

July 31, 2018

His Worship William (Bill) Robertson
Mayor
Town of Okotoks
PO Box 20
Okotoks, Alberta
T1S 1K1

Dear His Worship Robertson:

I am pleased to announce that I have appointed Ms. Trish Merrithew-Mercredi to the role of Interim Executive Director for the Aboriginal Consultation Office (ACO).

Ms. Merrithew-Mercredi began her new role on July 3, 2018 and brings with her a wealth of senior management experience in government and First Nations. Prior to this, Trish worked as the Executive Director of First Nations Relations with the department. Her previous experience includes her work as the Senior Advisor to the Chief and Council of the Mikisew Cree First Nation and as the Regional Director General of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada in the NWT.

Established in 2013, the ACO manages the consultation process with First Nations and Metis Settlements. Through consultation, the Government of Alberta seeks to reconcile Treaty rights and traditional uses with the interests of all Albertans. Each year, the ACO reviews thousands of regulatory applications for a wide range of developments, including oil sands, conventional oil and gas, pipelines, mining, forestry, parks, public infrastructure (bridges, roads), and flood recovery and mitigation.

With the ACO in its sixth year of operation, management determined earlier this year that the timing was right to conduct a major review of the ACO to ensure the office was functioning to its highest level of operational effectiveness and client service. A third-party firm was appointed to conduct the review, which included interviews with a number of First Nations and Metis Settlements, ACO staff, Government of Alberta staff from other ministries, and representatives of industry.

Trish and the senior management team are now working to implement the recommendations of the review to ensure greater organizational effectiveness.

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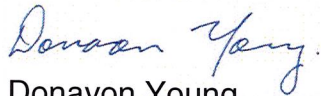
Among the accepted recommendations is changing to a regional model, which will see three Directors appointed to oversee the operations of the northwest, northeast, and south regions, under the overall direction of the Executive Director. We will also be creating two new positions – a Director of Business Optimization and a Director of Strategic and External Relations. This organizational set-up will ensure First Nations, Metis Settlements, industry, and municipalities have comprehensive and responsive representation at the ACO, no matter where they are in the province.

Ms. Merrithew-Mercredi will be instrumental in guiding the ACO through this time of restructuring, during which the office will continue to operate at full capacity to meet the Crown's duty to consult. Please feel free to reach out to ACO staff with any questions you may have on consultation matters. Contact information can be found at <http://indigenous.alberta.ca/575.cfm>.

Please also feel free to contact Ms. Merrithew-Mercredi should you wish to set up a meeting to discuss ACO operations or the changes that are unfolding. She would be happy to meet with you, either in person or by telephone, and may be reached at 780-643-6215 or trish.merrithew-mercredi@gov.ab.ca.

Ms. Merrithew-Mercredi's leadership and experience will be great assets to the ACO, and I am very pleased to have her at the helm during this time of renewal.

Sincerely,



Donavan Young
Deputy Minister