



AUG 08 2017

The Honourable Shannon Phillips, M.L.A.
Minister of Environment and Parks
Office of the Minister of Environment and Parks
208 Legislature Building
10800 - 97 Avenue
Edmonton AB T5K 2B6

Dear Minister Phillips:

I would like to invite representatives from Alberta Environment and Parks to participate in a technical working group that is being established by the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency for the environmental assessment of the Springbank Off-Stream Reservoir Project.

I decided that the federal environmental assessment for the Project should continue as an Agency-led environmental assessment and not be referred to a review panel. I am aware that the Project also requires an environmental assessment under Alberta's *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*. The federal government has a longstanding history of working with provincial government representatives in coordinating environmental assessments in Alberta.

In response to the concerns raised by Indigenous groups and the public regarding the potential effects of the Project and transparency of the environmental assessment process, the Agency will invite potentially affected Indigenous groups, including Tsuut'ina Nation, and the Rocky View County to participate with federal expert departments in a technical working group.

As members of the technical working group, Indigenous groups and the local county would be able to contribute their traditional and local knowledge, working directly with federal expert departments to review the information and address issues, review potential mitigation measures, and influence the design of monitoring and follow-up requirements.

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The federal government is committed to a renewed nation-to-nation relationship with Indigenous people based on recognition of rights, respect, co-operation and partnership. We recognize that consultation with Indigenous peoples is the honourable way for us to build relationships and work towards reconciliation. We understand that Indigenous peoples have unique knowledge about the local environment, traditional lands and resources.

I am aware of Premier Notley's commitment to renewing Alberta's relationship with Indigenous people based on trust and respectful engagement, and that she has stated that the Government of Alberta intends to transform its relationship with Indigenous groups so that First Nations, Metis and Inuit people have every opportunity to participate as equals in all aspects of Alberta society, while maintaining their cultures and unique identities.

I believe that the work of the technical working group would be greatly enhanced if experts from Alberta Environment and Parks were also members, contributing to the rigour and transparency of the environmental assessment.

If Alberta Environment and Parks wishes to participate in the technical working group, the Agency can provide additional information related to the timelines and next steps in drafting Terms of Reference for the working group.

Should officials in your office have any questions in this regard, please contact Kyle Harrietha, Director of Parliamentary Affairs with my office at 613-462-7036 or by email Kyle.Harrietha@canada.ca. I look forward to your response to this invitation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C McKenna', with a stylized flourish at the end.

The Honourable Catherine McKenna, P.C., M.P.