



United States Department of State

*Assistant Secretary of State
Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20520-6258*

March 8, 2024

Ms. Susan Daniel
Executive Secretary, U.S. Section
International Joint Commission
1717 H Street NW Suite 835
Washington, DC 20006

Dear Ms. Daniel,

U.S. and Canadian and federal agencies, provincial, state, and Indigenous governments, and stakeholders have been actively engaging in many conversations and cooperative initiatives regarding the impacts of water pollution in the Elk-Kootenai/y watershed, geographically known as the Kootenai/y watershed.

The Governments of the United States and Canada are committed to work cooperatively to ensure that our respective transboundary interests are protected. Toward this end, we draw your attention to the attached “Proposal to Address Transboundary Water Pollution in the Elk Kootenai/y Watershed.” We are pleased to note that this Proposal was developed in partnership with officials from the Ktunaxa Nation and has the support of the Nation’s leadership, as indicated in the attached statement. Canada is pleased to note that British Columbia has indicated its commitment to fully engage in this process.

In accordance with Article IX of the *Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909*, the governments of the United States and Canada hereby request the International Joint Commission (IJC) to take the actions described in items 1, 2 and 3 of the attached Proposal.

The Governance Body and Study Board are expected to respect the respective legal authorities and jurisdictions of each Government.

As described in the Proposal with regards to the Governance Body, the purpose of the targeted engagement is for Governments to develop a Terms of Reference to establish a Governance Body by June 30, 2024, with the IJC providing continued assistance and advice for the two years following receipt of this request.

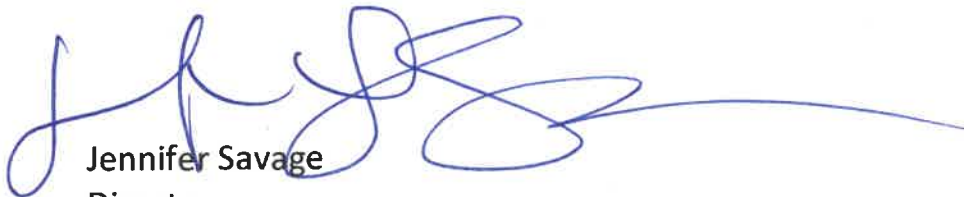
The Governments request that the IJC's plan of study also include an engagement plan as outlined in the attached Proposal, which ensures consultation with and participation by representatives from the relevant federal, provincial, state, First Nation, Tribal, industry and others in the watershed, as appropriate.

The Governments welcome the IJC's assistance and look forward to receiving the IJC's plan of study, engagement plan, timetable, and proposed budget as soon as possible.

Following receipt and review, the IJC can expect the U.S. and Canadian governments to submit a subsequent joint reference, in accordance with Article IX of the *Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909*, to execute the approved plan of study.

An identical letter is being sent by Global Affairs Canada to the Canadian Section of the Commission.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Savage
Director
Office of Canadian Affairs
U.S. Department of State

cc: IJC Commissioners

Attachments

1. Proposal to Address Transboundary Water Pollution in the Elk-Kootenai/y Watershed
2. Ktunaxa Nation Statement