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Oral Presentation

Exposé oral

**Written submission from
Rick Robillard**

**Mémoire de
Rick Robillard**

In the Matter of the

À l'égard de

**Cameco Corporation,
Cigar Lake Operation**

**Cameco Corporation,
établissement de Cigar Lake**

Application for the renewal of Cameco's uranium mine licence for the Cigar Lake Operation

Demande de renouvellement du permis de mine d'uranium de Cameco pour l'établissement de Cigar Lake

Commission Public Hearing

Audience publique de la Commission

April 28-29, 2021

28 et 29 avril 2021

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March 17, 2021

Rick Robillard
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Senior Tribunal Officer, Secretariat
Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission
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Senior Tribunal Officer:

Eḏlānet'e (Hello).

Thank you for this opportunity to submit an intervention letter in support of Cameco's renewal application for the Cigar Lake Operation uranium mine licence.

As a proud Dene person from the Black Lake First Nation, I have spent most of my life in the community where I continue to practice a traditional lifestyle. My culture is part of who I am and connects me to the land and to my community. My family continues to thrive on hunting and fishing, we utilize the land and the water almost everyday.

As a previous Chief of Black Lake and currently, the Black Lake First Nation and northern hamlet of Stony Rapids Cameco and Orano community liaison, I have had different opportunities to serve my community. When I was Chief, it was a pivotal time for my community. I took on a leadership role when the Athabasca Basin was in the middle of talks with industry on updating our Impact Management Agreement (IMA) and the benefits for all community members. I was the Black Lake First Nation Chief that signed the Ya'thi Nene Collaboration Agreement (CA) in 2016, which builds on the IMA signed in 1999. In my Dene language, Ya'thi Nene means Land of the North. The CA confirms the partnership between the communities in development of the uranium resources in the basin. My father had been Chief, and I continued that legacy of working to better my community.

Cameco has over a 30-year history in the region with its uranium mining and milling operations. During this time, Black Lake First Nation and Cameco have a long history of working together. The negotiations and processes under the CA have brought Athabasca Basin leadership closer together, created a way we can work along side our industry partners. The seven Athabasca Basin communities and industry signed the Ya'thi Nene CA.

I have seen the Athabasca Basin communities making the most of the benefits, previously as Chief and currently, as the community relations liaison. The relationship is not always easy, but the intentions of the CA is to provide stability and predictability around 4 pillars: workforce

development, business development, community investment and community engagement and environmental stewardship. Some of the benefits I have seen:

- Workforce Development: hiring preference for residents of the Athabasca communities and employment targets. Providing career awareness programs and scholarship funding for residents.
- Business Development: preference for community-owned businesses.
- Community Engagement and Environmental Stewardship: established a process together to engage and inform members. Enhance the community-based environmental monitoring program (CBEMP).
- Community Investment for initiatives that promote the health and well-being of members, address housing needs, preserve language, culture and traditional practices, improving community infrastructure and generate education and economic opportunities for residents.

Since the CA was signed, \$598 million has been provided to the Basin communities under the four pillars.

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted the world, in the north, we faced many challenges. I was happy to assist with the support Cameco provided through the \$1 Million COVID-19 Relief Fund and helped deliver the 1,200 care packages directly to community member's homes. These care packages included essential supplies that residents of our remote communities were having difficulties obtaining.

I have been fortunate to see the industry from a number of perspectives. I have had the opportunity to experience mine life as a process operator working at the McClean Lake Operation. I have worked for my community as a leader and now, in support of our relationship with industry as a Community Relations Liaison. In my current role, I work closely with community leadership in the basin and liaise with industry. I also enjoy working with all members of the community, Elders, land and resource users and the youth. I want to encourage the young generation to pursue careers in the industry because this provides an opportunity for long-term employment in the region and possibilities for advancement.

Living a traditional way of life is important to me. I am teaching my children how to live off the land. I am teaching my children our culture and our language. I have learned a lot from my involvement in the Community-Based Environmental Monitoring Program (previously the Athabasca Working Group environmental monitoring program), which had been conducting monitoring in the region since 2000. I worked with the traditional land and resource users, I received training. I conducted interviews and mapped out the areas. I assisted with sample collection. I have talked a lot with the land and resource users. I have listened to their concerns. I have presented to leadership and the community that the country foods remain safe, the water remains safe. I feel comfortable with the knowledge that we can continue our traditional way of life and share that information with community members.

I support the renewal application for Cameco's uranium mine licence for the Cigar Lake Operation. We have been well informed about the operation: Cigar Lake successfully transitioned through commissioning to full production during the current licence term.

Marsi,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rick Robillard', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Rick Robillard