

From: [Springbank Community Association](#)
To: DHenn@rockyview.ca
Cc: john.barlow@parl.gc.ca; minister.municipalaffairs@gov.ab.ca; Miranda.Rosin@assembly.ab.ca; springbank-project@gov.ab.ca; [Springbank \(IAAC/AEIC\)](#); [Laura Friend](#); [REDACTED]; ASchule@rockyview.ca; [Richard Secord](#)
Subject: SR1 & Rocky View County: Letter #2
Date: Monday, December 14, 2020 12:14:33 PM
Attachments: [2020 Dec 14 Letter #2 to Reeve Re SR1.pdf](#)
[2020 Letter #1 to Reeve Re SR1.pdf](#)

Reeve Henn:

See attached letter dated December 14, 2020 from the Springbank Community Association Board of Directors regarding the consequential SR1 Project.

Also attached is our first letter from October 7, 2020.

The link to our submission to NRCB is here

https://www.nrcb.ca/download_document/2/83/10514/phc-14-20201120-sclg-by-ackroydllp-sub-to-nrcb

The pre-hearing report is available here

https://www.nrcb.ca/download_document/2/83/10638/20201210-nrcb-springbank-phc-decision-report

Respectfully,

--

Karin Hunter
President



<https://springbankcommunity.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/springbankcommunityassociation>



Karin Hunter
Springbank Community Association
244259 RR33
Calgary, Alberta
T3Z 2E8

October 4, 2020

Reeve Boehlke (delivered via email)
262075 Rocky View Point
Rocky View County, AB
T4A 0X2

Re: SR1

Reeve Boehlke:

The latest submissions by the Alberta Government in the SR1 file outline significant structural changes to SR1. In our estimation, the changes result from foundation risk that became apparent with additional geotechnical work. The outlet works have been completely redesigned - is RVC even following these developments to the Project? If SR1 fails, the consequences are unbearable. We therefore request clarification on RVC's role in the SR1 project from this point onwards.

The decision to withdraw opposition raises many questions about RVC fulfilling its mandate and responsibilities to protect the environment and health and safety of its citizens. Further, the withdrawal of RVC from the ongoing regulatory process sets an inexplicable and troubling precedent. By RVCs own account, SR1 has many adverse impacts and deficiencies. Now, Council has apparently stepped away from being an active participant in resolving these issues. This sets up a vacuum for impacts on the County that, by default, will be filled by other parties including the Federal and Provincial governments and special interest groups - or in other words, non-residents of RVC.

We are unclear how RVC's interests will be addressed in the regulatory process going forward and how the decision to withdraw objections was arrived at. Clearly, there were long-term negotiations occurring that RVC residents were not privy to.

Decision to Withdraw Objections:

1. Who arrived at a specific list of RVC infrastructure projects for GoA? It appears that sufficient RVC Councillors were appeased by intersections and road upgrades to ensure a majority vote.
2. How did Council address the precedent that this compensation for silence decision sets with other environmentally sensitive projects?
3. What role did Administration play in reaching this decision? Is there an administration report? If so, why has it not been released?
4. What are the conditions related to the GoA-RVC payments and infrastructure investments?
5. Why has the agreement with GoA not been released? We have several public statements by Councillor Kamachi regarding the compensation and yet, the County has not provided details.
6. Does RVC have legal exposure by accepting this arrangement in the future if/ when air or water quality outcomes are negative?
7. What if there are further cost overruns on the work that RVC is overseeing at Bragg Creek? Who pays for the overages?
8. Did Council review their own report on SR1 before voting?
9. Did Council read the recent 400-page submission or its Executive Summary from residents of west Rocky View that discussed concerns with the project?
10. Did Council contemplate what redress is required to mitigate water, air and environmental degradation in and around the SR1 footprint?
 - a. Did Council consider requesting that the City of Calgary run water to users of the Elbow River?

RVC Role in Regulatory Processes and Project Review:

1. Does the GoA agreement preclude RVC from commenting to the Federal Regulator (IAAC)?
2. Does the GoA agreement preclude RVC from commenting to the NRCB?
3. Can RVC participate in any capacity in the federal or provincial regulatory processes? If so, what restrictions apply?
4. Who represents RVC resident's interests going forward?
5. How will RVC support area residents and the Springbank Community Association on the SR1 project?

We request:

- To understand if and how the County will participate in the SR1 process going forward.
- Financial support from the County for experts in priority areas of interest, including Project risk.

We look forward to discussions on the aforementioned matters. Or, has the County fully abdicated its responsibility to represent residents on this matter?

Regards,



Karin Hunter, CFA

President, Springbank Community Association

CC: Al Hoggan, SCA Board, Kim McKylor, Mark Kamachi, Kevin Hansen



Karin Hunter
Springbank Community Association
244259 RR33
Calgary, Alberta
T3Z 2E8

December 14, 2020

Reeve Henn (delivered via email)
262075 Rocky View Point
Rocky View County, AB
T4A 0X2

Re: Rocky View County and SR1

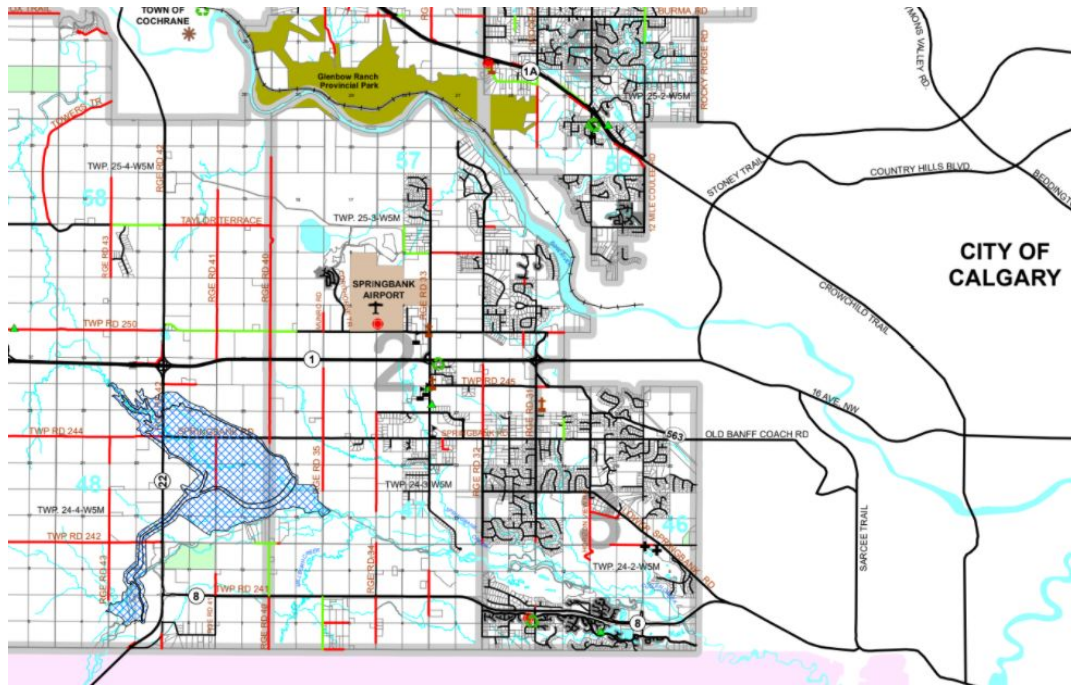
Reeve Henn:

On October 7, 2020, the Springbank Community Association sent a letter to former Reeve Boehlke regarding a request for clarification of Rocky View County's position on SR1 (as attached for your reference). The following day, October 8, 2020 Reeve Boehlke called Springbank Community Association President, Karin Hunter to discuss the letter. Reeve Boehlke noted that Councillors McKylor and Kamachi were also on the call. On the October 8 call, Reeve Boehlke stated his intention and commitment to a formal response to the October 7 letter. When asked by Karin Hunter if Rocky View County had tasked staff with monitoring SR1 developments, Reeve Boehlke was uncertain. Over two months have passed without a response to the October 7, 2020 letter and October 8, 2020 call. Given the magnitude and seriousness of the SR1 project, this is concerning. While we realize that the transition of the Reeve role may be a factor in the delay, we felt it necessary to again formally solicit a response to the October 7, 2020 letter and remind Rocky View County that area residents deserve and expect the County's full attention on this matter. Is it possible that Rocky View County Councillors do not understand the scope and consequence of the project?

SR1 Size:

There are approximately 60,000 acres in West Rocky View from Calgary's western boundary to west of Highway 22 and Highway 8 area where SR1 begins. With a direct project footprint of 4,000 acres (and 7,000 total impacted acres) SR1 will account for ~7-10% of this land. For perspective, see the following map, provided by Rocky View County in 2017. As you can see, SR1 has a massive - and highly unusual - footprint. It's direct footprint is larger than Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park in northwest Rocky View County.

Figure 1: SR1 Direct Project Footprint (approx 4,000 acres).



Consequence:

To illustrate the seriousness of SR1, the following inundation maps show the terrible damage inflicted on Rocky View County residents if SR1 experiences a failure. We remind Rocky View County that Alberta Transportation stated that this project is the first of its kind in the world (September 24, 2020 Information Session). In fact, due to the unique nature and operations of SR1, the Canadian Dam Association does not have guidelines that apply to SR1¹, as highlighted below:

These were developed for conventional water or tailings retention structures that have a permanent reservoir (with operational fluctuations as required), which develops steady-state conditions over time after first filling. As discussed in Section 8.4.1, the CDA guidelines does not cover all of the operating conditions of the SR1 Dam System.

The following images are sourced from the Alberta Transportation submission titled Breach Analysis and Inundation Mapping²:

¹ Sections 8.2.3 and 8.4.1
<https://www.nrcb.ca/natural-resource-projects/natural-resource-projects-listing/83/springbank-off-stream-reservoir-project/documents/9078/20171114-at-eia-r-to-nrcb-re-draft-preliminary-design-report-dated-20170331>

²
https://www.nrcb.ca/download_document/2/83/9070/20171114-at-eia-r-to-nrcb-re-breach-analysis-and-inundation-mapping-dated-20170308

Figure 2: Failure of Embankment: Location Between Highway 22 and RR35

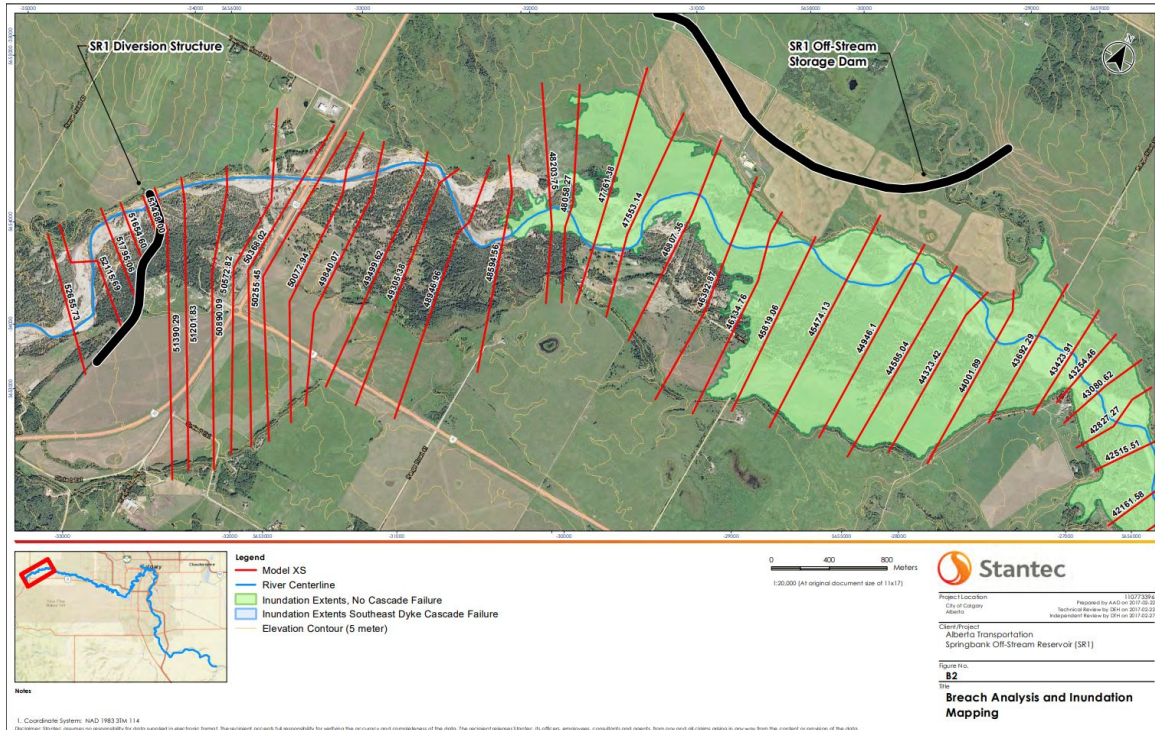


Figure 3: Failure of Embankment: Location Between Highway 22 and RR35 - Zoomed In to RR40

Note the lack of emergency access for RR40 residents (including Entheos Retreat centre). What is not illustrated in this image is the landslide caused by failure of the embankment, as seen in other dam failures.

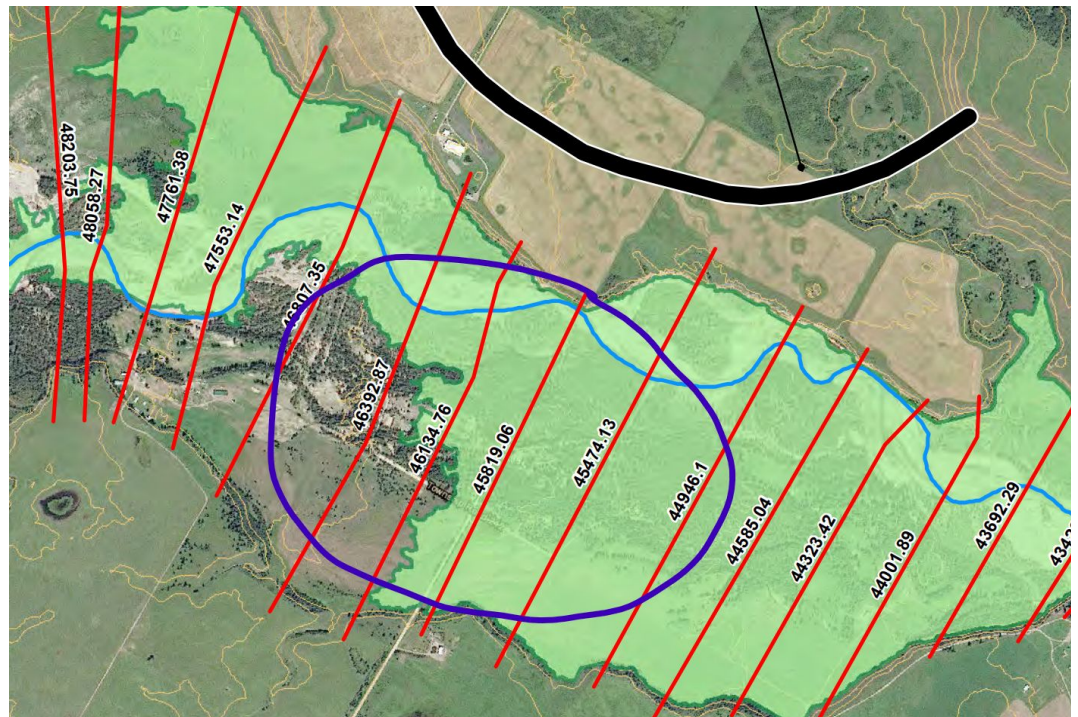


Figure 4: Failure of Embankment: Location Between 101st and RR35 on Highway 8

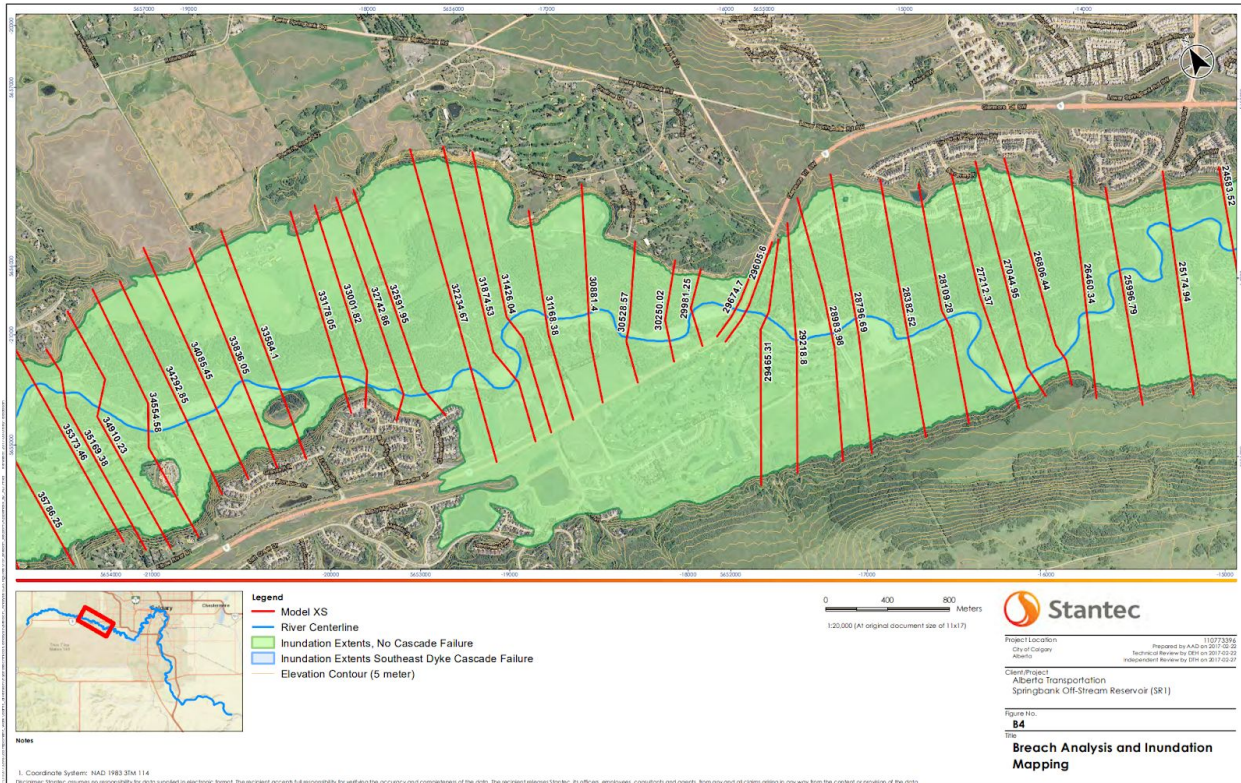
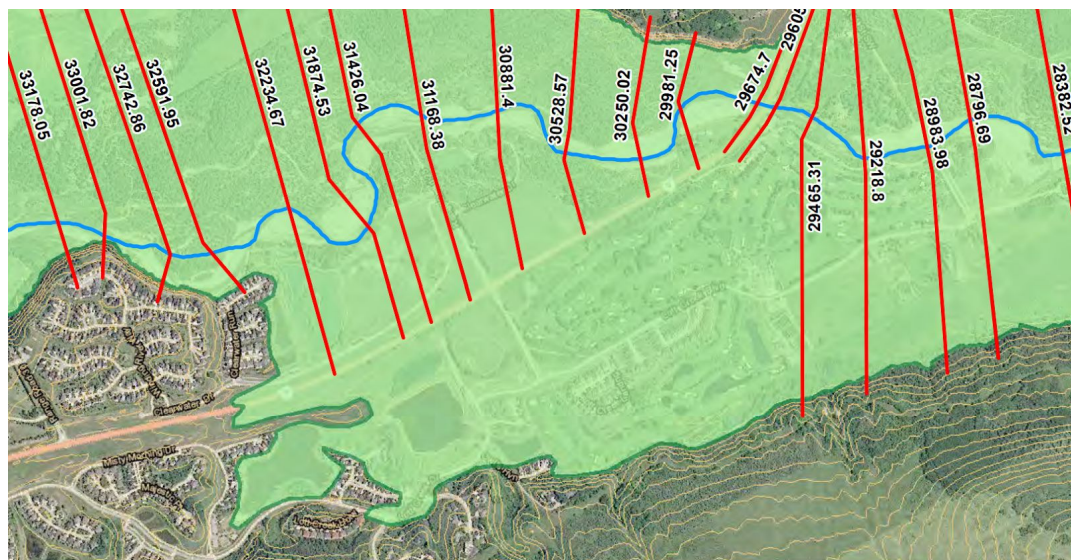


Figure 5: Failure of Embankment: Location Between 101st and RR35 on Highway 8 - Zoomed in on Elbow Valley East Entrance

Note the inundation of both Highway 8 and the eastern Elbow Valley entrance, along with inundation of Elbow Springs Golf Course and adjacent homes. To the west of this image, the Glencoe Golf Course would be under water.



As you can appreciate in your capacity as elected officials that represent these residents and taxpayers, and the residents of the greater Springbank area, this is no trivial matter and a response to the October 7, 2020 letter is requested.

Regrettably, in return for a promise of intersections and cash, Rocky View County withdrew opposition to the SR1 project. *At the risk of stating the obvious, this does not mean Rocky View County should be indifferent or agnostic to any or all of the negative outcomes of SR1. On the contrary, in our view, Rocky View County continues to have an obligation and responsibility to residents to evaluate the project, identify shortcomings and areas for improvement and to work to minimize the negative outcomes, should it proceed.* Both Rocky View County staff and external experts should be tasked with this responsibility. We remind Council that 100% of the negative outcomes of this project fall directly on Springbank and Bragg Creek residents. It is notable that Alberta Transportation Minister Ric McIver specifically acknowledged that there was “no benefit for Springbank” at the September 24, 2020 Information Session hosted by Alberta Transportation. Meanwhile, project benefits accrue to the City of Calgary. Has Rocky View County secured a legal opinion on its decision to forego participation in regulatory processes? If so, we request Council release the opinion received to residents. Ultimately, we ask Council to consider whether Rocky View County has adequately fulfilled its fiduciary responsibilities to taxpayers and residents.

Pursuant to the Municipal Government Act, as provided below in Figure 6, municipalities are responsible for (a.1) to foster the well-being of the environment, (b) to provide services, facilities, or other things that....are necessary or desirable for all or a part of municipality, and (c) to develop and maintain safe and viable communities.

Figure 6: Excerpt from MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT ACT, Current as of September 1, 2020 (pages 39, 40)

**Part 1
Purposes, Powers and Capacity
of Municipalities**

Municipal purposes

3 The purposes of a municipality are

- (a) to provide good government,
- (a.1) to foster the well-being of the environment,
- (b) to provide services, facilities or other things that, in the opinion of council, are necessary or desirable for all or a part of the municipality,

- (c) to develop and maintain safe and viable communities, and
- (d) to work collaboratively with neighbouring municipalities to plan, deliver and fund intermunicipal services.

RSA 2000 cM-26 s3;2016 c24 s6;2017 c13 s1(3)

(a.1): Clearly, SR1 deteriorates the natural environment, directly and indirectly. It permanently impairs thousands of acres of native grasslands and wetlands in a key wildlife biodiversity zone. It will also result in reduced air quality post-flood. We also expect weed propagation post-flood that may have adverse impacts on landowners in the broader community, including those that cultivate crops. Furthermore, hydrologists are concerned that SR1 will result in contamination of aquifers. Rocky View County should have direct involvement in these matters with a view to finding solutions, should the project proceed. As Rocky View County can attest to, the political pressure to build SR1 quickly is immense. Without active and constructive participation in the process by Rocky View County, local impacts caused by SR1 may not be appropriately evaluated and mitigated.

(b) Where is consideration for what is “necessary or desirable” for Springbank and Bragg Creek residents? The benefits of SR1 accrue to Calgary, a neighboring municipality. Meanwhile, there is nothing desirable about SR1 for Springbank or Bragg Creek residents. Does a roundabout in Bragg Creek, as promised by Alberta Transportation in the agreement, address concerns about a failure of the Bragg Creek bridge in a flood? Rocky View County should consider what is “necessary or desirable” as it pertains directly to the project. Who is looking out for Rocky View County residents? The City of Calgary? Calgary River Community Action Group? The NRCB is considering “public interest”, but they do not have the specific local knowledge regarding traffic patterns and land-use, for instance, that only Rocky View County can bring to the table. *Our community needs Rocky View County to be engaged to arrive at the best possible outcome should the project proceed.*

(c) Fundamentally, SR1 makes our community less safe and less viable.

- Safety: Is this not a critical test for whether Rocky View County should participate in the regulatory process? A large flood, such as the one in 2013, did cause damage in Rocky View County, but nowhere near the damage that would be caused by a failure of the SR1 embankment as outlined in the inundation maps contained herein. Critically, a large flood at or above the 2013-level is expected to cause groundwater and overland flooding in Bragg Creek despite the new berms. What happens when residents can’t cross the bridge linking west Bragg Creek to the Townsite because of a flood? Please note, that an upstream alternative would have reduced impacts of flooding in Bragg Creek. Is this not important to Rocky View County? Do new intersections in Langdon and Balzac justify looking away from this important fact?

Highway 8 residents are also made less safe by a lack of consideration for emergency planning that would provide secondary exits during large flood and/or failure events.

- Viability: SR1 will cause Springbank to have a massive tract of land sterilized in perpetuity on a valuable tourism corridor. Along with the negative elements of weed propagation and dust (and potentially water issues), one must ask whether the long-term viability of the Springbank community is impaired. Additionally, Bragg Creek residents remain exposed to large floods, which could inhibit growth of the hamlet over time and will cause an ongoing impairment to its viability relative to an upstream alternative.

It is imperative to point out the following:

- The NRCB Hearing process on SR1 is underway. The Pre-Hearing to determine status and issues was December 2, 2020.
- Rocky View County is conspicuous in its absence at the Hearing process, while the City of Calgary requested intervener status to fully represent and advocate for its residents.
- In the void left by Rocky View County's absence, area residents - volunteers - have taken up the responsibility to represent area concerns.
- Alberta Transportation was openly skeptical of Rocky View County resident submissions and funding requests, while endorsing the submissions of City residents and groups (attached to this email is the SR1 Concerned Landowner Group (SCLG) submission to regulators). The SCLG requested independent expert reviews on a number of critical issues that directly affect residents in Rocky View County.
- Alberta Transportation continues to dismiss local concerns. We, as volunteers, have - and continue - to spend an inordinate amount of time advocating for our communities. We are no doubt at a disadvantage, more so with the apparent absolute withdrawal of Rocky View County.
- Unfortunately, by withdrawing opposition, an important local perspective - one that could have resulted in improved outcomes if the project moves forward - is lost. *The regulatory process would have been improved by Rocky View County's participation. Alberta Transportation's willingness to compensate opposition groups - and those groups willingness to accept these terms - for their silence is damaging to the entire process and its outcome.*
- On December 10, 2020, SCLG was awarded intervener status, along with pro-SR1 Calgary groups.

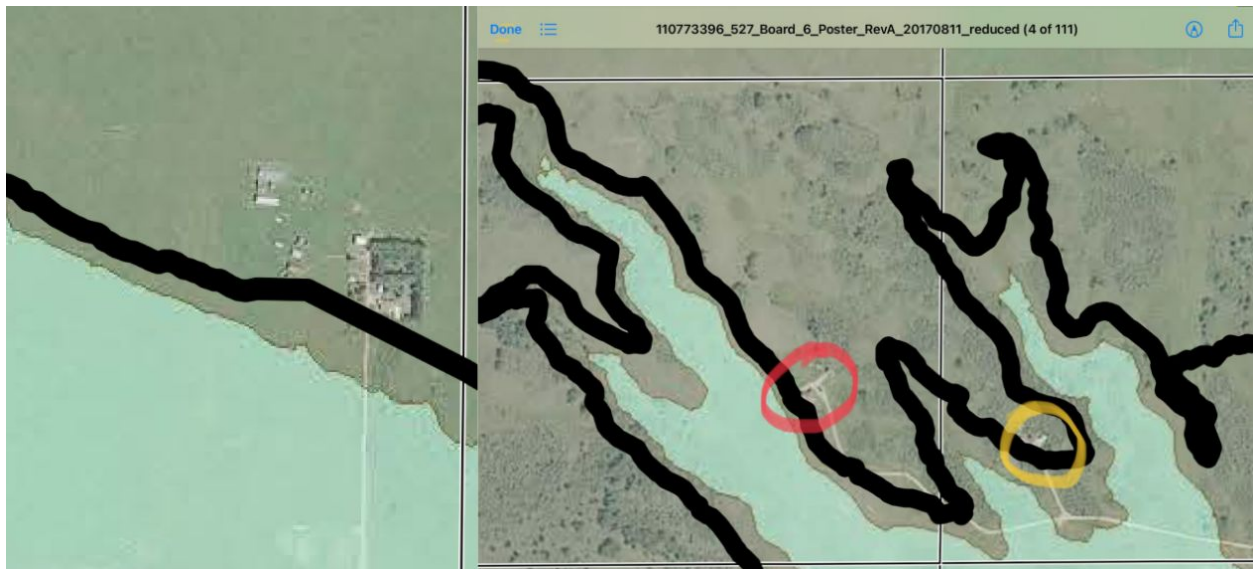
If SR1 is approved and Rocky View County has not completed appropriate and independent due diligence and demanded commensurate mitigations or improvements, it will be an abject failure of Rocky View County's duty to residents and taxpayers. We identify that Rocky View County, in fulfilling its responsibilities to constituents, should execute the following action items for SR1. These items are additive to the items as outlined in our October 7, 2020 letter to Rocky View County.

1. Investigate and report resident insurance impacts: Should SR1 proceed, will area residents experience changes to their insurance rates? SR1 will cause homes to be in an emergency planning area.
2. Determine emergency planning & transportation requirements:
 - a. Determine emergency planning and egress: Should SR1 proceed, residents in flood-vulnerable areas need improved emergency access. The time is now to plan for these scenarios. It is not okay to wait for this, as investment in capabilities and infrastructure may be required as a condition of SR1 approval. Rocky View County could be left with substantial financial costs during a failure.
 - i. Determine full scale of SR1 consequences. What failures could be experienced and what is their impact in Rocky View County? As of now, there are no inundation maps for failures at the floodplain berm and diversion inlet so we do not know where the water could go.
 - ii. Determine emergency access routes. Does Elbow Valley need additional entrances? How will Bragg Creek residents exit the community if another flood occurs and impacts the main bridge? What if the diversion inlet fails and water inundated Highway 22?
 - iii. Assess emergency planning requirements. Is Rocky View County equipped to execute a mass response to a failure disaster? A failure of SR1 will immediately impact - potentially with little or no notice - a large number of residents. A failure will require a coordinated response - personnel, equipment and processes. Does Rocky View County have the technical response capabilities? Where are responders coming from? What resources will be engaged? Will Calgary coordinate the response or will it be the County? Do additional funds need to be secured for SR1 emergency response capabilities?
 - iv. Determine road upgrades: Should SR1 proceed, the detour route of Township Rd 250/Highway 22 is an unacceptable risk for residents. Has the County conducted a safety assessment of this detour? Traffic studies? Is there a better detour route or can upgrades to these roads occur that will minimize risk (lights at Highway 22, roundabout, turning lane)? Should the County advocate for a relocated Springbank Road, as originally contemplated by Alberta Transportation? Are there any other road plans Rocky View County should review associated with SR1?
3. Determine whether SR1 will cause increased insect activity at the SR1 site: Mosquitoes and mosquito-borne illness are concerns for area residents. Insect activity has not been contemplated by Alberta Transportation and is excluded from the EIA despite concerns of stranded water post-flood.
4. Identify opportunities to minimize risk to landowners from proposed future land-use plans which include hunting with firearms: The County should identify acceptable setbacks, landscaping, fencing, pathways, etc. required to adequately protect and separate residents from Crown Land hunting areas. To review the land-use proposal, see

https://www.nrcb.ca/download_document/2/83/10412/20201022-at-sir-to-agency-re-ir-response-package-4-round-2-question-4-05-response. Figure 6 below illustrates the project footprint and its proximity to area homes. As you can see, this is comical. Clearly, Alberta Transportation used elevations to design the project footprint and did not appear to consider homes and access to homes during flood events.

5. Assign full-time expert resources (technical, financial, operational, etc.) to review SR1 developments, submissions, reports and identify potential mitigations or project improvements should the project proceed. The Springbank Community Association requests coordination with these resources to ensure the best possible outcomes for Rocky View County residents in the event the project is approved.

Figure 6: Examples of Springbank homes adjacent to project footprint



Although SR1 is not a development, perhaps the development framework would provide a useful precedent for Rocky View County’s engagement. Currently, Rocky View County has a defined process for reviewing proposed developments. If a developer proposed a new development of 4000-7000 acres in Rocky View County, wouldn’t Rocky View County review the proposal, identify deficiencies and apply conditions of approval? Standards should be applied to new developments and should be applied in this instance as well. Relying on Alberta Transportation and regulators will not sufficiently address local issues in the level of detail required to minimize harm and identify potential community benefit. *Alberta Transportation’s role is to get the project approved for the least cost. This is at odds with Rocky View County’s role, which should be to make sure the project meets or exceeds standards within Rocky View County with a view to creating and maintaining safe and viable communities.* Items such as transportation studies, setbacks, lighting, servicing plans for water and wastewater, pathway connectivity, and more sit squarely within Rocky View County’s purview.



In closing, SR1 is a project of tremendous and lasting consequence. The Springbank Community Association requests a written response to our letter dated October 7, 2020 and the items identified herein. We do not know if it is too late for Rocky View County to participate in the NRCB Hearing process. However, it is not too late to participate in the ongoing federal regulatory process nor is it too late to make constructive recommendations with the goal of achieving the best possible outcomes for residents of adversely affected communities within Rocky View County. There is no doubt that SR1 makes Rocky View County communities less safe and less viable. We ask that Rocky View County seriously reconsider its responsibilities in this matter.

Karin Hunter, BComm, CFA
President, Springbank Community Association
on behalf of Springbank Community Association Board of Directors

CC: MP John Barlow (john.barlow@parl.gc.ca), Minister of Municipal Affairs, Tracy Allard (minister.municipalaffairs@gov.ab.ca), Miranda Rosin, MLA (miranda.rosin@assembly.ab.ca), Rocky View County CAO Al Hoggan, Rocky View County Councillors, Alberta Transportation Springbank Project (springbank-project@gov.ab.ca), IAAC (iaac.springbank.aeic@canada.ca), NRCB (laura.friend@nrcb.ca)