



Responsible Energy Action

May 30, 2018

The Honourable Catherine McKenna
Minister of Environment and Climate Change
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

Dear Minister:

Re: Request for CEAA Federal Assessment of Northern Pulp Effluent Treatment Facility

Responsible Energy Action (REA) is an organization with over 100 members based in Antigonish Nova Scotia, just over 50km away from the Northern Pulp facility. We are writing to support the request from fishermen's organizations from Nova Scotia, PEI and New Brunswick and Pictou Landing First Nation to have Northern Pulp's Effluent Treatment Project designated a project for Federal Environmental Assessment under Section 14 of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (CEAA), 2012.

REA is concerned about the health of people living close to Northern Pulp, taking note that the existing effluent treatment facility is located beside the Indigenous community that has become known as Pictou Landing First Nation. You have an opportunity to halt the environmental racism by demanding rigorous environmental review. A rigorous environmental review will demonstrate reconciliation by acknowledging that all the communities along the Northumberland Strait have the right to live in a healthy environment.

We are concerned about the damage to fish and fish habitat that could result from Northern Pulp's proposal to discharge 70-90 million litres of treated effluent from a bleached kraft mill every day. Thousands of families from all three provinces, some of whom are First Nations and many of whom are multi-generational fishers, make their living from these fisheries.

The economic impact of the Northumberland Strait commercial fishery is significant, with the majority being owner-operators who live in our communities. The commercial fishers along the Northumberland Strait are among the most technically advanced in the world, highlighted by a local Fisherman's Co-op developing a sustainable lobster harvesting, transporting and tracking process that could revolutionize the fishery

throughout the Strait, and develop a brand that is world renowned for product quality. Any impact to that brand could be jeopardized if even a perception of contamination exists. A rigorous environmental review can minimize this perception.

We are also concerned about the continued health of the Northumberland Strait and the forests of Nova Scotia. If the proposed effluent discharge plan proceeds without appropriate environmental review it could result in Northern Pulp providing a lower cost solution that increases profits but at a significant cost to the environment and to communities, including the fishing industry and tourism. This type of subsidy would allow Northern Pulp to avoid paying full costs of their foresting operations which reduce our communities' ability to mitigate climate change.

We believe this project requires a more rigorous review than it will receive from the province of Nova Scotia, which has decided to require only a Class 1, 50-day review, including only 30 days for public comment. The government's past handling of effluent from this mill has resulted in one of the most contaminated sites in Canada, Boat Harbour.

We want to see a strong, science-based review of this project that can be achieved by a Federal Environmental Assessment under Section 14 of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012. This will protect the present and future health of our Strait and of the local economy, which depends on healthy waters.

Sincerely,

On Behalf of Responsible Energy Action

cc: Dominic Leblanc

Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency NS Regional Office, Northern Pulp file