

**Postal Address:**

205 Beaver Rd, Suite 1  
Smithers, BC  
V0J 2N1

**Location Address:**

3873 1<sup>st</sup> Ave  
Smithers, BC  
V0J 2N1

**Telephone:** (250) 847-3630**Facsimile:** (250) 847-5381

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November 30, 2007

To: Graeme McLaren  
Environmental Assessment Office  
Project Assessment Director

**RE: Office of the Wet'suwet'en Response to PTP EA Application**

Hadih Graeme,

The date the following concerns have been expressed in regards to the Pacific Trails Pipeline Environmental Assessment Application.

The Wet'suwet'en have major concerns in regards to the proposed pipeline corridor on Wet'suwet'en territory. Many of the concerns and issues that were brought forward by the Wet'suwet'en have been insufficiently addressed by the proponent and the EA office at this point in time.

The potential impacts on numerous resources will seriously affect Wet'suwet'en culture, health and wellbeing of our territory. These impacts have simply been labeled as insignificant in the project application.

Considering the scale and potential impacts of the project on Wet'suwet'en culture, the funding that was and is provided by the government and the project proponent, for a thorough review of PTP'S Environmental Assessment Application, is insufficient to nil. A detailed assessment of the project's impacts and how these will affect, aboriginal rights, title and interests, is consequently almost impossible.

The Wet'suwet'en have provided PTP with our Wet'suwet'en Use Study, however the Wet'suwet'en have had no involvement in the Socio-Economic portion of the EA Application, this has resulted in inaccurate information in the Application.

There seems to be a resistance to consider serious mitigation measures because of the excessive costs it would require. Considering appropriate mitigation expenses to avoid serious negative impacts to the Wet'suwet'en interests, costs for stabilizing and engineering the existing Telkwa Pass corridor may outweigh the establishment of a new corridor.

The project will cross the most important salmon spawning and rearing area of the Wet'suwet'en. About 10 000 to 30 000 Chinook spawn in the upper end of Morice River, 8000 to 80 000 Sockeye spawn in the Nanika River and rear in Morice Lake and over 70 000 Coho Salmon and Steelhead Trout spawn in the upper Morice Watershed. The Gosnell and its tributaries is of particular importance to the latter species.

Based on its unequaled importance to the salmon stocks, the Morice Lake watershed was designated a special water management zone during a recently signed Morice LRMP. Water quality in this special management zone cannot be altered from its reference state. This particular measure was established to safeguard country foods, in particular fish, against any contamination or loss of habitat to ensure fish stocks will remain healthy.

Water sampling and analysis is confined to current sources for domestic and agricultural purposes. Such methodology is not acceptable since Wet'suwet'en people utilize all surface waters throughout their territories. Wet'suwet'en consider contamination of their food and water sources a serious infringement on their aboriginal rights.

The Wet'suwet'en repeatedly stated to the proponent and the government that they do not want development in this particular zone unless there is absolutely zero impact on the resources present.

The pipeline proposal already admits in its application that such impacts will occur and this fact is not acceptable to the Wet'suwet'en.

The corridor will also promote the distribution and spread of noxious weeds. The Wet'suwet'en are absolutely opposed to the application of pesticides on their traditional territories. A compensation plan for loss of culturally important plant, wildlife and fish species as well as negative impacts on traditional activities needs to be included.

The Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) is fully aware of the high fisheries values in this area and also of its utmost importance to the Wet'suwet'en. To date, DFO has not yet consulted with the Wet'suwet'en, despite the fact that it is the fiduciary duty of that federal department.

In regards to fish-bearing streams affected by the project proposal there is no seasonal window that will not have negative impacts on fish or one of their development stages. Construction impacts of non-fish bearing streams will certainly affect the downstream receiving environment.

Up to this point the proponent also has not included any testing of country foods and water regarding any background contamination levels. Without this data in a pre- project environment the Wet'suwet'en, as well as other impacted First Nations will not be able to trace any potential future contamination caused by the project.

Terrain stability in the Western portion of Wet'suwet'en territory has always been an issue, as numerous slides and mass movements evidence, local experts in the fields of Hydrology and Geomorphology confirm the potential risk of a newly established corridor.

Since surface stability depends on many factors and is highly variable on a small, local scale, the Wet'suwet'en feel that the currently proposed geological drilling program is largely insufficient to safeguard against failure.

The area Northwest of Morice Lake has seen only minor disturbances through logging activities in recent years and provided a wildlife reserve replenishing surrounding hunted areas. Opening a new corridor will jeopardize that ability and also create access from two municipalities to the area. This is not in the interest of the Wet'suwet'en and will severely impact on our aboriginal rights.

Thank you for your time to review this letter.  
Working together for the betterment of all.

Missiyh,

David de Wit  
Natural Resources Manager,  
Office of the Wet'suwet'en