



September 23, 2020

To All Parties Interested in Participating in the NRCB Review Springbank Off-Stream Reservoir Project – Application #1701

The Natural Resources Conservation Board (NRCB) review of Alberta Transportation's application to construct the Springbank Off-Stream Reservoir Project (SR1 Project) will include a public hearing. In advance of the public hearing, the NRCB will be convening a pre-hearing conference.

Both the pre-hearing conference and the hearing provides Indigenous groups, other interested parties, government authorities, and Alberta Transportation the opportunity to participate in the NRCB's review proceedings.

The NRCB anticipates that the pre-hearing conference will be scheduled for the latter half of November or early December of this year, and will issue a Notice of Pre-hearing Conference in the coming weeks. Once that notice is issued, the NRCB strongly encourages those who anticipate participating in the hearing to also register to participate in the pre-hearing conference. The notice will provide details on how to register.

What will the pre-hearing conference accomplish?

The Notice of Pre-hearing Conference will be published at least 30 days before the conference is held. The notice will identify various agenda items for the pre-hearing conference, such as:

- a) ***A discussion of the major issues to be examined at the hearing.*** To ensure it has adequate information to determine whether the SR1 Project is in the public interest, the NRCB Panel will determine the matters that would benefit from further examination at the hearing. (Note that the NRCB Panel may consider additional matters at the hearing, provided that they are within its jurisdiction and are specifically relevant to its mandate of determining whether the SR1 Project is in the public interest.)
- b) ***The appropriate scope and jurisdiction of the review.*** Under the *Natural Resources Conservation Board Act* the NRCB will make a determination whether the SR1 Project is in the public interest, having regard for the social and economic effects of the Project and the Project's effects on the environment.
- c) ***The location for a hearing, the hearing format, the appropriate timing of a hearing, and deadlines for filing hearing submissions.*** The NRCB anticipates that a hearing could take place as early as February 2021.
- d) ***A discussion of procedures to be followed at the hearing.*** The NRCB has adopted formal rules of practice (Rules of Practice of the Natural Resources Conservation Board Regulation) that establishes hearing procedures, and has developed explanatory guides and fact sheets (listed below).

- e) ***Applications for advance funding, including eligibility of individuals to apply for intervener funding.***
- f) ***Other matters.***

Recognizing the public health implications associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, the NRCB is currently considering appropriate options to ensure that the pre-hearing conference is both accessible to all participants and consistent with Alberta Health guidelines and restrictions. It is likely that the NRCB will conduct the pre-hearing conference virtually. These details will be announced once finalized.

How do I get further information on the NRCB process?

The review is a public process, and all submissions are accessible on the public record maintained by the NRCB [s. 24, Rules of Practice of the Natural Resources Conservation Board Regulation]. Parties may [sign up](#) to receive email notification of new documents and notices posted on the website. Some helpful links are listed below. In addition, parties are encouraged to contact Laura Friend or Bill Kennedy should you have further questions (contact info below).

Application Documents

- All submissions, including evidence and correspondence received by the NRCB, is available on the NRCB's website [Springbank project page](#).

Guides and Fact Sheets under the *Natural Resources Conservation Board Act*

Pre-hearing Conference Procedure

- [Pre Hearing Procedure - Fact Sheet](#)
- [Preparing for a Pre-hearing Conference - Fact Sheet](#)
- [The Board Review Process under the NRCBA – Process Guide](#) (see section 7 for pre-hearing conference information and Appendix 2 for a participant checklist)

Intervener Funding

- [Intervener Funding - Fact Sheet](#)
- [Intervener Funding - Process Guide](#)

Aboriginal Consultation and Participation

- [Aboriginal Consultation and Participation in Natural Resource Development Project Reviews - Fact Sheet](#)

Hearing Procedure

- [NRCB Public Hearings – Fact Sheet](#)
- [Participant Checklist - Fact Sheet](#)
- [Cross Examination Rules and Suggestions - Fact Sheet](#)
- [Hearing Procedure - Fact Sheet](#)
- [Intervener Considerations for the Hearing - Fact Sheet](#)

General

- [Natural Resources Conservation Board Profile - Fact Sheet](#)
- [The Board Review Process under the NRCBA – Process Guide](#)
- [NRCBA Board Review Process - Flowchart](#)

Acts and Regulations

- [Natural Resources Conservation Board Act](#)
- [Rules of Practice of the Natural Resources Conservation Board Regulation](#)

If you have any questions, please contact Laura Friend, Manager, Board Reviews at 403-297-8269 or by email at laura.friend@nrcb.ca.

Sincerely,



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