



File: 30050-25/WLNG-05

Reference: 308766

March 16, 2017

SENT VIA EMAIL

Tracey Saxby
Co-Founder
My Sea to Sky
PO Box 5271
Squamish, BC V8B 0C2
tracey@myseatosky.org

Dear Ms. Saxby:

Thank you for your March 11, 2017 letter addressed to Michael Shepard, Project Assessment Manager at the Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) regarding the Woodfibre LNG Project amendment process. Given the nature of the comments you make in your letter, I wanted to respond to you directly. Your incoming correspondence and this reply will be posted on the EAO's website.

At the outset, I want to express my disappointment that you and the other signatories to your letter have opted to boycott the public comment period on the Amendment Application and have not provided comments on Woodfibre LNG Limited's proposed amendment to its Environmental Assessment Certificate (EAC).

Public engagement is a key component of British Columbia's (BC) Environmental Assessment (EA) process, and provides an opportunity for citizens to not only participate in the process but also directly influence the outcome of EAs by providing input on the potential for adverse effects from a project. Regardless of the decision at the end of the process, public comments and concerns often influence the design of the project or the legally binding conditions attached to an EAC. In fact, Woodfibre LNG's proposal to shift its project design from seawater cooling to air cooling is as a result of previous input received from the public and Aboriginal groups.

I also take strong exception to your assertion that the BC EA process lacks integrity and any suggestion that the EAO's process was unduly influenced in any way.

The EAO is a neutrally administered office that is required by law to assess the potential significant environmental, economic, social, heritage and health adverse effects of proposed major projects in BC. Reviews are undertaken under my independent statutory authority as the EAO's Executive Director and conducted by nonpartisan public servants in the organization.

The EAO reviews and considers all relevant matters - including those raised by Aboriginal groups, communities and the public - absent of any undue influence. The EA for the Woodfibre LNG Project was no exception. The process and assessment of the project was that of the EAO alone. At the end of each EA, all relevant documents, including the Assessment Report, recommendations made to provincial Ministers, and the reasons for the Ministers' decision, are posted on the EAO's website at <https://projects.eao.gov.bc.ca/>.

As a federally substituted EA, a single process that met all federal and provincial requirements was conducted. The federal minister and provincial ministers made separate decisions on whether to approve the project based on the EA report prepared by the EAO. The Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency provided advice to the EAO throughout the EA in relation to fulfilling the requirements of the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012*.

While Ministers have absolute discretion as to whether to issue a project an EAC or not, the Ministers' decision in this case was consistent with the conclusion of the assessment report prepared by the EAO and the recommendation I made as the Executive Director to issue an EAC for the project. I note the federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change reached the same conclusion.

The process to consider the recent request by Woodfibre LNG Limited to amend their EAC follows the same principles of independent review and assessment outlined above with one exception: under the *Environment Assessment Act* the statutory authority to amend certificates rests with me, in my capacity as Executive Director of the EAO. It is also delegated to the Assistant Deputy Minister, EAO Operations.

As you know, that process is currently being conducted by the EAO. The 30-day public comment period on the Amendment Application closed on March 11, 2017. At the conclusion of the amendment process, however, I invite you to please visit the EAO website to review all of the relevant documentation, including the decision.

With best regards,



Kevin Jardine
Associate Deputy Minister

cc:

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau Prime Minister of Canada
The Honourable Catherine McKenna Minister of Environment and Climate Change
The Honourable Dominic LeBlanc Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard
The Honourable Marc Garneau Minister of Transport
The Honourable Christy Clark Premier of British Columbia
The Honourable Rich Coleman BC Minister of Natural Gas Development
The Honourable Mary Polak BC Minister of the Environment
Pamela Goldsmith-Jones MP for West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky
Jonathan Wilkinson MP for North Vancouver
Hedy Fry MP for Vancouver Centre
Joyce Murray MP for Vancouver—Quadra
Sheila Malcolmson MP for Nanaimo—Ladysmith
Kennedy Stewart MP for Burnaby South
Ken Hardie MP for Fleetwood—Port Kells
Elizabeth May MP for Saanich—Gulf Islands
Fin Donnelly MP for Port Moody—Coquitlam
Jordan Sturdy MLA for West Vancouver—Sea-to-Sky
Nicholas Simons MLA for Powell River—Sunshine Coast
David Eby MLA for Vancouver—Point Grey
Ralph Sultan MLA for West Vancouver—Capilano
Sam Sullivan MLA for Vancouver—False Creek
Spencer Chandra Herbert MLA for Vancouver—West End
Naomi Yamamoto MLA for North Vancouver—Lonsdale
George Heymans MLA for Vancouver—Fairview
Adrian Dix MLA for Vancouver—Kingsway