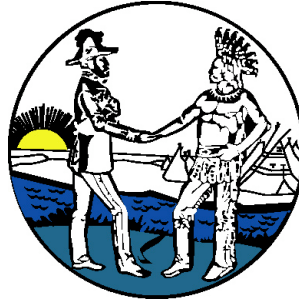




Treaty No. 7



Treaty No. 6



Treaty No. 8

ASSEMBLY OF TREATY CHIEFS

RESOLUTION: *DRAFT FOR REVIEW*

SUBJECT: TREATY CHIEFS SUPPORT the KEEPERS OF THE ATHABASCA WATERSHED COUNCIL IN THE CALL FOR NO NEW APPROVALS FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THE ALBERTA TAR SANDS

Whereas the Assembly of Treaty Chiefs of Treaty No. 6, Treaty No. 7, Treaty No. 8 (hereinafter Assembly of Treaty Chiefs) did meet at a duly convened assembly held in Calgary at the Fairmont Palliser; and

Whereas it has come to the attention of the Assembly of Treaty Chiefs that various industries, including oilsands, mining, and forestry developments have been awarded approvals and continue to apply for approvals throughout the traditional territories of the Treaty First Nations; and

Whereas the Aboriginal rights of Treaty First Nations to land, water, minerals, and other natural resources have not been extinguished by Treaty, legislation, or any other means; and

Whereas the inherent jurisdiction of Treaty First Nations to govern the use natural resources was not extinguished by Treaty, legislation, or any other means; and

Whereas the Aboriginal rights of Treaty First Nations to engage in practices, customs, and traditions that sustain them on the land have been afforded protection under Treaty, the NRTA, and the Constitution; and

Whereas the existing developments have adverse effects on the exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty rights, and the province of Alberta contemplates approving developments that may have additional and cumulative adverse effects on the exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty rights, in particular, the right to livelihood within the Athabasca River and Lake watershed; and

Whereas these developments affect the air and water traveling across provincial and territorial boundaries, and thereby adversely affect the rights and interests of Treaty First Nations in Alberta, British Columbia, the NWT, and Saskatchewan, destroying and poisoning animal and fish habitat and infringing on the traditional livelihood of the First Nations downstream and downwind of the developments; and

Whereas the Government of Saskatchewan desires to facilitate rapid investment in the Saskatchewan oil sands; and

Whereas the Government of Alberta has failed to take into consideration the existing and potential cumulative adverse effects of rapid development on the Treaty-protected Aboriginal right to livelihood;

Whereas scientific research and traditional ecological knowledge has shown that the people and biota of the Athabasca River Delta and western Lake Athabasca are exposed to higher levels of some contaminants than are those upstream; and

Whereas the primary contaminants of concern may be arsenic, mercury, and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons and that concentrations of these contaminants are already high and appear to be rising; and

Whereas a petition by Peter Cyprien (Athabasca Chipewyan First Nations) to the Auditor General of Canada (submitted on January 4, 2008) requests the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and the Minister of Health to stop federal approvals of new projects in the Alberta Tar Sands region until such time that contamination of the Athabasca River, the Peace-Athabasca Delta and Lake Athabasca is stopped, and any further development meets/exceeds stringent regulations for safeguarding water quality.

Therefore be it resolved that this Assembly of Treaty Chiefs call for no new approvals for development in the Alberta Tar Sands until such time as:

- 1) a comprehensive watershed management plan has been established with the involvement of First Nations directly affected. Such plan shall incorporate limits to the contamination of the Athabasca River, the Peace-Athabasca Delta and Lake Athabasca, and a safeguard for water quality, quantity and flow so as protect the Treaty-protected Aboriginal rights to water and to livelihood;
- 2) a comprehensive resource development plan has been negotiated with the involvement of First Nations whose traditional lands are directly impacted including matters of the protection of environmental integrity, compensation for environmental destruction, and a share in the benefits of natural resource extraction;

3) all applicants for development approvals can demonstrate that they have met or have exceeded the standards for environmental protection as established by the comprehensive watershed management plan.

MOVED BY:

SECONDED BY:

QUESTION CALLED

VOTE:

FOR:

AGAINST:

ABSTENTIONS:

RESOLUTIONS

CHAIRPERSON: