



NETMIZAAGGAMIG
N I S H N A A B E G

April 2, 2024

Hon. George Pirie, Ontario Minister of Mines, minister.mines@ontario.ca

W/O Prejudice

RE: Mining Activity in Netmizaaggamig Nishnaabeg Aboriginal Title Area

Dear Minister Pirie,

I am writing to express my disappointment and dissatisfaction with Ontario's approach to mining in our Title Area. Mines has refused to consult with us on the registration of new claims in our Title Area and refuses to deny permits in highly sensitive cultural areas. Mines continues to scope impacts for early exploration as low without consideration of cumulative impacts, the protection of Section 35(1) rights and in complete disregard to our social / cultural values within these impacted areas.

Accordingly, Netmizaaggamig Nishnaabeg, jointly with Biigtigong Nishnaabeg, have released a public notice (attached here) regarding areas that are off-limits for mining development work within our respective Title Areas. The areas identified in this notice have been, and continue to be, Section 35(1) centers for the exercise of spiritual and cultural activities within our Title Area.

This is not a step that we have taken lightly. Despite Ontario's *Notice of Caution*, Mines continues to allow mining claims to be registered within our title area at locations known by Ontario to be off-limits to mining activity. Ontario's policy to not consult with First Nations prior to registration of mining claims, and Ontario's unwillingness to clearly tell the mining industry that there are exclusion areas, and to refuse permits in these areas, has resulted in mining companies spending time, money, and effort on projects that will not have First Nations support and that will not advance.

We have good relationships within the mining industry, including Barrick Gold, Wesdome, Silver Lake Mines, and early exploration companies like First Class Metals and Newpath Resources. We will continue to support mining projects with proponents that have executed mutually-beneficial agreements with our community. And we will continue to support mining exploration where it is appropriately located, where environmental impacts have been minimized and mitigated, and where there are direct benefits to the community.

Again the areas identified within the attached public notice will not be supported for exploration or development activities. For certainty, we ask that permits be denied within these areas and for these permits not to be put on indefinite temporary hold until our First Nation gets out of the way. We aren't going anywhere. This is our home, we are here forever.



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With Regards,

Chief Louis Kwissiwa,

CC: Afsana Qureshi, Deputy Minister (Acting), Mines (afsana.queshi@ontario.ca)
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