

Summit of First Nations and Northwestern Municipalities shows alignment on sharing Ring of Fire benefits

Summit Resolution says Exton is favoured site for Ring of Fire ferrochrome refinery and north/south access

(Greenstone, ON, April 17, 2012) A Summit between leaders of Lake Nipigon and Ring of Fire North/South Alliance First Nations met on Saturday April 14, 2012 with Mayors of Greenstone, Nipigon, Hearst and Thunder Bay to demonstrate solidarity in their position that the opportunities and benefits of resource development related to the Ring of Fire remain in the area.

A Ring of Fire Resolution supporting (a) Exton (between Aroland First nation and Nakina) as the preferred refinery site and (b) a north-south access route to Marten Falls was signed by six First Nations (Marten Falls FN, Aroland FN, Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinabeek FN, Constance Lake FN, Animiigoo Zaagi'igan Anishinabeek FN, and Red Rock Indian Band) and four regional Mayors (Greenstone, Hearst, Nipigon and Thunder Bay). Peter Collins, Regional Grand Chief, Union of Ontario Indians, Anishinabek Nation Council & Chief of Fort William First Nation participated by teleconference. Chief Collins and other community leaders unable to attend are also expected to sign the Resolution over the next few days.

Chief Elijah Moonias of Marten Falls First Nation, on whose traditional lands the Ring of Fire chromite deposits are located, addressed the gathering held in Greenstone. Chief Moonias stated, "The companies want to come in and exploit the resources and leave nothing behind for local long standing benefits such as electric grid connection and roads access - both a boost to the local economy. By proposing to use diesel generators at the mine, Cliffs/Noront signal they are not interested in helping with infrastructure development nor will they support the smelter in a new location - to avoid environmental accounting they want to consider any new location."

Moonias went on to say, "We want infrastructure out of the development, a new powerline will do this. We have a company interested in studying this project in partnership with the communities. The Province should support this for environmental reasons over diesel, the Federal government should support this long range outlook – grid connection will eliminate costly community diesel generation systems. What we ask of Cliffs and Noront is to provide the opportunity to study this regional initiative until the final decision on the access corridor, smelter location and power supply is addressed, and that there is satisfaction from all parties that no alternative exists to what the companies are proposing," said Chief Eli Moonias of Marten Falls First Nation.

Chief Moonias concluded, "We have no patience with powering the mine site with polluting diesel generators. I believe the mining companies still do not understand that the minerals are located under our land. I have said before, if they wish to mine the ore, we want it processed in our territory. That means Exton, not Sudbury."

There was much discussion of the proposal to power the mine site with diesel. It was concluded by proposing to use massive diesel generators at the mine site, developers Cliffs/Noront are showing they are not interested in supporting regional infrastructure development.

Renald Beaulieu, Mayor of Greenstone, thanked the Summit Chairs, Raymond Ferris and Wilfred King, as he welcomed the attendees. "It is very exciting to see so many First Nation community leaders and Mayors sitting and working together. There is strength in numbers. In the future, today will be remembered as the day when a huge step forward was made in the on-

going partnership between First Nations and other communities. The Resolution we signed today, states the ferrochrome processing facility should be in Greenstone so that all people of this region can benefit from the jobs and the revenues generated. Cliffs suggests it wants to take the chromite to Sudbury. We say it should stay here for processing.”

Thunder Bay Mayor Keith Hobbs stated, “To be clear, Thunder Bay supports the First Nations efforts to secure benefits from the Ring of Fire. We appreciate the efforts you have made to date, you have worked hard and we will help when and wherever possible.”

Chief Sonny Gagnon of Aroland First Nation acknowledged the historic nature of the event and welcomed the involvement of both First Nation and municipal politicians. Chief Gagnon reminded the Summit participants, “We will not be treated like a third world country, where a company can walk in, take what it wants and get rich off our resources without giving back. We are still looking for a negotiated process with both orders of government to deal with the Environmental Assessment and each of the other issues and impacts that are going to happen here. Still the Federal Government ignores us. We don’t want to end up with our lands destroyed and that is what is going to happen if we keep going down this road. This Summit today shows that the people in the North are getting together and will force these companies to work with all of us.”

Paul Gladu, Chief of the Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinabek First Nation concluded, “Together, we have signed historic Resolutions. One clearly showing the expectations of the Region from the municipalities and the First Nations are shared in supporting a refinery in Exton and a north south route to Marten Falls. Together, we will make the federal and provincial governments and the mining companies understand this is our choice.”

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Sonny Gagnon, Chief of Aroland First Nation, 807-620-7195

Chief Paul Gladu, Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinabek First Nation (Lake Nipigon Chief), 807-623-2724

Greenstone Mayor, Renald Beaulieu, 807-854-7785 (French & English)

Thunder Bay Mayor, Keith Hobbs, 807-625-3600

Other Resources:

For a group photo of the Summit’s participants, contact Michael Zupanic, 416-972-7401, mzupanic@ecostrategy.ca

Map of “Delivering power to a Ring of Fire refinery”

<http://huffstrategy.com/MediaManager/photo/Unsorted/13-3-12/Northwest-Kickstart-Option---Delivering-Power-to-Ring-of-Fire-Ref/2486.html>

Technical Analysis: Energy Supply Related to Exton Ferrochrome Refinery Siting, Sep 20th, 2011, Technical Analysis by: Larry Doran, President & CEO, Imperium Energy Inc.

<http://huffstrategy.com/MediaManager/release/Municipality-of-Greenstone/20-9-11/Technical-Analysis--Energy-Supply-Related-to-Exton-Ferrochrome-Re/2348.html>

See a copy of the April 14, 2012 version of the Resolution at:

<http://www.huffstrategy.com/MediaManager/release/preview/0/preview/2500.html>