

NLIS 5
Environment and Climate Change
October 19, 2016

Protecting Human Health and the Environment

Provincial Government Requires Nalcor to Increase Clearing at the Muskrat Falls

The Provincial Government has required Nalcor to remove more forest cover at the Muskrat Falls reservoir as an additional mitigation to further address concerns surrounding methylmercury.

“We have heard the call for further mitigation measures to address concerns around methylmercury and this is why removing additional forest cover is being required. Along with additional clearing, we will continue to work with the Innu Nation, Nunatsiavut Government, and the NunatuKavut Community Council on oversight of this project.”

- The Honourable Perry Trimper, Minister of Environment and Climate Change

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has also provided to the Innu Nation, the Nunatsiavut Government, and the NunatuKavut Community Council details on recent activities, including the establishment of a new water quality monitoring program, the establishment of an Independent Expert Advisory Committee, as well as the facilitator’s final report from the expert workshop that was held on August 4, in Happy Valley-Goose Bay. Additional information on the material provided can be found in the backgrounder below.

“The Provincial Government has taken the concerns expressed by the Innu Nation, the Nunatsiavut Government, and the NunatuKavut Community Council very seriously. We are taking action that clearly demonstrates our commitment to enhance measures which ensure we are best positioned to protect human health.”

- Minister Trimper

In addition to the above, following discussions with the Nunatsiavut Government, the Provincial Government will be requiring Nalcor to fund a further study, to be conducted by Dr. Elsie Sunderland’s research laboratory at Harvard University.

QUICK FACTS

- The Provincial Government has required Nalcor to remove additional forest cover from the Muskrat Falls reservoir site.
- The final facilitator’s report for the August 4 expert workshop has also been provided to the Innu Nation, the Nunatsiavut Government, and the NunatuKavut Community Council and will be made available to the public online in the coming days.

- Nalcor will be required to fund a further study on methylmercury, to be designed and conducted by Dr. Elsie Sunderland.

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Media contact:
John Tompkins
Director of Communications
Department of Environment and Climate Change
709-729-2575
JTompkins@gov.nl.ca

BACKGROUNDER

Methylmercury Monitoring Plan

This plan augments water quality monitoring already conducted by the Department of Environment and Climate Change, and also augments methylmercury monitoring in the tissues of fish and seals that is being conducted as part of Nalcor's Aquatic Environmental Effects Monitoring Plan. Nalcor has started to implement this plan so as to ensure that baseline sampling is done prior to the initiation of this first phase of flooding.

Draft Framework for an Independent Expert Advisory Committee

This framework includes a role for the Nunatsiavut Government, Innu Nation and the NunatuKavut Community Council. This group will also include scientific representatives and an appropriate individual to serve as the independent Chair.

The Final Report from the Expert Workshop:

This summary document was received from the independent facilitator in late September and has been sent to all workshop participants. The report will be released publicly in the coming days.

2016 10 19

12:40 p.m.