

MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday, September 15, 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MATAWA FIRST NATIONS CHIEFS COUNCIL STATEMENT TO CANDIDATES IN MATAWA REGION IN ADVANCE OF 2021 FEDERAL ELECTION

THUNDER BAY, ON: Today, the Matawa Chiefs Council released this statement in advance of the September 20, 2021 federal election:

"We are asking that the candidates in the ridings of Thunder Bay-Superior North, Thunder Bay-Rainy River, Kenora, Algoma-Manitoulin-Kapuskasing and Timmins-James Bay contact First Nations in their respective ridings to discuss how—if they were elected to form the next federal government—they would commit to taking action in the following priority areas:

- *Honouring the Agreement to settle the national safe drinking water class action as announced in July 2021 and bring an effective end to First Nations boil water advisories on-reserve;*
- *Increasing investments to improve day-to-day quality of life issues in First Nation communities with respect to mental health as a result of intergenerational trauma and addressing existing states of emergencies that date back to 2013 as a result of suicide epidemics;*
- *Increasing essential infrastructure investments for housing and other community infrastructure as well as other basic needs of communities including broadband connectivity, large scale capital and education;*
- *Implementing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's "calls to action" on addressing unmarked graves from residential schools and holding the operators and staff to account;*
- *Going beyond the limited Bill C-15 UNDRIP framework legislation to meaningfully recognize First Nation jurisdiction and the free, prior and informed consent required to permit access to lands and resources based on our Aboriginal, Treaty and Inherent Rights;*
- *The meaningful and significant inclusion of First Nations in the federal Impact Assessment Agency process for the proposed Ring of Fire development Regional Assessment; and*
- *Setting a new standard and approach to revenue sharing agreements that are not limited only to resource development, but based on the Spirit and Intent of the Treaty to share in the benefits of the land and include all sources of government revenue*

As a collective, the Matawa Chiefs Council have not heard specifics how parties will address these priority areas and feel that Indigenous Peoples have been falling off the radar in this campaign. We will be taking the opportunity raise responses received from each candidate with members of their communities in advance of election day."

For more information, please contact Carol Audet, Communications Manager – Matawa First Nations at (807) 632-9663 or by email at caudet@matawa.on.ca

