

FOR RELEASE
March 15, 2017

Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and Yukon government reach agreement on exploration notification

Joint news release

The Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and Government of Yukon have settled their dispute as to whether Yukon has a duty to consult Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in in relation to mining exploration activities proposed to occur on Non-Settlement Land within the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Traditional Territory.

A consent order was filed in the Supreme Court of Yukon on March 2, 2017, that declares:

To the extent that mining exploration activities may prejudicially affect the rights of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in under the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Final Agreement, the Government of Yukon has a duty to notify and, where appropriate, consult with and accommodate the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in before allowing those activities to take place on that portion of Non-Settlement Land within the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Traditional Territory (as these terms are defined in the the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Final Agreement) which, as of the date this order is made, is not identified as a Class 1 Notification Area in the *Class 1 Notification Areas Regulation*, O.I.C. 2013/221.

The declaration is suspended from coming into effect until February 23, 2018.

The Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and the Government of Yukon have also entered into a memorandum of understanding that commits both governments to working together and with the other Yukon First Nations that entered into the mining memorandum of understanding that was signed in January 2017 to resolve a number of mining-related issues associated with the legal action.

Quotes

"This agreement is a clear indication of the commitment we made to work together. We take the agreement signed in January very seriously. The improved co-operation between our governments means we can address these outstanding issues and develop a fair and predictable regulatory process that respects the rights of First Nations. The result will be an improved mining regime that doesn't only benefit industry, but benefits all Yukoners."

–Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources Ranj Pillai

"We're very happy to reach this agreement with the Yukon government without having to go to court. This demonstrates to us that this government is serious in its commitment to forge new relationships with First Nations that respect our rights and agreements while providing for responsible mining in the territory."

–Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Chief Roberta Joseph

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