

Drinking water would not be harmed

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Meeting Corridor boss says project would be halted if supply in jeopardy

C6 Tammy Scott-Wallace
Telegraph-Journal

HAMPTON "" - The president of Corridor Resources says a project he is proposing for the Salt Springs area won't happen if it means people's household water supply will be affected.



Tammy Scott-Wallace/Telegraph-Journal

Norm Miller, president of Corridor Resources, answers questions during Wednesday's meeting about his company's proposal to store natural gas and petroleum products in underground salt caverns.

[ENLARGE PHOTO](#)

"We don't have to have potable water" for the project, Norm Miller told a gathering Wednesday night of about 300 people who live in area from Cassidy Lake to French Village.

"If we don't come up with a high comfort level in terms of water, that's probably a stopper for the project."

Miller said to leach out salt caverns that would be suitable to store natural gas, crude oil, liquid petroleum gases, or to isolate carbon dioxide, his company would be looking for deeper saline waters in the ground. If the water supply wasn't ample enough, water could be removed from the Bay of Fundy to flush out the caverns and returned to the bay by pipeline.

"We need a lot of water," Miller said, explaining a cavern would require about 8,200 litres per minute, over

a slow course of two to three years as the dense salt deposit become a massive underground storage room.

Water has been the biggest issue for residents since hearing of the possible project a year ago. A group of concerned citizens formed a group called the Quality of Life Initiative and organized its first community meeting Wednesday, attended by Miller and his staff.

Even though residents sometimes showed their agitation, the meeting was a productive one, said committee president and Salt Springs resident Otty Forgrave. The gathering allowed Miller to explain his concept for a project and citizens were able to ask him questions.

Miller said he appreciated the opportunity to better open the lines of communication on the proposed project.

"We're on the very front end of this," Miller said. "Things are going very slow, which is not much surprise with the state of the economy these days. We are in the very early stages of evaluating this (project)."

He said while there are expressions of interest from natural gas users to support such a facility, there are no contracts signed, nor have any commercial commitments been made.

During the meeting, one resident said since Salt Springs residents do not have access to Corridor's natural gas, they shouldn't have to store it in their community.

Miller said the storage is important to ensure adequate supply of natural gas during the busy winter season for users, and to maintain the supply during the months when the demand is low and therefore the market price is low.

"Are we talking years yet before this project happens?" Miller said. "We don't know."

Because of the lull in the economy, Miller said there is making little progress being made on the proposal even though his company will continue doing its background work permitted as part of its exploratory licence to study 67,000 acres in the Salt Springs vicinity and beyond. That exploration will likely require two or three lines of seismic testing, he said.

Hampton resident Harold Bettle said he doesn't want to see damage to community drinking water as in Penobscis, which residents blamed on industry. Penobscis residents have been without a safe water supply for more than four years, and despite there being no conclusive study as to the reason, residents believe seismic testing done by Corridor is to blame.

Miller stressed seismic testing does not cause drops in water tables that Penobscis has experienced, nor does drilling nor casing activity for the natural gas wells.

"These kinds of operations do not cause water tables to go down," he said. "It just doesn't happen."

Bettle also said he believes the community has to keep an eye on Corridor's project because there is no government protection.

"I'm not a great person to trust government people," he said, adding he feels big business will always come before citizens in the government's mind.

Corridor's chief geophysicist Paul Durling said the caverns would be created on a parcel of land about 100 acres in size, or one per cent of the total exploration area, where salt deposits form the best geology for the project. The caverns would be about one kilometre underground and the facility would

be created at least one kilometre away from residential properties.

When one resident asked if Miller would honour a referendum question that asked residents if they support the project, he said. "I think that is a premature question. We have a licence to explore from the provincial government. It's really up to the government to determine. There's local issues, there's the general issues - that's really not up to us to balance those. That's a broader issue. I really don't have an answer," Miller responded.

"I think that answered the question," the resident said.

A cavern would measure 180 to 240 metres tall and 60 metres across and Miller said he would first plan to create three of them. But because the salt body is huge, there would be potential for more.

The project's construction would employ about 200 people and provide work to 15 to 20 full-time operators.

Miller said safety is a priority, and salt caverns are safer than above-ground storage facilities.

"We are a highly regulated industry all over the world, but we're a long ways away from having something to regulate," he stressed.

Approval to proceed would depend on government approvals, but before that time, Miller said, much more study has to be done and community consultation done. He told the meeting he would return as progress is made towards the potential project.

"It's pretty obvious we don't want what you want to bring to our neighbourhood," Hampton resident Pauline Ruttle told Miller during the meeting. "How do we shut you down?"

Miller did not respond.

Corridor's presentation to the community is available online at www.corridor.ca.

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Isn't it time to stop believing the doe-eyed capitalist who says "Just trust me...?"

Once this is approved for Natural Gas it is likely that during a downturn in gas prices there will be little to stop them from switching to something like crude oil - something NO ONE in the area would want. You can't un-ring a bell and once they've spent any money getting started on this you won't have any chance to stop them from doing anything they want to.

Your grandchildren will judge you on how greedy or desperate you were for a couple of jobs at the expense of their water supply.

8 THUMBS UP 4 THUMBS DOWN

FLAG AS INAPPROPRIATE

That's What I Think, Saint John on 27/02/09 08:26:12 AM AST

You have to keep in mind that this area is not only slated for the storage of natural gas. It's also slated for Natural gas and oil exploration.

So there will be seismic, drilling and hydraulic fraccing all taking place in the same area. These technologies crack rock (that's what hydraulic fracturing is supposed to do.)

If its coming in your area - go research it. Then determine for yourself if the risk is worth the reward.

6 THUMBS UP 3 THUMBS DOWN

FLAG AS INAPPROPRIATE

Smalltown NB, New Brunswick on 27/02/09 10:11:54 AM AST

I agree with "That's What I Think". We have all seen how honest CEOs are these days - not very!



5 THUMBS UP 2 THUMBS DOWN

FLAG AS INAPPROPRIATE

Freddy Rose, Saint John on 27/02/09 11:33:13 AM AST

It is ultimately up to the populace-at-large to be vigilante against corporate blunderings which damage our environment and way of life. Further, it is our responsibility to make intelligent, INFORMED decisions, without emotion clouding the truth. In addition, mostly everyone reading this, would be jobless, if the "not-in-my-backyard" attitude had prevailed

through the course of human history.
Think about your own employment...might ANYONE dislike aspects of your job? Farmers= habitat destruction & run-off issues
Loggers= deforestation & HUGE carbon footprint
Truckers= noise & air pollution
Get my point? The ONLY issue here is the potable water guarantee!

3  THUMBS UP 0  THUMBS DOWN

 FLAG AS INAPPROPRIATE

roundedknowledge same, sj on 02/03/09 01:36:54 PM AST

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