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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Environment  
Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources

### **NORTH ISLAND TO GET ECONOMIC BOOST**

PORT MCNEILL – Vancouver-based Orca Sand and Gravel Ltd. has received provincial environmental certification for a gravel quarry and ship-loading facilities near Port McNeill, Environment Minister Barry Penner and Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources Minister Richard Neufeld announced today.

“Orca Sand and Gravel Ltd. considered numerous sites along the west coast of North America and chose B.C.’s Port McNeill as an ideal location,” said Neufeld. “This is another great example of how the province is leading the world in sustainable environmental management and job creation, while supporting the high level of business confidence in B.C. to continue investment in our economy.”

After a joint federal and provincial environmental assessment, the B.C. government concluded the project will have no significant environmental, social or health effects on the surrounding area. The company can now proceed with obtaining the necessary provincial approvals and leases to begin construction. Federal approvals are expected this fall.

“It is important to find the right balance between the environment, the economy and our communities,” said Penner. “B.C.’s environmental assessment process ensures the environment remains protected during the entire life of the project – from the initial ground-breaking to the final site reclamation.”

Located four km west of Port McNeill, between Highway 19 and the Cluxewe River, the aggregate project has a 30-year lifespan and will produce four-to-six million tonnes of sand and gravel, which will be shipped to markets along the Pacific coast of North America. Construction is expected to begin this fall, with operations commencing in late 2006. Approximately 50 full-time jobs will be created, with a target of 50 per cent to be filled by Aboriginal people.

“Aggregate products such as sand, gravel and crushed stone provide the foundation for the booming construction industry on the west coast of the United States,” said Marco Romero, president of Orca Sand and Gravel Ltd. “We are very excited to be working with First Nations and British Columbians to meet the needs of this expanding market.”

Orca Sand and Gravel Ltd. is a partnership between Vancouver-based Polaris Minerals Corporation and the ‘Namgis First Nation. The company also has a business agreement with the Fort Rupert Kwakiutl Band. More information on the environmental certificate can be found at [www.eao.gov.bc.ca](http://www.eao.gov.bc.ca).

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