

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release September 15, 2011

The Mokami Status of Women Council, with FemNorthNet, says a moratorium on further development relating to the Muskrat Falls Hydro Electric Development Project is essential in light of the Joint Panel Review of the Lower Churchill Project's report released in August.

"We feel vindicated in our conclusion that NALCOR did not engage in consultation with the community. The Panel rightly highlighted the significant impacts this development will have on our communities and how unprepared we will be to deal with increased demands for housing and social supports," said Petrina Beals, the Council's Executive Director.

"Our message has always been talk with the people in the community who will be affected by this development. The Panel's report demonstrates how important meaningful dialogue with community is for any development process."

Ms. Beals said the Panel also highlighted the long term, cumulative effects from previous developments on the communities in Labrador as well as the anticipated changes associated with the communities in Labrador such as in-migration and the potential risk of irreversible damage to the river and its ecosystems.

"Developments have the potential to bring tremendous benefits to communities, but also tremendous risks particularly for certain subpopulations. We must be careful that the benefits which should accrue to Labrador and its peoples do not come at a price we cannot afford," said Ms. Beals.

"Our submissions during the hearing process demonstrated the inadequacy of NALCOR's Environmental Impact statement. Our capacity as a community is already compromised and NALCOR ignored the overwhelming evidence put forward about our current situation. We want the provincial government to take the opportunity offered by the Panel's report and take a very careful second and third look at what Muskrat Falls really means to the people who will be directly affected by its development."

The Mokami Status of Women Council is a feminist, equality-seeking organization operating in Happy Valley-Goose Bay since 1979. FemNorthNet is a network of researchers and community-based organizations focused on researching issues of sustainable economic development and its impact on community health and social well being in northern Canada.

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