



Muskrat Falls protesters voice concerns to Nalcor's Stan Marshall in sharing circle



It is the first time Nalcor CEO Stan Marshall has met directly with the group

Jacob Barker · CBC News ·

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Nalcor CEO Stan Marshall sits in sharing circle with Labrador Land protectors. The event was closed to media but broadcast live on Facebook (Labrador Land Protectors/Facebook)

It was a long awaited meeting for many in the Labrador Land Protectors group, a sitdown with Nalcor CEO Stan Marshall. The group met with representatives from the company in a traditional sharing circle in Happy Valley-Goose Bay Wednesday evening.

"Of course it was very emotional and draining but it was real conversation. That was what we wanted to have and we believe that's what took place," Denise Cole said.

This is the first face-to-face meeting Marshall has had with the Land Protector group. It has continued to champion the concerns raised during protests, which [shut down the Muskrat Falls site in October, 2016.](#)

"Given that our lives hang in the balance. I think the onus is on you to order an independent review of the North Spur," Mud Lake resident Craig Chaulk told Marshall. He told the Nalcor CEO that he's concerned a

failure of the natural formation will cause a catastrophic flood downstream from the project.

"There will not be a sudden catastrophic failure. There will not be," Marshall said.



Denise Cole would like to see the concerns raised at the sharing circle become part of the provincial inquiry into Muskrat Falls. (Jacob Barker/CBC)

Marshall also dismissed the concerns raised around methylmercury contamination.

"If you had no serious health problems when you built the Upper Churchill, which is 60 times greater, what did you think was going to happen now?" Marshall told the group.

"It's the same environment. Same river. I'm not asking that you accept it but I'm asking that you ask yourself that question."

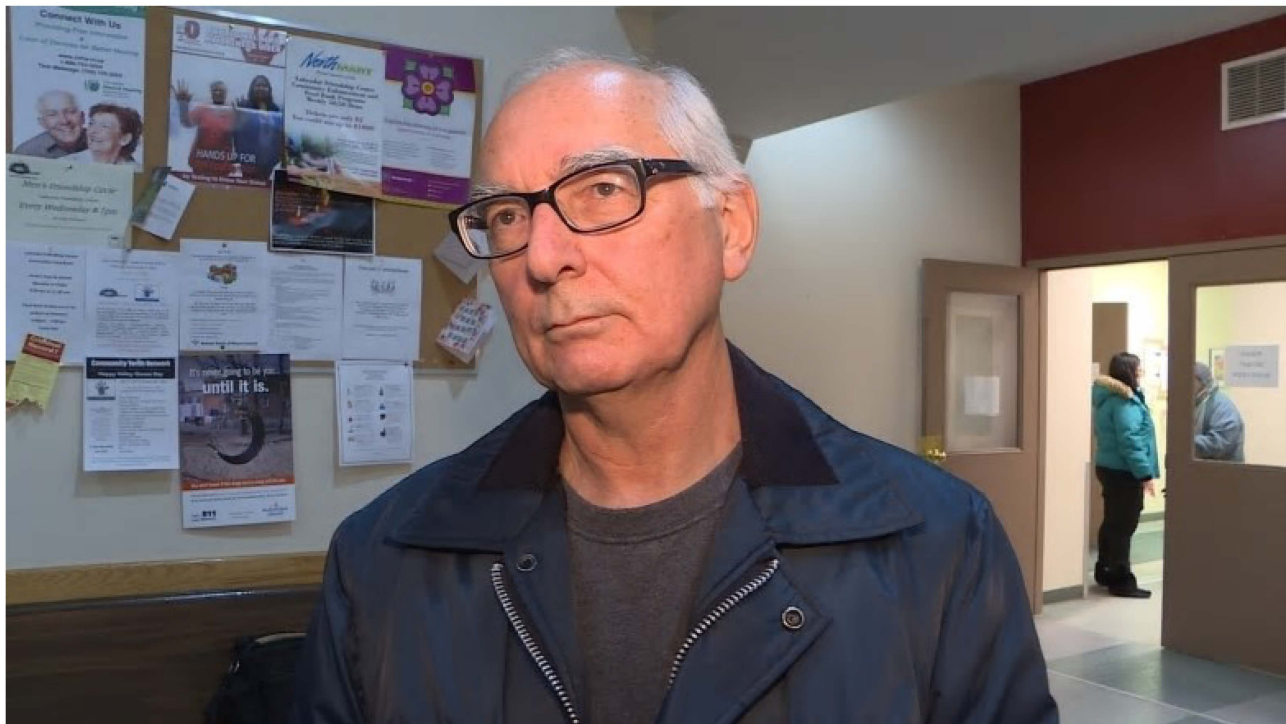
Starting point

Though Nalcor and the residents that voiced their concerns in the sharing circle were far from seeing eye-to-eye on many the issues, some see it as a starting point for a dialogue with the company.

"It does give us a foundation to keep working from," Cole said. "As they said they couldn't answer all of our questions now, so that gives us an opportunity to follow up."

"There's always people going to be concerned because they don't understand the issues," Marshall told the CBC after the event.

"All I can do is give them assurances that proper studies have been done, proper designs have been developed and the work has been implemented properly."



Eldred Davis found Marshall's comments condescending. (Jacob Barker/CBC)

"It was very condescending," Eldred Davis said.

"When we bring up topics that are important to us at this point in time he goes back to the time he was in school 'methylmercury is no big deal. I studied the North Spur and I know all the answers', that's not sufficient."

Mud Lake mitigation

Despite the findings of the independent study that found Muskrat Falls played no role in the flooding of Mud Lake this spring, Marshall did say Nalcor is working with the community. The study did make recommendations of changes Nalcor could make to mitigate the risk of flooding in the future.



Marshall says Nalcor is installing more ice monitoring stations along the Churchill River. It was one recommendation made in the independent study of the Mud Lake flood. (Jacob Barker/CBC)

"We will look at what recommendations there are and do what we can to help mitigate things," Marshall said.

"We've been working with the residents of Mud Lake to do some work for them even though the report completely vindicated us."

Marshall said it is still a work in process but they are installing more ice monitoring stations along the Churchill River.

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