



MATAWA FIRST NATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Deadlines set by Ontario are Unacceptable for Matawa First Nations

First Nations unable to meet limited consultation deadlines set by Ministry of Northern Development & Mines

THUNDER BAY, ON (Tuesday September 23, 2008) - The Chiefs of Matawa First Nations are unable to meet the schedule set by the Ministry of Northern Developments and Mines' (MNDM) to consult 9 (nine) First Nation communities within 30 days, they announced today. The Chiefs claim that the wrap up date, set for October 15 2008, is an unrealistic timeframe to consult with the Matawa people.

"Before any consultation about recommendations to the new mining act can begin with our First Nations, there needs to be education and information provided at the community level," said Chief Scott Jacob of Webequie First Nation, spokesperson for Matawa First Nations. "Our people need to understand the existing policies so they can better evaluate any proposed changes. The entire process simply cannot be facilitated in this timeframe and particularly if Ontario wants the outcome to be successful and meaningful for all. Matters concerning the use of our traditional lands are of high importance to our people. Too many mistakes happen when things are rushed...history shows us that."

Matawa Chiefs have for some time demanded that the Mining Act be amended to reflect the requirement that First Nations need to be consulted and accommodated on any development or activity taking place in their lands. More importantly, the people must give their consent to any





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developments. These consultations must take place in our communities and not with Provincial Territory Organizations (PTO) or Tribal Councils.

Matawa First Nations have attended 3 (three) public mining act consultations: August 11th, 2008 in Timmins, Ontario August 18th 2008 in Thunder Bay, Ontario & September 8th 2008 in Toronto, Ontario. The Chiefs played an active role in both sessions, where they voiced their concerns about the underlining issues facing their communities with respect to resource development.

Matawa First Nations are a Tribal Council of 9 (nine) communities located in the Nishnawbe Aski Nation; Aroland, Constance Lake, Eabametoong, Ginoogaming, Long Lake #58, Marten Falls, Neskantaga, Nibinamik, and Webequie First Nations.

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Media Contact:

Tana-Leigh Sacino or Stephanie Ash

Firedog Communications

Phone: 807-767-4443

Mobile: 807-474-8567

Email: tanaleigh@firedogpr.com

