



COMMUNIQUE TO BC FIRST NATIONS

RE: BC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT REFORM

TO:	BC First Nations Chiefs and Leaders	DATE:	June 18, 2018
FROM:	Regional Chief Terry Teegee	PAGES:	1

As many of you know the BC First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) have engaged with the Province under the Commitment Document beginning in 2015 with the Environmental Assessment (EA) reform as one of the three initial priority areas for legislative and policy reform.

In December 2017, the FNLC met with BC Minister of Environment, George Heyman on moving forward with EA reform. The Minister has made assurances that he has the full mandate in these discussions. Pursuant to that mandate the First Nations Energy and Mining Council (FNEMC) has providing support to the FNLC and First Nations in BC by organizing and hosting information workshops throughout BC regarding First Nations perspectives on reforming and revitalizing the provincial and federal environmental assessment processes. It has also provided the opportunity for First Nations to highlight their own laws, policies and processes that provide their consent for major projects in their territories.

Today, the government of BC released a Discussion Paper regarding the revitalization of the BC EA process. An independent EA Advisory Committee has also released their report, which provides further information for First Nations, the public and industry regarding how EA needs to be reformed to address various factors including the implementation of First Nations policies and laws related to consent and decision-making.

FNEMC will continue to provide strategic technical support to the FNLC and information for First Nations to consider. The BCAFN and FNLC will continue to provide advocacy support to First Nations in BC, and work collaboratively with the Crown to ensure that EA processes, federally and provincially, uphold First Nations rights, treaty rights, title and decision-making authorities. The BCAFN, FNLC and FNEMC continue to emphasize that this process does not replace direct consultation and engagement with proper Title and Rights holders and we strongly encourage all First Nations to review and comment on the materials released by the provincial government. We have an opportunity to change EAs to benefit all.

For more information visit the follow websites:

Link to BC Government Public Engagement – EA Revitalization:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/natural-resource-stewardship/environmental-assessments/environmental-assessment-revitalization/public-engagement>

Link to EA Revitalization Discussion Paper:

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/environment/natural-resource-stewardship/environmental-assessments/environmental-assessment-revitalization/documents/ea_revitalization_discussion_paper_final.pdf

Link to BC First Nations Energy and Mining Council:

<http://fnemc.ca/>

