



Yukon Legislative Assembly

Select Committee Regarding the Risks and Benefits of Hydraulic Fracturing

33rd Yukon Legislative Assembly

OPEN LETTER

November 1, 2013

As Committee Chair, I am pleased to provide the public with an update on the work of the Select Committee Regarding the Risks and Benefits of Hydraulic Fracturing. So far, we have had a number of excellent briefings that have enhanced our understanding of the process of hydraulic fracturing and the context of the legislative and regulatory regime for oil and gas in Yukon. We have met with the departments of Energy, Mines and Resources, Environment, and Justice, as well as the Yukon Water Board and the Yukon Environmental and Socio-Economic Assessment Board. We received presentations from the Yukon Chamber of Commerce as well as Yukoners Concerned About Oil and Gas. All of these presentations are available at http://www.legassembly.gov.yk.ca/rbhf_briefings.html. In the coming months we have meetings scheduled with academics, environmental groups, as well as Yukon's Chief Medical Officer of Health; all of which are intended to further our understanding of the risks and benefits of hydraulic fracturing. In addition, we have written to all Yukon First Nations and have invited them to engage with the Committee in a manner of their preference.

In January we will travel down to the Calgary area where we plan to visit a site where hydraulic fracturing is used. While there, we will meet with and learn about the process further from industry, environmental and community organizations. Once we have determined our schedule and itinerary we will be happy to share it publically. Furthermore, we plan an additional trip in the spring to the Fort St. John/Fort Nelson area to broaden understanding even more.

We also recognize that facilitating an informed public dialogue is an important part of our mandate. With this in mind we will host a series of public proceedings beginning in January 2014. At these proceedings the Committee will hear presentations that will be open to the public. The presentations will occur in the Yukon Legislative Assembly, where the public and media are welcome to observe from the gallery. After the presentations Committee members will ask questions of the presenters and there will be an opportunity for members of the public to submit written questions to be read by committee members as time allows.

We are still finalizing the list of presenters but they will include industry, environmental groups, academics, public health officers, regulators, and First Nation representatives that have experience with hydraulic fracturing. The finalized list will be made public in advance of the event. All of this is intended to provide the Committee and the public with a balanced, science-based understanding of the risks and benefits of hydraulic fracturing.

The Committee has done a significant amount of work to date, and has more work planned in the coming months. We will endeavour to keep the public as informed as possible about our work and our plans in the months to come.

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