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**Halt Development on Marie Lake Immediately, Say Alberta Liberals**

Edmonton – The Alberta Liberals are calling on the government to halt oil and gas development at Marie Lake until a full environmental impact assessment has been conducted.

“The government should not allow seismic testing at Marie Lake until any potential environmental impacts have been identified and there has been a full public discussion with affected residents,” says Shadow Environment Minister David Swann.

Swann says the government is required under Section 40 of the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act to conduct an environmental impact assessment to predict and mitigate any potential consequences of development.

Swann says that by approving the project, the government has turned their backs on local residents who have clearly opposed development at the pristine lake.

“The people who live in the Marie Lake area have clearly stated their opposition to this proposed development – they want their lake to remain untouched,” says Swann. “This is another example of the will of Albertans being ignored. Citizens living and owning property in this region should have a say in land use decisions affecting their area.”

Shadow Sustainable Resource Development Minister Bill Bonko says that Ted Morton stated in the Assembly on April 16th that the Ministry would not authorize any seismic testing on Marie Lake if scientific evidence indicated there would be an adverse effect on the aquatic environment.

“If the Minister has any scientific evidence that the seismic testing will not have an adverse effect on this lake, I’m calling on him to release that information to the public immediately,” says Bonko.

Swann adds that Marie Lake is one of the few pristine lakes left in Alberta with exceptional water quality.

“Is there no place in Alberta that is off-limits to development? We could be risking the very lifeblood of the province for future generations if we don’t properly evaluate the impacts of this development.”

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