



June 5, 2019

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LIFTING OF FRACKING MORATORIUM DOES NOT HAVE THE CONSENT OF MI'GMAQ CHIEFS

MIRAMICHI - The Chiefs of Mi'gma'el Tplu'taqnn Inc. (MTI) were blindsided by the decision of the Higgs government to lift the moratorium on hydraulic fracturing in the Sussex area without consent, consultation, or input from First Nations in New Brunswick.

In 2016, the New Brunswick Commission on Hydraulic Fracturing released its Final Report. The Commission urged the Province of New Brunswick, to rebuild its relationship with Indigenous Peoples, and to adopt a nation-to-nation consultation process with First Nations, which would include a cumulative impact assessment, and Indigenous-led research and monitoring. They made this a condition that must be met before any moratorium could be lifted. It seems the Higgs government has unilaterally decided to ignore the advice of these experts, as well as others in law and science, and allow this industry to proceed without any regard for what the Commission proposed.

“Fracking remains an issue of serious concern to our Mi'gmaq communities. This Premier must remember that First Nations have never ceded our lands and waters in this province. The Mi'gmaq, and the Fort Folly First Nation continue to fish, hunt, and gather on the lands and waters of the Kennebecasis River, and the Sussex and Penobsquis area. For us, water is sacred, and anything that pollutes our lands and waters is like a knife to the heart of Mother Earth,” said Chief Rebecca Knockwood of Fort Folly First Nation and Co-Chair of MTI.

“The Premier must remember the Crown has a duty to consult, and to seek our consent to development in our territory. The Mi'gmaq should've been engaged on this issue when the Government was just considering lifting the moratorium in the Sussex area,” said Chief George Ginnish of Natoaganeg First Nation and Co-Chair of MTI.

The Chiefs urge the Premier to read the full report of the Commission on Hydraulic Fracturing and then sit down and listen to First Nations to begin the work of repairing the broken relationship. Maybe then we can talk about how we move forward together.

Mi'gma'el Tplu'taqnn Incorporated (MTI) is a not for profit organization whose members are the nine Mi'gmaq communities in New Brunswick. Its objectives include promoting and supporting the recognition, affirmation, exercise, and implementation of the Aboriginal and Treaty Rights; the right of self-determination; political, cultural, economic, educational and social development; justice and equity; wider respect and understanding; and general

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awareness of its member communities and their Mi'gmaq laws, rights, values, traditions, customs and practices. It represents eight of its member communities in negotiations under the Mi'gmaq/Canada/New Brunswick Framework Agreement.

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