



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

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

October 23, 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

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

Dear Mr. Ellis, Mr. McGhan, and Mr. Watson

### **Importance of Role of the Cumulative Environmental Management Association in Regional Planning Initiatives**

CEMA is asking the Alberta government to provide direction on their view of the future role for our organization in the management of cumulative effects in northeast Alberta. CEMA has nominated representatives to the Regional Advisory Council responsible for the North East Alberta Regional plan; and we are hopeful our representative will be able to provide the Advisory Council information about CEMA's findings and reports. The Alberta Government, however, has announced several initiatives that risk overlapping with CEMA's activities including:

- Land Use Framework and an emerging regional plan for Northeast Alberta
- A proposed new cumulative effects management system for the province, including regional pilot projects



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

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

- Watershed Planning and Advisory Council for the Lower Athabasca River under the Water For Life Strategy

Despite our good working relationship with the Government of Alberta, it is not clear to us how these initiatives fit together and how they might relate to the current and future role of CEMA. As you might expect, members of CEMA are concerned due to uncertainty that is presented to our organization. Three non-government organizations recently resigned as members of CEMA partially based on the assumption that an alternate body was available to manage cumulative effects in the province. Funding organizations are also concerned that these planning processes may risk duplicating a portion of CEMA's work.

Members of our organization are concerned about the lack of timely responses and implementation by the provincial government of recent recommendations our association has put forward to the government. This was particularly evident on two recent recommendations:

- On September 11, 2008 we received a response to the CEMA recommendation for a Terrestrial Ecosystem Management Framework we sent in June 2008. The response indicated that the recommendations would be addressed during the development of the regional plan that provides the appropriate context in which to address the full suite of values in the region.
- On June 30, 2008, we submitted an Interim Nitrogen (Eutrophication) Management Recommendations and Work Plan. On August 2, 2008, Alberta responded that the recommendations within this document would be considered as part of a regional plan for Northeast Alberta under the Land Use Framework.

With respect to the Terrestrial Ecosystem Management Framework (TEMF), CEMA members are concerned that the TRIAD land management approach may not be incorporated into the new planning process for Northeast Alberta. The continued selling of leases in areas modeled for protection seems to indicate new protected areas will not be included in the new plan. Clarity on whether new protected areas are going to be considered in the planning process would be most appreciated.

We respectfully request that as soon as possible the government clarify their expectations on the future role that CEMA will play in the management of cumulative effects in Northeast Alberta, and particularly in relation to the emerging Northeast Regional Plan. Members of the CEMA Management



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

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

Committee are looking forward to meeting with you on November 7, 2008 to discuss these issues and chart a path forward.

Sincerely,

Randall Barrett  
CEMA President

Judy Smith  
CEMA Vice-President

(On behalf of the CEMA General Membership)

cc: CEMA Management Committee (by email)