



June 21, 2021

Paul Anderson, Director
Western Energy Corridor Inc.

Paul.Anderson@WesternEnergyCorridor.ca

Dear Paul Anderson:

Thank you for your March 23, 2021, letter in which you requested a regional assessment of a proposed Western Energy Corridor under subsection 97(1) of the *Impact Assessment Act* (the IAA), and for the additional information you submitted on May 17, 2021.

Under the IAA, a regional assessment of the effects of existing or future physical activities in a region may be conducted. Upon receipt of your request, the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (the Agency) undertook a detailed review, using the applicable guidance related to regional assessment requests. Following careful consideration and analysis of your request, I have determined not to conduct a regional assessment of a proposed Western Energy Corridor at this time, for the reasons described below.

I recognize that the underlying objective of Western Energy Corridor Inc. is the identification and advancement of the multi-use corridor concept to help facilitate future energy development in the region (including possible pipelines, transmission lines, and others). In my view, further discussions are required between the federal government, implicated provincial governments, Western Energy Corridor Inc., and other parties as to whether there is the potential for multiple developments to occur within the identified corridor in the reasonably foreseeable future.

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One of the key objectives of regional assessments under the IAA is to inform and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of future project-specific impact assessments. I am also of the view that there are other existing regulatory frameworks and initiatives that are well placed to consider and address the potential (and often project- and location-specific) effects of large-scale linear developments such as that which might eventually be proposed within such a corridor. This includes robust project-specific impact assessments undertaken at the appropriate stage of project planning and design.

While I have decided not to proceed with such a regional assessment at this time for the reasons outlined above, there is certainly merit in continuing to identify and explore such corridors as a means of helping facilitate energy projects and other economic development activities in Canada. Doing so will require early and ongoing discussions between federal, provincial and/or territorial governments, Indigenous groups, industry, and other stakeholders to identify possibilities, priorities and benefits. I would therefore encourage your organization to continue to participate in such discussions and collaborations as you continue your work on a proposed Western Energy Corridor.

Thank you again for taking the time to prepare and submit this regional assessment request.

Sincerely,

<original signed by>

The Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson, P.C., M.P.