

Environmental Stewardship

In February 2007, Petro-Canada drilled the Kwijika M-59 well located southeast of the community of Deline, Northwest Territories. The area is culturally and environmentally significant and as a result focused and thorough planning was critical. At Petro-Canada, we also made sure that our best management practices and stakeholder consultations were incorporated into all of our planning activities. Petro-Canada consulted with various regulators, community members, external consultants and traditional knowledge holders throughout project planning so that the most relevant and practical mitigation measures were employed. By listening to stakeholders' needs and concerns, the impact of our project on both the community and local environment was reduced.

Our first challenge was that our planned access route to the site, an environmentally low-impact route across Great Bear Lake, intruded on a spiritually sacred location. As we became aware of this site, we re-routed our access on existing seismic lines.

Through engagement with the community, we established early on that wildlife, particularly caribou, was a highly sensitive environmental concern for local stakeholders. Potential impacts on a caribou migration corridor raised concern that our operation would deter them from using the corridor and keep them away from the area. We worked collectively with the community to develop a risk-based caribou protection plan that outlined measures to be taken in the event that caribou were in proximity to drilling and camp operations. The access route was determined in consultation with the Deline community and their elders. We also took additional measures to have a traffic checkpoint at the beginning of the road to improve the safe use of the road.

Our environmental planning approach helped at all stages of the process. For example, a detailed waste management plan was developed, under which we expected that all waste would be contained on-site in above-ground containment and transported back to an approved oilfield waste facility in Alberta or British Columbia for disposal. Another key part of the program was to make use of in-ground sumps, which preserved the integrity of the permafrost.