



Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta

To Protect, Promote, Bring to Life, Implement, and Sustain the True Spirit and Intent of Treaty No. 8 as long as the sun shines, the grass grows, and the waters flow.

HEAD OFFICE

Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation
P.O. Bag #5
Valleyview, Alberta T0H 3N0
Telephone: (780) 524-3307
Fax: (780) 524-2711

SUB OFFICE

c/o Santa Fe Plaza
18178 – 102 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T5S 1S7
Telephone: (780) 444-9366
Fax: (780) 484-1465

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Another Spill Further Contaminates the Athabasca

Edmonton, Alberta – November 14, 2013 – Recently, it was announced that there has been another accidental release into the Athabasca River. This time the culprit is a coal mine operated by Sherritt International. This one-billion-litre leak comes on the cusp of an earlier spill this year by Suncor and First Nations within Treaty No. 8 are not happy. “When are we going to begin having serious conversations about the cumulative impact of these toxic spills on a river which has traditionally sustained our communities?” asks Richard Kappo, Grand Chief of Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta.

While the Province of Alberta has quickly come forward to assure the public that the drinking water is not used by the local communities near the spill, it has yet to contact the First Nations of Treaty 8 regarding this latest environmental disaster. “Immediate drinking water concerns aside, what is the provincial government doing about the damage to the fisheries in the Athabasca?” states Grand Chief Kappo.

Provincial officials had warned 10 communities downstream of the spill not to draw water from the Athabasca River and also advised farmers not to allow livestock to drink from the river. “If the water is not healthy for cows to drink, then it can’t be healthy for fish to swim in,” states the Grand Chief before continuing “Alberta has recognized our Treaty Right to hunt, fish and trap, but if we continue along this irresponsible road there will be no healthy fish left for anyone. How do you practice a Treaty Right when there are no fish to catch in the river?”

“First Nations are the original stewards of this land and the province is not doing a good job of protecting our waterways, waterways that need to be preserved for the next generation of our children, both First Nation and Albertan alike,” states the Grand Chief.

Contact:

Greg Posein
Communications Coordinator
gposein@treaty8.org
18178 – 102 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T5S 1S7
Ph: (780) 444-9366

###