



MEDIA RELEASE

Chiefs Take Action and Prepare Eviction Notice to Mining Companies working in the Ring of Fire

THUNDER BAY, ONTARIO, CANADA - JUNE 22, 2012: Six Northern Ontario First Nations who will be impacted by the proposed mines and infrastructure development in the Ring of Fire are in the final stages of issuing a 30-day eviction notice to all mining companies with exploration and development camps in the region. The forthcoming eviction notice for a moratorium on all Ring of Fire mining activity will come from the First Nation communities of Aroland, Constance Lake, Ginoogaming, Longlake #58, Neskantaga, and Nibinamik. Other First Nations in the area will also have the opportunity to sign on before it is distributed.

Chief Sonny Gagnon of Aroland First Nation said, "Cliffs, Noront and all the other mining companies active in the Ring of Fire will have thirty days from the time the eviction notice is served to pack up their bags and leave our lands."

Chief Peter Moonias of Neskantaga First Nation said, "We are sending a strong message to Ontario and Canada that we need to negotiate a process for First Nation participation in the mining projects that will be changing our lives forever. Unless and until we have a table for government to government negotiations we will evict the intruders from our lands."

Chief Johnny Yellowhead of Nibinamik First Nation said, "All the Memorandums of Cooperation in the world cannot hide the fact that there are no negotiations or agreements in place with Ontario and Canada to deliver First Nation decision making, a full and thorough regional environmental assessment with hearings in our communities and resource revenue sharing. Unless we stop this project now and assert our Aboriginal and Treaty rights we will be left on the sidelines watching the chromite leave our lands while our communities remain in poverty."

The Chiefs have been calling for government to government talks for over two years and Ontario and Canada continue to ignore them while proceeding full speed ahead with developing the road, infrastructure, refinery and mines.

In October 2011, Canada rejected the First Nations demand for a negotiated joint review panel environmental assessment for the Cliffs Chromite project and forced the First Nations to launch a judicial review of the federal decision to use simply a paper process called a comprehensive study for the environmental assessment. That court action will not see a hearing until 2013.



On July 5, Neskantaga First Nation is going to the Mining Court in Toronto to make a case that Ontario must consult and accommodate First Nations before any decisions are made about the road into the proposed Cliffs mine. Neskantaga's legal action could freeze the project up in court for years to come.

The First Nations are not opposed to development. However the development must be sustainable, responsible and undergo an appropriate environmental assessment which includes meaningful First Nation participation, consultation, accommodation and consent.

The \$3.2 billion project by American mining giant Cliffs Natural Resources includes a 350 kilometre private road, a giant open pit mine in the globally significant wetlands of the James Bay lowlands and a ferrochrome refinery in Sudbury.

The First Nations are concerned that by the way the Ring of Fire projects are proceeding, it will damage the lands and river systems, change their way of life forever and deliver no real benefits to their communities that are facing a continuing crisis of inadequate housing, substandard education, poor access to health care, a prescription drug crisis and chronic unemployment.

The Ontario government remains focused on its negotiations with Cliffs on electricity pricing and the public subsidy for the mining road and other infrastructure. On May 9, 2012, Ontario announced that it had reached an agreement in principle with Cliffs that will address Cliffs concerns regarding electricity and the cost of building a road. Cliffs are proposing to build a ferrochrome refinery in Northern Mining Minister Rick Bartolucci's home riding of Sudbury.

About the Ring of Fire

The Ring of Fire is an area exceedingly rich in minerals and precious metals. It is situated in First Nations Traditional Territories around McFaulds Lake in Northern Ontario. Resource development in the area has the potential to drive the Ontario and Canadian economies for decades. Several First Nations will be impacted by development in the area or by the associated infrastructure. Over 100 bodies of water and four major rivers in the James Bay Lowlands will be affected. The James Bay Lowlands contain the largest collection of intact wetlands in the world and sequester 25 years of the world's carbon emissions. The Lowlands are part of the Boreal Forest, the last and largest intact forest ecosystem in the world. If the world had to find another way to filter its air, it would cost 750 billion dollars a year.



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