

Interpretation of Issue 1. (from the Issues List)

Issue 1 poses the question: "Has the applicant adequately demonstrated the need, costs and benefits of the proposed project?"

The question could be interpreted in two ways:

- (a) does the project provide the best way to move the shale gas from A to B?, or
- (b) could the needs that might be served by shale gas be met at lower cost, more sustainably and with reduced GHG emissions in an alternative way?

In general terms, the United Nations and all levels of government in Canada have determined that we need to radically reduce our dependence on fossil fuels. Shale gas is arguably the worst of all of the fossil fuels, primarily because of its related high-GWP methane emissions. For heating applications it could readily be replaced by natural, local sources of heat and for peak power generation and for handling power supply/demand fluctuations it could likewise be replaced by alternatives that would be cheaper, cleaner and much more sustainable. However, interpretation (a) would rule out the consideration of alternatives that would arguably be much better from the public's point of view.

The proposed project is specifically intended to convey shale gas from the Marcellus/Utica plays to Ontario. Using shale gas represents a fundamental change from the use of conventional gas because of the delayed GHG emissions from the in-ground release of methane and the start-up release during the fracking process so this should be a central consideration in the Board's review. We know we need to phase out the use of fossil fuels so the project proponents should demonstrate why we should not start that phase out now instead of importing shale gas and boosting our consumption as they have proposed.

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