October 24, 2025
Box 242,
Blairmore, AB. T0K 0E0

Mr. Duncan Au, Board Chair, Alberta Energy Regulator
Suite 1000, 250 – 5th Street SW
Calgary, Alberta T2P 0R4
Inquiries@aer.ca

Dear Mr. Au,
My name is Brenda Davison and I am the President of the Crowsnest Conservation Society, an environmental action and advocacy group with about 200 members.

We are very concerned about the recent decision made by Rob Morgan, as Chief Executive Officer of the Alberta Energy Regulator, to cancel the Public Hearing that was expected to be held about Summit Coal's application to open Coal Mine #14 near Grande Cache.

Firstly, the decision will set a new precedent that will allow use of public lands without any input from the public. We believe that the process of allowing the public to speak results in better projects. Often, the people and organizations who speak at these Public Hearings have different perspectives than the proponents of a project. They bring light to environmental and social issues that might not have been considered before. It means that the AER's decision-making panel will be informed of data and viewpoints that may be new information to them. The Crowsnest Conservation Society believes that this careful and complete look at industrial projects prior to approval has great value and can even prevent issues that could have long-term consequences. It gives the AER Panel the opportunity to deny an application or approve it with conditions that require the company to mitigate possible negative effects in the project design.

Secondly, we believe it is a mistake to favour the proponent over the Alberta public to whom the land belongs. The approval or denial decision then becomes a political one rather than one based on science. Because impartiality is not evident, this action contributes to people losing trust in the government. We believe the Public Hearing process allows us to work together in a way that produces better results for our society now and in the future.

The process of review for industrial projects that includes Public Hearings has been a fair one. Companies, environmental groups, and members of the public have all had the chance to voice their perspectives on a particular application. When a Public Hearing is cancelled, then it becomes clear that the Alberta Energy Regulator is biased in their decision-making. No one will be confident that the decision on the proposed project is a good one.

The Crowsnest Conservation Society respectfully requests that you reconsider this cancellation, follow your established protocol, and schedule a Public Hearing for the Grande Cache mine prior to making a decision on their application.

Yours truly,

Brenda Davison, President,
Board of Directors

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