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## **Survey for Bald Eagle and Golden Eagle Nests in CYA 732**

Prepared for

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Confidential information not to be  
released to the Public

## Table of Contents

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<b>1.0 OBJECTIVE .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2.0 STUDY TEAM .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>3.0 METHODS.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>4.0 RESULTS.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>5.0 CLOSURE .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>6.0 REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>3</b>

### LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX A	Table A-1: Incidental wildlife sightings during eagle surveys on 6 <sup>th</sup> and 7 <sup>th</sup> May, 2009
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### LIST OF TABLES

Table 4-1	Results of 2009 Aerial Survey for Bald Eagle and Golden Eagle Nests in CYA 732 (Confidential information not to be released to the Public) .....	2
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## 1.0 OBJECTIVE

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As part of the environmental mitigation and management plan at 5 Wing Goose Bay, the Institute for Environmental Monitoring and Research (IEMR) contracted Jacques Whitford Stantec Ltd. (JWSL) to survey known Bald Eagle and Golden Eagle nest locations beneath the military training area known as CYA 732. This work was consistent with obligations to place spatial avoidance closures around active nests prior to the initiation of aviation training. These nests may be occupied by a breeding pair from May until August. The Study Team was to complete the survey as soon as possible, providing the locations of active nests to the IEMR who would in turn contact 5 Wing Goose Bay regarding the recommended closures.

## 2.0 STUDY TEAM

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The Project Manager was Mr. Perry Trimper. Ms. Caroline Hong served as lead field observer and navigator, secondary (rear seat) observers included Ms. Mary-Ann Aylward, Ms. Sherry Buckle and Ms. Karen Rashleigh served as secondary observer on Day 2. The Pilot with Universal Helicopters Newfoundland Limited (UHNL) was Mr. Geoff Goodyear.

## 3.0 METHODS

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Previous reports for past aerial surveys for raptors completed in CYA 732 and adjacent areas were reviewed from corporate records. Coordinates of known eagle nest locations and previous sightings, current and historical, were extracted from those reports (e.g. Jacques Whitford Environment Limited 1998, 1999 and Minaskuat 2006, 2007). A list of nest locations within CYA 732 was compiled based on this information. The team flew by helicopter to locations in order of proximity, and as fuel and time permitted. Aerial surveys were conducted over two days; 6 May 2008 and 7 May 2009. Upon approach, as soon as the nest was determined to be active [one or more adults were observed at the nest or within 500 m, if eggs (or young) were observed in the nest, or if obvious fresh nesting material was observed in the bowl], the pilot would be instructed to leave the area. All nests were circled at least once if empty or if the nest could not be found to determine if adults were present and/or if the nest had collapsed.

The weather was favourable during these surveys with low winds, sunny skies and temperatures ranging from 8-15 °C. There were no delays or disruptions during the surveys. Ferry time between nest locations caused an increase in fuel consumption and total survey time. This added additional flying time during which no nest locations were surveyed.

Locations of incidental sightings of wildlife were recorded over the two day survey period.

## 4.0 RESULTS

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In 11.6 hours of helicopter time, JWSL surveyed 55 previously known Bald Eagle and Golden Eagle nest locations beneath CYA 732. Of the 38 Bald Eagle nest sites, four (10.5%) were active and 11 (28.9%) were inactive. At one of the active locations, two Bald Eagles were observed, but the nearby nest was empty. An osprey was observed near one nest that was considered inactive in terms of the presence of eagles. In instances when the nest was not located, it was possible the nest had collapsed as broken tree tops were often observed in the vicinity of the coordinates. These observations were recorded.

Seventeen Golden Eagle nest sites were surveyed in CYA 732. Of these, one (5.9%) was active, five (29.4%) were inactive, and two (11.8%) were empty but had evidence of fresh nest material. Two additional nests, both empty, were found near other known nest locations (Table 4.1).

**Table 4-1 Results of 2009 Aerial Survey for Bald Eagle and Golden Eagle Nests in CYA 732 (Confidential information not to be released to the Public)**

Locations of and comments on incidental wildlife sightings can be found in Appendix A.

## 5.0 CLOSURE

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Five active or suspected active Bald Eagle nests and three active or suspected active Golden Eagle nests were located in CYA 732. A preliminary summary of these results was sent to the IEMR on 8 May 2009. In accordance with the mitigation program at 5 Wing Goose Bay, closures were recommended around each of these active nests.

## 6.0 REFERENCES

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Jacques Whitford Environment Limited. 1998. *1997 Raptor Monitoring Program*. Report prepared for Goose Bay Office, National Defence Headquarters, Ottawa, ON. 25 pp. + Appendices.

Jacques Whitford Environment Limited. 1999. *Churchill River Power Project LHP 98-11 – Osprey and Bald Eagle Study*. Report prepared for Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro, St. John's, NL. 30 pp. + Appendices.

Minaskuat Limited Partnership. 2006. *2006 Osprey Monitoring in the Low-Level Training Area (CYA 731) of Labrador*. Report prepared for the Institute for Environmental Monitoring and Research, Happy Valley-Goose Bay, NL. 35 pp. + Appendices.

Minaskuat Limited Partnership. 2007. *Inventory of Osprey, Bald Eagle and Golden Eagle Nest Sites in the Lower Churchill River Valley and Area, Lower Churchill Hydroelectric Generation Project*. Draft Final Report prepared for Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro, St. John's, NL.