



**BRITISH COLUMBIA CONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATION**

**KEEP BC BUILDING!**

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## **Environmental Assessments**

As a province with the highest number of projects under environmental assessment in Canada, finding an efficient and streamlined approach to approvals, or disapprovals, is critically important for BC.

In Northern BC alone eight mines and a natural gas pipeline, currently under assessment could provide as many as 4000 construction jobs and as many as 2000 permanent ones. Given the state of the economy such potential to boost the local economy should not be unnecessarily hindered. Industry will need a more certain and timely process if such jobs are going to come our way.

Environmental assessments in BC are still a two tiered process, with both provincial and federal assessments required. While BC assessments have legislated timelines, the federal process is significantly more open-ended. As a result many projects assessments can be three to four years in the making and often end in a “no” causing job opportunities to leave the province as companies seek more reasonable assessment climates in other locations.

Untimely environmental assessments are not just a problem for large companies. Smaller companies, with even less ability to withstand long delays are also being faced with unreasonable time frames for responses.

The provincial government must endeavor to streamline and shorten the review process and avoid the duplications that result in the current two-tiered system. As an example the Province could look to the Yukon Territory where a one-window process has been implemented and the federal government has devolved responsibility for the management of the environmental assessment process to an arm’s-length government agency.

**We recommend that the Provincial Government work with the Federal Government to develop a one-window process for environmental assessments that will result in an accountable and well-managed process completed in a time-sensitive manner.**

*The BC Construction Association represents over 1900 construction related member companies from across BC. Our member companies are both large and small, union and open-shop, and active primarily in the ICI sector.*