

MEMBER'S STATEMENT – GREAT SLAVE – OCTOBER 7, 2008

DOWNSTREAM IMPACTS OF TAR SANDS DEVELOPMENT

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last night, I attended the world premiere of the Akaitcho Territory Dene First Nations¹⁹ film, *Tu Beta Ts'ena*, which is "Water is Life." At that film we were introduced to Terry Woolf, who did the filming, AlexCzarnecki, who was the director, and Norm _____, who wrote some original songs for the movie.

Also during the film, the facilitator was encouraging members of the audience to go out into the foyer after the meeting and get copies of some letters they had prepared to be distributed to the Premier of the Northwest Territories, the Premier of Alberta and the Prime Minister of Canada. As part of my Member's statement, I would like to read from the letter they are directing to the Premier of the Northwest Territories. It goes as follows:

"Dear Premier Floyd Roland,

"I just viewed the premiere of *Tu Beta Ts'ena*, "Water is Life", a film production of the Akaitcho Territory Dene First Nation. This documentary confirms my concerns that there must be an immediate halt to new tar sands development and extensive study of the cumulative impact of current oil and gas development prior to further exploration.

“We need to know the cumulative effects to assess the impact of this industrial development on the water, land, animals and people who live downstream from the tar sands in the Northwest Territories and Northern Alberta. I am shocked to learn how little consultation there has been with people living downstream. Responsible development is a matter of justice. I urge you to protect the health, culture, environment and economy of the Northwest Territories by joining the growing call for a halt to new tar sands development and adequate study of the cumulative effects of development to date. Your constituents deserve no less.

“I look forward to hearing what you are doing to protect this important ecosystem and people who live here.”

Mr. Speaker, I imagine that many of these letters will be sent to the Premier over the next couple of days, and I encourage him and Cabinet to take them seriously.