

## Media Release

### **Ring of Fire decision ill-considered says Greenstone Mayor**

**(Greenstone, May 9, 2012)** Mayor Renald Beaulieu of Greenstone, the closest municipality to the Ring of Fire mineral find, was underwhelmed by today's announcement from Cliffs Natural Resources to locate the chromite refinery near Sudbury.

"It is truly unfortunate that Cliffs and the Provincial Government chose not to meaningfully consult with the directly affected First Nations and Greenstone prior to making and announcing their decision," stated Mayor Beaulieu.

Important questions remain unanswered by Cliffs and the Province said Beaulieu. In particular, it's hard to see how you can lead with a decision on a refinery location without an agreement on how you are going to obtain the ore body in the first place.

- Why are First Nation interests being ignored? Today's update confirms the suspicion of First Nations that a secret deal has been worked out between the Government of Ontario and Cliffs. That deal doesn't place any value on the support First Nations have offered for the project nor does it take their position on the mining activity seriously.
- What part of the Resolution made repeatedly by Matawa Tribal Council and First Nation leaders "if it is mined in Matawa Territory it must be refined in Matawa territory" do they not understand?
- With Provincial support and contributions in the millions of dollars, why is the Province saying repeatedly that the decisions are all in the hands of Cliffs Natural Resources?
- Why was Exton not considered as the refinery site, given its proximity to the site, superior transportation linkages, a long history of mining and exploration, an energetic workforce, ample space and significant support (NOMA Resolution – 37 Municipalities' unanimous support, support from First Nations, Chambers of Commerce, Métis of Ontario and others)? With today's update the Government of Ontario is committed to a regional electricity infrastructure upgrade that can readily address the issue of electricity supply.
- Why is the Exton refinery location not being used to provide a foundation to connect the First Nation communities (currently dependent on diesel generators) to the electricity grid and ensure that dirty diesel capacity will not be installed at the mine site?

“As we move into the feasibility phase we expect that Cliffs and Ontario will see that siting the refinery at Exton is not just technically feasible but advantageous to meeting the ambitious timeline to bring the mine into production,” said Beaulieu. “It just seems odd that the company hasn’t yet figured out that the Exton site makes their project feasible because it has support from First Nations. We will use the feasibility phase to drive this point home.”

“A lot of people are shaking their heads at the idea that we are closing coal plants and at the same time allowing large scale diesel generation to be considered feasible,” continued Beaulieu. “As the feasibility of diesel comes into question and more attention shifts to a stable supply of clean electricity, the path through Exton becomes clearer.”

These are only a few of the many questions being asked by observers in Northwestern Ontario and by First Nation leaders. The Mayor stated, “If today was a final decision we would have had the Premier and the President of the Company rather than a conference call. We will use the feasibility study framework to get answers to the questions that have not yet been answered.”

The Mayor concluded that Greenstone supports the position of Matawa that minerals mined in their territory are to be processed in their territory. He and his Council will continue to work closely with neighboring communities and First Nations to ensure the benefits associated with the Ring of Fire are realized and the environmental impacts minimized.

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**For additional information or to schedule an interview contact:**

Greenstone Mayor Renald Beaulieu  
Cell: 807-854-7785  
Email: [renald.beaulieu@greenstone.ca](mailto:renald.beaulieu@greenstone.ca)

**Greenstone** ([Canada 2006 Census](#) population 4,906) stretches 200km along [TransCanada Highway 11](#) from [Lake Nipigon](#) to Longlac. It is one of the [largest incorporated municipalities in Canada](#). Formed in 2001, it combined the Townships of Beardmore and Nakina, the Towns of Geraldton and Longlac with large unincorporated portions of [Crown Land covering an area in excess of 3,000 sq.km](#). It is the closest municipality to the Ring of Fire.

The **Ring of Fire** is the area in the [James Bay Lowlands](#) in [Northern Ontario](#), currently the site of major [mining](#) exploration projects (over 30,000 Claims have been staked). It has the potential to be the most significant mineral development in Ontario in over a century. It is centered on [McFaulds Lake](#), 286 km from Greenstone on First Nation traditional lands.