



Ref: 97529

APR 15 2008

COPY

Michael Sather, MLA  
(Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows)  
Room 201 Parliament Buildings  
Victoria BC V8V 1X4

Dear Mr. Sather:

On December 14, 2007, I responded to your letter of December 4, 2007, regarding the proposed Upper Pitt River Water Power Project (Project) proposed by Northwest Cascade Power Ltd. (Proponent), and advised that I would provide a substantive response after receiving further information from staff on this Project. I have now received this information and am pleased to provide you with the following responses to the concerns raised in your letter.

As you are aware, the Project as proposed included a transmission line through Pinecone Burke Provincial Park (Park) across the pass between Steve Creek in the Upper Pitt River watershed and Crawford Creek in the Mamquam River watershed. Since a transmission line is not a permissible use within the Park, the Proponent submitted a formal application to BC Parks requesting an adjustment to the Park's boundary. On March 26, 2008, I announced that I would not be recommending to Cabinet or the Legislature that the proposal by the Proponent to adjust the boundaries of the Park be accepted.

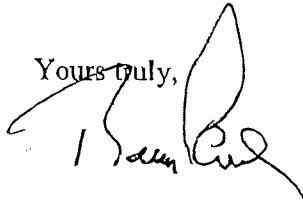
As you are also aware, the proposed Project is a reviewable project under the *Environmental Assessment Act*, and is currently in the pre-application stage of the environmental assessment (EA) process. The pre-application stage focuses on identifying project-related issues requiring assessment (such as the ones described in your letter), based on consultations with interested and potentially affected parties – federal, provincial and local governments, First Nations and the public. The pre-application stage leads to the development and finalization of information requirements (Terms of Reference) which the Proponent needs to satisfy in assembling its application for an EA certificate.

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In light of my decision on the park boundary issue, the Project cannot proceed through EA as proposed. The Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) is awaiting information from the Proponent as to whether it intends to modify the proposed Project with a different transmission line route, or whether the EA will be abandoned. If the Proponent does decide to propose an alternate transmission line corridor for its Project, EAO will determine the appropriate next steps as it relates to the EA process.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Barry Penner", written over a faint circular stamp.

Barry Penner  
Minister

pc: Honourable Richard Neufeld  
Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources