

Blanket Permit Policy

Updated April 3, 2019

This policy replaces Bulletin 25. All active permits must adhere to this policy.

This policy does not apply to projects regulated by the Oil and Gas Commission.

Background

Heritage Inspection Permits authorise an archaeologist to conduct archaeological impact assessment studies (AIAs) to identify and assess potential impacts to protected archaeological sites. AIAs are characterized as low-impact information gathering studies. These studies often provide information to inform management of protected archaeological sites.

Blanket permits are Heritage Inspection Permits (HIPs) where archaeological methods, site types, and management recommendations are anticipated to be consistent, and where multiple assessments may be added after the application is referred to First Nations. To ensure First Nations have an adequate opportunity to comment on proposed assessments, the permit holder must provide supplemental information to interested parties as individual assessment areas are proposed. The permit holder must consider all responses regarding the specific assessment areas. Should First Nations identify concerns, the Archaeology Branch (the Branch) may determine further consultation is required prior to field work.

Purpose

This policy explains when blanket permits are appropriate, their limitations, and provides details about the required consultation process.

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1. A permit holder may apply for a blanket permit for a broad geographic area for multiple assessments in one sector (e.g., forestry) where consistent management recommendations are anticipated.
2. Blanket permits may have multiple proponents. Each proponent must sign a client certification.
3. Blanket permits are limited to 100 developments and/or two field seasons unless otherwise approved by the Branch.
 - a. First time permit holders may hold blanket permits limited to 15 developments. This may be extended following review of interim reports and written authorisation from the Branch.
4. A two-step consultation process is required for all blanket permits, as the initial application referral will not contain all information required for meaningful consultation:
 - a. Step one of consultation is the initial referral period coordinated and administered by the Branch¹ and is identical to the referral process for all other permit applications.

¹ Archaeologists are encouraged to discuss applications with First Nations prior to submission to the Branch.

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- b. Step two of consultation is a Notice of Intent provided by the proponent to interested parties for proposed assessment areas that were not identified in the initial permit application. Permit holders must follow the “Notice of Intent Requirements.”
5. The permit application must outline the size and scope of the permit area and the developments to be assessed under the permit.
 - a. Permit area boundaries must be limited to the smallest geographical or administrative area required to meet the project or proponent requirements, and must be approved by the Branch. Permit areas may be defined by:
 - i. administrative jurisdiction (e.g., municipalities, Natural Resource Regions);
 - ii. natural/physical boundaries (e.g., watersheds);
 - iii. cartography (e.g., NTS mapsheets);
 - iv. applying a buffer to linear projects (e.g., new pipelines or upgrades to existing infrastructure); or
 - v. other areas may be proposed.
 - b. When known, archaeologists must identify individual areas to be assessed in the initial application- maps and shapefiles will be included in the referral package to First Nations.
 - c. Proposed assessment area size must be defined in the application (e.g., by hectareage or length), using the following as standards:
 - i. Areas (e.g., Forestry blocks, new ancillary facilities) up to 125 hectares
 - ii. Linear developments (e.g., transmission lines, access roads, pipelines) up to 2 km with a defined right-of-way width; or
 - iii. Maintenance/upgrades to existing infrastructure (e.g., highways).
 - d. When assessment areas are larger than the standards outlined above, the permit application must include:
 - i. a statement noting the intention to assess larger areas;
 - ii. the size of the proposed assessment areas, if available; and,
 - iii. rationale conveying need for larger assessment areas.
6. Assessments outside the scope of an existing blanket permit require a separate Heritage Inspection Permit.
7. Blanket permit extension applications must provide a brief summary of work to date including the number of developments assessed and sites identified. The Branch may refuse to extend the permit if:
 - a. The permit holder is ineligible to hold new permits;
 - b. Deliverables (e.g., site forms, interim reports) have not been submitted in an appropriate timeframe; or,
 - c. Deliverables do not meet Branch standards.

Notice of Intent Requirements

1. The permit holder must provide a Notice of Intent to all affected First Nations (i.e., those with interests in that particular territory²), other affected parties, and the Branch prior to conducting any and all field work (including preliminary field reconnaissances [PFRs]);
2. Interested parties will have at least 30 calendar days to comment on proposed assessment area. Exceptions include:
 - a. The Branch may approve less than 30 days when:
 - i. public or environmental factors pose safety concerns, in which case First Nations must be provided as much notice as possible; or
 - ii. the permit application addresses the notification period (which may include defining emergency criteria or other rationale for a shortened review period).
3. Field work may proceed before the 30 day period ends with support from all First Nations who received the Notice of Intent.
4. Notices of Intent may not be required if all affected First Nations have stated they are not required.
5. When First Nations identify concerns, the study may not proceed until the Branch has conducted a review.
6. If proposed study areas are identified after the application has been submitted, but prior to permit issuance, Notices of Intent may be distributed to First Nations during the initial referral period and documentation must indicate the permit has not yet been issued;
7. Upon request, permit holders must be able to provide:
 - a. The Branch a summary of the Notices of Intent, which must include recipients and their responses;
 - b. First Nations a summary of Notices of Intent distributed to the requesting First Nation; and
8. The Final Permit Report must include an appendix to summarise the distribution of the Notices of Intent.

Required Content for Notices of Intent

The Notice of Intent will minimally contain:

1. The permit or application number;
2. If applicable, First Nation file number;
3. Development description,
 - a. If the development is larger than the defined areas of assessment in the application, the notice of intent must include:
 - i. a hectarage/linear corridor;
 - ii. rationale conveying the need for the larger assessment area; and,
 - iii. evidence of Branch approval of larger assessment area size.

² Note: First Nations identified on the permit application referral may not have overlapping territory with specific assessments. Notices of Intent should only go to those First Nations with interests in that particular assessment area. Consultation area information is available from the Province through imap.

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4. Sufficient information to easily identify the proposed inspection area.³For example,
 - a. A general location map (1:20,000 or 1:50,000) showing the proposed study area, nearby landmarks and archaeological sites;
 - b. A midrange map (1:5,000 to 1:15,000) showing the exact location of the proposed study area where available, as well as nearby archaeological sites as polygons and mapped archaeological potential (if available);
 - c. A .zip file containing study area shapefiles, kmz files, and geomark files.
5. Proposed fieldwork start date;
6. A summary of related studies (permitted and non-permitted; archaeological or ethnographic) known to exist within or in close proximity to the proposed assessment area that may affect the pending study;
7. Any other information required as a condition of permit (e.g., shapefiles specially formatted for the Tsilhqot'in National Government Portal).
8. The following statement –

“Should you have information, comments or concerns about the proposed archaeological fieldwork described above, please contact our office (***Arch Firm contact information***) on or before (***date***). If you have concerns about impacts on Aboriginal Interests (asserted or established aboriginal or treaty rights) resulting from this activity, or you’d rather discuss concerns related to the assessment area directly with the Province, please contact (***Project Officer contact information***) at the Archaeology Branch, citing (***Application or Permit Number***)”

Permit holders might also consider including:

- A discussion of anticipated methods if they can be refined from the permit application (e.g., subsurface testing strategies); and
- Ethnographic or other references used when evaluating archaeological potential.

³ Maps and shapefiles must comply with Archaeology Branch [Requirements](#), including appropriate base maps.