NUNATSIAVUT
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10 Years of Continued Progress

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NEWS RELEASE

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Muskrat Falls position hasn't changed; no flooding before full clearing, says President

Nunatsiavut President Johannes Lampe today reiterated that the Muskrat Falls reservoir must be fully cleared of all trees, vegetation and topsoil before any flooding takes place.

"Our position has not changed," says President Lampe. "Labrador Inuit health, rights and way of life is being threatened, and we must continue to insist that flooding not be permitted until concerns over methylmercury have been meaningfully addressed."

Wednesday's announcement by Conservation and Climate Change Minister Perry Trimper, in which he indicated that Nalcor Energy has been ordered to clear more trees from the reservoir, falls far short of what's needed to address concerns surrounding methylmercury, says President Lampe.

"Unless all vegetation and soil is removed the threat to our health, culture and way of life remains," he says. "Nalcor should also be directed to delay plans to begin initial flooding of the reservoir (which would see water levels rise from 18 to 25 metres) to allow for the removal of trees, vegetation and topsoil. Initial flooding is expected to take place within days, and once you flood the land the damage has been done. There's no turning back then."

The Nunatsiavut Government is pleased that some progress has been made on the development of a methylmercury monitoring plan, and that steps would be taken to develop a framework for an independent expert advisory committee. President Lampe says he's hopeful the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador will also implement an Impact Management Agreement with the Nunatsiavut Government, as well as grant Inuit joint decision-making authority over downstream environmental monitoring and management.

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