



## **ESAA Members and Alberta's Environment Industry**

### **Re: ESAA Board Meets with Alberta' Energy Minister**

On October 20<sup>th</sup>, five members of the ESAA Board of Directors (Stacy Thygesen, Rob Traynor, Darrell Haight, Karen Schmidt and Darren Cherniak) along with ESAA Executive Director, Joe Chowanec met with the Honourable Sonya Savage – Minister of Energy.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss ESAA's members role in a successful Site Rehabilitation Program, provide the Minister with feedback from ESAA members, express a concern with the SRP and provide a solution.

ESAA emphasized the importance of accelerating the advancement of Complete Site Closures, shifting the focus past downhole abandonments will allow the Program to respond to stakeholder demands, improve public opinions and allow the province to quickly complete a high volume of environmentally-significant work ensuring the goals of the SRP are met.

ESAA highlighted our recommendation of focusing some funding to address the 71K previously abandoned wells in Alberta which require further surface decommissioning, remediation and reclamation that could immediately get our sector back to work and dramatically reduce the number of partially abandoned sites. Minister Savage was receptive to the industry concerns and acknowledged the importance of complete site closures (reclamation certificates) to ensure the success of the program.

Following the meeting, ESAA provide the Minister with our written recommendations and additional information that provided a breakdown of the types of services ESAA members deliver, the timeframe surrounding each phase of remediation and reclamation work and the number of people employed on a typical well site cleanup.

ESAA continues to work tirelessly to represent the interest of our members and environment industry with respect to the SRP and will continue to do so in a positive and productive manner.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'STACY THYGESEN'.

Stacy Thygesen  
ESAA President  
Principal, JSK Consulting

## ***Water Bug Surfaces as Potential Spill Solution***

***This article is part of a creative sentence that the Provincial Court of Alberta imposed as a result of an Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act infraction.***

Our company was penalized \$30,000 for improperly disposing of waste. The sentencing made the local news, projecting a very bad image of the company. As owners, we took it hard. This incident goes against our personal standards of integrity and environmental care.

We accept full responsibility for this incident. In fact, we were first to alert the authorities that a large amount of water had been released into our local municipality's storm water infrastructure. We admitted guilt after the subsequent investigation found that the water contained traces of toxic electro plating waste.

The waste escaped when a fitting broke on a water pipe. As a result, the waste tanks were flooded, and the combination of the water and waste overflowed.

We knew we needed to have secondary containment for our electro plating waste. We thought the system we designed had so much secondary containment that even if something happened, the worst result would be that our secondary containment would fill. The training we gave our people was based on that assumption.

But we were wrong. We did not account for the fact that an external source of liquid could combine with our waste and overwhelm our secondary containment.

We prided ourselves on trying to be an industry leader, and we have always tried to make better systems to avoid spills and releases. Following this incident, we developed a new technique to avoid spills.

Our technique is a fresh idea using old technology. Our company believes that protecting the environment is important. We want to try to help other companies avoid situations like ours.

We have now placed sensors, commonly called water bugs, in all critical locations of the building. The water bug sits within the secondary containment, below the top lip of that container.

The water bug is a 24-volt moisture sensor that, when dry, allows 24-volt power to pass through it via a solenoid to two Belimo stainless steel ball valves. The default state of the ball valves is to be closed, preventing water flow. A constant application of power is required to keep them open. If the power is taken off, the valves spring closed and shut all the water to the building off. The second valve is installed as a redundant safety valve if the first one fails.

“Solenoid” is the generic term for a coil of wire used as an electromagnet. In this application, the device creates a magnetic field from electric current and uses the magnetic field to create linear motion, i.e. it acts as a switch.

If there is no water on the sensors, the power passes through the sensors and keep the solenoids open. If any of the sensors detect water on the floor, the power to the solenoids is interrupted and the valves shut off the water supply to the building. This prevents any drainage water on the floor from entering the storm or sanitary drains. The water will not come back on until the water bug sensor is dry, which means the danger has been rectified.

Ideally, the sensor would be located near the bottom of the secondary containment to reduce the likelihood of over-topping. This is especially important if there is a lag time between the moment when the water supply is switched off and the time when the water stops flowing into the secondary containment.

The water bug will also activate a siren, drawing attention to the situation. The siren should notify both those within the building and, in case the building is unoccupied, someone on-call off the premises.

Water bugs and solenoids are not new technology. However, using them together to protect the environment is an idea that our company believes is worth sharing with other companies in the surface finishing industry. Their use may help other companies avoid some of the heartache that our company had to endure.

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### ***Members reappointed to Environmental Appeals Board***

Alberta's government is reappointing five members to the Environmental Appeals Board.

The independent board provides Albertans, conservation groups and industry the opportunity to appeal decisions made by Environment and Parks under the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act* and other legislation.

“The board works to advance the protection, enhancement and wise use of our environment by providing fair, impartial, cost-effective and efficient resolution of all matters before it. These five reappointed members have the experience and skills needed to continue ensuring the board acts in the best interest of the public and the province.”

*Jason Nixon, Minister of Environment and Parks*

All five members were reappointed for a one-year term.

The Environmental Appeals Board was created more than 25 years ago and hears appeals relating to environmental approvals, water licences, enforcement orders, reclamation and remediation certificates, administrative penalties and environmental protection orders.

**Anjum Mullick** holds a master of science in environmental engineering from the University of Alberta, and a bachelor of applied science in civil engineering from the University of Waterloo. An environmental engineer with a focus on contaminated site assessment and remediation in the oil and gas industry, she currently works as the director of Engineering Services with the City of Edmonton. Her previous experience includes developing and managing oilsands, mine reclamation and closure projects with a focus on tailing pond reclamation, and developing environmental policies and guidelines.

**Meg Barker** holds a bachelor of science (honours) in geology from the University of Manitoba, and qualified mediator certification through the ADR Institute of Canada. She is a regulatory compliance professional, a qualified mediator, and a professional geologist with extensive experience in energy regulation, resource development, environmental stewardship and land use planning. She has worked for more than 25 years with independent quasi-judicial regulatory boards, administrative tribunals and government agencies in energy and resource industries across Western Canada.

**Brenda Ballachey** holds a bachelor of science and a master of science in animal sciences from Colorado State University, and a doctor of philosophy in animal breeding from Oregon State University. Over the past two decades, her work has focused on the acute and chronic effects of the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill on sea otters and nearshore communities. She retired from the U.S. Geological Survey in 2015 but retains emeritus status and continues her involvement in several ongoing research projects in Alaska.

**Line Lacasse** holds a civil law degree from the University of Montreal, and a common law degree from McGill University. She has practised law for more than 25 years, working in private practice with a focus on Indigenous and environmental matters, and as legal counsel in the energy and utilities industry, including at the Alberta Energy and Utilities Board (predecessor to the Alberta Utilities Commission) and Trans Canada. She was first appointed to the board in 2018.

**Nick Tywoniuk** holds a bachelor of science in civil engineering from the University of Alberta, a master of science in civil engineering (hydrology/hydraulics) from the University of Saskatchewan, and a doctor of philosophy in civil engineering (water resources) from the University of Ottawa. With extensive experience in dispute and resolution, he has worked with Environment Canada and Public Works and Government Services Canada. A chartered arbitrator and mediator, he participates in conflict resolution programs at the Alberta Civil Courts, Service Alberta business licence appeals, and Alberta Municipal Affairs. He is also a public adjudicator for the Law Society of Alberta's discipline hearings. He was first appointed to the board in 2010.

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## ***Alberta Laying the groundwork for geothermal development***

New legislation will clarify rules for geothermal energy development, building on Alberta's strong track record of responsible resource development and helping to diversify the province's economy.

If passed, Bill 36, the *Geothermal Resource Development Act* will:

- Outline rules and processes for industry.
- Establish the legislative authority for land use and liability management.
- Protect landowners and mineral rights owners.

Alberta is uniquely positioned to attract investment in this emerging industry because of its geothermal resources, leadership in drilling technology and extensive oil and gas expertise. However, development has been limited as, without a specific regulatory framework, geothermal project applications have been assessed on a case-by-case basis, which is inefficient for both industry and government.

"Encouraging the development of low-emitting geothermal energy will play an important role in Alberta's economic recovery by attracting investment and creating jobs in this emerging sector. Through this legislation, we are establishing a clear path forward for geothermal projects, while ensuring the resource is developed responsibly and in the best interests of Albertans, including landowners." - *Sonya Savage, Minister of Energy*

"The Alberta government continues to foster innovation through smart policy, recognizing the future of geothermal energy. FutEra Power, a subsidiary of Razor Energy, will build Canada's first co-produced geothermal power plant in Swan Hills. We intend to be a leader in energy transition including the utilization of legacy assets to harvest natural resources, such as geothermal heat from existing oil and gas production. With our world-class regulatory and policy frameworks, accompanied with Alberta's legendary enterprising citizens, transformative projects like this will flourish. This

evolving geothermal policy will build confidence for those seeking to invest in the cleaner and greener future of Alberta.” - *Lisa Mueller, president, FutEra Power (a subsidiary of Razor Energy)*

“Utilization of Alberta’s vast geothermal energy to create a new industry for Alberta is something whose time has come. As Alberta’s first conventional deep geothermal project, Alberta No. 1 is utilizing as much existing expertise and as many companies as possible, retraining and retooling them for deployment in the geothermal sector. Having clear regulatory guidelines to follow will help move the industry forward more rapidly. They are a welcome addition to the existing positive geological and business setting Alberta has to offer for a nascent geothermal industry.” - *Catherine Hickson, CEO, Alberta No. 1, and vice-president, Geothermal Canada*

Modelled after the *Oil and Gas Conservation Act*, this legislation would provide the Alberta Energy Regulator (AER) with the authority to regulate the safe, efficient and responsible development of Alberta’s geothermal resources. The legislation clarifies industry requirements, establishes the AER’s oversight authority, and establishes government’s ability to receive revenues, such as royalties and fees, for geothermal development.

To help inform the next steps of implementing this policy and regulatory framework, the government is planning to hold discussions with key groups in the near future.

### **Quick facts**

- Geothermal energy is the natural heat that originates from the Earth. It can be used for heating and cooling or to generate clean electricity.
- Alberta has a number of advantages to develop geothermal energy, including:
  - a natural geological advantage
  - the opportunity to repurpose inactive oil and gas wells, well sites and infrastructure
  - leadership in drilling technology
  - extensive oil and gas expertise, as well as a well-established service sector
- This legislation establishes the framework to regulate geothermal development below the base of groundwater protection, which is the depth groundwater transitions from non-saline to saline. Alberta Environment and Parks will continue to regulate shallow geothermal development, which occurs above the base of groundwater protection.
- Bill 36 creates the *Geothermal Resource Development Act*, and amends several existing acts, including:
  - *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*
  - *Mines and Minerals Act*
  - *Oil and Gas Conservation Act*
  - *Pipeline Act*
  - *Responsible Energy Development Act*

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## ***AER: Invitation for Feedback on AER Review of Industry Levy Methodology***

As announced in [Bulletin 2019-31](#), we are undertaking a detailed review of the methodology used to calculate our industry levy. We are currently 100 per cent funded by industry and are authorized to collect funds through administrative fees levied on energy development projects and activities.

We have worked with key industry associations during a first round of engagement on the levy methodology and are now seeking input from all stakeholders through a survey.

We have developed a PowerPoint [presentation](#) that provides an overview of the current methodology, guiding principles for the review, and areas for potential changes. We recommend viewing the presentation before completing [the survey](#).

The survey and presentation are available on the bottom of this bulletin's webpage. Feedback will be accepted until **November 16, 2020**.

Personal information provided with comments will be collected, used, and disclosed in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. We may use the personal contact information you provide for follow-up communication related to your feedback.

For any questions, contact [AdminLevyReview@ aer.ca](mailto:AdminLevyReview@ aer.ca).

## Methodology Links

- AER Administration Fees – [Methodology Review](#)
- AER Administration Fees – [Methodology Survey](#)

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## AER: Guilty plea lands Tamarack an \$80 000 penalty

October 26, 2020... Tamarack Acquisition Corp. has been ordered to pay an \$80 000 penalty after pleading guilty in provincial court to one charge under the [Water Act](#).

Tamarack received a temporary diversion licence from the AER to withdraw groundwater for well drilling operations near Veteran, Alberta, between January 2017 and April 2018.

As water was being withdrawn from the ground, Tamarack did not record how much water it was withdrawing. Instead, the company recorded this information after the fact, breaking a condition of the licence.

The Veteran area is home to many diverse wetlands, as well as birds and other wildlife. When making decisions on energy development, the AER ensures these wetlands are protected.

The penalty includes a fine of \$2000; the remaining \$78 000 will be directed to creative sentencing projects that educate landowners and other non-industry stakeholders on [requirements](#) companies must follow when using water for energy development.

The penalty follows charges that the AER [laid](#) against Tamarack earlier this year.

For more information, check out the agreed statement of facts and court order on our [Compliance Dashboard](#).

The AER ensures the safe, efficient, orderly, and environmentally responsible development of hydrocarbon resources over their entire life cycle. This includes allocating and conserving water resources, managing public lands, and protecting the environment while providing economic benefits for all Albertans.

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## CCLM User Experience Survey

You may already know that five collaborating organizations, including InnoTech Alberta, Ducks Unlimited Canada, ECCC – National Boreal Caribou Knowledge Consortium, NRCan-Canadian Forest Service, NAIT-Center for Boreal Research) joined forces to develop the Canadian Conservation and Land Management Knowledge Portal (CCLM) – (<https://www.cclmportal.ca/>)

Launched in April 2020, the website was designed to provide an accessible and centralized place to share conservation and land management (reclamation and restoration) resources from across Canada and is now home to nearly 1000 resources.

This fall, we will be entering our second phase of site development, with the aim of further enhancing and refining the many features and functionalities available on the CCLM Knowledge Portal. Therefore, we are reaching out to our site users to collect their feedback on how the site is working for them and to assess areas for improvement or future growth. We would like to invite you and any of your colleagues who have had the opportunity to explore the CCLM Knowledge Portal to complete our CCLM User Experience Survey - <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TJMQP5X>

This survey will only take a few minutes of your time and will play a crucial role in guiding our next phase of development. Your participation is greatly appreciated and you can access the survey here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TJMQP5X>

The survey will be open until November 9, 2020.

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### ***Husky Energy pipeline shut in after 900,000 litres of produced water leaks in northern Alberta***

(Source: Global News) Husky Energy says 900,000 litres of produced water spilled from one of its pipelines in northwestern Alberta.

Produced water is a byproduct of oil and gas extraction and sometimes contains residual petroleum and chemicals.

The Alberta Energy Regulator said cleanup efforts are underway after the pipeline leaked into a low-lying wetland, about 15 kilometres southeast of Rainbow Lake.

In 2019, the regulator told Global News that “the impact of produced water is extremely variable depending on the concentration of oil and whether the substance is ‘sweet’ or ‘sour.’”

In an emailed statement to Global News on Tuesday, Husky Energy said the produced water release was discovered in the Rainbow Lake area during a daily inspection on Monday morning.

“Some of the water entered nearby muskeg,” a company spokesperson said. “The pipeline was immediately shut in and the Alberta Energy Regulator was notified.

Story continues below advertisement

“Cleanup efforts are underway, including the use of pumps and vacuum trucks.”

**READ MORE:** [Cenovus Energy shares plummet on news of its \\$3.8B deal to buy Husky Energy](#)

Husky said there have been “no observed impacts to wildlife and fencing is in place to keep wildlife from the area.”

“Husky’s first priority is the safety of its people, and the protection of the environment in the communities we operate in,” the spokesperson added. “We are undertaking a thorough investigation of this incident.”

On Wednesday, the AER told Global News it continues to review the cause of the leak and the circumstances surrounding the incident.

“If we determine that Husky is not in compliance with our requirements, we have a number of compliance and enforcement tools to bring them back into compliance,” the AER said.

A spill of 500,000 litres was initially reported to the Alberta Energy Regulator, but company spokesperson Dawn Delaney said the amount was increased after an initial investigation.

The energy regulator said environmental contractors are at the site.

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### ***A Quebec mining company is fined \$350,000 for a violation of the Fisheries Act***

Canadians value a safe and clean environment. Environment and Climate Change Canada’s enforcement officers strive to ensure that businesses and individuals comply with environmental laws and regulations administered by Environment and Climate Change Canada, which protect Canada’s natural environment.

On October 19, 2020, Breakwater Resources Limited, which operates the Langlois Mine, pleaded guilty in the Val d’Or courthouse to one count of violating the Fisheries Act. The company was fined \$350,000, which will be directed to the Government of Canada’s Environmental Damages Fund.

On February 28, 2018, a 500-litre spill of flocculent from the Langlois mining site in Lebel sur Quévillon resulted in a discharge of acutely lethal effluent into the Wedding River. The discharge of acutely lethal effluent into water frequented by fish is a violation of subsection 36(3) of the Fisheries Act.

As a result of this conviction, the company's name will be added to the Environmental Offenders Registry.

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## ***The governments of Canada and Alberta have reached an agreement for the conservation and recovery of woodland caribou in Alberta.***

Alberta's caribou populations have dramatically declined due to habitat changes and increased predation. The governments believe entering into a conservation agreement under section 11 of the federal Species at Risk Act demonstrates meaningful progress that will benefit caribou in Alberta and its survival in the wild.

"I am pleased to announce that the governments of Canada and Alberta have signed a conservation agreement under the Species at Risk Act that commits to taking actions required to support woodland caribou recovery in Alberta. The Government of Alberta along with Indigenous Peoples, industry stakeholders, and many others have taken steps to support caribou recovery, and I believe this agreement will help fulfill obligations to future generations of Canadians. The Government of Canada recognizes that at this time, this collaborative approach—as opposed to an order under the Species at Risk Act—represents the best path forward for the conservation and recovery of boreal and southern mountain caribou in Alberta." – The Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Government of Canada

Together, Canada and Alberta are acting on a shared commitment to address caribou conservation and recovery. The agreement supports Alberta's ongoing caribou recovery program and sets out clear caribou conservation, management, and recovery actions with timelines for achieving naturally self-sustaining caribou populations and habitat recovery.

"This agreement with the federal government is consistent with Alberta's commitment to end decades of uncertainty around caribou recovery and land use. Our negotiated section 11 agreement puts Alberta's needs first, instead of having an order imposed on us under the Species at Risk Act. Alberta's government will continue to work with our many partners on developing common-sense solutions to protect caribou populations, maintain jobs and grow local economies. Albertans want to ensure that their communities have input on caribou recovery solutions that work. That is why I established three Caribou task forces made up of people who have a stake in these important caribou ranges. The agreement also builds on the momentum that Alberta's government created last year through its Caribou Sub-regional Task Forces and establishes timelines for the work of the task forces, including consideration of social, economic and environmental values when advising on sub-regional plans." - – Jason Nixon, Minister of Environment and Parks, Government of Alberta

The agreement acknowledges Alberta's ongoing work to recover caribou and their habitat and includes:

- Moving ahead with land-use planning that enables a working landscape and supports achievement of caribou recovery goals.
- Mechanisms for approving oil and gas and forestry projects that align with caribou recovery outcomes.
- Considering socio-economic implications of conservation and recovery measures needed.
- Restoring critical caribou habitat by planting trees in historical seismic lines.
- Managing wildlife population to support caribou recovery.
- Monitoring caribou population, habitat status, and recovery trends.

The governments of Canada and Alberta also commit to sharing information and engaging with Indigenous Peoples on progress related to the implementation of measures in the agreement and opportunities for collaboration.

The agreement builds on the momentum that Alberta's government created last year through its [caribou sub-regional task forces](#), establishing timelines and milestones for their work, including consideration of social, economic, and environmental values when providing advice to government on sub-regional plans.

Engagement with affected Albertans is key to achieving caribou recovery in Alberta while addressing the needs of communities. A diverse group of Albertans, including the forestry and energy industries, Indigenous communities, municipalities, local business, and environmental and conservation organizations, provided feedback on the agreement. This feedback helped develop the conservation and recovery measures that will be implemented.

The governments of Canada and Alberta have committed to providing funding to support implementing this agreement. This agreement will be key to managing caribou recovery while maintaining jobs, building local economies, and supporting strong communities—particularly as Alberta recovers from the economic effects of COVID-19.

### **Quick facts**

- There are two types of woodland caribou in Alberta: southern mountain caribou and boreal caribou. Both are listed as threatened under Alberta's Wildlife Act and the federal Species at Risk Act.
- There are currently 12 boreal and three southern mountain caribou populations in the province.
- Alberta measures the population growth of all remaining caribou populations on provincial lands.
- Section 11 of the federal Species at Risk Act allows the federal government to enter into a conservation agreement with another government, an organization, or a person to benefit a species at risk or enhance its survival in the wild.
  - Such agreements must provide for the taking of conservation measures such as monitoring the status of the species; developing and implementing education and public awareness programs; developing and implementing recovery strategies, action plans, and management plans; protecting the species' habitat; and undertaking research projects in support of recovery efforts for the species.

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### ***Two companies in Quebec fined a total of \$75,000 for breaching the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999***

Canadians value a safe and clean environment. The enforcement officers at Environment and Climate Change Canada work tirelessly to ensure that people and businesses comply with Canadian environmental laws.

On October 5, 2020, two companies in Quebec—150 Montréal-Toronto Inc. and Recydem Enviro Inc.—were fined a total of \$75,000 after each pleaded guilty to a charge of breaching the *PCB Regulations* made under the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999*. The total amount of the fines will be directed to the Environmental Damages Fund of the Government of Canada.

150 Montréal-Toronto Inc. commissioned Recydem Enviro Inc. to manage their equipment containing polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). During an inspection on February 20, 2015, enforcement officers from Environment and Climate Change Canada discovered that equipment containing PCBs was being used and stored on the premises.

150 Montréal-Toronto Inc. was fined \$50,000 after pleading guilty to the non-compliant storage of PCBs between February 20, 2015, and January 30, 2018, in breach of paragraph 19(1)(b) of the *PCB Regulations*.

Recydem Enviro Inc. was fined \$25,000 after pleading guilty to failing to send the PCBs for destruction to an authorized

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### ***Hearing begins for contentious coal mining project in Alberta***

(Source: Cochrane Times) In a project that provides a window into the future of Canada's vast natural resources, a joint federal-provincial panel on Tuesday kicked off a review of an Australian company's proposal to reopen a part of southwestern Alberta to coal mining after a nearly four-decade absence.

Benga Mining Ltd., a Calgary-based subsidiary of Australia's Riversdale Resources Ltd., which is itself owned by Perth-based Hancock Company, is looking for approval to build an open-pit steelmaking coal mine near Crowsnest Pass, about a three-hour drive southwest of Calgary.

Although Riversdale is only proposing one mine, known as the Grassy Mountain Coal Project, other companies are also hoping to build mines in the area and approval or rejection of the project could be a bellwether for the fate of other developments.

Already, intense divisions have sprung up as local town residents, who see mining as a boon for the local economy, support it while ranchers, environmentalists and others say it would threaten water supplies and wildlife, including the native westlope cutthroat trout, which is considered at risk. Meanwhile, Riversdale has struck agreements with local Indigenous communities, some of which support it and others of that are merely neutral.

More narrowly, the project also opens a discussion on steelmaking coal, which is used as its name suggests, to make steel, and not as controversial as thermal coal, which is used to generate power and is under increasing pressure from investors and climate-change activists.

“The ability to produce high quality steelmaking coal from countries ... such as Canada is of vital importance,” Gary Houston, Riversdale’s vice president of external affairs, said in his opening remarks at the hearing on Tuesday, adding that strong markets in India, China and elsewhere ensure there will be demand.

He pointed out that Canada is “strategically positioned from a freight point of view to access Asian markets,” a reference to the existing railways in the area that would allow the company to ship its coal to ports, and avoid the massive infrastructure investments, or pipeline debates, that have held up other energy projects in Alberta.

The ability to produce high quality steelmaking coal from countries ... such as Canada is of vital importance

Gary Houston, Riversdale’s vice president of external affairs

The joint three-member review panel, which includes members of the Alberta Energy Regulator and the federal Impact Assessment Agency of Canada, is collecting testimony from various stakeholders in a process expected to last into November, and is being streamed live online.

Riversdale has been doing preliminary development work on the Grassy Mountain Coal Project since 2013. Located half on crown and provincial land, and half on private lands, it would create a 1,500-hectare open pit mine that would require mountaintop removal.

About 25 per cent of the project land was already mined, but abandoned in the 1960s, according to the company. The \$800-million project would produce 4.5 million tonnes of steelmaking coal per year for 23 years.

Houston, of Riversdale, testified the company aims to start construction in the second half of 2021, so it can begin producing and shipping coal by 2023. The project would provide about 500 jobs during its two-year construction phase, and about 400 jobs once the mine is operational.

The company also estimates that the mine, over its 23-year life, would produce \$35 million in municipal taxes, plus \$1.7 billion in royalties and taxes to other levels of government.

But that’s assuming steelmaking coal prices hold steady.

Teck Resources, which produces steelmaking coal in British Columbia’s Elk Valley, just on the other side of the mountains, has faced consistent problems with its steelmaking coal operations.

This week, it [reported a 35 per cent decline](#) in the average realized price for steelmaking coal from the same three month period last year — from \$206 per tonne to \$135 per tonne.

But it has also faced environmental problems and the company has said that in 2018, Canadian federal prosecutors informed it that it may face charges under the Fisheries Act for the discharge of selenium and calcite into nearby watersheds.

Now, people are flagging concerns about those same environmental issues on Riversdale’s project.

Ian Urquhart, conservation director of Alberta Wilderness Association, said his group is concerned about not only water pollution issues, but also water usage issues, and a potential drop in the local groundwater table that is much larger than Riversdale has predicted.

“Our biggest concern is on the water side,” Urquhart said. “I think when it comes to the (environmental) assessment that (Riversdale) has done, it’s a picture where I think they’ve understated the impacts on the environmental side of the ledger, and then they have exaggerated or overestimated the positives on the economic side of the ledger.”

Riversdale has said it has letters of support from local First Nations and Metis communities, but at the hearing Tuesday, Bill Snow, a consultation manager for Stoney Nakoda First Nation, gave a more nuanced view.

Snow said his community had struck an agreement to support the project, with conditions — including that Indigenous citizens could act as monitors of socioeconomic and environmental impacts of the project. Also, the support is premised on approval by the joint review panel, he said.

Snow said his community has “remained neutral, but will accept the joint panel’s review decision if they find the project can be built safely in accordance with” environmental standards.

Currently hearings are scheduled until Nov. 30 and it is estimated that it could take several months before a final decision is released.



### ***ECO Canada Environment Industry HR Pulse Survey Results***

Results of the ECO Canada Environment Industry HR Pulse Survey are available:

- Part 1 <https://www.eco.ca/blog/hr-insights-employers-aprilresults/>
- Part 2 <https://www.eco.ca/blog/hr-pulse-survey-results/>
- Part 3 <https://www.eco.ca/blog/hr-insights-series-shifting-business-and-workforce-priorities-amid-a-global-pandemic-part-3/>

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## **ESAA MEMBER NEWS**

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### **AGAT Labs Launch the AGAT Labs Foundation**

Friday October 2 marked the official launch of AGAT Labs Foundation, an evolution of AGAT Laboratories’ corporate giving program and an ambitious endeavour to increase its philanthropic impact within local communities in Alberta and across Canada.

The event was attended by Hon. Sonya Savage, Alberta Minister of Energy, Hon. Jason Copping, Alberta Minister of Labour and Immigration, Calgary-Klein MLA Jeremy Nixon, and a host of special guests including:

- Jim Stanford, former CEO of Petro-Canada.

- Clayton and Linda Woitas, Woitas Family Trust.
- Tim McKay, President of CNRL.
- Meghan Meger, President of BMO Private Banking.
- Pam Heard, Executive Director of Prostate Cancer Centre.



After an overview of AGAT's history and heritage, MLA Jeremy Nixon presented CEO Marissa Reckmann and Executive Chairman John DeSanti with a certificate from Alberta Premier Jason Kenney acknowledging the company's 41 years in business as a national leader in laboratory services with proud Albertan roots.

The event included an outline of the Foundation's involvement in opioid awareness and cancer care initiatives, along with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and a one-million-dollar donation on behalf of the DeSanti Family Trust and the Woitas Family Trust to the Prostate Cancer Centre (PCC) in support of mental health programs.

Fostering mental wellbeing is a matter of fundamental importance, especially in the midst of a virulent pandemic. This major contribution helps set the stage for continued community support programs that will be championed by AGAT Labs Foundation across Canada.

InnoTech Alberta's Soil Sterilants Program is seeking bromacil or tebuthiuron impacted soil that has been historically treated with activated charcoal. The soil would be used in experiments to assess the long-term effects of activated carbon on the immobilization of soil sterilants. If you are able to provide soil or site access to support these experiments, please contact:

- Simone Levy ([simone.levy@innotechalberta.ca](mailto:simone.levy@innotechalberta.ca))
- Sarah Thacker ([sarah.thacker@innotechalberta.ca](mailto:sarah.thacker@innotechalberta.ca))

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### CLRA Webinar: Indian Resource Council of Canada

November 3, 2020

12:00 pm - 1:00 pm MST

**Speaker:** Steve Saddleback - Director of the National Energy Business Centre of Excellence (NEBCE) at the Indian Resource Council of Canada (IRC).

**Registration Deadline:**

November 2, 2020

**Fees:**

CLRA Members: Free Non-Members: \$20

\*All registration fees will be donated to Western Sky Land Trust. The current amount raised through past webinar registrations is \$440.00.

[REGISTER](#)

IRC was founded in 1987 by Chiefs representing the oil and gas producing First Nations, following the recommendation of a task force that was established to study the role of the Crown in the management of First Nations oil and natural gas resources. An expanded and restructured Indian Oil and Gas Canada (IOGC) was established at the same time.

The work and activities of the IRC are guided by the mandates that were approved and adopted at previous AGM's in 1993 and 1995. These mandates, which are currently being revamped, are as follows:

- To support First Nations in their efforts to attain greater management and control of their oil and natural gas resources;
- To complement initiatives by individual First Nations to gain economic self-reliance and to ensure the preservation of the Crown Trust obligations under Treaties with First Nations;
- To coordinate the promotion of initiatives with Federal and provincial governments, with industry and with other groups associated with oil, natural gas and related activities to enhance economic benefits realized by the First Nations from resource development;
- To encourage a greater development and utilization of First Nations human resources in oil, natural gas and related activities;
- To transform IOGC into a First Nations institution, working in partnership with the IOGC co-management Board. To this end work towards the establishment of an oil and gas business centre, and a First Nations oil and gas institution in the long term.

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**SMART REMEDIATION  
INTRODUCES 2021 VIRTUAL SEMINARS  
CALL FOR ABSTRACTS**



Due to the COVID 19 Pandemic and expected travel restrictions we have decided to hold SMART as a Virtual Seminar Series in 2021. We are looking at ways to have Live Networking and Remote Speakers so attendees can interact in real time. More on the virtual experience to follow.

SMART talks have focused on innovative technologies for contaminated sites, approaches for characterization, case studies, regulatory and industry perspectives, and more. We invite you to share your experience with our environmental community. Topics of interest could include (but not limited to):

- Treatment Systems / Methods (Physical / Biological / Chemical / Thermal)
- Advances with in-situ and ex-situ remediation
- On-site excess soil treatment and management
- Risk Assessments and Remediation
- Sub-slab depressurization and vapour intrusion control
- Regulatory / Industry Perspectives on site remediation
- Solidification / Stabilization
- Natural Attenuation
- Advanced site characterization, delineation and monitoring
- Emerging Technologies
- Emerging Contaminants
- Interesting developments in the research field
- Case Studies

For more information on SMART Remediation and past topics, visit [www.smartremediation.com](http://www.smartremediation.com).

Abstracts should be no more than 500 words and include a presentation description and presenter biography. If you are interested in submitting an abstract or have any questions, please contact [Bruce Tunncliffe](mailto:Bruce.Tunncliffe). Please submit your abstract/presentation to [info@smartremediation.com](mailto:info@smartremediation.com) by November 20, 2020.

We are considering two-half day events, one the end January 2021 and one in February 2021. Your input on format would also be appreciated! If you would like to help us with the organization or any of our events, please reach out to help, we enjoy working with others to ensure the SMART Remediation events are of the highest quality and value to our amazing environmental community!

For more information, please visit [www.smartremediation.com](http://www.smartremediation.com).

## Industry Positions Openings



**As a benefit of ESAA Membership**, ESAA Members can now post position openings on our website at no charge. Position opening ads also will appear in the newsletter at no charge. For full details visit: <https://www.esaa.org/news/job-board/>

**Note:** You must still complete the advertising form. After completing the order form, you will receive an email with a link to post your position.

**Non-Members** are welcome to advertise as well for a nominal charge. Visit [advertising form](#) to place your order.

Job Title	Organization	Application Deadline	Term	Details
Project Manager	H3M Environmental Ltd.	2020-10-18	Contract	<a href="#">more</a>
Industrial Technology Advisor	National Research Council of Canada	2020-12-31	Full-Time	<a href="#">more</a>
Consultant	Fort McKay Metis Nation	2020-11-10	Contract	<a href="#">more</a>
Planner, Lands	ATCO Electric	2020-11-10	Full-Time	<a href="#">more</a>
Intermediate Environmental Scientist - Field	360 Energy Liability Management	2020-11-30	Full-Time	<a href="#">more</a>



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**Comments & submissions are welcome!**

Please submit your announcement via e-mail to: [weeklynews@esaa.org](mailto:weeklynews@esaa.org)