
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation

Funding supports LNG environmental legacies

VICTORIA – New provincial government funding is supporting environmental stewardship projects being developed throughout northern B.C. with First Nations and the liquefied natural gas (LNG) industry.

B.C.'s LNG Environmental Stewardship Initiative will allocate up to \$30 million over three years for co-designed projects that First Nations communities will have a direct hand in managing.

Projects in development focus on four key areas:

- ecosystem assessment and monitoring
- ecosystem restoration and enhancement
- ecosystem research and knowledge exchange
- stewardship education and training

“First Nations should be strong partners in resource management in their traditional territories,” said John Rustad, Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation. “The LNG Environmental Stewardship Initiative is a new way of working with First Nations – one in which First Nations help design the process from the outset and propose projects that are important to their communities.”

The initiative was created because many First Nations want to be involved in the LNG industry while managing environmental impacts within traditional territories. Since it was first announced in May 2014, regional stewardship forums with First Nations, industry and government representatives have been established throughout the North to identify environmental priorities and work together to refine the project concepts.

“We want First Nations to share in the benefits of LNG development,” said Rich Coleman, Minister of Natural Gas Development. “We’re working together to determine what kind of legacy we want to create.”

To date, 32 First Nations, the Province and industry are working together on the LNG Environmental Stewardship Initiative.

“By working together across government with First Nations and industry, we will create high-quality and accessible environmental information that all participants can trust,” said Steve Thomson, Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations. “Collaboration that results in trusted information will ensure that future resource management decisions are supported by all parties.”

There is potential for the initiative to provide training for First Nations members to undertake

the on-the-ground technical aspects of environmental monitoring and to create jobs focused on protecting the environment.

“The development of an LNG export industry in B.C. has tremendous potential to raise the bar on the quality of life for many First Nations across the North through increased prosperity and access to jobs,” said Wet’suwet’en First Nation Chief Karen Ogen. “The LNG Environmental Stewardship Initiative is helping First Nations realize that economic potential without sacrificing our environmental priorities.”

“Environmentally responsible development is key to being a good neighbour,” said Tony Palmer, TransCanada's senior vice-president, stakeholder relations. “TransCanada respects the value that comes from working closely with First Nations through all aspects of our projects. This initiative will further strengthen our understanding of each other’s environmental priorities. We look forward to continuing our work with Aboriginal groups in northern B.C. to ensure the environment is properly cared for.”

Quick Facts:

- The Province is ensuring First Nation communities can participate in, and benefit from, B.C.’s LNG opportunity through a three-pillared approach: skills training and job creation, economic benefit sharing and environmental stewardship projects.
- Up to \$30 million over three years in new funding has also been committed to support Aboriginal skills training, focused primarily on First Nation communities poised to benefit from LNG development.
- Nearly all First Nations with proposed natural gas pipelines through their traditional territories have signed pipeline benefits agreements with the Province.

Learn More:

LNG ESI web site: <http://ow.ly/QtOGK>

Funding for Aboriginal skills-training projects and partnerships: <http://ow.ly/Q8EeT>

Pipeline benefits agreements the Province has signed with First Nations: <http://ow.ly/FHpLO>

More information on LNG in B.C., including the Province’s latest news, frequently asked questions, and links to LNG skills and training can be found at: www.engage.gov.bc.ca/Inginbc

Follow the conversation on LNG using this hashtag #LNGinBC

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