

WCOL Response to Prince George Citizen Editorial : Follow The Money

Marie Hay / Prince George Citizen

MAY 19, 2020 07:00 AM

Marie Hay's original Letter to the Editor is shown in black.

Ken James' response Letter to the Editor is shown in red.

There is an old adage, "follow the money," used to analyze why industries make major decisions. The proposed West Coast Olefins petrochemical/plastics plant is moving north, so let's follow the money.

Who has asked the B.C. Environmental Assessment office if, in their discussions with West Coast Olefins, they indicated to WCO that stringent emission controls might be needed, adding significant costs to their budget? Does Marie Hay believe that it is her role to speak for the provincial regulatory authorities? Who out there believes that BC does NOT have very strict regulatory standards and that their government is not ensuring they are enforced? Who said that stringent emission controls are not incorporated into the design of the WCOL facilities? Is Marie Hay trying to imply that by moving the facility north, there will be less emissions controls and therefore a cheaper plant? (it will actually cost more to build the facility to the north)

Who has asked why an intelligent and forward looking chief and council of the Lheidli T'enneh Nation, after several months of discussions, lost trust in West Coast Olefins? Is Marie Hay's view based on her belief that they support her agenda? Would her view change if they actually came and supported a project?

Who has asked if Chief Clayton Pountney and Council did their due diligence into researching WCO itself, as well as the adverse consequences to building such a plant, on their unceded traditional territorial lands? Such consequences, like the significant increase in deadly cancers amongst plant workers, and the increase in neurodevelopmental conditions in children born to women workers. What is Marie Hay trying to imply with this question? What does the first part of the question have to with unsubstantiated and fear mongering statements at the end of this question?

Who has asked if the Lheidli T'enneh Nation found out how many more citizens would die from the toxic air pollution of petroleum by products and particulates emitted by the plant and the trains, trucks and cars used? **How many people does Marie Hay think are going to die from “toxic” emissions from the plants and what are the facts that she bases this claim on? She has raised several concerns and ignores facts that refute her assumptions.**

Did the Lheidli T'enneh also realize that vast amounts of fugitive plastic pellets will contaminate their lands and waters within a 35 kilometre radius for centuries to come? **Why does Marie Hay try to transfer her “false facts” into fears from Lheidli T'enneh? Marie Hay has no facts and continues to ignore those that are provided to her.**

Who has asked fishers/ hunters about concerns they may have to feed their families wildlife which has consumed those escaped plastic pellets? Such ingested plastics are human endocrine disruptors which cause serious illnesses. As these fugitives plastic pellets are not biodegradable, they pose trans-generational risks to the well being of humans and wildlife. **Why does Marie Hay not portray her perspective from her area of expertise, which is as a pediatrician? Her expertise is not petrochemicals or their effects on humans and we would guess that she has no first hand expertise in this field.**

Who has asked if West Coast Olefins was concerned about the competition from Enbridge, who are proposing a much cheaper \$2.5 billion BC Frontier gas plant and resource extraction project near Chetwynd? If approved, it will most certainly kill the ethylene project of WCO anywhere south of Chetwynd. **Who has not asked this question? We think there has been a lot of discussion in the media on that point. The primary scope of the Enbridge project is to extract natural gas liquids and then pipeline them to Taylor near the Alberta border with no added value to the resource which has already been extracted (it is, in fact, a more expensive project, since it only does 1/3 of the processing of the WCOL facilities). Would British Columbian's be happier to export their resources and associated economic benefits to other locations for processing?**

Who has asked the “noisy” environmental groups like PACHA (Peoples Action Committee for Healthy Air) and Too Close 2 Home who are they and what do they want? Well, we consist of hundreds of everyday working and retired Prince George citizens, professors from the university, engineers, architects, specialist biologists, medical doctors, environmentalists and literally dozens of senior year UNBC under and postgraduate students. Scientists of the highest calibre have been donating their expertise for free, because they care deeply about the health and welfare of us all. **What is the real question**

here? Marie Hay is a member of both of these organizations. Who has asked the thousands of people who have and continue to support the project?

Who has asked how many hundreds of hours of research from the world's scientific literature was completed by the noise makers? About 500 and more hours. There were also dozens of hours spent organizing public workshops, educating the public as to the dangers of placing such a petrochemical plant right in the Bowl of PG. **Is there a question here? Does Marie Hay believe that 500 hours of research by hundreds of "noise makers" (1-2 hours per person) really constitutes scientific research? We don't think this is the process that the medical community believes constitutes adequate scientific research for new drugs or procedures.**

Who has really looked closely at the people leading West Coast Olefins? The individuals heading up this company are not Dow, Bayer, Celanese or Nova Chemicals. They are simply a small group of chemical engineers and an accountant, who used to be employees of some of these big named companies. They actually have rather limited experience in the development of a project of this magnitude. **Who does Marie Hay think is an accountant? (None of us are). Who has asked who the real shareholders of the company are? I can tell you that they are virtually all BC investors, with the majority of them from Prince George who believe that British Columbians can do a project like this more responsibly than anyone else. Does Marie Hay think that Dow, Bayer, Celanese or Nova Chemicals are better suited to work with and listen to the community to develop a project that addresses impacts and provides major benefits to the community than local investors?**

By asking such probing questions, we may get a better understanding of the multilayered and complex decision made by WCO to move north. We do indeed need to "follow the money."

It's not clear what the purpose of Marie Hay's questions are – she seems to be implying what people related to the project might be thinking, without having actually talked to most of them. We have met with Marie Hay on a number of occasions and it was her that first suggested that we relocate to the Hart North site to mitigate the impacts of the project on the Prince George airshed. Clearly, moving the project has not satisfied her and we can only conclude that she is against any development in the region.

Dr. Marie Hay

Prince George

