

Martin Haefele

From: Alestine Andre [aandre@learnnet.nt.ca]
Sent: April 16, 2004 11:42 AM
To: Martin Haefele
Subject: From Alestine Andre

Friday, April 16th

Attn: Martin Haefele

Re: The Mega Project - the Proposed Mackenzie Valley Gas Project

I am a Gwichya Gwich'in woman from Tsiigehtchic who lived and travelled on the land, in my youth with my family - parents, grandmother and extended family - in the Tree River and Travaillant Lake areas. Today, I still go to my family's fish camp on the Mackenzie River every summer to make dry fish and to be on the land.

The impacts from the mere building of the pipeline will be long term and even 'forever'. The impacts will ripple back and forth throughout the Mackenzie Valley for many years to come. My expression here will be about the direct impacts on individuals, the environment. Even the process has an impact, as we speak.

The impacts on the individual

As I live today and wherever I am, I cannot get the land out of my blood especially the land around Tree River. I wish to say that there are many Gwich'in people like me who live in Aklavik, Fort McPherson, Inuvik, Tsiigehtchic and elsewhere in Canada who still feel a passion for the land. The impact are therefore on the hearts of individuals, myself included, as we hear about our aboriginal leaders and territorial government supporting and backing the construction of this pipeline.

The impacts on the environment.

This one will be short. The impacts and damage to the land will be permanent, as permanent as the seismic lines of the 1960s and the recent 'temporary' winter access roads are today. The northern environment is delicate!

The impacts of processes

The many 'westernized' processes that are carried out regarding this mega project, mostly in hard-to-understand terminology and technological schemes, are too intimidating and too complex for most individuals in our communities. There are many complex wheeling and dealings that happen in southern board rooms between Gwich'in leaders, oil and gas companies, and the governments that many every day individuals, myself included, will never understand. That is the simple fact!

Thank you for allowing me to say my peace.

Alestine Andre