



August 14, 2018

Mi'gmaq Chiefs not adequately consulted on Forest Strategy Review

The Gallant government today released its review of the 2014 Forest Strategy that was signed by the previous government; a review that was promised in the Liberal's 2014 election platform. With the amount of time that has passed the Mi'gmaq Chiefs of New Brunswick had hoped more of the concerns they had raised over the past number of years would have been adequately addressed.

The Mi'gmaq were not adequately engaged as a part of the review. The Mi'gmaq are still deeply concerned about the impacts of the Forest Strategy and the Forest Agreements will have on the health of New Brunswick's forests. "This review did not address our concerns with the original Strategy and Forest Management Agreements. This will still impact our Aboriginal and Treaty Rights to hunt, fish and gather," said Chief George Ginnish, Co-Chair of Mi'gmawel Tplu'taqnn Inc. (MTI).

In addition, the government failed to address the Chiefs concerns with Clause 7.6 in the Forest Management Agreements. This clause gives license holders a veto over forest management practices. This is something that should be worrisome to all New Brunswickers.

The practice of giving too much power, access and, essentially subsidies, to corporate interests has to be reviewed. The Auditor General of NB and trade rulings have confirmed the government continues to subsidize the forest sector by selling timber from Crown Lands at below its value.

The Mi'gmaq Chiefs will continue to speak with their communities and others in the forest sector and look at what further action will need to be taken. Mi'gmawel Tplu'taqnn will not be making any further comment at this time.

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