

Dear Minister Wilson,

I am writing in relation to the Focus Report on Northern Pulp's Proposed Replacement Effluent Treatment Facility Project. I wrote to the previous Minister in response to the initial proposal and after reviewing the Focus Report I remain opposed to this project.

I grew up in Pictou, in a large family of whom various members were employed by the Mill and others in the fishing industry. After high school I moved to Halifax where I studied Nursing and enjoyed a 35+ year career in health care as a Registered Nurse. I return to Pictou County often, am concerned about wellbeing of the residents there and wish to address two factors involved in this proposed project: the Pipe and the Effluent.

First, in regards to the Pipe that will carry the Effluent from the Mill across Pictou Harbour and Pictou watershed area out into Caribou Harbour, I have read about the proposed HDPE pipe and how very strong and safe it is supposed to be. I have read about the proposed construction process to install the Pipe. I have also read about proposed leak detection monitoring. But this sentence in the Focus Report, Appendix 2.1, Page iii, On-Land Pipeline Info: "Final technology for the leak detection system will be completed during detailed design", is concerning to me. Pipes have a history of leaking. Northern Pulp has a history of Pipes leaking Effluent: on June 10, 2014 more than 47,000,000 litres of untreated pulp and paper Effluent spilled onto sacred Mi'kmaw burial grounds and into East River/Pictou Harbour. An Effluent leak at Indian Cross Point during October 2018 remains under investigation. Some leaks have been detected by residents of the area rather than Northern Pulp itself. Yet you are being asked to approve a project where toxic Effluent will be piped across the Town of Pictou's drinking water supply area and the leak detection system hasn't even been designed.

Reading through the Pictou/ Caribou Source Water Protection Plan of Oct 16 2017, prepared for NSE, I learned that water is a provincial resource and the Town of Pictou holds water withdrawal approvals for its two wellfields: Pictou and Caribou. I also learned that "In 2002 NSE introduced its Drinking Water Strategy to ensure clean drinking water for all Nova Scotians." How does allowing the installation of a Pulp Mill Effluent Pipe fit within this health promotion strategy? This proposed project, from construction through to operation, seems at odds with the principles of water stewardship brought forward by NSE and puts the town's drinking water, a basic need for all life, at risk.

My second concern is the nature of the Effluent and it's potential effect on the shoreline, marine environment and the fishing industry. From the Focus Report, Project Description, 2.3 Characterization of Effluent I learned that the exact composition of the Effluent remains unclear (pun intended). I believe there remains little doubt it is an environmentally hazardous substance. Diluting Effluent, through distribution into the Northumberland Strait near Caribou Harbour is not a solution. Caribou Harbour - teeming with tidal organisms, Caribou Monroe's Island Provincial Park and wildlife preserve, a vulnerable fish hatchery, a bird sanctuary and sandy beaches are a few of the precious natural resources found in that area. All could be

negatively impacted and even destroyed over time by millions of litres of Effluent per day discharging from Northern Pulp Mill.

The Pictou County Pulp Mill, now Northern Pulp, has operated for more than fifty years and displayed a lack of accountability to the public over that time. The well documented stack test failures, Effluent leaks, and notoriously the environmental racism that resulted in Boat Harbour have made it obvious that the Mill Management are not good corporate citizens and cannot be trusted.

Pictou County families deserve a healthy environment in which to live and grow, not one where the air they breathe and the water they drink are contaminated by a Pulp Mill whose goal is profit for offshore investors.

It is for these reasons that I respectfully request you decline approval of Northern Pulp's Proposed Replacement Effluent Treatment Facility Project.

Sincerely,

Francine Topple