

Court battle looms over Highway 2000 north-south link

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File - A section of Highway 2000

Environmental watch dogs Jamaica Environment Trust (JET) is threatening to do battle in court yet again with the National Environment and Planning Agency (NEPA) for breaching public consultation guidelines.

This comes as JET raises concern about the approach being taken on the construction of the north-south link of Highway 2000. According to the environmental advocates, the public consultation on the impact of a section of the roadway is scheduled to take place days after the thoroughfare is to be launched on December 5. The consultation is to take place despite serious environmental concerns that have been raised in an assessment of the project.

Executive Director of JET, Diana McCaulay says a review of the environmental impact assessment (EIA) done on the Linstead to Caymanas segment of the highway in St Catherine has shown several failings. She says a review of the EIA shows risks of landslides, flooding; and risks to forests among other dangers. However, a decision has been taken to assess these risks concurrently with construction of the road, she said.

According to McCaulay, it appears that the opening of the road is a done deal in spite of the concerns raised in the EIA. She wants the Minister of Water, Land, Environment and Climate Change, Robert Pickersgill to intervene.

There was no comment from NEPA up to news time, which requested that our questions be sent to them by email for a response.