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First Nations Engagement to Create “New West” for Canada’s Energy Sector

IRC Schedules Release of Public Report Reflecting the Reality of First Nations Engagement in the Western Canadian Energy Sector

In anticipation of **The Pipeline Gridlock Conference** (October 3rd and 4th, 2016), the **Indian Resource Council (IRC)** has scheduled the public release of a report written by Dr. Ken Coates, which looks at two scenarios, equally compelling but seemingly worlds apart, reflecting the reality of First Nations engagement in the Western Canadian energy sector.

The first, and the best known, shows First Nations protesters, particularly in British Columbia, opposing the Kinder Morgan Pipeline, criticizing Enbridge’s Northern Gateway project, and challenging the construction of the Site C hydro dam in northern British Columbia. The second, much less well-known, captures images of thousands of Aboriginal people working in the industry, First Nations’ equity investments in oil and gas fields, hundreds of Indigenous-owned service and supply companies, and long but typically successful negotiations of impact and benefit agreements with Indigenous companies.

Is the natural resource and energy sector the frontlines of reconciliation in Canada, the single most important point of constructive and positive collaboration between First Nations and other Canadians? Or is the energy sector the present and future battleground between First Nations and national aspirations for sustained economic development and national prosperity?

As Canada struggles to reconcile these two apparently contradictory realities, Dr. Coates reflects on past and present day issues in the Western Canadian energy sector, while looking into the next forty years of what could truly be a “New West” with First Nations playing a prominent role in the regional economic, social, and political order.

To continue this discussion beyond the report, The Pipeline Gridlock Conference aims to be the platform to bring together Industry, Government and Indigenous Leaders to discuss challenges facing the pipeline industry, as well as opportunities for Indigenous involvement and meaningful participation in determining solutions. The conference is scheduled to be held at the Hyatt Regency in Calgary on October 3rd and 4th.

According to Stephen Buffalo, President and CEO of the IRC, "The Pipeline Gridlock Conference is a timely opportunity for all the key players to engage in a constructive dialogue on

the current energy infrastructure challenges in the interest of all Canadians. The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau has promised a nation to nation relationship with the indigenous people. We want to provide him and his Ministers a Forum to put substance to these words. The folks that we represent are willing to engage in this important dialogue for the benefit of their resources and communities"

To view the full report, please visit the IRC Webpage: <http://www.irccanada.ca/>
or download directly by using this link: <http://goo.gl/qtU2YP>

For more information on The Pipeline Gridlock Conference visit the website:
www.pipelinegridlock.com

For further information on the release of this report please contact:

Stephen Buffalo, President/CEO
Indian Resource Council
Phone: (403) 281-8310
E-mail: stephenb@irccanada.ca