

# Memorandum



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**To:** WEI participants  
**From:** Rahul Ray and Jason Collier  
**Date:** April 22, 2019  
**EDI Project No:** 18P0173  
**Re:** Prince George Information Session – April 16, 2019

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An information session for Rio Tinto’s Water Engagement Initiative (WEI) was held on April 16, 2019 at the Prince George Civic Center in Prince George, BC. The public was invited to attend the session which ran from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm.

The organizers and presenters included:

**Rio Tinto:** Andrew Czornohalan (AC), Justus Benckhuysen (JB), and Danielle De Kay (DD)

**EDI facilitators:** Rahul Ray (RR) and Jason Collier (JC)

**Ecofish:** Jayson Kurtz (JK)

The following provides a summary of the main discussion points.

- A community member wanted to know if decisions or outcomes of the WEI would be derived through a weighted-decision process? RR stated that a consensus outcome is ideal and that a broad representation of interests is being encouraged. Indigenous participants will be a part of this process. They will also continue to have discussions with provincial and federal government bodies on a regular basis.
- A comment was made by an attendee that technical support will need to consider a lot of existing information that is available on the Nechako. The approach can not be based on “pin-point” data or information.
- A comment was made that this initiative opens the door to discussions on the state of the Nechako, which is beneficial.
- A question was asked if EDI was hired by Rio Tinto to act on their behalf or was EDI formed as a result of the WEI? RR replied that EDI is a Prince George-based company that has been in business for 25 years, works on projects within varying sectors, and works with proponents, governments, and Indigenous



communities to improve project outcomes from an environmental perspective. EDI was not formed to conduct the WEI and is independent from Rio Tinto.

- An attendee wanted to know if the WEI was about changing Rio Tinto’s Water License or about changes to flows? RR responded that the goal of the WEI is to first identify issues and interests that participants have with Rio Tinto operations, then determine options to address those issues—which can affect the Water License, flows or operations. It depends on the interests and the subsequent options and outcomes resulting from the WEI process in order to determine if changes to the Water License or flows are needed. AC stated that Rio Tinto has had discussions with the provincial Water Comptroller with regards to assessing potential regulatory changes. RR noted that the province will be providing representation during the WEI, so that potential regulatory changes needed to address interests identified during the WEI process can be assessed during the process and are not “regulatory surprises” at the end of the WEI process.
- A question was asked if one of the goals of the WEI process is for Rio Tinto to eventually use more water? AC stated that the outcomes depend of the interests brought forward during the process; however, using more water has not been the goal of this process. The goal set out from the start is about enhancing Rio Tinto operations.
- A representative from the Ministry of Forest, Lands, Natural Resources Operations, and Rural Development (FLNRORD), Omineca Region, provided a summary of the Province’s participation in the WEI. It was confirmed that Rio Tinto’s Water License is managed by the Water Comptroller. The Province will support the WEI process, and will provide technical support, such as supplying data and weighing in on or reviewing technical information. The Province will also help keep the scope of the WEI manageable, so it doesn’t turn into, for example, a Land and Resource Management Plan process.
- A representative from Northern Health appreciated the invitation to attend the information session. Northern Health will need to determine the extent of their participation, but will be available to support relevant health questions and will want health aspects to be considered as part of the WEI process. RR commented that the WEI will work with Northern Health to determine how they can be appropriately involved in the WEI process.
- As a final comment, RR asked participants at the information session to contact him if they had other questions.

## Action Items

- **RR to follow-up with attendees to see who is wanting to participate.**
- **RR to work with Northern Health to determine how they can be appropriately involved in the WEI.**