



KITIGAN ZIBI ANISHINABEG

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Press Release

February 14, 2024

Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg Opposes the Chalk River Nuclear Surface Disposal Facility Without Consent

On January 8, 2024, the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) unilaterally approved the Chalk River Nuclear Surface Disposal Facility (NSDF) without proper consultation with Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg and other Algonquin First Nations. Despite their duty to consult, the CNSC failed to consider the rights and interests of Indigenous communities, violating both the spirit of Supreme Court rulings and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Elder Verna McGregor aptly remarks, "The process undertaken in consultation did not include all Algonquin First Nations. This undermines the spirit and intent of rulings of the country's highest judicial institution - the Supreme Court of Canada."

Located just one kilometer from the Kichi Sibi (Ottawa River), which flows through Algonquin Anishinabeg Unceded Territory, the NSDF poses significant environmental risks. Our assessments indicate that the facility could result in long-term irreversible damage to the Kichi Sibi, with the potential for radioactive leakage threatening the health and safety of both our community and downstream residents, including those in the City of Ottawa and Gatineau.

As caretakers of the Kichi Sibi since time immemorial, the Algonquin Omamawinini recognize the river's vital importance to all life. It is our inherent responsibility, as Algonquin Anishinabeg, to protect the Kichi Sibi for the next seven generations. Water is sacred, and decisions regarding its management must involve our Anishinabeg women, the traditional water carriers. In the words of Elder Claudette Commanda, "February 14 is the day to celebrate love. Well, we love our Mother Earth, we love our land, we love our water. This is why we oppose the nuclear waste facility. We must protect the land, the water, and the sacred!"

Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg stands in solidarity with the Algonquin Nation, our brothers and sisters from other First Nations, and our allies in protecting the Kichi Sibi.

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