



Canadian Environmental
Assessment Agency

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Agence canadienne
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Re: Springbank Off-Stream Reservoir Project – Minister's Decision on Referral to Panel

Dear: Ms. Wagner, Ms. Drewry, Ms. Robinson, Mr. J. Robinson, Mr. R. Robinson, and Mr. Copithorne

As you are aware, the Federal Court directed the Minister of Environment and Climate Change to personally decide whether the Springbank Off-Stream Reservoir Project should be referred to a review panel. I am writing to inform you of the Minister's determination that the Project will not be referred to a review panel and that the federal environmental assessment of the Project will continue to be conducted by the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency.

The Minister made this decision because the Project has a low potential for significant adverse environmental effects in areas of federal jurisdiction, as defined in section 5 of the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012*, concerns raised to date have not been in relation to significant adverse environmental effects that the Project may cause in areas of federal jurisdiction, and an Agency-led assessment provides the flexibility to coordinate with provincial assessment processes and to involve those potentially affected by the Project in the conduct of the assessment. For your information RockyView County will be invited to participate in the technical working group conducting the assessment.

I encourage you to continue to participate in the federal environmental assessment. The proponent is now preparing the Environmental Impact Statement in accordance with federal Environmental Impact Statement Guidelines issued August 10, 2016.

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Once the Environmental Impact Statement is submitted to the Agency and is determined to conform to the Environmental Impact Statement Guidelines, the public and Indigenous groups will be invited to submit comments on the summary of the proponent's Environmental Impact Statement. Taking into account public, Indigenous, and government comments received, the Agency may require the proponent to provide additional information. The Agency's questions and the proponent's responses will be available on the public registry.

Once the Agency is satisfied with the proponent's information, the Agency will prepare a draft Environmental Assessment Report. In this report, the Agency will present findings and recommendations regarding the Project's potential environmental effects, the proposed mitigation measures, the significance of any residual adverse environmental effect and the proposed follow-up program.

The Agency will also prepare potential environmental assessment conditions for consideration by the Minister of Environment and Climate Change. These conditions would become legally binding on the proponent if the Minister ultimately decides that the Project may proceed.

A public comment period on the draft Environmental Assessment Report and the potential conditions will be announced at a later date.

Information regarding the federal environmental assessment process or the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012* is available on the Agency's website at www.canada.ca/ceaa. Documents associated with the federal environmental assessment of the Project are available on the Agency's online public registry, accessible via the Agency's website, under Reference number 80123.

Further questions can be directed to Ms. Shauna Sigurdson, Regional Director of the Agency's Prairie and Northern Region at 780-495-2236 or by email at shauna.sigurdson@ceaa-acee.gc.ca.

Sincerely,



Heather Smith
Vice President, Operations
Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency

cc: Robert Drummond, Department of Justice
Bill Kennedy, General Counsel, Natural Resources Conservation Board
Rick Blackwood, Assistant Deputy Minister, Alberta Environment and Parks
Susan Tiede, Prairie and Northern Region,
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