

Protecting Yukon waters has become critical

Thanks to the minister of Environment, Currie Dixon, for his open letter in *L'Aurore Boréale* on May 15 announcing the French translation of the Draft Yukon Water Strategy, and for giving us – francophones – the link to access it.

In the current context, the federal government is waging war on any science that could get in the way of:

- the export of water;
- the export of liquefied natural gas; and
- the uncontrolled use of water for hydraulic fracturing, tar sands etc.

The federal government is also silently denying:

- global warming; and
- the discharge of contaminated and radioactive waters into nature and into treatment plants.

The protection of Yukon waters has become critical, crucial, and should be defined and accurate.

The first most important strategy for Yukon's water should be to test and monitor the quality of our waters and rigorously control the quantity used by industries.

Did you know that in the document 2012-0140-153-1, Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board, dated Sept. 13, 2012, Northern Cross Yukon, the oil and gas company in Eagle Plains, wrote:

"As a sign of good faith, to those concerned about hydraulic fracture stimulation, Northern Cross will not use this stimulation technique prior to the end of March 2014"?

What has been done since? Is there the protection of Yukon water against fracking in the

draft?

For over a year, we have asked the government to use an independent third party to do specific baseline water testing before gas and oil activities are allowed to take place.

We have also asked it to make sure these analyses of water are done ahead to protect from the ravages of fracking.

One also has to test for thermogenic and biogenic methane when doing such baseline testing.

This is new, and comes into play with regard to hydraulic fracturing. It is the methane, beside the hundreds of chemicals that will contaminate Yukon water, make it poisonous, unusable and undrinkable for all life.

Methane is also going to pollute the air and increase the global warming effect dramatically.

It is obvious that the "best practices" of the oil and gas industry in Canada are not sufficient. Who will be our next regulator (s) here in the Yukon? Outsiders – regulators from Alberta? Northeast B.C.? The U.S.?

Who knows? We just know that M. Corbet will soon retire, and says he will regulate everything.

Also, this draft water strategy has to be seriously written.

Testing/monitoring should be done on the posting for new wells, not around old wells, as has been done lately. Monitoring takes time.

From Aug. 2-4, there will be a meeting of the Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council, representing 72 First Nations from Yukon and Alaska, taking place in Mayo.

They will discuss their strategy for protecting waters.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

It would be wise for the Government of Yukon to further extend the time for comments on this draft water strategy in order to align with the intentions of these First Nations who have preserved and protected their water for millennia.

I believe we owe them the respect not to repeat the abuses that have occurred in the past to these experienced stewards of the land and waters.

And we francophones, and anglophones, why are we in the Yukon? To let the oil and gas industry sneak in and frack?

Or to live and see our children grow and enjoy pure water?

We'd better answer that question now and fill out the Draft Yukon Water Strategy survey or

comment on it before they come with more tankers, as they do elsewhere.

Here is the link to the use of water for fracking in northeastern British Columbia (presented in Caleb Behn's presentation in January):

<http://vimeo.com/53894471>

Cheers to water, life, sun and wind.

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