

Speaking Notes

for

Wes Shoemaker Deputy Minister of Environment

**Ministry of Environment Plenary Session
for the Provincial Spills Regime**

Executive Airport Plaza Hotel
7311 Westminster Highway
Richmond, B.C

Wednesday, April 20, 2016
9:00AM

INTRODUCTION OF DEBRA SPARROW

- Good morning everyone, first off, I would like to acknowledge we are on the traditional territory of the Coast Salish peoples
- I'll begin today by introducing Debra Sparrow from the Musqueam First Nation to welcome us to the proceedings today.
- Debra is an acclaimed weaver whose work has been prominently displayed at such locations as the Royal BC Museum and the Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture in Seattle.
- Her talent and commitment to traditional crafts as both an artist and an educator is inspirational, please join me in welcoming Debra Sparrow

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

- Thank you for that welcome Debra,
- I would also like to thank the staff from the Ministry of Environment for organizing this important session.
- And I would like to thank all of you, on behalf of the Honourable Mary Polak, Minister of Environment for coming here to share your thoughts over the next two days on where we go from here with our new provincial spills regime.
- We recently introduced legislation that will establish the basis for our world-leading spill preparedness and response regime to move ahead.
- Now is the right time to re-engage with our key partners and the public as we build a new path to best prepare and respond to spills.
- I know there are many different perspectives in this room on what may be needed in terms of regulations.
- But we can all agree it is in everyone's best interest to ensure B.C. is prepared to respond quickly and recover from the effects of a spill.

Latest Intentions Paper

- The foundation for building these regulations is outlined in the ministry's third spills intentions paper released earlier this month.
- This new paper sets out government's intentions for legislative, regulatory and policy changes across key components of the regime.
- Our goal is to collect feedback on specific considerations required to develop regulations and policies.
- This includes topics such as:
 - Spill reporting;
 - Response times;
 - Sampling and monitoring;
 - Spill contingency planning; and
 - Geographic and area response plans.

- As part of the engagement process, we will also be holding regional meetings with First Nations over the coming month.
- Technical working groups will also meet to discuss in more detail what is needed for the regulatory phase.
- A summary paper of this engagement period will be available this fall, prior to us finalizing the new regulations and policies required to implement the new regime.

CONCLUSION

- We have always maintained that we want economic growth in B.C. while balancing environmental protection.
- A world-leading spills regime is an example of this; and through this legislation, and the detailed regulations to come, we are working hard to ensure that we are protecting human health and the environment.
- Thank you again for taking the time to be here and for contributing your expertise as we continue to move closer to implementing this regime in British Columbia.