

Norris, Sara

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, September 24, 2013 11:53 AM
To: Information
Subject: Public Review of Draft Western Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Area SEA and Update Report

Scott Tessier, Chair & CEO
C-NLOPB
140 Water street
St. John's, NL
A1C 6H6

Dear Mr. Tessier:

RE: PUBLIC REVIEW OF DRAFT WESTERN NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR OFFSHORE AREA SEA AND UPDATE REPORT

I have reviewed the subject document prepared by AMEC. I have been researching vertical/horizontal slickwater hydraulic fracturing since February. I have read many stories of the environmental damage caused by **conventional** and **unconventional** drilling throughout the world. I read about contaminated groundwater, well casings leaking, gas bubbling, explosions from built-up pressure, lowered pressure in natural springs or no flow at all, and unprecedented earthquakes, even in places where earthquakes have never happened. I have listened to Dr. Tony Ingraffea, professor at Cornell University and heard his deep concerns about fracking, the size of the industry footprint close to schools, playgrounds, homes, etc. and the lack of government intervention although they promise "best practices" and "strictest regulations". I read about the countries that have a moratorium on fracking and those who have a total ban on fracking. Land and homes lose their value. Why would anyone want to come and live in a toxic zone? I recently attended a People's Forum and presenter Jessica Ernst is not in this for the money. The fracked areas around her home in Rosebud, AB, look like pepper dots. It is extensive. The companies lie. The governments lie. The regulators lie. Ernst's is an example, just one example. She has nothing to gain and has lost everything because of the corruption of the industry, regulators and industry lawyers. This is an international issue. This is a social justice issue.

My comments are as follows:

The C-NLOPB does not demonstrate credibility and legitimacy when, on one hand, they are conducting a SEA to determine if it is appropriate to proceed with oil/gas development in Newfoundland's Gulf and, on the other hand, allowing seismic testing, issuing licenses, making land ownership and control agreements with oil companies and facilitating oil and gas exploration and development under the premise that we have strict enforceable regulations in place. It is of great concern that the fracking technology is pushing itself very hard throughout the world without any regard for our environment, fresh water source, our air, wildlife, and the health of its residents. This is a global issue. Global warming due to fossil fuel seems to be a non-issue and is given lip service only.

The SEA, prepared by a consulting firm that is very active in the oil and gas industry, is deficient and inadequate to protect what is most important in our bays and gulf to sustaining wildlife and human life. It is obvious to the least educated that the C-NLOPB is **not** an independent regulator and the concerns of the

people most affected by fracking for oil and gas has gone unheard. For months now, here in NL, the public has heard phrases like “new regulations”, “strict regulations”, “best practices” and other comforting words, but the truth is that for the last decade or so, environmental regulations are slowly being dismantled to accommodate the oil and gas industry. Many stories I have heard from local people who are “in the know”, indicate that once the oil/gas company is in and the gate is locked, they are more or less self-regulated, contaminating, dumping toxins anywhere they please under the cover of night. This is hardly enforced regulations. Permits and regulatory approvals are no guarantee that anyone is watching or listening or protecting since the Dept. of Environment has laid off too many and not hired on.

I submit that for obvious reasons the risks are too high for our precious saltwater and fresh water resources and for fishery and tourism and for public health. We in Port au Port East have often had a water shortage and often communities are on a boil order. BSE/SPE have stated that they will use saltwater, then propane gel, etc. The industry changes its tactics every time a public concern is addressed. Recently, they have stated they will not be fracking per se. This screams of deception. Water is a vital resource that no one should be messing with. If our elected officials don't protect us, who will? We cannot trust the industry's promises. They are practically free from liability, and non-disclosure agreements are often part of the hiring procedures. In other words, employees are under gag orders.

The Gulf of St. Lawrence is a fishing ground, providing sustainable industry. Fishermen and farmers are over-regulated and frustrated. The oil and gas industry is under-regulated. If I throw a bottle of Javex in Romaine's River, I risk arrest and a fine, yet the industry dumps untold quantities of toxins wherever they can and leaves behind a toxic wasteland for the local people to breathe, eat, drink, clean up and pay for. And these are “best practices”. Onshore to offshore slickwater hydraulic fracturing is an experiment never done before and Premier Dunderdale announced that no new regulations will be put in place because what we have is sufficient.

I am asking that the C-NLOPB cease all development in the waters along the west coast of NL and in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. In other words, immediately put in place a moratorium on oil and gas exploration and development in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and, without prejudice, submit to public scrutiny the recommendations and conclusions of the final SEA report.

Sincerely and respectfully,

Marion Sampson


cc: Kathy Dunderdale, Premier of NL – premier@gov.nl.ca

Tom Hedderson, Minister of Environment and Conservation, NL – thedderson@gov.nl.ca

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