



NOVA SCOTIA

Energy
Office of the Minister

Suite 400, 5151 George Street, PO Box 2664, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada B3J 3P7 • Telephone 902 424-7793 Fax 902 424-3265 • www.gov.ns.ca/energy

December 17, 2013

Jennifer J. West, M.Sc., P.Geo.
Chair, Steering Committee, NOFRAC
Geoscience Coordinator
Ecology Action Centre
2705 Fern Lane
Halifax NS, B3K 4L3

Dear Ms. West:

I wish to clarify a few issues regarding the Province's independent review of hydraulic fracturing, in response to your letter dated and received on Dec. 16, 2013.

We have commissioned an independent review that will examine the social, economic, health and environmental impacts of hydraulic fracturing. I've been calling for an independent review for some time and have long advocated for an independent review that looks at all aspects of hydraulic fracturing.

This review is led by Cape Breton University president Dr. David Wheeler and is independent of government. I have met with Dr. Wheeler and reassured him that I fully intend it remains independent.

Dr. Wheeler's education, research and background uniquely qualify him to lead this project and I have confidence in his extensive public and stakeholder engagement experience. That's why Dr. Wheeler is leading the design of the review and consultation process. He has led an open and transparent process from the start. The work of the review isn't limited to what is outlined in the contract between the Province and Dr. Wheeler; he can investigate emerging issues at his discretion.

In your letter you indicated that I have been unwilling to meet with your members. In fact, your first request to meet with me was dated Dec. 16 and received by me on Dec. 17 at the same time you sent out your release suggesting I was unwilling to meet. As the review is entirely independent I do encourage people to meet with Dr. Wheeler's team who are responsible for designing the review, however your coalition has not previously requested a meeting with me.

I encourage Nova Scotians to become involved with this review and there are many ways they can do so. Written submissions will be accepted. There will be on-line forums and surveys starting in January, and public forums will begin in February, giving Nova Scotians multiple ways to have their say.

All of the public consultation and review materials are available on-line at cbu.ca/HFstudy.

The review results are expected to be available in Spring 2014, as agreed with Dr. Wheeler. We have discussed the review's timelines with Dr. Wheeler and we've been advised the review can be completed within this timeframe. The time-frame allows Dr. Wheeler to also consider studies and work being done in other similar reviews. However, importantly the contract also allows for an extension beyond June 2014 if necessary to complete the work.

Dr. Wheeler is currently in the process of putting together an expert technical panel, including people with expertise in hydrogeology, water quality management, oil and gas engineering, public and environmental health, energy and community economics, social and environmental psychology and knowledge of Aboriginal wisdom. The panelists have yet to be announced.

I look forward to receiving the review results in the spring of 2014.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Andrew Younger", followed by a horizontal line.

Andrew Younger
Minister of Energy