

Decision Summary RA23022X

This document summarizes my reasons for issuing Approval RA23022X, a consolidated version of Approvals RA23022 and RA23022A, under the *Agricultural Operation Practices Act* (AOPA). All decision documents and the full application are available on the Natural Resources Conservation Board (NRCB) website at www.nrcb.ca under Confined Feeding Operations (CFO)/CFO Search. My decision is based on the Act and its regulations, the policies of the NRCB, the information contained in the application, and all other materials in the application file.

Under AOPA this type of application requires an approval. For additional information on NRCB permits please refer to www.nrcb.ca.

1. Background

On August 20, 2024, I issued Approval RA23022 to Mitchel and Lindy Kroetsch (Kroetsch), to construct and operate a new CFO with 2,500 beef feeders and 2,500 beef finishers. Approval RA23022 permitted the construction of feedlot pens and two catch basins.

Following the issuance of Approval RA23022, the NRCB's Board (Board) received several requests for review (RFRs). A panel was established to consider the RFRs and determine if a review was warranted.

On September 24, 2024, the Board issued Decision RFR 2024-06/RA23022. That decision stated that new evidence (the operator recently encountering unexpected shallow groundwater) raised questions of environmental risk with respect to groundwater and surface water protection in the synthetically lined catch basins. At that time, the Board identified a likelihood that Kroetsch would have to file an application to amend his permit in order to address the shallow water encountered.

On October 30, 2024 Kroetsch submitted an amendment application RA23022A. The amendment proposed to modify the dimensions of the two catch basins. The new catch basins would be shallower (2.7m deep), to meet the 1 metre setback to the water table requirement, at time of construction. The width of both catch basins were subsequently increased, to provide the required storage volume. Kroetsch also proposed to construct a barrier around the catch basins to protect the liner.

On January 31, 2025, I issued Approval Amendment RA23022A. RA23022A permitted the modified dimensions of the catch basins, and included a condition requiring a barrier around the catch basins.

The Board did not receive any RFRs with respect to RA23022A. The Board held a written review and on May 29, 2025 issued its Decision in Review 2025-02. The decision granted Approval RA23022 and Approval Amendment RA23022A, subject to additional conditions to address the concerns of environmental risk to surface water and groundwater quality. This decision summary and Approval RA23022X consolidates the previous approvals (RA23022 and RA23022A) and includes the Board's suggested conditions.

2. Terms and conditions

Upon the Board's direction, I consolidated the following permits with Approval RA23022X: Approval RA23022 and Approval Amendment RA23022A. Permit consolidation helps the permit holder, municipality, neighbours and other parties keep track of a CFO's requirements, by providing a single document that lists all the operating and construction requirements. Consolidating permits generally involves carrying forward all relevant terms and conditions in the existing permits into the new permit, with any necessary changes or deletions of those terms and conditions. The Board gave final approval to the permit on August 6, 2025.

Approval RA23022X contains all the terms and conditions from Approval RA23022 and Approval Amendment RA23022X, and includes additional conditions as directed by the Board. Those conditions include installation of piezometers and assessing the depth to the water table near the catch basins, sampling and testing groundwater, visually assessing of the synthetic liners, maintaining records of water table levels and groundwater testing results, and a requirement for the applicant to notify the NRCB if uplifting of the liner is observed.

3. Conclusion

Approval RA23022X is issued for the reasons provided above.

Kroetsch's NRCB-issued Approval RA23022 and Approval Amendment RA23022X are therefore superseded, and their content consolidated into this Approval RA23022X.

August 20, 2025

(Original signed)

Lynn Stone
Approval Officer