



File: 30200-20/TENCO-05-08

Reference: 396896

February 8, 2023

**SENT VIA EMAIL**

Jeff McKay  
Chair  
Bulkley Valley Community Resources Board  
[info@bvcrb.ca](mailto:info@bvcrb.ca)

Dear Jeff McKay:

Thank you for your letter dated November 25, 2022 and received by the Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) on January 3, 2023, on behalf of Bulkley Valley Community Resources Board (BVCRB). As the EAO's lead for the Tenas Project, I would like to provide you with responses to the concerns in your letter.

Meeting Between the EAO and BVCRB

Although I was not personally in attendance, I understand that the meeting between the EAO and BVCRB on January 20, 2023, provided an opportunity to discuss the public engagement completed to date, future opportunities for public engagement, transition of the project to the 2018 *Environmental Assessment Act*, extensions provided for local experts to provide feedback on the project, how information provided by the proponent is considered against other expert input, and how the Bulkley Valley Land Use and Resource Management Plan has been incorporated into the review.

Request for a Public Hearing Panel

Your letter specifically requests that a public hearing panel be created for the Tenas Project's Environmental Assessment (EA) process and this request was made again during the meeting between the EAO and BVCRB on January 20, 2023. This request has been previously brought up by other local interested parties and at this time EAO is not considering a public hearing panel as part of the EA. However, there are other

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opportunities for the public and members of the BVCRB to provide meaningful feedback on the proposed Tenas Project. The public will have an opportunity to review and comment on the EAO's draft referral materials, including the EAO's assessment report and draft EA Certificate conditions, during a minimum 30-day public comment period during the Effects Assessment and Recommendation phase. The draft referral materials are based on recommendations and feedback from our technical advisory committee (formerly referred to as the working group), on which the BVCRD has representation, as well as feedback from Indigenous nations and the public. Please note that the EAO aims to write our referral materials in more accessible, plain language for ease of public consumption and the EAO will provide the public with advance notice of the start of the next public comment period.

### Clarification on the Environmental Assessment Process

During the meeting between EAO and BVCRB, some clarification around the EA process was provided which hopefully helped to highlight opportunities for continued engagement. As discussed in the meeting, you had voiced concerns over the previously held Open House only showing information from the proponent. The last in person Open House lead by the EAO on June 1, 2022, as well as the EAO's Virtual Information Session held June 8, 2022, occurred during the Application Review phase of the 2002 *Environmental Assessment Act*. During this phase of the process, the EAO seeks input on the proponent's application from Indigenous nations, technical experts, and the public. During the Open House and Virtual Information Session, the proponent presented their proposed project to members of the public and the EAO relayed information on the EA process. Now that the project has transitioned into the 2018 *Environmental Assessment Act*, the proponent must address significant issues that have been identified by the EAO, Indigenous nations, the technical advisory committee (TAC), and the public. For more information on transition to the 2018 Act and EA process, please see the [Transition Order](#) on our website, as well as the [Reasons for Decision](#) letter, and the Information Requests related to [caribou](#), [water](#), [Office of the Wet'suwet'en](#) and [Witset First Nation](#).

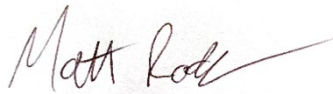
### Technical Advisory Committee

Though this topic was not discussed during the January 20 meeting, I would like to take this opportunity to remind you that the BVCRB has two members assigned to the TAC and to date, there has been no feedback from these members on the proponent's application, or on the [Issues Tracking Table](#), which details technical comments from the TAC and responses from the proponent. The BVCRB will have additional opportunities to submit meaningful feedback on the EAO's assessment report and other key documents as part of the TAC during the remainder of the EA process and I strongly encourage the BVCRB to take advantage of their role on the TAC going forward.

In closing, I would like to share that the EAO is planning a visit to Smithers to meet with EA participants for the Tenas Project from March 6 to 8. I would like to extend an invitation to meet with the BVCRB to provide available updates on the proposed Tenas Project, and to discuss your request for a public hearing panel and next steps in the EA process. Please reach out to schedule an in-person meeting in the community in March.

Thank you for your continued interest in the Tenas EA process. If you have any further questions, please contact me at [Matthew.Rodgers@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Matthew.Rodgers@gov.bc.ca) or 778 698-9319.

With thanks,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matt Rodgers". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Matt Rodgers  
Project Assessment Director

Attachment: (1)

cc: Marla Bojarski  
Project Assessment Officer  
Environmental Assessment Office  
[Marla.Bojarski@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Marla.Bojarski@gov.bc.ca)