



Ministers' Reasons for Decision

IN THE MATTER OF AN APPLICATION FOR AN ENVIRONMENTAL
ASSESSMENT CERTIFICATE FOR THE ANGUS PROJECT

JULY 13, 2026

NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE DECISION

On June 17, 2026, the acting Chief Executive Assessment Officer (CEAO) referred an application from Vitreo Minerals Ltd. (Vitreo) for an Environmental Assessment Certificate (Certificate) for the Angus Project (Angus) to us. We are the “Ministers,” as defined in the *Environmental Assessment Act* (2018) (the Act). Under Section 29(4)(c) of the Act, the Ministers must, within 30 days of the receiving the referral:

- Issue an environmental assessment certificate to the proponent and attach any conditions to the certificate that the Ministers consider necessary, or
- Refuse to issue the certificate to the proponent.

Angus is a proposed open pit silica sand mine located approximately 10 kilometres (km) southeast of Bear Lake and 60 km north of Prince George, within the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George. Angus is anticipated to produce up to 2.9 million tonnes of quartz arenite annually and up to 2 million tonnes of silica sand annually over a mine life of 20 years. Mined materials from the Monkman East Pit will be transported to the nearby Raw Sand Plant where primary crushing of quartz arenite and initial processing will occur. Raw sand will be transported and stockpiled at the Finishing Plant where it will be dried, stored in on-site silos, and subsequently loaded onto transport trucks. Silica sand materials from Angus will be sold at the Finishing Plant Site, with buyers responsible for arranging delivery.

The CEOA provided the following materials for our consideration in making a decision:

- Assessment Report from the Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) that considers all required matters under Section 25 of the Act;
- Draft Certificate, with draft Certified Project Description and Table of Conditions;
- Recommendations and reasons with respect to Vitreo’s application for a Certificate; and
- Notices of consent received from participating Indigenous nations for the issuance of a Certificate for Angus.

MINISTERS’ CONSIDERATIONS

To make our decision, we considered the following:

- All the materials provided by the CEOA, including the findings of the EAO with respect to the effects of Angus and the CEOA’s recommendations;
- How the Environmental Assessment of Angus was consistent with the purpose of the EAO to support reconciliation with Indigenous peoples in British Columbia; and
- Whether Angus is consistent with the purpose of the EAO to promote sustainability by protecting the environment and fostering a sound economy and the well-being of British Columbians and their communities.

The Assessment Report and Recommendations of the Chief Executive Assessment Officer

The CEOA advised us that, after considering the EAO’s Assessment Report and other materials, she was satisfied that the proposed Certificate conditions, in combination with other provincial and federal permitting and regulatory requirements, will manage and mitigate adverse effects and enhance positive effects, such that no significant adverse effects or significant adverse cumulative effects are expected from Angus.

The CEOA proposed ten project-specific conditions to manage potential adverse effects from Angus, developed through discussion and collaboration with participating Indigenous nations and members of the Technical Advisory Committee. The conditions are proposed to:

- Monitor and manage ambient air quality at sensitive receptor sites to ensure emissions generated by Angus do not exceed safe levels for nearby residents and site users;
- Protect worker and community health and limit strain on regional health services;
- Promote local hiring to manage social effects and limit pressure on community infrastructure and services;
- Provide project information publicly and establish a process to receive, track and respond to public feedback;
- Avoid and minimize effects to vegetation, wetlands, species of concern and species of interest to participating Indigenous nations;
- Reduce effects to wildlife and track reclamation success for wildlife habitat;
- Reduce traffic-related risks through safety measures, workforce transportation strategies, applying new technologies and ongoing community engagement;
- Implement a long-term greenhouse gas reduction strategy, including emissions tracking and reporting;
- Protect water quality through monitoring requirements tied to permit applications under the *Environmental Management Act*; and
- Work with interested First Nations to monitor and manage effects of Angus on their Indigenous Interests.

We are aware that additional federal and provincial authorizations, including those related to water quantity and fish, are also required for Angus.

Following her obligations under the Act, the CEO provided us with her recommendations that:

- A Certificate be issued for Angus, with a 10-year timeline by which the project must be substantially started;
- Angus is consistent with the promotion of sustainability in B.C. by protecting the environment and fostering a sound economy and the well-being of British Columbians and their communities; and
- The matters in Section 25 of the Act were assessed sufficiently and the Crown’s duty to consult and accommodate First Nations has been fulfilled for Angus.

First Nations Engagement and Consultation

As part of making our decision, we considered the perspectives of participating Indigenous nations, as well as the engagement and consultation with additional First Nations carried out by the EAO. We appreciate the extensive efforts made by participating Indigenous nations, the EAO and other provincial agencies to identify and resolve issues and concerns and seek consensus on the conclusions of the Assessment Report and proposed conditions. These efforts are aligned with the principle of free, prior and informed consent, consistent with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, and the obligations set out in the Act and common law.

We respect the rights of all First Nations in British Columbia to self-governance and to carry out activities in accordance with their Indigenous practices, laws and preferences. For the Environmental Assessment of Angus, we note that Lheidli T’enneh Nation, McLeod Lake Indian Band, Tsay Keh Dene Nation and West Moberly First Nations identified as participating Indigenous nations under the Act and chose to engage deeply in the Environmental Assessment for Angus. We would like to recognize the substantial efforts of these participating Indigenous nations throughout the Environmental Assessment. Their ongoing collaboration with the EAO has contributed to a more comprehensive and robust assessment that reflects their knowledge and perspectives.

We also recognize that the EAO consulted with Kwadacha Nation beginning in the Effects Assessment phase after the Province obtained constructive knowledge of asserted Aboriginal rights by Kwadacha that triggered the Province’s duty to

consult for Angus. The draft referral package was provided to Kwadacha Nation for review and comment; no comments or concerns were received.

Nak’azdli Whut’en and Nazko First Nation were also notified of key milestones throughout the environmental assessment.

We acknowledge that, despite substantive efforts of all parties over the duration of the Environmental Assessment, not all concerns have been resolved. We recognize that industrial development in the area, including forestry, mining and the development of the W.A.C. Bennett Dam, has deeply affected Indigenous communities and ways of life, and that Angus will contribute to cumulative effects on ecosystems and communities in the region. While the scope of our decision related only to activities associated with Angus, we recognize the history of major projects, forestry and other development in the area and throughout Treaty 8 is important and has been considered in the EAO’s assessment of how Angus will contribute to cumulative effects.

We note that under Section 25(2) of the Act, adverse cumulative effects must be considered in every assessment. Angus is not anticipated to contribute substantively to adverse cumulative effects on biophysical valued components, given its relatively small footprint within the broader regional area, the lack of interaction with other reasonably foreseeable projects in the region and the limited extent of other activities. The mitigation measures proposed for biophysical valued components are expected to reduce the incremental contribution to cumulative effects from Angus. For social effects, because of Vitreo’s plans to prioritize local hiring, Angus’ contribution to adverse cumulative social effects is considered low. In making our decision, we note the EAO’s conclusion that with effective implementation of proposed Certificate conditions and mitigation measures, Angus will not result in significant adverse cumulative effects on any valued component.

We note that at the conclusion of the Environmental Assessment, Lheidli T’enneh Nation, McLeod Lake Indian Band and Tsay Keh Dene Nation provided notices of consent to the issuance of a Certificate, which were provided to us for consideration. We also acknowledge that West Moberly First Nations communicated that they will not be providing a notice of consent or withholding consent, and that West Moberly First Nations takes no position of the potential issuance of a Certificate at this time.

Based on the record of consultation that occurred over the course of the EA and the final notices of consent provided by Lheidli T’enneh Nation, McLeod Lake Indian Band and Tsay Keh Dene Nation, we are of the view that the Environmental Assessment of Angus was consistent with the purpose of the EAO to support reconciliation with Indigenous peoples in British Columbia.

Protecting the Environment and Fostering a Sound Economy and the Well-Being of British Columbians

We also considered Angus’ consistency with the EAO’s purpose in protecting the environment and fostering a sound economy and the well-being of British Columbians and their communities.

As stated above, we note that the EAO determined that there would not be significant residual adverse effects on any valued components. While we recognize that localized, high magnitude residual effects are anticipated for air quality, water and fish and aquatic resources, we note that the EAO has proposed conditions to mitigate adverse environmental effects. An Air Quality Management condition, including a requirement to develop an Air Quality Management Plan, to monitor and manage ambient air quality at sensitive receptor sites to ensure air quality emissions generated by Angus do not exceed safe levels for local residents or visitors accessing areas located near Angus. In addition, conditions requiring a Vegetation Management Plan and a Wildlife Management Plan will further mitigate and monitor potential adverse environmental effects. We are of the view that Vitreo’s planned mitigation measures, the Certificate conditions and other required permitting and regulatory authorizations under the *Mines Act*, *Environmental Management Act*, *Fisheries Act* and *Water Sustainability Act* processes, including assessment, permitting and monitoring programs, would support

protection of the environment by mitigating predicted environmental effects on these valued components to acceptable levels.

We considered that, as a new project in an area that is experiencing decline in other resource extraction industries such as forestry, Angus is anticipated to contribute positively to local communities and the region by generating new employment opportunities, increased business opportunities through project related expenditures on materials, equipment and opportunities, government revenues for federal, provincial and municipal government, and through personal income taxes, indirect taxes, corporate income taxes, and taxes on products and royalties. Additionally, by establishing a local source of silica sand for use in natural gas production, we note that Angus will reduce reliance on imported silica sand from the United States and help mitigate inflationary pressures and economic uncertainty associated with potential tariffs imposed by the current U.S. administration.

Regarding community well-being, we recognize that Angus has the potential to cause adverse social effects. This includes residual effects on infrastructure and services, human health, community well-being, non-traditional land and resource use, and cumulative effects on community well-being including changes to physical health and health behaviours, emotional and mental health, and community and family stability. Angus could also adversely affect participating Indigenous nations’ peaceful enjoyment and sense of place in the project area and nearby vicinity, as well as adversely affect the enjoyment of the area by recreational users, due to increased noise, traffic and dust.

We note that the EAO has proposed two conditions to mitigate adverse social effects. A Community and Workforce Management Plan to implement workforce strategies that support local and equitable hiring, preventing an influx of temporary workers into the region, and mitigating associated adverse social effects. This condition includes requirements for Vitreo to conduct monitoring to ensure mitigation and enhancement measures are working as intended and implement adaptive management if actual hiring is not achieving identified targets for local hiring, Indigenous participation and gender participation. In addition, a Health Management and Emergency Response Management Plan will protect worker and community health by reducing additional strain to regional health services from Angus and enable coordinated planning with local health and emergency services. This condition also requires Vitreo to implement health monitoring and reporting to verify impacts on local health service providers.

The EAO also considered that Angus is anticipated to contribute positively to the local and regional economy and the well-being of British Columbians and their communities, with employment income generated by Angus benefitting human health and community well being. Though project employees, contractors and those receiving economic benefits will most directly benefit, there may also be indirect positive effects on the broader community when employees spend their wages in local communities.

In considering the above, we are of the view that Angus is consistent with the EAO’s purpose of protecting the environment and fostering a sound economy and the well-being of British Columbians and their communities.

Public Interest

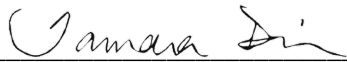
Under Section 29(4)(b) of the Act, the ministers may also consider any other matters that they consider relevant to the public interest in making their decision on the application. In the final public comment period for Angus, the majority of the public comments expressed support for the project, emphasizing the importance of the economic opportunity, benefit to surrounding communities and need for new job opportunities as other historically prominent industries, such as forestry, are in decline. We considered this input in arriving at our decision.

CONCLUSION

Having considered all materials provided by the EAO, we have adopted the recommendations from the CEAO and have decided to issue a Certificate for Angus.

The Certified Project Description, which forms part of the Certificate, limits what the holder of the Certificate is authorized to do with respect to the Project. The Certificate also includes conditions that the holder must abide by. These aspects of the Certificate, in combination with other provincial and federal permitting and regulatory requirements, give us the confidence to conclude that Angus will be carried out such that no significant adverse effects are likely to occur.

We express our gratitude to everyone who participated in the Environmental Assessment for their contribution and engagement in the process, including the public, technical advisors, and First Nations leadership and staff. Finally, we would like to thank the EAO for all their work throughout the assessment.



Honourable Tamara Davidson
Minister of Environment and Parks



Honourable Jagrup Brar
Minister of Mining and Critical Minerals

Signed this 13th day of July 2026