

Minister's statement



July 21, 2011

Minister Renner responds to federal monitoring technical reports

Edmonton... Alberta Environment Minister Rob Renner issued the following statement in response to Environment Canada's July 21 release of a series of technical documents about monitoring surface water, the aquatic ecosystem, air quality, and biodiversity in the oil sands region.

"These technical reports completed by the federal government add to the work submitted to the province earlier this month by the Alberta Environmental Monitoring Panel. Our goal remains to work with the federal government to develop a state-of-the-art monitoring, evaluation and reporting system.

"We are currently undertaking a thorough examination of the technical and strategic advice provided to determine how to put it into action. The advice of the provincial panel, combined with the federal technical reports, will help us to develop an implementation plan, which we are aggressively working on.

"The bottom line is that we want the best system possible. The Alberta government will work jointly with the federal government to give Albertans and Canadians full confidence that our environment is being protected and that development is occurring responsibly. It is critical that effective cooperation and collaboration exist to avoid duplication of efforts and costs.

"Although there is still a lot of work to do before we get a new system in place, we are not starting from scratch. Several recent reports indicate the need to better integrate and improve existing monitoring in the region, but also acknowledge the strong foundation in place for a new monitoring system.

"We know there is good monitoring already underway in Alberta - by government, industry and environmental groups. We also know that our system must evolve and be better integrated as oil sands production increases.

"Expectations from Albertans and others around the globe are high - the world is watching. Going forward, as the foundation for a new environmental monitoring, evaluation and reporting system continues to grow, I have no doubt we will meet those expectations."

A video version of this statement is found at: <http://environment.alberta.ca/01548.html>

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