



Suite 214, 9914 Morrison St.
Fort McMurray, Alberta
Canada T9H 4A4

Tel (780) 799-3947
Fax (780) 714-3081

May 8, 2008

Mr. Jim Ellis
Deputy Minister
Alberta Environment
10th Floor, South Petroleum Plaza Building
9915-108 Street
Edmonton, AB T5K 2G8

Mr. Eric McGhan
Deputy Minister
Alberta Sustainable Resource Development
11th Floor, South Petroleum Plaza Building
9915-108 Street
Edmonton, AB T5K 2G8

Peter Watson
Deputy Minister
Alberta Energy
10h Floor, North Petroleum Plaza
9945 - 108 St.
Edmonton, AB T5K 2G6

Dear Sirs:

Thank you for your March 7, 2008 response to our recommendation for maintaining conservation land options in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo. The Cumulative Environmental Management Association (CEMA) is concerned that your brief response provided limited direction about the Government of Alberta's path forward for the recommendation. We are writing to specifically seek clarification on the Government of Alberta's position and proposed actions and timelines to address CEMA's recommendation on protected areas.

CEMA submitted this urgent recommendation to the government before completing our final Terrestrial Ecosystem Management Framework for two reasons:



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- First, establishment of an expanded Protected Zone is fundamental to the success of the Framework. Without Protected Areas it may be impossible to meet the management objectives for the environmental goals and indicators, and achieve an optimum balance among environmental, social and economic needs in the region.
- Second, rapid sales of resource tenure in the region are reducing the availability of land for an expanded Protected Zone. CEMA submitted the recommendation in January 2008, several months before the projected date of submission of our Final Management Framework to the Alberta Government to assist with identifying sites for Protected Areas to minimize potential land use conflicts and compensation issues.

We understand that one of the Alberta Government's top five priorities is to ensure Alberta's energy resources are developed in an environmentally sustainable way, and that the Government of Alberta is leading the work to address the cumulative impacts of development on land, air, water and biodiversity through management system integrated with Alberta's Land-use Framework (LUF). CEMA believes the Terrestrial Ecosystem Management Framework (TEMF) will provide a good path forward to develop Alberta's energy resources in an environmentally sustainable way and to address the impacts of development on ecosystems. CEMA continues to work towards approval of the Management Framework in June, for submission to the Alberta Government for integration into the Land Use Framework planning processes in June 2008.

Action by the province in a timely fashion would help provide tangible evidence to CEMA members and the Alberta Public that the Government is serious about delivering on the intent to develop resources in an environmentally sustainable way. Several stakeholders in CEMA are anxious to get government direction on this recommendation to help them evaluate where they should engage their future efforts.

CEMA respectfully requests that the Government provide specific response to our January 2008 recommendation, including where possible a review of the potential options considered. If helpful, CEMA's Management Committee would be pleased to meet with you to get clarification about the Government of Alberta direction on the Management Framework recommendation.

Sincerely,

Randall Barrett
CEMA President

Judy Smith
CEMA Vice-President

