

From: "Scarr, Matthew EAO:EX" [REDACTED]

Date: September 3, 2025 at 16:24:58 MST

To: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Subject: Dawson Creek Water Supply System Project: Request for Technical Advisors

Good afternoon,

I am writing on behalf of the Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) regarding the proposed Dawson Creek Water Supply System Project (the Project).

You have been identified as a key contact for your department/branch/ministry who can identify the appropriate staff members to participate as technical advisors for the

upcoming Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Dawson Creek Water Supply System

On September 3, 2025, the EAO issued an Order under Section 13(3)(a) of the *Environmental Assessment Act* (2018) (the Act) approving the Initial Project Description (IPD) and Engagement Plan (EP) for the Project. The Early Engagement phase of the EA has now begun and more information on this phase is available in the EAO's [Early Engagement Guide](#). The IPD and EP are available on the [EAO's Project Information Centre \(EPIC\)](#).

Project Overview

1. The City of Dawson Creek has proposed to develop the Project, which is anticipated to deliver water from the Peace River to the City of Dawson Creek. This will include the installation of 4-6 groundwater extraction wells along the south side of the Peace River, near Taylor, British Columbia (B.C.), a river intake pipe, pumping stations and a water pipeline spanning 52 kilometres between Taylor, B.C. to Dawson Creek, B.C.
2. The Project is located on the traditional territories of several First Nations, as well as private and provincial crown land.
3. The City of Dawson Creek is seeking an environmental assessment certificate exemption order (Exemption) for the Project stating urgent water supply needs due to historic drought conditions and current water use restrictions.

Exemptions under the *Environmental Assessment Act* (2018)

1. If the Chief Executive Assessment Officer (CEAO) considers that a reviewable project will not have significant adverse environmental, economic, social, cultural or health effects, or will not have serious effects on an Indigenous nation or the rights recognized and affirmed by Section 35 of the *Constitution Act*, 1982, taking into account practical means of preventing or reducing to an acceptable level any potential adverse effects of the project, the CEAO may refer the project to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy (Minister) with a recommendation that the project be exempt from the requirement under Section 6 of the Act to obtain an environmental assessment certificate. This recommendation would be included in a Certificate Exemption Report.
 2. If the Minister determines that a certificate is not required, the Minister will issue an order under [Section 17\(1\)\(b\)](#) of the Act, including an Exempted Project Description, and may attach any conditions considered necessary. The proponent may then proceed directly to permitting without an environmental assessment.
 3. If issued, an Exempted Project Description binds a project with a description or list of project features and spatial boundaries at a level of detail that ensures adequate mitigation. If the proponent were to receive a certificate exemption, it does not relieve the proponent from compliance with the applicable requirements that pertain to the project under other regulations.
1. In addition to any permitting or other regulatory requirements, the project would be required to be constructed, operated and decommissioned in accordance with the

exemption order, including the Exempted Project Description and any attached conditions. In making the decision to exempt a project from the requirement for an environmental assessment, the Minister must set out the reasons for decision. If the Minister determines that a certificate is required, the project will be referred to the CEAO for further decision consistent with [Section 17\(1\)\(c\)](#) of the Act.

2. The EAO will seek consensus with participating Indigenous nations on the recommendation to the Minister, including the Certificate Exemption Report prepared to inform the Minister's decision and any proposed conditions, and the draft Exempted Project Description. Participating Indigenous nations may also provide a notification indicating their consent or lack of consent to issuing an exemption order. For more information please see the EAO's [Certificate Exemption Policy](#).

Early Engagement Public Comment Period on the Dawson Creek Water Supply System Project

The EAO will hold a 30-day comment period on the IPD to seek input from local governments, provincial and federal government agencies, First Nations, and the public.

1. The comment period will be open on September 23, 2025 and close on October 23, 2025 at midnight PST.
2. An in-person open house will take place on October 8, 2025, at Co-op Mercer Hall, #1 300 Hwy 2, Dawson Creek, BC, from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. (PDT),
3. A Virtual Information Session will take place on October 16, 2025, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. (PDT).

During the Early Engagement phase, the EAO requires the assistance of technical advisors to review and provide comments on the IPD. The EAO will be formally establishing a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) (formerly known as a Working Group) in the next phase (Process Planning) of the EA, if the project proceeds.

TAC Participation

The EAO will consider all comments received from technical advisors in the development of a Summary of Engagement report that will be posted to EPIC at the end of the Early Engagement phase.

The type of feedback the EAO is seeking includes your perspectives on the identification of project-related concerns and/or potential adverse project effects that should be considered in the City of Dawson Creek's development of the Detailed Project Description, as well as the Chief Executive Assessment Officer's (CEAO's) referral recommendation to the Minister of Environment as per [Section 17 of the Act](#) on the City of Dawson Creek's Exemption request.

Please note that the EAO may seek input from a relevant group, department, agency, or ministry technical advisor on potential issues identified during the comment period, as appropriate.

Confirmation of Technical Advisors (Action Requested)

Given the urgency of the Project, the EAO respectfully requests that you provide notice of intent to participate or not participate as a Technical Advisor in the exemption review process for the Project as soon as possible and no later than September 12, 2025.

If your group, department, or ministry wishes to participate in this EA as a Technical Advisor, please respond by end of day **September 12, 2025**, with the name, position, phone number and email address of your designated Technical Advisor(s).

If your group, department, or ministry is **not** interested in attending the webinar and/or participating as a technical advisor for the Project EA **please respond by September 12, 2025**, and I will remove you from the distribution list.

Please note that you, or someone from your organization, may wish to participate in the EA as an observer. Observers are included in all technical advisor/Technical Advisory Committee correspondence but are not expected to provide input during the EA. Please note that issues may arise during the course of the EA that the EAO views as requiring participation by those that have previously opted out or are acting as observers; the EAO will seek input from your group, department, or ministry in these cases as appropriate.

For additional information on the Technical Advisory Committee, including the roles and responsibilities of technical advisors, please review the EAO's [Technical Advisory Committee Guideline](#) and attached Technical Advisory Committee Quick Reference Document.

If you have any questions or require further information, please contact me Matthew Scarr, Project Lead for the Dawson Creek Water Supply System Project by telephone at 250-812-5897 or by email at Matthew.Scarr@gov.bc.ca.

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The EAO respectfully acknowledges that it carries out its work on the territories of First Nations throughout British Columbia.

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