resulting in the termination of the regulatory proceedings by the SLWB and CER. Without these applications, the proposed developments (replacement of Line 490 and the continued operations of the Norman Wells oilfield beyond the existing, current authorizations) cannot proceed.
2. Since the replacement of the flowline connecting Goose Island to Bear Island (Line 490) and the continued operations of the Norman Wells oilfield (collectively, the proposed developments referred to the Review Board) cannot proceed, the Review Board is no longer required to conduct an environmental assessment under section 126(2)(b) of the MVRMA.

¹ Request to cancel the EA – [letter from Imperial](#), January 30, 2026

² SLWB notice: Type B Water [Licence Application S24L-002](#) and Type A [Land Use Permit Application S24A-005](#) for the Line 490 Replacement considered withdrawn and closed.

³ [SLWB notice](#) dated February 2, 2026 stating renewal of Water Licence S24L-005 for the Norman Wells Operations in Norman Wells considered withdrawn and closed.

⁴ [C38217 dated February 11, 2026](#) stating that the Commission will not issue decisions on the applications related to Imperial's Norman Wells Operations or Line 490 replacement project.



3. Background preceding the cancellation of the environmental assessments

3.1 Line 490

On September 24, 2024, the Sahtú Secretariat Incorporated (SSI) referred Imperial's Line 490 Replacement project (Water Licence Application S24L-002 and Land Use Permit Application S24A-005) to the Review Board for EA.⁵

The Review Board proceeded with the EA through to the hearing phase. On May 1, 2025, after parties had submitted interventions and the Review Board had hosted the pre-hearing conference,⁶ Imperial requested an adjournment of the EA.⁷ Imperial specified that its request was made:

1. to ensure that regulatory decisions were made sufficiently in advance of the next potential construction window to allow for proper planning; and
2. to align decision-making associated with the Line 490 Replacement project, the variance of the Operations Authorizations (OA-1210-001) and the renewal of its Water Licence (S13L1-007) held by Imperial.

The Review Board issued its *Reasons for Decision* on Imperial's adjournment request on May 8, 2025, granting the request to adjourn.⁸

Imperial's request to cancel the EA was submitted to the Review Board on January 30, 2026. The request included a letter to the SLWB and CER, indicating Imperial's withdrawal of its Water Licence amendment and Operations Authorization applications to the SLWB and CER respectively.

3.2 Norman Wells Operations

On September 30, 2024, the Sahtú Secretariat Incorporated (SSI) referred Imperial's Water Licence renewal application (S24L1-005) and the application for Variance of Operations Authorizations (1210-001) to the Review Board for EA.^{9,10}

⁵ SSI's [letter referring the Line 490 replacement project to EA](#)

⁶ Review Board's pre-hearing conference [presentation](#)

⁷ Imperial's [request for adjournment](#) of the Line 490 EA

⁸ Review Board's letter to Imperial and [Reasons for Decision](#) on Imperial's adjournment request

⁹ [EA referral letter](#) from the SSI to the SLWB

¹⁰ [EA referral letter](#) from the SSI to the CER



Imperial challenged the EA referral on October 9, 2024.¹¹ Imperial requested a ruling (Request for Ruling) to reverse the Review Board’s decision to conduct an EA citing four reasons:

1. Part 5 of the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act* (MVRMA) does not apply to the Norman Wells Operations
2. the applications are not a “proposal for a development” under the MVRMA
3. the proposed EA duplicates and interferes with ongoing regulatory proceedings
4. Imperial was not provided an opportunity to be heard regarding the referral prior to the referral

The Review Board met on November 25th, 2025, to decide on Imperial’s Request for Ruling. After careful consideration of Imperial’s argument, and the arguments made by parties, the Review Board determined that it would not grant the relief sought in Imperial’s Request for Ruling and that the EA would proceed. The Review Board’s *Reasons for Decision*¹² on Imperial’s Request for Ruling detail the considerations of the Review Board in making its determination.

The Review Board proceeded to scope the EA through a series of community and technical scoping sessions between May and September 2025.¹³ Two draft *Terms of Reference* were made available for public review on the Online Review System.^{14,15} Imperial requested the cancellation of the EA in the letter submitted to the Review Board on January 30, 2026. The letter also included an attached letter to the SLWB and CER, indicating Imperial’s withdrawal of its Water Licence amendment and Operations Authorization applications to the SLWB and CER respectively.

4. Looking forward

Review Board staff is available to meet with Imperial to discuss any items within this decision, and to discuss the Board’s process in general. If Imperial wishes, at some time in the future, to apply to restart operations of the Normal Wells oilfield and/or replace Line 490, the applications would be subject to Part 5 of the MVRMA. The Review Board continues to

¹¹ Imperial’s [request for ruling](#) on the EA referral by the SSI

¹² Review Board’s [Reasons for Decision](#) on Imperial Request for Ruling to reverse the decision ordering an EA

¹³ [Notice of Proceeding](#) for scoping the Norman Wells Operations EA

¹⁴ First draft [Terms of Reference](#) provided to parties for review, July 25, 2025

¹⁵ Second draft [Terms of Reference](#) provided to parties for review, December 2, 2025



proceed with the EA of the closure and reclamation of Imperial's Norman Wells facilities (EA2526-01).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "JoAnne Deneron".

JoAnne Deneron
Chairperson
Mackenzie Valley Review Board

