Stk’emlúpsemc te Secwépemc Nation (SSN) Building Allies Across B.C. and Canada To Oppose KGHM’s Ajax Mine in Kamloops

Kamloops, April 1st, 2017. Today, over 30 organizations representing hundreds of thousands of members across British Columbia and Canada announced their support to the Stk’emlúpsemc te Secwépemc Nation’s (SSN) decision to withhold its free, prior and informed consent to the development of the lands and resources at Pipsell (Jacko Lake and area) for the purposes of KGHM’s Ajax copper-gold mine.

The announcement was made this morning during an Allies Meeting and a Solidarity Ceremony held at the Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops, British Columbia. Supporting organizations signed a “Declaration of Support” to the SSN Pipsell Decision, announced on March 4th of this year (see list and quotes of supporting organizations enclosed).

The Ajax Mine Project in its proposed location at Pipsell is in opposition to the SSN land use objective for this profoundly sacred, culturally important, and historically significant keystone site, which significance is fundamental and undiminished. If approved, the mine would destroy part of Jacko Lake and irreversibly affect Pipsell.

“The SSN has taken a historic step in self-determination through conducting its own independent assessment of the Ajax open pit project in accordance with SSN laws, traditions, customs and governance system. The SSN wants to preserve the use of Pipsell area for all British Columbians and Canadians in accordance with Secwepemc law,” states Dr Ron Ignace, Chief of Skeetchestn.

The SSN, which represents the communities of Tk’emlúps te Secwépemc and Skeetchestn Indian Band, has an irreplaceable historical, cultural and spiritual connection to Pipsell. Councillor Viola Thomas, Tk’emlúps te Secwepemc, says: “This connection is deeply rooted in one their oral histories: the Trout Children Stseptékwil. The Trout Children Oral History is inseparably connected to the place of the proposed Ajax mine site. It encapsulates and expresses the human connection of Stk’emlúpsemc te Secwépemc, to Pipsell. It sustains Secwépemc law about Secwépemc conduct on the land and the reciprocal accountability to living beings on the land, social conduct across generations and within generations.”


SSN Spokespeople
- Dr Ron Ignace, Chief of Skeetchestn
- Councillor Viola Thomas, Tk’emlúps te Secwepemc
- Media contact: Sunny LeBourdais, 250-320-0712, sunny@stkemlupsemc.ca
Declaration of Support to Stk’emlúpsemc te Secwépemc Nation,
April 1st, 2017, Kamloops:

Union of BC Indians Chiefs
British Columbia Assembly of First Nations
Shuswap Nation Tribal Council
First Nations Women Advocating for Responsible Mining
Indigenous Environment Network
West Coast Environmental Law
David Suzuki Foundation
Sierra Club BC
Leadnow
SumOfUs
Council of Canadians
MiningWatch Canada
Rivers Without Borders
Wilderness Committee
RAVEN Trust
Fair Mining Collaborative
BC Environmental Network
Northern Confluence
Cayoquot Action
Kamloops Code Blue
Kamloops Physicians for a Healthy Environment Society
Kamloops Area Preservation Association
Kamloops Moms For Clean Air
Thompson Institute for Environmental Studies
Thompson Rivers University Faculty Association Human Rights Committee
Thompson Watershed Coalition
Aberdeen Neighborhood Area
Sagebrush Neighbourhood Association
Coalition East Kamloops
Concerned Citizens of Quesnel Lake
Forest Protection Allies