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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation

### **B.C. to engage with First Nations, industry on eco-stewardship**

VANCOUVER – The Province will seek input from First Nations and the natural gas industry on advancing the government’s long-term environmental management approach through collaboration. The proposed LNG Environmental Stewardship Initiative (LNGESI) creates a platform for First Nations, the Province and the private sector to work together to enhance environmental values over the long term. LNGESI is intended to build a focal point for collaboration between natural gas proponents, First Nations and government.

In 2013, BC achieved agreement with 15 First Nations to support the Pacific Trails Pipeline project (PTP), the first proposed gas pipeline to support LNG. Since then, B.C. has been engaging with First Nations whose traditional territory may be affected by pipelines, through a comprehensive and integrated regulatory process. The LNGESI aims to establish long-term legacies that advance our stewardship of the land that will complement our existing world-class environmental standards, legislation and regulatory processes.

The Province is proposing the LNGESI as a mechanism to advance the level of collaboration for key environmental management issues like monitoring and restoration.

The LNGESI is not designed to change or alter the current regulatory process. It is being proposed to complement the regulatory process. For example, certain environmental values may require long-term monitoring to ensure they are sustained well after pipelines are built. The ESI proposes to have First Nations front and centre in that monitoring so they can support ongoing Provincial efforts.

The ESI is intended to build a focal point for collaboration between natural gas proponents, First Nations and government.

#### **Quotes:**

#### **Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation Minister John Rustad –**

“Aboriginal people have a crucial role in our LNG strategy, and will benefit with jobs, business and community opportunities. However, we recognize that First Nations feel strongly about upholding their important environmental values. We recognize that there’s a need for new tools that will create a positive legacy for First Nations and the environment.”

#### **Chief Karen Ogen, Wet'suwet'en First Nation –**

“The Wet'suwet'en First Nation welcomes this initiative and looks forward to working with the Province and other First Nations to turn this concept into a reality. The environmental sustainability of the WFN territory and all of British Columbia is critical to the people of the

WFN.”

**Chief Wilf Adam, Lake Babine Nation –**

“This initiative is very intriguing and looks very promising. It’s worthwhile looking and developing the outcome.”

**Philippe Reicher, vice-president, external relations, Canadian Energy Pipeline Association –**

“The Canadian Energy Pipeline Association (CEPA) and its members respect and support First Nations commitment to protecting the environment now and for future generations. We look forward to working with First Nations and the Province of British Columbia on this new Environmental Stewardship Initiative.”

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