**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

**LAUNCH OF**

**INDIGENOUS CLEAN ENERGY OPPORTUNITIES (ICEO) ENGAGEMENT**

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 17th, 2021**

1. For Mr. John Kim Bell - Are there any biological carbon sequestration strategy in play; and if so, where, and how are these strategies being implemented?

[*Answered live*](https://ca01web.zoom.us/rec/share/fmE4eK7WjN7fajUJuvAJCE_l8L5KLaRxA7VzGY6H0zyde-JOeSMGPIeSTj7lOe38.BPTGqpR_-xFTE1G-) *(Passcode: ICEO\_Nov17): Yes, I believe that the oil industry and gas industry is looking at carbon sequestration. I don't know that much about it, but what I would say is that there is a reverse danger here that I didn't speak about. British Columbia is one of the three largest natural carbon sinks in Canada, the other two being the McKenzie Valley area in northern Alberta and Northwest territories, and across the north of Ontario into Manitoba where the boreal forest exists right now, and there isn't much legislation in place to study and limit the carbon releasing if you're mining and cutting down all the trees, you're releasing tons and tons of carbon and when you're using equipment in mining. You are producing lots of gas emissions from our carbon emissions from the actual machinery right now in Ontario, for example, there's no there's no laws or regulatory need to study it, but if we are going to lower our carbon footprint there's going to have to be an active discussion and measurement of how we protect these three major carbon sinks and how we everybody has to start measuring their carbon footprint.*

1. Will the revenue share issues be addressed? Current revenue share causing communities to claim territory for the purpose of revenue share, impacting title and rights and more so the daily operation of bands.

*Revenue sharing has been identified as topic area in the* [*ICEO Terms of Reference*](https://indigenouscleanenergyopportunities.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/721/2021/10/ICEO_TOR_202110.pdf)*. We encourage you to fill out the questionnaire, available on the* [*website*](https://indigenouscleanenergyopportunities.gov.bc.ca)*, and to attend one of the regional workshops in March to ensure your priorities are heard.*

*The ICEO is intended to be an opportunity for a fresh dialogue between First Nations and the Province to explore clean energy opportunities, including but not limited to electricity projects, to benefit the broadest possible range of Indigenous communities. The upcoming workshops will be designed to develop a workplan on which priorities to pursue based on First Nation participants’ and the Province’s inputs. These topic areas will represent areas of common interest and may require either, or both, parties to seek mandates on topics before commitments or agreements can be made.*

*To be kept informed about the regional workshops planned for March 2022, please contact Mark Blom at:* *Mark.Blom@fnemc.ca**.*

1. Is the ICEO process an engagement process, or will it provide funding and support for specific Indigenous clean energy projects? Could the program provide funding support for research and concept proving projects?

*The ICEO is an engagement process, not a program to fund clean energy projects. The ICEO is intended to be an opportunity for a fresh dialogue between First Nations and the Province to*

* *explore clean energy opportunities, including but not limited to electricity projects, to benefit the broadest possible range of Indigenous communities, and*
* *examine ways in the Province could support First Nations in benefitting from clean energy opportunities.*

*For further information on program and/or economic development funding opportunities in the clean energy sector, please see:* [Community Climate Funding – Government of British Columbia](https://communityclimatefunding.gov.bc.ca/).

1. Other than communication, how will these opportunities assist First Nation’s guardian programs to support land stewardship?

*We are currently in the process of understanding what the interests are of First Nation communities and organizations in the B.C. clean economy.*

*We recommend participating in the regional workshops to better understand how this process may support land stewardship when considering new clean energy projects in B.C. First Nations guardians’ programs are a provincial and federal priority, and FNEMC is currently developing a report based upon a province-wide webinar held on October 29, 2021.*

1. For Minister Rankin – Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) has not had an energy component and would benefit from a department within ISC. Even with a demand side management program or capacity building. Is there consideration to creating a ISC energy program? Benefits would be in reduced energy cost, more efficient building codes and job creation within First Nation’s territory which are normally imported at higher cost.

*Minister Rankin can not speak on behalf of Canada, and so is unable to speak directly to this question or comment on decisions the federal government makes on its organizational structure or program offerings.*

*However, based on public information sources, the Province can note that Canada has recently announced new targeted programs for clean energy and energy efficiency:*

* *Off-diesel and clean energy transition of communities (NRCan, ISC, and CIRNAC): $300 million over five years*
* *Strategic Partnership initiatives focused on clean energy (ISC): $36 million over three years.*

*Other new programs for clean energy and energy efficiency:*

* *Green and Inclusive Community Buildings (infrastructure): $1.5 billion over 5 years with 10% minimum allocation to Indigenous Peoples*
* *Grants for Home Energy Retrofits (NRCan): $2.6 billion over 7 years.*

*Provincial programs that support the clean energy opportunities described in your question include the* [First Nations Clean Energy Business Fund](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/natural-resource-stewardship/consulting-with-first-nations/first-nations-clean-energy-business-fund) *and* [Clean BC Better Homes/Better Buildings](https://betterhomesbc.ca/)? *For further funding opportunities please see the* [Community Climate Funding – Government of British Columbia](https://communityclimatefunding.gov.bc.ca/).

1. What is ICEO?

*The Indigenous Clean Energy Opportunities (ICEO) process is a jointly designed and co-led engagement process developed by the Province and FNEMC to*

* *explore clean energy opportunities, including but not limited to electricity projects, to benefit the broadest possible range of Indigenous communities, and*
* *examine ways in the Province could support First Nations in benefitting from clean energy opportunities.*

*Further information can be found within the draft ICEO terms of reference (*[*https://indigenouscleanenergyopportunities.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/721/2021/10/ICEO\_TOR\_202110.pdf*](https://indigenouscleanenergyopportunities.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/721/2021/10/ICEO_TOR_202110.pdf) *) and the ICEO website (*<https://indigenouscleanenergyopportunities.gov.bc.ca/>)

1. Where can we access the B.C. First Nations Energy Business Fund?

The First Nations Clean Energy Business Fund is administered by the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation. Further information on the program can be found at this website: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/natural-resource-stewardship/consulting-with-first-nations/first-nations-clean-energy-business-fund>

1. Where can we access the $500 M for housing?

*The Province, through the Building BC: Indigenous Housing Fund, is investing $550 million over 10 years to support the building and operation of 1,750 new units of social housing for projects on and off-reserve. Together, with our non-profit housing providers, the Aboriginal Housing Management Association, Indigenous housing societies and First Nations, we’re working hard to make housing better in all communities. In addition, Indigenous organizations and First Nations can access provincial support under all the new housing funds announced as part of Building BC. This link,* [Indigenous Housing Fund - Program and Proposal Process (bchousing.org)](https://www.bchousing.org/projects-partners/Building-BC/IHF), *will provide you with more information on the program and process.*

1. BC Hydro advertises a $44 billion surplus for its shareholders from time to time. The administration of BC Hydro in Indigenous Communities hits the poorest members with double billing. Social Assistance clients are expected to pay BC Hydro billing before the CHMC rent - mortgage in the client’s name. This adds to the debt and hardships of the clients themselves. If you are found behind in the rent or mortgage, you are then denied other services like education, recreation and medical needs under community and provincial policies working against erasing barriers. So, is it time to erase the double billing Indigenous people?

*BC Hydro and CMHC are independent organizations. BC Hydro bills its customers for the cost of electricity used under rates that are set by the BC Utilities Commission, and that are consistent for all of its customers across the province.*

*BC Hydro understands that some customers face challenges paying for their electricity bills. As a result, BC Hydro offers flexible payment arrangements, as well as programs to help customers reduce their electricity use. For more information, please contact 1-800-BCHYDRO (1-800-224-9376).*

*In addition, the affordability of electricity bills is a potential topic that could be discussed within the ICEO process. For Nations for whom this is a priority, we recommend participate in one of the regional workshops scheduled for the first week of March 2022. At these workshops the Province and the FNEMC will jointly seek input from Nations on priority topics for engagement. To be kept informed about the regional workshops planned for March 2022, please contact Mark Blom at* *Mark.Blom@fnemc.ca**.*

1. For President Chad Day - as a Kaska member that does not live within the territory, how can I engage with my band to take advantage of these opportunities?

*President Day’s response: “I would need to know what ‘these opportunities’ is referring to in order to answer this question more specifically, but generally speaking, if you're having a difficult time getting information from your Indian Act band, it's important to understand that all the high-level decisions are supposed to be made via band council resolutions by the elected council members (including the chief councillor). So if you feel there hasn't been enough engagement on a particular economic opportunity or impact benefit agreement negotiation process, I would first try to reach out to the person or group in charge of engaging with members, and if that doesn't work, you could eventually reach out to multiple council members and politely ask them to help ensure that their constituents (band members that voted them into place) are better informed and/or involved to take advantage of economic development opportunities. “*

1. Minister Rankin referenced Indigenous led clean energy projects along with the First Nations Clean Energy Business Fund, yet with the cancellation of the Standing Offer Program and BC Hydro's Draft IRP highlighting an energy surplus, how is this administration going to structure energy procurement opportunities? He highlighted the Tsilhqot'in Solar Farm as an example and this project was one of the last projects to be commissioned under the SOP?

*The First Nations Clean Energy Business Fund was created to support First Nations in participating clean electricity generation projects at a time when the marketplace for the sale of power to BC Hydro was active. That market shifted significantly when BC Hydro’s supply of electricity moved into a surplus around 2015 due to lower than anticipated industrial demand and other factors. Since then, the First Nations Clean Energy Business Fund has shifted its focus to support First Nations in other clean energy opportunities, including development of community clean energy plans, energy efficiency projects, and transitioning remote communities away from diesel generation.*

*The jointly designed and co-led ICEO engagement presents the opportunity to explore what First Nations’ participation in existing and emerging clean energy opportunities might look like to benefit the broadest possible range of communities and meet rights holders’ interests. In doing so, the scope will include, but go beyond clean electricity generation and include new opportunities under CleanBC, including biofuels, hydrogen and renewable gases.*

*We recommend that you participate in one of the regional workshops, scheduled for the first week of March 2022 Indigenous ownership in independent power projects is on the current list of* [*potential*](https://indigenouscleanenergyopportunities.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/721/2021/10/ICEO_TOR_202110.pdf) *topics for discussion under the ICEO. At the regional workshops the Province and FNEMC will jointly seek First Nations’ input on these and other topics, and the priority order in which they should be discussed. To be kept informed about the regional workshops planned for March 2022, please contact Mark Blom at* *Mark.Blom@fnemc.ca**.*

1. For President Chad Day - what does your land and waters look like now with this much mining in your areas?

*President Day’s response: “Our land mass is very large - nearly the size of Portugal. We have two operating mines (Red Chris + Brucejack) and another mine that wants to be operating again (Silvertip). There are approximately 30 mineral exploration projects as well, but their footprint is minimal compared to an operating mine. We have shut down most jade mining operators and fewer will exist into the future. All that being said, a very small percentage of our territory is actually being disturbed by mining projects, and given the environmental mitigation measures and involvement we have in place, coupled with the economic benefits that flow back to our collective Tahltan Nation from these activities, we are currently in a place as a nation where I would assert we are taking a balanced and responsible approach to how we are utilizing and protecting our homeland.”*

1. For President Chad Day - what is the life expectancy of the mines? How will the remediation and mitigation be funded?

*President Day’s response: “Red Chris mine will likely run another 50+ years, and Brucejack mine another 20+ years. The companies fund the remediation and mitigation work.”*

1. Can I get contact information for President Chad Day?

*Tahltan Nation Office*

*Box 69 Tat'lah*

*Dease Lake, BC VOC 1LO*

*Phone: 1-250-771-3274 or 1-866 824-5826*

1. What funding opportunities are available for electric vehicles & build a re-charging station?

TheMinistry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation has developed a number of initiatives under the CleanBC Go Electric Program that may be applicable. To find out more, you can contact Megan Shepherd, Policy Analyst, Clean Transportation Branch at Megan.Shepherd@gov.bc.ca, Or you can click on this link: [Community Climate Funding – Government of British Columbia](https://communityclimatefunding.gov.bc.ca/) to find available funding opportunities and upcoming deadlines.

1. The BCUC rate review process failed indigenous people who are the majority in off grid communities. Anahim Lake, Altin, Dease Lake, Elhlateese, Fort Ware, Good Hope Lake, Haida Gwaii, Hartley Bay, Jade City, Telegraph Creek District, Toad River, Tsay Keh Dene all pay the higher Zone II rates. BCUC failed these special shareholders, long ignored, and marginalized by BC Hydro, in favour of the colonial majority – rate payers. If the government wants to reconcile, have one rate for all rate payers. There is only one excuse for special higher rates for indigenous peoples, and it is not geography. When is the government going to legislate equality?

*Thank you for raising your concerns about current rate structure for the stated areas.*

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*If you would like to see the topic of electricity rate structures in off-grid communities, included for discussion within the ICEO, we recommend that you register and participate in one of the regional workshops, scheduled for the first week of March 2022, once registration opens. At these workshops we will review the list of topics for engagement and prioritize them for discussion over the course of the ICEO engagement process.*

1. Will the compensation for past infringements include today’s infringements?

*The overall goal of the ICEO process is a collaborative dialogue with First Nations rights holders and organizations to position rights holders to fully participate in current and future opportunities in British Columbia’s clean energy sector to improve the economic, environmental, social, and cultural outcomes for First Nations in British Columbia.*

*This will involve building relationships based on trust and respect for each other’s perspectives and rooted in recognition and respect for each side’s authorities, responsibilities, and internal structures and processes.*

*Consistent with this, the Province is open to a fresh conversation on these and other issues to enhance its understanding of First Nations’ views and present the Province’s perspectives. From there, Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation staff, and/or and First Nations would have to seek mandates before commitments or agreements can be made on any of the issues of common interest that are explored under the engagement.*

1. Will hemp initiatives also be considered in these opportunities?

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*If you would like to see the topic of hemp included for discussion within the ICEO, we recommend that you register and participate in one of the regional workshops, scheduled for the first week of March 2022, once registration opens. At these workshops we will review the list of topics for engagement and prioritize them for discussion over the course of the ICEO engagement process.*

1. For President Chad Day - How did the Tahltan Nation negotiate a tax revenue sharing agreement, and did the Tahltan Nation negotiate a redress payment from past extraction of resources on their traditional lands?

*President Day’s response: “Tax revenue sharing agreements with indigenous peoples in BC on major projects are now rather standard across the Province (although it gets tricky in "overlap" areas with neighboring First Nation groups), as the Province recognized many years ago that they had a legal responsibility to share meaningful benefits with indigenous peoples when there were permanent or longstanding impacts on their collective title and rights. We have not negotiated a redress payment for past extraction, but the recent signing of the Shared Prosperity Agreement provides additional funds for us to expand our economic development assets and efforts. “*

Responses to questions directed to Chief Gordon Planes will be added to this document when received.