



507-100 Park Royal South
West Vancouver, BC
V7T 1A2

Ph: 604-922-7733
Fx: 604-922-7433



1200-100 Park Royal South
West Vancouver, BC
V7T 1A2

Ph: 604-926-9903
Fx: 604-926-9923
Toll Free: 866-990-9939



500-342 Water Street
Vancouver, BC
V6B 1B6

Ph: 604-684-0231
Fx: 604-684-5726

FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 7, 2008

First Nations commend Canada and BC for rejecting the Kemess North mine

Coast Salish Traditional Territory/Vancouver – First Nations leaders expressed relief that Canada and British Columbia are formally rejecting Northgate Minerals' Kemess North mine expansion project. The department of Fisheries and Oceans cited the report of the joint environmental review panel, which did not favour the controversial project because it was found "not to be in the public interest."

"It should have been an easy decision for both governments. No government should as a matter of public policy authorize the destruction of lakes," Grand Chief Edward John of the First Nation Summit said. "Nevertheless, the decision was made for the right reason. In that respect, this decision can be a catalyst for First Nations, governments, and the mining industry in B.C. to establish working relationships so we can start down the path of true sustainable development, where everyone's interests are met."

"We trust that industry and the governments of BC and Canada have learned an invaluable lesson from this long and frustrating experience. They must change their attitudes, approaches and policies concerning the essential need to recognize our Aboriginal Title and Rights," said Grand Chief Stewart Phillip of the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs. "I hope they have the vision and intelligence to understand the need to commit to these changes."

"Today's announcement should bring immense relief to the Tse Keh Nay and Gitksan peoples who were directly affected by this mine proposal," Regional Chief Shawn Atleo of the B.C. Assembly of First Nations said. "Over the years, their leadership, staff, and various supporters worked diligently to publicize the message that destroying Amazay Lake was just too high of a price to pay, no matter the short-term benefits promised. So now, finally, it can be said with certainty that they will not have to pay that price. For this reason, and remarkably enough that this matter didn't end up in court, we can all be thankful."

-30-

The First Nations Leadership Council is comprised of the political executives of the BC Assembly of First Nations, First Nations Summit, and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs.

The Council works together to politically represent the interests of First Nations in British Columbia and develop strategies and actions to bring about significant and substantive changes to government policy that will benefit all First Nations in British Columbia.

For more information please contact:

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip
President, UBCIC: 250-490-5314

Ryneld Starr
BC Assembly of First Nations: 604-922-7733

Colin Braker
Communications Director Office: 604-926-9903
First Nations Summit: Cell: 604-328-4094