

CARC and other interested parties, such as the government of the Northwest Territories, had suggested that a federal review would be more appropriate because of the transboundary effects of the proposed project. The project is in the calving area of the Bathurst Caribou herd, a critical resource for people in both territories.

"In view of the obvious fact that key components of the proposed project lie outside of Nunavut, not to mention the potential environmental and socio-economic transboundary impacts, it is alarming that Minister Mitchell would take such a narrow view", says Shelagh Montgomery, CARC's Cumulative Effects Program Director.

Another disappointing aspect of the minister's decision is that whereas a federal review would be paid for by the project proponent, a Nunavut review is a public expense.

"While we share Minister Mitchell's confidence in the Nunavut Impact Review Board, we remain concerned that his decision narrows the scope of the project to be assessed", says Karen Wristen, CARC's Executive Director. —There is no question that federal jurisdiction is invoked by the project and one would ordinarily expect a joint federal-territorial review in these circumstances. It remains unclear how the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency will discharge its role in the project's approval."

There is however, some encouragement in the minister's letter. He directs the Nunavut Impact Review Board to take note of transboundary effects and cumulative impacts in its review. The Minister also notes that it is essential for NIRB to carefully consider how to involve people from outside Nunavut in the hearings, and he asks for a detailed analysis of what participant funding the Nunavut Board would require.

CARC hopes that NIRB will take this advice to heart, and provide meaningful intervener funding for interested parties outside and inside Nunavut, as well as holding hearings outside the territory.

For more information, contact:

Karen Wristen, executive director ø (613) 759-4284 x 221

Shelagh Montgomery, cumulative effects program director (867) 873-4715