



NUNATSIAVUT
Senani jarini kajusimanik pivallianimmut
10 Years of Continued Progress

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NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

President calls on Premier to halt Muskrat Falls project

Nunatsiavut President Johannes Lampe is calling on Newfoundland and Labrador Premier Dwight Ball to immediately halt construction of the Muskrat Falls project until concerns over methylmercury contamination are addressed.

“The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is about to risk the health of hundreds of Labrador Inuit, erode our culture and threaten our way of life,” says President Lampe. “We once again implore the Premier to not play Russian roulette with the lives of our people, and to direct Nalcor Energy to delay flooding of the Muskrat Falls reservoir until it is fully cleared of all trees, vegetation and topsoil.

“The concerns over methylmercury contamination are real, and to proceed with flooding without fully clearing will clearly violate our human and indigenous rights. This project has to be stopped now before it’s too late.”

The Nunatsiavut Government has explored legal options to try and force the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to direct Nalcor to fully clear the reservoir of trees vegetation and soil, notes President Lampe.

“While we explored all possible avenues we continued to lobby the decision makers to have the reservoir fully cleared,” he says. “We have participated in rallies and protests, voiced our concerns publicly, and met with the Premier and Environment and Climate Change Minister Perry Trimper and Natural Resources Minister Siobhan Coady on a number of occasions over the past couple of months. We have written Prime Minister Trudeau and lobbied Indigenous and Northern Affairs Minister Caroyln Bennett and Labrador MP Yvonne Jones.”

During meetings with the Premier, the Nunatsiavut Government stressed the importance of ensuring a rigorous monitoring program, to be overseen by an independent advisory committee, be in place prior to the initial phase of flooding. To date, that program, or an agreement on how it would be implemented, has not been finalized by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. As well, the Premier committed to examining the feasibility of fully clearing the reservoir prior to the second phase of flooding, expected in 2019, and to begin discussions on other



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Nunatsiavut Government recommendations as outlined in the Make Muskrat Right campaign, specifically:

- * an Impact Management Agreement with the Nunatsiavut Government; and
- * granting Inuit joint decision-making authority over downstream environmental monitoring and management.

“Despite our concerns, those who have the authority to make changes, including the Prime Minister and the Government of Canada, to the scope of the project are not willing to do so, and would rather stand by and allow our people to be poisoned and destroy a way of life,” says President Lampe. “If this project proceeds without changes, there will never be true reconciliation in this country.”

The Nunatsiavut Government is thankful of the tremendous support it has received for its Make Muskrat Right campaign.

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