



Media Release
August 20, 2018

Province sinks \$6 million into design of Northern Pulp's controversial pipe project

“This stinks worse than a barrel of rotten fish,” Ronnie Heighton, Northumberland Fisherman's Association

Pictou, NS: Northumberland Fisherman's Association (NFA) President Ronnie Heighton is outraged that the NS Government has provided \$6 million to Northern Pulp for design of their proposed new effluent treatment facility.

“This proposal puts our industry at risk,” says Heighton. “Our fishing organizations requested meetings with the provincial Minister of Environment for months and he would not meet with us. We asked for information from the department two months ago and received nothing. Now we find the government has funded the project to the tune of \$6 million in the last year. This stinks worse than a barrel of rotten fish.”

“It's beyond belief that the same government that is funding a plan to discharge 70-90 million litres of pulp effluent daily into our prime fishing grounds in the Northumberland Strait thinks they can conduct a fair and unbiased environmental assessment,” Heighton added.

Jill Graham-Scanlan, President of Friends of the Northumberland Strait (FONS) agrees. “If it wasn't clear before, it's certainly clear now,” Graham-Scanlan says. “The federal government needs to step up and take on the environmental assessment of this project, as we and 5,000 others have requested.”

Graham-Scanlan says the provincial government cannot expect citizens to trust their ability to conduct an unbiased environmental assessment when they are funders and potentially owners or partners in the project. “The livelihoods of thousands of fishing families, now and in the future, are on the line,” says Graham-Scanlan.

In March, Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Renewal (TIR) Lloyd Hines told CBC that ownership of the facility was still to be determined. When asked who would be paying for the facility, Hines stated, "... we look at partnering, we look at sharing liability, we look at reasonable partners who want to reach an objective who want to get things done."

"The Nova Scotia government thinks they can be defendant, judge and jury on this project," says Heighton. "If the Feds don't step in, we're on track for another environmental disaster that could rival Boat Harbour and the Sydney Tar Ponds."

Nova Scotia Public Accounts for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2018 were posted on July 26, 2018. The accounts include a sum of \$6,001,238.13 to Northern Pulp from Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal (Grants and Contributions.)

The Northumberland Fishermen's Association and FONS asked Karla MacFarlane, MLA for Pictou West, if she could find out what the \$6 million grant to Northern Pulp covered. MacFarlane contacted TIR, and the department confirmed to MacFarlane that the "funding was related to design work on a possible future effluent treatment facility." MacFarlane has asked for a breakdown of the amount to determine exactly what the funding covered.

1. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/boat-harbour-northern-pulp-mill-pictou-county-effluent-1.4599028>
2. Volume 3, Supplementary Information, p 330