

Response to OPR Discussion Questions

Apeiron was able to meet with communities and hold conversations over the last few months. While the discussion was focused on the majority of the questions asked by the OPR discussion paper, some other questions were seen by members as tangential to their concerns. To date, Apeiron has worked with these communities through TLU studies, workshops, and regulatory support. Throughout these processes common themes have emerged and are captured below. Even though each impacted community is in a different geographically, they share many common concerns as Métis people of Alberta.

Answers from communities:

1. Overall the biggest challenge has been language. Communicating with Indigenous peoples who do not have a legal background has not been considered in this or many other CER papers. An overall call for simplified and clear language would be good. As well, many would like to understand the regulations, but these documents are very technical
2. First, reconciliation without truth cannot happen. Emphasis on learning and having the CER and proponents being educated: what actions are they taking should be covered in any documents. Two other ideas is an expansion of involvement in monitoring programs and an enlargement of Indian Advisor Committee for each area.
3. Extend the area of consideration in projects, as Metis historically were highly mobile people. Existing plans on projects do not consider this and should expand their scope areas to be more accurate. The project footprint should be larger than the RoW. The interest should be beyond area of interest. The are trapping line, hunting grounds or medicinal plant harvesting are sometimes beyond the footprint of the project.
4. Assist in maintenance/preservation of significant sites such as memorials or sacred spaces, as many groups are unable to financially upgrade or preserve the sites. Contributions to these spaces would also fit into Truth and Reconciliation actions. There should be support for conducting TLU/TK studies as part of identifying, documenting, and preserving these sites
5. Integrate historical and current land use discussions from day one of the project, not as an add on. It's great that they are seeking information about traditional ways to fight fires, but more involvement is needed. One way to increase employment as well. The key is "integrate" not the current language of "consideration of indigenous knowledge" that is currently being discussed.

6. The expansion of the Indigenous Monitoring Program should be a main priority and encompass all stages including the water and land reclamation, safety and security as well.
7. Open up the dialogue and come into community more often, with seminars and more meeting with the general community. While sending documents and keeping updated information is useful, it still isolates many people from the overall process. The key note is more communications with the communities
8. Again one issue is the language used - very colonial language - to communicate in written form. Remembering who the actual audience is could be vital to better communication.
9. Again coming into community often, talking about the opportunities for people to be involved and find work as well, environmental monitoring program information, would help.
10. There seems to be a lack of understanding by CER and proponents about safety and security for women and 2SLGBTBQ+ people when in contact with workers and contact with pipeline infrastructure such as camps. How much these issues are considered is difficult to discern and this means plans are unclear to community. As well in conversation, the issue was added that there could be more night shift security and weekend security.

11-19: Not applicable

20. One thing that has not been explicit to the community is how many/percentage of the contractors should be Indigenous. It appears to be up to the contractors themselves as well to hire an unknown percentage of Indigenous people. The vagueness of these numbers should be addressed to support the local communities.

21-29: While the emphasis here is technical guidance, how will it be dove tailed into traditional guidance?