

**PRESS RELEASE**

April 29, 2014

**VAPOR and Otto Langer to Take BC Ministers Mary Polak, Rich Coleman and the BC Environmental Assessment Office to BC Supreme Court**

**Approval to allow delivery of jet fuel into the Fraser River made without meaningful public consultation. A filing for a Judicial Review of their actions was initiated on April 25, 2014.**

It is with great disappointment and reluctance that VAPOR\*, a small Lower Fraser River citizens' group and Richmond fisheries biologist Otto Langer, have been left with no other recourse but to take the Minister of Environment, the Minister of Natural Gas Development, and the Environmental Assessment Office to court over their decision to grant an Environmental Assessment Certificate to the Vancouver Airport Fuel Facilities Corporation. VAPOR and Mr. Langer contend that the public consultation conducted as part of the assessment process undertaken by the EAO in response to the Vancouver Airport Fuel Facilities Corporation's (VAFFC) application for an Environmental Assessment Certificate did not follow the appropriate guidelines established by law.

Granting an Environmental Assessment Certificate allows VAFFC to follow through with their plan to construct a fuel unloading marine terminal and a large fuel storage facility to receive jet fuel by tanker ship and barge via the South Arm of the Fraser River. This plan would see highly toxic and flammable jet fuel transported 21 kilometres upstream to be unloaded and stored in an area adjacent to the Watermania aquatic centre, SilverCity Riverport Cinemas, the Richmond Ice Centre, Waterstone Pier condominiums, and a host of restaurants.

The jet fuel would be transported from the storage facility to Vancouver International Airport in a pipeline running parallel to Highway 99. VAPOR and Mr. Langer argue that storing 80 million litres of jet fuel in such close proximity to a well-used recreational and residential area poses an unacceptable threat to public safety. Moreover, the whole plan poses an extreme risk to the health of the Fraser River and its estuary. The Fraser River and its estuary are crucially important for the sustainability of British Columbia salmon and home to globally significant populations of bird, plant, and animal life.

The public consultation was poorly advertised and the public was not given a reasonable opportunity to review materials filed or to comment on them. In addition, the public was not allowed to comment on several key supplementary studies released following the end of the last public comment period in February, 2012. These included key environmental studies on the potential impact of jet fuel on the Fraser River Estuary and studies that addressed the risks

associated with tanker traffic in the Fraser River. Although VAPOR repeatedly requested that the public be given opportunities to review and respond to new studies and information presented by the VAFFC, the Environmental Assessment Office refused to gather any feedback from the public after February 2012.

Given the current Provincial and Federal governments, we can no longer depend upon our environmental review and protection agencies to adequately protect Canada's crucial environmental habitats, including the Fraser River Estuary. At risk are globally significant salmon and migratory bird populations, local public safety and our quality and enjoyment of life. In 1988, the Vancouver Airport Fuel Facilities Corporation proposed to transport cheaper, American jet fuel in the North Arm of the Fraser River. The Federal Government of the day held public hearings and rejected the proposal in 1989, determining it to be too great a threat to the Fraser River and its estuary.

Despite the 1989 rejection, the Vancouver Airport Fuel Facilities Corporation proposed a new project much larger in scale and more threatening to the environmental health of the South Arm of the Fraser River and to the estuary itself. In fact, the granting of an Environmental Assessment Certificate now poses great risks to the Fraser River, its salmon and wildlife.

Taking such legal action is a very expensive and exhausting undertaking. VAPOR appeals to the public and the Cities of Delta and Richmond, First Nations and those that have been ignored in this environmental review to join VAPOR and support this action.

For further information or a copy of the Petition please contact:

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**\*VAPOR** is a citizens' society formed to oppose jet fuel tankers and fuel handling and storage in the Fraser River and estuary. VAPOR promotes a safer, more reliable and environmentally friendlier on land pipeline option to supply jet fuel to YVR that will remove all jet fuel barges and supertankers in the Fraser River, its estuary and Burrard Inlet.