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PRESS RELEASE

CARRIER SEKANI TRIBAL COUNCIL COMMENCES FEDERAL COURT CHALLENGE IN ENBRIDGE GATEWAY PIPELINE PROJECT

The Carrier Sekani Tribal Council (CSTC) has filed an application in Federal Court challenging the decision of Minister of the Environment, Rona Ambrose to appoint a Joint Review Panel with the National Energy Board in the environmental assessment of the proposed Enbridge Gateway Pipeline project.

The CSTC has asked the Court to overturn the Minister's September 29th decision which was made without consultation with the CSTC, despite a series of requests for consultation made by CSTC, commencing in January 2006.

Approximately 450 km of the proposed pipeline would cross the traditional territory of the CSTC, to which the CSTC claims aboriginal rights and title and which remains unresolved in the B.C. Treaty Process. The CSTC has written to the Minister of the Environment and other federal Ministers on several occasions to express its concern about the profound impacts that the project would have on the CSTC, and asking that the CSTC have a role in decision-making with respect to Enbridge's proposal.

CSTC Tribal Chief David Luggi said: "The Courts have said that the Crown has a duty to consult with First Nations that will be affected by major infrastructure projects, from the earliest stages of those projects. This referral effectively decides how the major decisions will be made about the Enbridge project, but the decision was made without consulting with the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council, despite our many requests, and despite the fact that a third of the project's B.C. route crosses our traditional territory. The Courts have been clear that First Nations can no longer be ignored in this way, and we are challenging the Minister's decision."

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