



RESPONSE TO PETITION

Prepare in English and French marking 'Original Text' or 'Translation'

PETITION No.: **421-00316**

BY: **MR. STEWART (BURNABY SOUTH)**

DATE: **MAY 30, 2016**

PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY: **THE HONOURABLE JIM CARR, P.C., M.P.**

Response by the Minister of Natural Resources

SIGNATURE

Minister or Parliamentary Secretary

SUBJECT

Protection of the environment

ORIGINAL TEXT

REPLY

The Government of Canada would like to thank the petitioners for their submission on the proposed Trans Mountain Expansion project.

The Government understands the importance of our natural resources to our economy and to the livelihoods of Canadians. Our resources must be developed in a sustainable manner that protects our rich natural environment, respects the rights of Indigenous peoples, and supports a more resilient natural resources sector.

On June 20, 2016, the Government of Canada announced the launch of a governmental review of environmental and regulatory processes. This comprehensive review will explore the various ways in which the National Energy Board (NEB) can be modernized, as well as examining the *Fisheries Act*, the *Navigation Protection Act*, and the state of environmental assessment processes.

While this work is underway, the Government will make decisions on projects in line with the interim approach and principles announced in January 2016. These principles are:

1. No project proponent will be asked to return to the starting line – project reviews will continue within the current legislative framework and in accordance with treaty provisions, under the auspices of relevant responsible authorities and Northern regulatory boards;
2. Decisions will be based on science, traditional knowledge of Indigenous peoples and other relevant evidence;
3. The views of the public and affected communities will be sought and considered;
4. Indigenous peoples will be meaningfully consulted, and where appropriate, impacts on their rights and interests will be accommodated; and
5. Direct and upstream greenhouse gas emissions linked to the projects under review will be assessed.

In keeping with this interim approach, the Minister of Natural Resources announced in May the appointment of the Trans Mountain Expansion Project Ministerial Panel. Between June and September 30, 2016, members of the panel are engaging with the public, Indigenous peoples, and affected communities to seek views they may have on the project that were not part of the NEB review or the government's assessment of upstream greenhouse gas emissions. This engagement is being conducted through in-person roundtable discussions and town-hall meetings, and online at <https://www.nrcan.gc.ca/questionnaire/18721>. The panel's role is not to make a recommendation as to whether the project should proceed.

The panel has held 44 meetings in Calgary, Edmonton, Jasper, Burnaby, Kamloops, Chilliwack, Abbotsford, Langeley, Vancouver, North Vancouver, and Victoria. Over 2400 Canadians have attended these public meetings, and more than 650 have made presentations to the panel. Additionally, in order to provide the best possible advice, the panel will be reviewing the input from the public via the website. As of September 12, over 19,000 submissions have been received via an online questionnaire. The panel's work will complement but not be a substitute for Crown consultations, which are ongoing. Indigenous groups are encouraged to participate in both processes. A report on the findings from this engagement will be submitted to me no later than November 1, 2016 and will be made public.

When the Government of Canada makes its final decision on the Trans Mountain Expansion project by December 19, 2016, it will consider a wide range of information and advice. Along with the NEB recommendation report on the project released on May 19, 2016, the Government's decision will also be informed by public input gathered through the ministerial panel, consultations with Indigenous peoples, and an assessment of upstream greenhouse gas emissions. All of this information will be taken into consideration to make an informed decision that reflects the interests of Canadians.