

# EAST-WEST RING OF FIRE ROAD COALITION

## Media Release

### **Ring of Fire - Indigenous, municipal and business representatives support Federal Regional Impact Assessment of all access routes**

(Ontario Legislature, Toronto, March 2, 2020) Today, indigenous, municipal and business representatives from North-Western Ontario were at the Ontario Legislature to advocate consideration of all access routes to the Ring of Fire chromite deposit. The East-West Ring of Fire Road Coalition outlined their support for an Environmental Assessment (EA) of all access road alternatives, including one starting in their area.

The Coalition is supportive of the federal government's recent announcement to initiate a Regional EA process. The Prospectors and Developers Conference (PDAC) in Toronto provides the opportunity to remind federal and provincial Ministers of the Environment of the importance of the undertaking as well as potential implications for land use, the region's economy, culture and indigenous rights.

The Mayor of Sioux Lookout Doug Lawrance outlined the details of July 2019 correspondence between the Coalition and (then) Federal Minister of Environment Catherine McKenna and current Ontario Minister of Environment Jeff Yurek. "Our request was that all access routes to the Ring of Fire be considered." Lawrance went on to say, "We are pleased to see the announcement of the Federal Regional EA process – and are here today to remind both senior levels government of the importance of considering all routes."

Local business leader Darrel Morgan, President of Morgan Fuels, described "How much of the supply network for fuel, food construction materials and other goods flow from the west to serve the area, often on winter ice roads." He went on to say, "Important transportation assets such as rail, road connections to the TransCanada highway and air service can be accessed via an east-west alignment. The Sioux Lookout Regional Airport already serves as a key air access hub for 31 First Nations in the region."

Matthew Keewaykapow, Chief of Cat Lake First Nation located 180 kms. north of Sioux Lookout, said, "An east-west road would provide access and benefits for many remote First Nations communities. All season road access to my community of Cat Lake is critical to our future. It is important for health care for the elders and the economic and education opportunities of our youth." He also noted "climate change makes the winter roads which currently serve remote communities less predictable every year."

Mayor Lawrance observed, "A Regional EA would frame project assessments required for future access for First Nations communities, mining development and other activities.." He concluded, "The stakes are high. Planning and development of access to Ontario's Far North is a complex undertaking. All options need to be considered with care. This will shape the future of the entire North."

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#### ***About the East-West Ring of Fire Road Coalition***

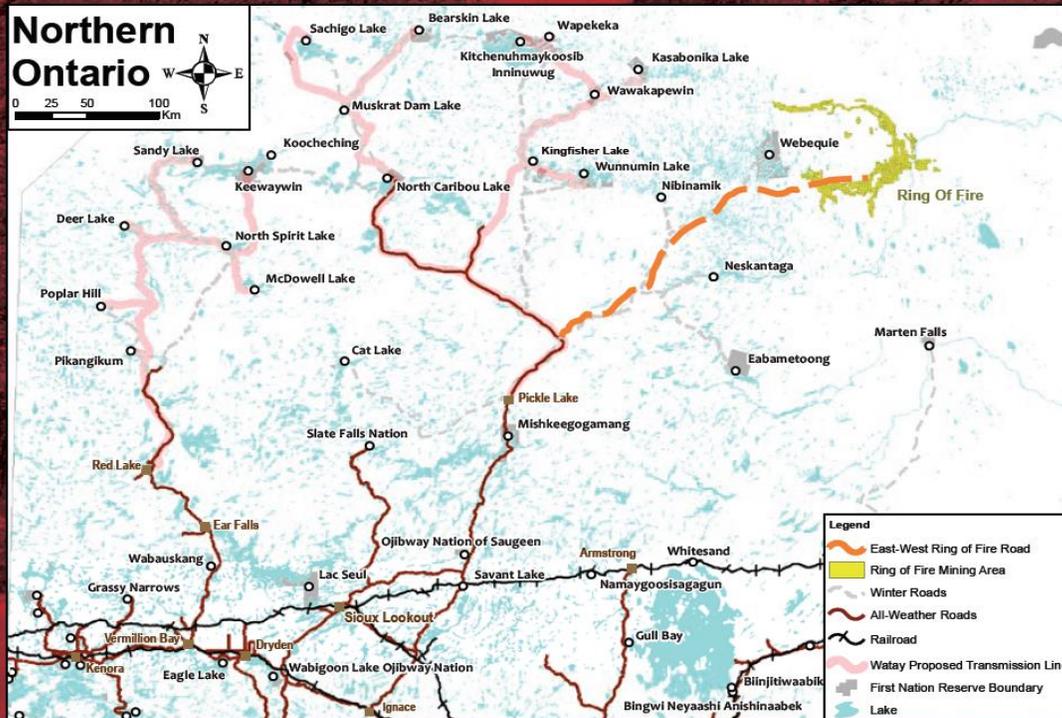
*Dedicated to ensuring an East-West access route is advanced, it includes the Chiefs' of the First Nation communities of Lac Seul, Cat Lake, Slate Falls, and Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug,*

Mayor of Sioux Lookout as well as Morgan Fuels, Perron Contracting and the Sioux Lookout Friendship Accord.

**About the Ring of Fire:**

Located 500 kilometres north of Thunder Bay and 1,700 kilometres north of Toronto - the Ring of Fire is considered by many to be Ontario's most promising mineral development opportunity. Current estimates suggest the existence of a multi-generational source for chromite production (ferrochrome/stainless steel component), as well as significant production of other strategic minerals such as nickel, copper and platinum.

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Infrastructure development in the Ring of Fire should not be limited solely to increasing industrial capacity, it should be implemented as part of a larger socioeconomic project to benefit far northern First Nations Communities. (Northern Policy Institute)

Hub of the North  
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