

Northern Route Gas Pipeline Corporation (NRGPC)

CPE Pipeline assessment 'misses the point': NRGPC President

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Norman Wells, N.W.T. – James Firth, President of Northern Route Gas Pipeline Corporation, during meeting in Norman Wells today, responded to the release of a pipeline assessment report authored by Canadian Petroleum Engineers (CPE) and comments attributed to Carl Chala, Vice President of the Gwich'in Development Corporation, quoted in the Inuvik Drum, August 22, 2002, suggesting the Mackenzie Gas Pipeline project is more likely to proceed than the ArctiGas 'over the top' pipeline proposal.

"I have read the CPE report and I believe that CPE totally missed the point," said Firth. "The issue isn't which pipeline proposal is more likely to proceed - everybody knows that Imperial Oil could finance their project off their own balance sheet. The issue is which project is in the long-term best interest of northern aboriginal people and communities along the Mackenzie Valley," said Firth. (NRGPC and ArctiGas Resource Corp. are proposing the Northern Gas Pipeline Project, while the Delta Producers Group and the Aboriginal Pipeline Group (APG) are proposing the Mackenzie Valley only pipeline project.)

Firth explained that at present, there is no aboriginal ownership in the Delta Producers/APG pipeline proposal. "Without over 1 billion dollars of federal government hand-outs and guarantees to aboriginal groups, there will be no aboriginal equity in Imperial Oil's pipeline," said James Firth "Therefore for Imperial Oil to call the Mackenzie Gas Project proposal an 'aboriginal pipeline' insults my intelligence and the intelligence of northern aboriginal people. Today, this project has 0% aboriginal ownership - people should not be fooled by speculation of federal government funding the Imperial Oil pipeline," Firth said.

Firth's vision is to have aboriginal ownership in all resource and infrastructure development up and down the Mackenzie Valley in order to provide maximum benefits to aboriginal and northern peoples. The NRGPC pipeline is a first step in this direction. "History has proven that if we (aboriginal people) do not stand up and exercise our rights with oil companies and government – we won't have any rights and few benefits", Firth said.



'Calling the Mackenzie Gas Project proposal an aboriginal pipeline insults the intelligence of northern aboriginal people.' – James Firth, NRGPC

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