
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation

Work begins on LNG Environmental Stewardship Initiative

VICTORIA – Through a series of regional workshops, the B.C. Government is taking the next step in its commitment to work directly with First Nations to create a positive environmental legacy from the development of a safe and sustainable liquefied natural gas industry.

The Liquefied Natural Gas Environmental Stewardship Initiative workshops are being held in collaboration with First Nations Sept. 8-16, 2014, in Fort St. John, Prince George, Prince Rupert and Smithers. Representatives from 35 First Nations involved in LNG negotiations, along with cross-government and industry representatives, have been invited to participate.

Announced in May 2014 at the International LNG in B.C. Conference, the Liquefied Natural Gas Environmental Stewardship Initiative was launched as a response to First Nations seeking a government commitment to more collaborative forms of environmental management. These workshops are the next step in designing the stewardship initiative, offering participants the opportunity to identify projects, priorities and management structure of the initiative.

First Nations have indicated an interest in participating in the development of information used to make resource management decisions. The development of the Liquefied Natural Gas Environmental Stewardship Initiative is one instrument the Province and First Nations will be using to incorporate Aboriginal values into resource management decisions.

First Nations have also indicated an interest in working with government to identify specific environmental restoration and habitat enhancement projects in areas affected by resource development, which the stewardship initiative is intended to address.

The Province is also engaging federal agencies to develop a shared vision and action plan for the Liquefied Natural Gas Environmental Stewardship Initiative that meets the priorities of First Nations and the other parties.

The initiative complements the existing regulatory process and advances the collaborative relationship between First Nations, governments and industry on key environmental management topics.

Quotes:

John Rustad, Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation –

“The LNG Environmental Stewardship Initiative is a significant part of our commitment to use the opportunities presented through LNG to create lasting legacies for First Nations and the environment. These workshops are an important step with First Nations so we can establish environmental legacies with a shared vision.”

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

“WFN is pleased that the Province has followed up with its commitment at the BC LNG Conference to develop to an LNG Environmental Stewardship Initiative in partnership with First Nations. Land management in the province needs to incorporate and address values of importance to First Nations. This initiative linked to the opportunity of LNG development is an important step in our community’s consideration of support for proposed LNG projects.”

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