



Vista Coal Mine Phase II Expansion Project
Impact Assessment Agency of Canada
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The Honourable Steven Guibeault MP
Minister of Environment and Climate Change
200 Sacre'-Coeur Boulevard
Gateneau, QC K1A 0H3

September 24, 2024

Dear Minister Guibeault,

We write today as a business partner of Vista Coal Mine to express our support for the Phase II Expansion Project. The Vista Mine operates in a rural community that has a long history centered around the extraction of natural resources, including more than a century of coal mining in and around the town in which it operates. Canada relies on these industries to sustain their communities and Vista Coal directly employs 460 people with high-paying jobs, and countless other positions through their contractors and suppliers, most of whom call Hinton their home. Back in 2020, Vista helped mitigate the community impacts from the closure of the Teck Coal Cheviot Mine operation, absorbing much of that operation's work force and continuing the community support that the coal industry has shown the area since the early 1900s.

However, Vista Coal has a viable phase that has twice been designated under the Impact Assessment Act, and both times the federal courts have set that designation aside. Approval of Phase II has been delayed several years already, and we understand that a new request for designation has been submitted by the Keepers of the Athabasca and the West Athabasca Bioregional Society.

We respect the fact that these organizations are participating in the regulatory process, but as a business partner we ask you to honor the court's previous decisions and not consider designating this project again, causing further uncertainty and delays to the project.

We understand that your purview is primarily environmental but have seen this area sustained over the centuries in co-existence with crucial economic activity like coal mining, forestry and oil and gas.

Also, from a regulatory perspective, we note Vista Coal outlines that:

- the Phase II portion of the Vista Mine is not a new mining project, rather it is a continuation of the existing mine. As production from the existing Phase I mining area ramps down, production from Phase II will ramp up.
- current production levels will be maintained. The average annual coal production from the Vista Mine will not increase with the Phase II approval.



- Mined areas are progressively reclaimed and the overall disturbance footprint will stay the same as Phase II is mined.

Thanks for your consideration in this matter, and we hope that you will carefully consider the perspectives above as part of your deliberations.

Sincerely,
<Original signed by>

Vishwa Sharma
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