

Press Release

Maliseet Call for Rejection of Sisson Mine Based on Conclusions in Federal Environmental Assessment Report

Kingsclear First Nation, Madawaska First Nation, Oromocto First Nation, St. Mary's First Nation, Tobique First Nation

April 20, 2016: The Maliseet communities of Kingsclear, Madawaska, Oromocto, St. Mary's and Tobique fully agree with the Canadian Environmental Assessment's determination that the Sisson Mine would have serious adverse impacts on the Maliseet's way of life: "Based on the above, the Agency concludes that the Sisson Project is likely to result in significant adverse environmental effects on the current use of lands and resources for traditional purposes by Maliseet First Nations." CEAA reached this conclusion in its Comprehensive Study Report for the proposed Sisson Mine (page 92). Canada is expected to make a final decision on the Sisson Mine application this summer.

Maliseet Aboriginal and Treaty rights are already seriously compromised in New Brunswick due to centuries of colonization, including overharvesting of key Maliseet resources and extensive development and privatization of provincial Crown land. The Mine would further erode the Maliseet's constitutional rights and seriously infringe on Maliseet Aboriginal title and Treaty harvesting and cultural rights. CEAA recognized this fact in its Comprehensive Study Report:

...the Agency considers the residual adverse effects on current use of lands and resources for traditional purposes to be of high magnitude given the size of the area that would become unavailable and the cultural importance of this area. The Agency considers the effects to be at a regional scale... permanent, continuous, and irreversible. The Agency considers that the measures proposed by the proponent would mitigate some effects on biophysical resources important for current use activities, but fail to address the permanent loss of access to an area of high value, and the associated use of that area.

Chief Candice Paul: "St. Mary's First Nation appreciates Canada's acknowledgement of the heavy toll this Mine would take on our rights. We call on Canada to honour its Peace and Friendship Treaties with us and reject the Mine on the basis of this finding of significant adverse effects".

Chief Ross Perley: "This open pit Mine would destroy one of our last remaining areas to harvest and practice our culture, and it creates a long term risk of contamination for our Territory and resources. This is not an appropriate project for Maliseet Territory and we urge Canada to reject it in light of the conclusions in the Comprehensive Study Report".

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