CAT LAKE FIRST NATION

Media Release

Cat Lake and Lac Seul First Nations Authorize the First Mining Gold Springpole Project and demand Ontario join negotiations

(Treaty 9 & 3 Territories / Northwestern Ontario, June 16, 2026): Cat Lake First Nation and Lac Seul First Nation will authorize the Springpole Gold Project following a 4 year review process and declare a position of non-objection to the federal and provincial Environmental Assessment processes. This authorization is strictly conditional upon various terms and conditions including enshrining their negotiated April 2026 Term Sheet into a final benefits agreement and the full implementation of all federal and proponent commitments.

A primary concern remains the Government of Ontario's absence from critical negotiations. The Nations continue to call on the province to join government-to-government discussions regarding the project, revenue sharing, and vital all-season road infrastructure.

Since 2023, the Nations (with First Mining Gold support) have collaborated on an Anishinaabe-led Impact Assessment (ALIA)—the first of its kind in Ontario. While the ALIA found that without the direct involvement and stewardship of the Nations the project will impact *Gidaakiiminaan* (Mother Earth), Birch Lake, Springpole Lake, and *Kakinakitinawemaakaninaanak* (all our relations), the Nations are implementing a co-management strategy with enhanced mitigation measures and oversight to protect their sacred responsibilities to the land and water.

"We will continue to act as stewards of our land," said Chief Russell Wesley of Cat Lake First Nation. "Our decision allows us to govern the Springpole project while applying much-needed resources to help our people heal. It also serves as a reminder to the government and the proponent to live up to their commitments."

Informed by the ALIA, there are 35 negotiated terms secured in the April 2026 Term Sheet with First Mining Gold including:

- **Environmental & Water Protections:** Enhanced management of mine rock and tailings, water treatment, and moving the operational treated water discharge location to protect Springpole and Birch lakes.
- **Cultural & Socio-Economic Safeguards:** Key conditions addressing impacts identified through the ALIA.
- **Economic Participation:** Significant financial benefits, including revenue sharing, guaranteed value in procurement opportunities, milestone payments, and annual capacity funding for direct participation in project activities.
- **Community Healing:** Federal and proponent funding to support essential on-the-land healing and addictions treatment.

Backed by these rigorous protections, the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada's (IAAC) commitments, and support from First Mining Gold, Cat Lake and Lac Seul First Nations are positioned to co-manage the project with seats at the decision-making table.

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About Cat Lake First Nation ᐱᔑᐠᐃᓴᐃ ᑲᓂᐢ

Cat Lake First Nation is a remote Anishinaabe community located approximately 180 kilometers north of Sioux Lookout in Northwestern Ontario. As a fly-in community, Cat Lake is home to a population of approximately 650 residents living on-reserve. The community remains disconnected from all-season provincial road networks, relying instead on-air travel and a limited seasonal ice road that is only accessible for a short period each year. Today, Cat Lake remains a vibrant community that honors its traditions of harvesting and fishing—while leading the way in modern health and sustainability initiatives to protect its heritage and support its future generations.