

## Kokish River Hydroelectric Project Consultation on Draft *Terms of Reference* – Environmental Assessment

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### **Potential Socio-Economic and Socio-Community Related Impacts**

#### **Background**

Kwagis Power, a limited partnership of Brookfield Renewable Power and the 'Namgis First Nation, is proposing to develop a run-of-river hydroelectric power project on the Kokish River on northeastern Vancouver Island, approximately 50 km southeast of Port Hardy, 15 km east of the Town of Port McNeill, and 4.5 km southwest of Telegraph Cove. The Kokish River Hydroelectric Project would generate up to 45 megawatts of clean renewable power, producing enough electrical energy to supply approximately 15,000 homes each year.

The Kokish River Hydroelectric Project is subject to a harmonized federal and provincial environmental assessment process under the BC *Environmental Assessment Act* (BCEAA) and the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* (CEAA).

#### **Environmental Assessment Application**

Kwagis Power must receive Environmental Certification under the BCEAA before the Project can proceed. The first step in this process is to obtain approval from the BC Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) regarding a draft *Terms of Reference* (TOR), a document that specifies the studies to be conducted and the information that Kwagis Power must provide in its application for an Environmental Assessment Certificate.

In addition to a detailed Project description and summary of public, First Nations and government consultation programs, the Environmental Assessment Certificate Application will present the findings of the following socio-economic and socio-community assessments. For each assessment study, the Application will describe scope and methodology, project-related impacts and benefits, recommended mitigation measures, and the potential for residual effects.

As required under CEAA, the Application will also address potential accidents and malfunctions, effects of the environment on the Project, and cumulative environmental effects.

#### **First Nations Traditional and Current Use and Ecological Knowledge**

Non-confidential summary of information shared by involved First Nations regarding traditional and current use and knowledge of lands and resources in the Project area and associated First Nations economies, assessment of potential project-related impacts on traditional and current use and the relative importance of sites used to carry out these activities in the Project area, and recommended monitoring protocols and mitigation measures to avoid and/or minimize adverse impacts.

#### **Archaeology and Heritage Resources Assessment**

This assessment will identify First Nations with an interest in the Project area and describe the area's archaeological potential and the extent, condition and significance of known archaeological and heritages sites. It will also summarize any potential project-related impacts to archaeological and heritages resources and describe the monitoring and mitigation measures to be used to avoid and/or minimize these impacts.

### ***Land, Water and Resource Use Assessment***

Summary of federal, provincial and local government land use designations and prevailing land use regime in the Project area, a description of land acquisition issues, and an assessment of potential impacts to existing land and river use, including forestry, mineral exploration and extraction, tourism and recreation use (e.g., whitewater paddling, hunting, angling), guide-outfitting and trapping. The Application will describe issues related to and resource access during all Project stages and identify mitigation measures to avoid and/or minimize adverse impacts.

### ***Socio-economic/Socio-community Assessment***

Description of potential impacts of the Project on identified socio-economic and socio-community attributes and features such as the existing housing and accommodation supply, business and commercial activities, transportation infrastructure, local and regional services (including education, justice, policing, fire protection, infrastructure and social support services) and public health.

### ***Noise Impact Assessment***

Description of potential noise impacts during Project construction, decommissioning of temporary facilities, and operation and maintenance, including identification of potential noise sensitive receptors (including residences, daycares and schools) and their distance from the Project, potential sources, levels and duration of noise associated with the Project and potential effects of Project-related noise on human health.

### ***Visual Quality Assessment***

Description of Visual Quality Objectives and/or scenic areas located within and adjacent to the Project area, assessment of potential effects on visual quality associated with specific Project facilities (e.g., powerhouse and switchyard) and recommended mitigation measures to minimize these effects.

### ***Consultation on Draft Terms of Reference***

A 30-day public comment period on the draft TOR is taking place from January 12 to February 11, 2009. After taking public comments into account, the EAO will finalize and issue the approved TOR to Kwagis Power. For more information on how to participate in the consultation and to view the draft TOR, please visit [www.eao.gov.bc.ca](http://www.eao.gov.bc.ca) or [www.kokishriver.com](http://www.kokishriver.com). Copies of the draft TOR document are also available for public review at the Alert Bay Public Library and the Vancouver Island Regional Library, Port McNeill Branch.

### **Contact Us**

Your input will help us to plan, design and implement a better project. We encourage you to share questions, comments or ideas on the Kokish River Hydroelectric Project by email, phone, fax or mail.

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