



February 27, 2023

Jean Sulzer
President
Elk Valley Métis Nation
[email address removed]

Chief Jim O'chiese
Foothills Ojibway First Nation
[email address removed]

Mike Oka
Consultation Coordinator
Kainai Nation (Blood Tribe)
[email address removed]

Theo Peters
Consultation Team Lead
Métis Nation of Alberta
[email address removed]

Lawrence Gervais
President
Métis Nation of Alberta Region 3
[email address removed]

Peter McPherson
President
Métis Nation of Alberta Locals 87 &
1880
[email address removed]

Jean Whitehorse
President
Nakcowinewak Nation of Canada
[email address removed]

Andrew Scott
Consultation Coordinator
O'Chiese First Nation
[email address removed]

Ira Provost
Consultation Manager
Piikani Nation
[email address removed]

Laurie Buffalo
Council Member
Samson Cree Nation
[email address removed]

Cedric Solway
Consultation Coordinator
Siksika Nation
[email address removed]

William Snow
Acting Director of Consultation
Stoney Nakoda Nations
[email address removed]

Violet M. Meguinis
Consultation Director
Tsuut'ina Nation
[email address removed]

Regional Assessment Requesters:

Thank you for your November 29, 2022, letter, in which you requested a regional assessment in the Southwestern Alberta Foothills under the *Impact Assessment Act* (the IAA). The request specifically identified the area surrounding the West Path 2023 delivery project area, inclusive of the foothills and grasslands, and in consideration of traditional territories of Treaty Nations. Your letter also requested that such a regional assessment would have a specific focus on establishing a robust baseline that could be used for informing the management of cumulative effects that are being experienced by Indigenous groups, resulting from historic and contemporary development in the region.

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The Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (the Agency) undertook a detailed review of your request, taking into account the considerations laid out in applicable guidelines related to regional assessment requests, to inform my decision. Following careful consideration and analysis of your request, I have decided not to conduct a regional assessment in the southwestern Alberta foothills at this time, for the reasons described below.

One of the key objectives of regional assessments under the IAA is to inform and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of future federal project-specific impact assessments. At this time, I am not aware of reasonably foreseeable future developments within the region that would be subject to impact assessment requirements under the IAA, which a regional assessment would help inform.

I recognize the ecological and cultural significance of the foothills region, and acknowledge your concerns around the historical and contemporary impacts of development in this area. I do note, however, that there are a variety of existing regulatory frameworks and ongoing planning and policy initiatives that are relevant to understanding and addressing the potential effects of current, ongoing, and potential future development in this region. These include existing and planned programs and initiatives that may be well placed to address the issues raised in your request, such as identifying and collecting information and making it accessible, as well as considering and addressing past and potential effects (including cumulative effects). These programs include federally funded programming by Environment and Climate Change Canada and the Agency that some of your organizations are currently participating in, and which are undertaking important and valuable work to build capacity, gather information, and identify and address key issues in the region. Additionally, existing provincial land use planning and other regional and project-specific initiatives provide further mechanisms for identifying, considering, and addressing the potential effects of development activities in this region.

Documentation related to this regional assessment request, including your request and my response to it, will be posted on the Canadian Impact Assessment Registry at <https://www.iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/proj/84148>.

Thank you again for taking the time to prepare and submit this regional assessment request.

Sincerely,

<Original signed by>

The Honourable Steven Guilbeault, P.C., M.P. (he/him, il)

c.c.: Kathleen ida Kiss, Administrative Coordinator, Foothills Ojibway First Nation
William Turner, Authorized Representative, Nakcowinewak Nation of
Canada
Kaylyn Buffalo, Consultation Project Officer, Samson Cree Nation
Gitane De Silva, Chief Executive Officer, Canada Energy Regulator