

Vista Coal Mine Phase II Expansion Project
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The Honorable Steven Guibeault MP
Minister of Environment and Climate Change
200 Sacre'-Coeur Boulevard
Gateneau QC K1A 0H3

September 20, 2024

Dear Honorable Mr. Guibeault, Minister of Environment & Climate Change, Canada,

I am writing to express my support of Coalspur's Vista Mine and the Phase II expansion project.

The Vista Mine is one of Canada's most progressive and environmentally friendly mining operations. From our observations, site remediation and overall impact minimization have been a top priority. Mined areas receive progressive reclamation, effectively minimizing the overall disturbance footprint and ensuring that it does not expand as production continues at the site.

Speculation around potential negative aspects of Phase II discounts the best practices of the current mining operation and Coalspur's environmental performance since mining commenced more than five years ago. Phase II is not a new mining project; it is a westward extension of the current operation. A federal assessment is unnecessary and a waste of resources. There are other means already in place, both provincially and federally, to address any potential adverse effects from the expansion of a project that has already met the high regulatory standard.

Any actions relating to potential risks from Phase II should come as the result of a careful analysis of the outcomes from Phase I. In addition, the designation of Phase II would have significant social and economic consequences for Hinton and the surrounding area.

In my judgment, Phase II does not require a separate federal designation to accomplish this goal and I implore you to not move to designate the project.

Sincerely,

Jim Thompson VP of Sales - Mining

<Original signed by>



Vista Mine Phase 2 facts, as they have been communicated and observed

- Phase II of the Vista Mine is not a new mining project, but rather is a westward extension of the Phase I permit boundary.
- As production from the existing Phase I mining area ramps down, production from Phase II will ramp up. Current production levels will be maintained. The average annual coal production from the Vista Mine will not increase with the Phase II approval.
- The Vista Mine is a progressive and environmentally friendly mining operation in Canada. Mined areas are progressively reclaimed and the overall disturbance footprint stays the same as Phase II is mined.
- Coalspur's reclamation liability is currently fully funded.
- Coalspur has fully reclaimed 60 hectares of previously mined out area and has another 80 hectares of area with vegetative soil placed ready to plant.
- In the absence of Phase II, when Phase I reserves are depleted, the mine would cease to operate and there would be an associated decline in revenue and employment in the town of Hinton.
- An application for Phase II was finalized and submitted provincially in March 2024.
- Phase II will utilize the existing infrastructure of Phase I including conveyor belts, raw and clean coal storage areas, coal preparation, rail loadout, etc. No new infrastructure is needed to mine Phase II.
- Phase 2 is expected to produce approximately 4 million clean tonnes of coal annually with annual operations expenditure of approximately \$250 million. An estimated 76% of the expenditures will accrue to Alberta.
- The Vista Project is well capitalized with over \$800 million spent on mine infrastructure that will be utilized for Phase II.
- Phase II is expected to generate over \$260 million of royalties and taxes for Alberta over the life of the project with an additional \$180 million in federal taxes.
- Phase II will generate over \$16 million of local taxes over the life of the project.
- The Vista Mine employs over 460 people, many of whom live in Hinton supporting the local economy and businesses.
- Estimated labor costs will exceed \$60 million annually.



- Employment opportunities are created by direct jobs as well as many more indirect jobs in the surrounding area.
- Coalspur hires locally first and uses Alberta-based contractors as often as possible when needed.
- The Vista Mine offers opportunities for qualified local Indigenous businesses and employment opportunities for qualified Indigenous workers. Roughly 7% of the Coalspur Phase I hourly workforce is Indigenous. Coalspur has established a process which ensures regular communications regarding activities and opportunities with local Indigenous communities.
- Direct impacts to all waters frequented by aquatic species at risk have been avoided in the mine plan for Phase II. The water management plan and flow augmentation plan are designed to mitigate potential impacts by treating mine wastewater and ensuring adequate flows are maintained in the adjacent creek. Monitoring through water quality, flow monitoring, groundwater level and quantity monitoring, benthic invertebrate monitoring, aquatic monitoring will occur throughout the project to ensure successful mitigation.
- Water sampling from Phase I which is immediately adjacent to the Phase II area has demonstrated that there are no impacts to selenium concentrations in waters downstream of the mining operation. This is unlike other mines in southern Alberta and in BC.
- Coalspur will avoid removal of fish and fish habitat in the mining of Phase II.
- At the end of mining, the land will be reclaimed to equivalent or greater land capability. This is evident in reclamation work done to date on Phase I.

