

May 11, 2021

Honourable Sonya Savage
Minister of Energy and Deputy House Leader
324 Legislature Building
10800 – 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

File #:

Re: Public Engagement on Changes to the 1976 Coal Development Policy

Dear Minister Savage,

I am writing to thank you for your commitment to increased public consultation on the 1976 Coal Development Policy and to reiterate the importance of engaging Albertans and municipalities before making important decisions that impact their lives and rights.

The County was disappointed with the lack of public consultation before the repeal of the 1976 Coal Development Policy on June 1, 2020. The lack of public information and debate before the repeal of the policy left space for unfounded rumors regarding the impacts of the policy to take root and grow. An open public debate, and time to truly understand the impacts of the proposed policies, creates social license and public buy-in.

We were relieved by your February 8, 2021, announcement that you would re-instate the Coal Development Policy and engage in fulsome public consultation before making further decisions. However, the Terms of Reference for the newly formed Coal Policy Committee does not allow for consideration of land use, impacts of coal mining on mountain headwaters, or pollution-related issues.

Therefore, I am writing to request a more fulsome and open public consultation on all impacts of any proposed changes to the 1976 Coal Development Policy. I believe that your government is attempting to do the right thing, but the limitations on public engagement feed into a negative narrative around the proposed changes. Albertans deserve a comprehensive public engagement process, with the full costs and benefits of any policy changes clearly explained and debated in public.

Thank you for taking this letter under consideration, and I hope that you are willing to expand the scope of public engagement to address any concerns that Albertans might have around coal development on the Eastern Slopes.

Sincerely,

Dan Henn
Reeve, Rocky View County

Cc: Rocky View County Council