



CONSTANCE LAKE FIRST NATION

P.O Box 4000

CONSTANCE LAKE, Ontario - P0L 1B0

Telephone (705) 463-4511 – Fax (705) 463-2222

General e-mail: clbo@clfn.on.ca

Website: www.clfn.on.ca

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Constance Lake First Nation wins court motion; Court orders halt to Zenyatta Ventures Ltd. drilling program

Today, the Ontario Superior Court ordered Zenyatta Ventures Ltd. (“Zenyatta”) to stop its drilling on all but two drill sites where it has already started drilling. Zenyatta may move to only one other site as of May 9, after an assessment of the impacts on Constance Lake First Nation in relation to that site is completed and paid for by Ontario. Other sites are not open to Zenyatta at this time under the court’s order.

Upon hearing the injunction motion brought by Constance Lake First Nation, Justice Lederman also ordered Zenyatta, Ontario and Constance Lake First Nation to meet and attempt to facilitate consultation and accommodation with the First Nation, as well as reach an agreement and resolve the case. If resolution is not achieved, the parties are ordered to return to court on May 11th.

Zenyatta is a mineral exploration company that has agreements with the Cliffs mining company. Zenyatta has staked mining claims and planned an exploration program over 300,000 acres north-west of Hearst, Ontario (the “Albany Claims”).

Much of the Albany Claims overlap an area known as the “Heartland” of Constance Lake’s traditional territory because of its significant historic and current value to the First Nation. There is very high use of this area by the First Nation’s members for hunting, fishing, trapping, gathering plants for medicine and food, and many other traditional cultural uses. Sacred sites, including burial sites, are in this area.

Constance Lake has been trying for some time to negotiate an agreement with Zenyatta and some accommodation from the Ontario Government, which would have included measures to identify and protect such sites and to mitigate impacts to the exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty rights. However, in early April, Constance Lake found out that Zenyatta had unilaterally gone onto the land and had started clearing land, drilling and conducting other exploration activities.

“I am glad to see the court taking these issues seriously,” said Chief Arthur Moore. “We take them very seriously. If exploration is going to occur, it needs to be done right – in a way that is respectful to the land, to our people, and to our rights.”

Constance Lake is continuing with a demonstration on Monday, May 2, to emphasize its commitment to protect its Aboriginal and Treaty rights. This demonstration, held under the First Nation's traditional laws, will be held where the Pagwachuan River crosses Highway 11, approximately 80 km west of Calstock (120 km west of Hearst). There is a sign marking the Pagwachuan River as a bridge crosses over it on Highway 11. This location is near Zenyatta's southern exploration base camp. Constance Lake asks any supporters to attend and to respect the fact that this is Constance Lake First Nation's demonstration. The OPP has been contacted about this event.

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For further information please contact:

Chief Arthur Moore: 705-372-5526
Oliver MacLaren (legal counsel): 416-700-9331
Kate Kempton (legal counsel): 416-571-6775