

SUMMARY: BC/AK Bilateral Working Group

Thursday, April 20, 2017 - 1:00 – 2:30 PM PST; 12:00 – 1:30 PM AKST

Teleconference: Dial-in: 1-877-353-9184 Participant ID: 2234568

PARTICIPANTS:

British Columbia:

- Deputy Minister of Environment Wes Shoemaker (Chair)
- Deputy Minister of Energy and Mines Elaine McKnight
- Assistant Deputy Minister Mark Zacharias, Environmental Protection Division, Ministry of Environment
- Anthony Danks, Executive Director, Strategic Policy, Ministry of Environment
- Lisa Paquin, Director, Intergovernmental and External Relations, Ministry of Environment
- Kathy Eichenberger, Executive Director, Columbia River Treaty Review Branch, Ministry of Energy and Mines
- Robyn Roome, Regional Director, Environmental Protection Division, Ministry of Environment
- Fraser Marshall, Executive Director, Corporate Initiatives Branch, Ministry of Energy and Mines
- Caitlin Copage, Sr. Policy Advisor, Strategic Policy, Ministry of Environment

Alaska:

- Commissioner Larry Hartig, Department of Environmental Conservation
- Deputy Commissioner Ed Fogels, Department of Natural Resources
- Deputy Commissioner Alice Edwards, Department of Environmental Conservation
- Deputy Commissioner Fred Parady, Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development
- David Rogers, Director, Department of Fish and Game
- Michelle Hale, Director, Department of Environmental Conservation
- Albert Kookesh, Special Staff Assistant, Office of the Governor
- Terri Lomax, Section Manager, Alaska Monitoring and Assessment Program, Department of Environmental Conservation
- Kyle Moselle, Large Mine Project Manager, Office of Project Management and Permitting, Department of Natural Resources

SUMMARY:

1. BC/AK – Intro and Updates
 - January 26, 2017 meeting summary approved
 - BC: Mining developments – Brucejack Mine now has a transmission line and progress toward production continues.
 - AK: Salmon State workshop, “Water Quality and Transboundary Rivers,” May 2 – 4, Juneau Alaska – organized and attended by NGOs in AK, BC and MT
 - **ACTION - BC:** Aquatic Ecological Risk Assessment (AERA) for Tulsequah Chief to be published after June, 2017; BC to share advance notice of publication.
 - **ACTION – BC:** Mount Polley Mine was granted a waste discharge permit for a location in Quesnel Lake after consultation with scientists, local communities, and First Nations. BC to share information on this permit with AK.
2. Review Materials: Technical Working Group on Monitoring (TWG-M)
 - Robyn Roome delivered a summary of the draft preliminary program description and two-year workplan drafted by the TWG-M
 - Discussion: Clarity that the scope of work does not include determination or analysis of impacts, but data collection and publication.
 - BWG agrees that the draft preliminary program description and two-year workplan is a robust foundation for further work by the TWG-M.
 - BWG agreed that implementation of monitoring elements described in the draft plan does not need to wait for approval of the final program description.
 - BWG agreed to approve the draft in principal to allow for consultation with First Nations and Tribes, as well as refinement of options and opportunities to seek funding partners.

- BC noted that final approval of the plan and any required provincial funding would need to wait for decision from the incoming government.
 - **ACTION:** TWG-M will bring back the program description and two-year workplan for final review and approval of the BWG at the next meeting (July – September, 2017.)
3. Review Materials: Reciprocal Procedures
- Kyle Moselle delivered a summary of the draft reciprocal procedures
 - Discussion: Clarity that the reciprocal procedures intend to capture EA, permitting, and other projects that may have impacts on transboundary waters.
 - Noted that the procedures are intended to be practical, pragmatic and efficient. Document is intended to be ‘living’ and amended as necessary to suit the needs of each jurisdiction – e.g., section 5 includes placeholders for BC’s participation in the AK permitting process.
 - BC noted that the procedures outlined do not restrict either jurisdiction from sharing additional information on particular projects of interest.
 - BWG agreed to approve the reciprocal procedures in principle, pending opportunities to engage with Tribes, noting that this is an interagency agreement only between BC and AK.
 - **ACTION:** BC and AK to review draft reciprocal procedures in context of other commercial project types, and AK to engage with Tribes; BWG will consider the draft at the next BWG meeting (July – September, 2017.)
4. Review Materials: Communications Plan
- Fraser Marshall delivered a summary of the draft communications plan
 - Minor edit noted – “on demand” to be revised to “as needed” on frequency of the newsletter and distribution of information.
 - First newsletter would be drafted and target release for June / July, 2017
 - BWG approves communications plan in principle, pending consultation with AK Tribes.
 - **ACTION:** BC and AK to begin drafting first newsletter; AK to consult with Tribes. Review at the next meeting of BWG (July – September, 2017.)
5. Next steps and next meeting of BWG
- Discussion: interregnum period and transition to incoming government in BC – business as usual continues during interregnum, but no new policy or major budgetary decisions are decided during the “caretaker period.” Incoming government will be in place in mid-June, 2017. BC confirmed there will be opportunities for transition of this work if necessary, and BC will remain chair of BWG.
 - AK: Request for discussion at next meeting of broader picture around mining and updates to processes and procedures (e.g., BC’s actions to respond to recommendations from the Auditor General’s report; financial securities, water quality monitoring processes, etc.)
 - **ACTION:** BC to share Mining Day News Release and additional fact sheets from the Ministry of Energy and Mines.
 - **ACTION:** BC to prepare a meeting summary and arrange the next quarterly BWG meeting for July – September; arrangements to be made following BC’s interregnum period.