



DENENDEH NATIONAL OFFICE

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DENE LEADERSHIP MEETING
February 16-19, 2009 Yellowknife, Denendeh

MOTION #09/010-006

SUBJECT: ALBERTA TAR SANDS

MOVED BY: Proxy Francois Paulette, Smith Landing First Nation

SECONDED BY: Grand Chief George Mackenzie, Tlicho Government

DECISION: Carried by consensus

WHEREAS the Dene Nation has convened a Dene Leadership Meeting at the Explorer Hotel Inn Yellowknife, NT from February 16-19, 2009 for the purpose of addressing issues and concerns facing the Dene;

WHEREAS, the Dene entered into the Peace and Friendship Treaties of #8 in 1899/1900 and Treaty #11 in 1921/22; and

WHEREAS these Treaties were to be in place as long the sun rises, the rivers flow and the grass grows; and

WHEREAS Alberta was part of the NWT until 1905; and

WHEREAS the tar sands are located in the Treaty #8 Territory; and

WHEREAS the Governments of Alberta and Canada have failed to live up to their financial, fiduciary and moral responsibilities to manage the Alberta tar sands in an environmentally responsible way; and

WHEREAS the Government of Alberta has encouraged the rapid expansion of the Alberta tar sands without implementing adequate regulatory or environmental protections to reduce negative impacts of individual projects or the cumulative impacts of all projects considered together; and

WHEREAS the Government of Canada has failed to take adequate steps to protect water, fish and migratory species; and

WHEREAS this colossal mismanagement is no longer an issue just for Albertans, it is now an urgent threat to all downstream communities in the Mackenzie Basin, most critically at this point in time, in terms of risks to water quality posed by leaks from the huge tailing ponds into the Athabasca River; and

WHEREAS a large-scale breach of tailing ponds, with a resulting massive, uncontrolled inflow of highly toxic, poisonous water into the Athabasca River and the rest of the Mackenzie Basin is an unimaginable concern.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT all member communities of the NWT Association of Communities call on the Government of Alberta to immediately halt tar sands expansion until the following provisions are in place:

- 1) Public contingency plans for catastrophic breaches of tar sands tailings ponds;
- 2) A plan to fix existing leaks in current tailings ponds;
- 3) A 10-year plan to reclaim all existing tailings ponds that does not involve any releases of toxic effluents into the river system;
- 4) A commitment to use dry tailings technology for all future tar sands development; and
- 5) A commitment to hold extensive environmental hearings - with standing for NWT communities - on the cumulative effects of the tar sands projects, including any plans to allow water from the tailing ponds into the Athabasca River;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT until these conditions are in place, all governments in the Northwest Territories and across North America be called upon to implement a low carbon fuel standard that would decrease reliance on, or entirely eliminate the use of, dirty tar sands oil;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Dene National Chief communicate this motion to the Premiers of Alberta and the NWT, to the Prime Minister of Canada and to other appropriate governments and agencies.

Certified copy of a resolution adopted on the 19th day of February 2009 in Yellowknife, Denendeh