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Hay-Zama Sees Oil Well Moved but Faces New Oil Pipeline Threat

By Cliff Wallis, AWA President

After discussions with regulators and the Hay-Zama Committee, Castle River Resources has moved the site of a proposed oil well completely outside of the most sensitive Area 1 lands. The AWA has been part of the effort to shift this oil well and some new gas wells outside Area 1. We are also trying to secure agreements that would improve environmental performance on existing oil developments on Dene Tha Area 1 lands.

Castle River originally proposed a new oil well "footprint" in Area 1 but withdrew this due to committee objections. They then proposed to drill the well from an existing shut in oil well owned by Crispin Energy. This latest move means the AWA continues to be successful in preventing any new oil development with Area 1. The AWA has also been instrumental over the last few years in securing abandonment of other oil wells through cooperative arrangements with Ventus Energy.

Some outstanding issues related to oil in the complex still need to be resolved. The committee is reviewing a new oil pipeline proposal by Crispin Energy that would cross part of the Wildland Park as well as Dene Tha lands. It is also looking at time limitations on existing oil development on Dene Tha Area 1 lands. The Hay-Zama Committee has held several meetings to inform the newly elected Chief and Council of the Dene Tha First Nation of our work and to secure their ongoing cooperation in protection of the Hay-Zama Wildland complex.

