



Federal Budget 2014 Largely Quiet on Major Energy, Environment and Aboriginal Initiatives

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From our perspective, the federal budget released February 11, 2014 was largely silent about major energy, environmental or Aboriginal announcements. Perhaps no news is good news. However, the Economic Action Plan 2014 does include several initiatives “to ensure safe and responsible resource development, and conserve Canada’s natural heritage.” Some of the highlights are below.

Energy Program Announcements

- ◆ Expanding accelerated capital cost allowances for clean energy generation to include water-current energy equipment and a broader range of equipment to gasify eligible waste
- ◆ Providing \$28 million over two years to the National Energy Board for reviews of pipeline project applications (such as the Energy East Pipeline Project) and to support the Participant Funding Program
- ◆ Responding to recommendations by the Tanker Safety Expert Panel and the Special Representative on West Coast Energy Infrastructure
- ◆ Aboriginal Program announcements
- ◆ Providing \$40 million over five years for disaster mitigation in First Nations communities
- ◆ Providing \$323.4 million over two years to continue the First Nations Water and Wastewater Action Plan
- ◆ Implementing the *First Nations Control of First Nations Education Act* to reform the on-reserve education system

Environmental Announcements

- ◆ Funding for improvements to highways, bridges and dams by Parks Canada, expanding snowmobile and recreational trails, supporting early intervention measures to stop the spread of the spruce budworm in Atlantic Canada and Quebec and extending the Recreational Fisheries Conservation Partnerships Program
- ◆ Doubling to ten years, for income tax purposes, the carry-forward period for donations of ecologically sensitive land
- ◆ Moving forward with a new airport to serve the GTA and other development in the Pickering lands east of Toronto, including preliminary meetings with stakeholders

In the coming months, the Government will release details about a new National Conservation Plan, first announced in the 2013 Speech from the Throne. The Government intends to “increase protected areas, focusing on stronger marine and coastal conservation.” We expect that additional initiatives, including legislative amendments to implement the actions listed above, will be set out in a forthcoming budget bill. We will report on these when they become available.

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