

July 7, 2016

Delivered Via Mail and Fax 709.729.5875

Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
Office of the Premier
P.O. Box 8700
St. John's, NL
A1B 4J6

Attention: Premier Dwight Ball

Dear Premier Ball:

Re: Muskrat Falls - Methylmercury in Lake Melville

I am responding to your letter of June 30, 2016, inviting the Innu Nation to participate in the discussion about the potential for methylmercury contamination of Melville Lake from the Muskrat Falls Project.

Innu Nation is pleased that your government is committed to re-assessing the impacts of the Muskrat Falls Project with respect to methylmercury in Melville Lake, and to discussing how this can be dealt with through improved mitigation and monitoring measures. As I have stated previously, we need to know that the best options for mitigation and monitoring are being used. This means that there must be a full and thorough review of relevant scientific predictions to reach a better understanding of whether or not methylmercury contamination downstream of the reservoir will be significant.

Mista-Shipu – Churchill River Valley – remains an important area for Innu land use. We have constitutionally protected rights to harvest in the area, so mercury accumulation in the local food supply is a significant concern for our people. That is why we participated fully in the environmental assessment of the Muskrat Falls Project, and concluded an impact benefit agreement with Nalcor. But, that was based on predictions that the level of methylmercury entering the Lake Melville food chain would not be significant. Now, we are being presented with different predictions and also with recommended options for prevention, mitigation and monitoring.

Before deciding what is the best way to move forward, we need to – together – re-assess the potential for impacts and examine all the options. This is part of honouring the commitment your government made to the Innu under our Agreement in Principle about environmental management and protection. We believe that the meeting you are proposing for July 27, 2016,

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convening the experts that participated in your earlier March workshop, and expanding the table to include other governments, the Innu Nation, Inuit and local residents, is a good start.

Innu Nation representatives will attend that meeting, and we expect – and we would like confirmation of this – that the government and/or Nalcor will cover the costs of our participation in this meeting and going forward, including costs we will incur to retain a scientific expert to advise us throughout this process.

While I acknowledge that timing is of critical concern for the government and for Nalcor on this issue, the scheduled meeting is on very short notice for us to be able to contribute in a meaningful way. We are still in the process of retaining scientific experts to independently review and advise on the concerns that have been raised and on the options being discussed to resolve these concerns. We hope to do so and will make every effort to be prepared prior to the meeting scheduled at the end of this month, but look forward to continuing our participation in this discussion beyond this initial meeting.

We look forward to working together with all the governments and parties involved, to find a way forward in resolving our shared concerns.

Yours Truly,

Grand Chief Anastasia Qupee