



WOLASTOQEY NATION IN NEW BRUNSWICK

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ALL FIFTEEN NEW BRUNSWICK FIRST NATIONS COME TOGETHER OVER CONSULTATION CONCERNS WITH HIGGS GOVERNMENT

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FREDERICTON – The Mi'gmaq and Wolastoqey Chiefs of all fifteen communities in New Brunswick have come together over their concerns with consultation under the Higgs government.

“We officially put the Province of New Brunswick on notice that we will continue our efforts to protect the lands, water and resources of New Brunswick. This is our responsibility, and it is in the interest of all New Brunswickers,” said Fort Folly Chief Rebecca Knockwood.

The Mi'gmaq and Wolastoqey Nations both learned through media reports that in early May Premier Higgs and the Province of New Brunswick quietly passed an Order in Council exempting an area near Sussex from the moratorium on hydraulic fracturing without any consultation with, or notification to, the Nations.

“As signatories to the Peace and Friendship Treaties, the Mi'gmaq and Wolastoqey never gave up legal rights to our lands, waters or resources. Despite this, in the past century, our lands, waters and resources have been increasingly exploited to the point that they are in serious danger. We will not sit by and allow our Aboriginal and Treaty rights, including Aboriginal title, to be infringed on by the Crown and Industry” said Tobique Chief Ross Perley.

The 2018 Throne Speech of the Higgs government committed to addressing unkept promises to First Nations and to defining a new relationship with First Nations that would include more control over lands and resources. The decision to secretly exempt the Sussex area from the moratorium on hydraulic fracturing without any Indigenous consultation does the very opposite and perpetuates the status quo in the New Brunswick government's relationship with Indigenous peoples.

“We came together to tell government they cannot cause division among our Nations and communities. We want to make sure the Premier never has to question who he needs to consult if he plans to frack in this province,” said Elsipogtog Chief Arren Sock.

The Mi'gmaq and Wolastoqey are committed to taking a strong and unified stand in protecting and taking back what is rightfully theirs and ensuring the Crown meets its consultation obligations.

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