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Safety Commission

Commission canadienne  
de sûreté nucléaire

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## **Oral presentation**

**Presentation from the  
Kineepik Métis Local #9**

## **Exposé oral**

**Présentation du  
Kineepik Métis Local no 9**

**Regulatory Oversight Report for  
Uranium Mines and Mills in  
Canada: 2021**

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**Rapport de surveillance  
réglementaire des mines et usines  
de concentration d'uranium au  
Canada : 2021**

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Commission Meeting

Réunion de la Commission

**December 15, 2022**

**Le 15 décembre 2022**



## Indigenous Organic Engagement and Consultation

Mike Natomagan, Mayor, President KML

Walter Smith B. Ed, M. Ed, MNDG, RSE

Good Morning - My name is Walter Smith, and I am from Pinehouse. I am currently employed by Kineepik Metis Local #9 a rights bearing entity located in Pinehouse.

I am a card carrying first nations member of the Lac La Ronge Indian Band, a right I received from my mother and Bill C-3. e Gender Equity in Indian Registration Act (Bill C-3).

I am also Metis as my father was Metis, My Indigenous Education stems from my relationship with Indigenous people my entire life. I am fluent and knowledgeable land user having to learn the language twice in my life. I was part of the 60-scoop process in which I lost my language and culture. Thankful to the generosity of Indigenous people namely my family through marriage, I have successfully regained my Indigenous capacity.

My western education stems from three university degree which include my two masters and one undergrad. My Certificate in Chemical technology and my Red Seal in Construction Craft.

I am fully able to use either or both of my cultures



## Why is Consultation and Engagement

Understanding each other better. Our shared history.

"We all must put down our ignorance and accidental racism, of not addressing the truth, that this country (Canada) had with Indigenous people," Delorme said in response to the find. "We are not asking for pity, but we are asking for understanding."

"We can't control other people's actions and we can't control a system that is outdated, but what we can control is our thoughts and we can control our own actions,"

Chief Cadmus Delorme Cowessess First Nations

- While we are generally pleaded with the protection of the safety and the environmental systems in operations uranium mines, incidents do occur. We only have to remember the significant ones, such as the sloughing of wall of Deilmann pit, the water inflow at McArthur River, and the complete flooding of the Cigar Lake mine. All of these incidents were rectified using monetary resources and are now currently operational and adding value to the Saskatchewan and Canadian economy. In fact the very process of rectifying these incidents created value for the economy. These incidents had no human casualties for which we are grateful, they do represent areality that no matter the intention and mechanisms in place, incidents can and will occur at Industrial operations including uranium mining operations.
- One can consider if we would create energy in the Indigenous communities near the operations the same efforts what the outcome could be. Community incidents are loss of culture and language, confused youths disconnected from either western or Indigenous world. An undereducated population, a population of youths at 70% under the age of 29, is so dramatic that perhaps, if it was a western populations, would be celebrated as a testament of virility and success.
- We still have incidents that require energy and not the just within the populations, but the society that created the reality for which those occurrences are reality.



## Organic and Intentional

We are making up for lost time. We did not choose to be under educated in western ways.

We did not choose to be indigenous, nor did we choose the land on which we live. It was where we were created. A place, just for us, we educated ourselves, to live in balance with the bounty and beauty of that which was around us, and it was beautiful.

It was always our home.

The Kineepik engagement process is largely organic, meaning we grow our understanding and capacity at the speed we can absorb the information, while keeping and rebuilding our Indigenous identity.

We engage with each other first, to understand where we are currently. We host meetings weekly as a community to discuss our issues at our Monday prevention meetings.

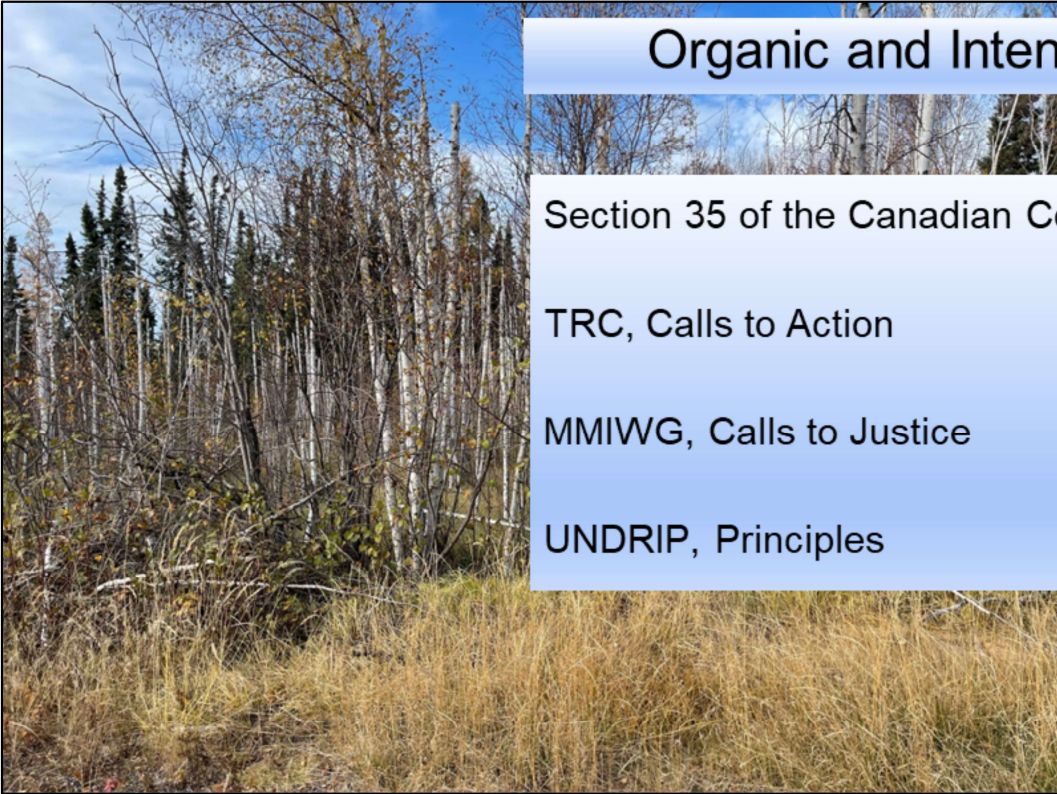
We strategize once a month at our formal Reclaiming our Community meetings (ROC) to bring a longer-term solutions for our issues. We listen to each other and heal from past trauma, as a community.

From these meetings we build longer term strategies, again organically and intentionally. It must make sense to us first. We realized that when others speak for us, their voice can change the meaning of our intentions. Our concerns get lost in the translation.

***As Indigenous people, our leaders have to be twice as good.*** We must understand western legal systems at the risk of prosecution, a reality we currently facing. We must understand academic ways of knowing through our credentials, education and degrees to be taken as equals in western society. Our Elders demand that we are also fluent in our languages and authentic as Indigenous people in our communities with our Woodland Cree culture intact.



It 's truly a burden you feel, for the distinctions and anomalies between the two cultures are significant.



## Organic and Intentional

Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution

TRC, Calls to Action

MMIWG, Calls to Justice

UNDRIP, Principles

too, **will become twice as good**. You can do this by helping us in completing land use studies, where you explore, creating agreements that will shape how you will work together with the rights bearing populations. Make a framework that gives us permission to work together and make mistakes and learn from the process.

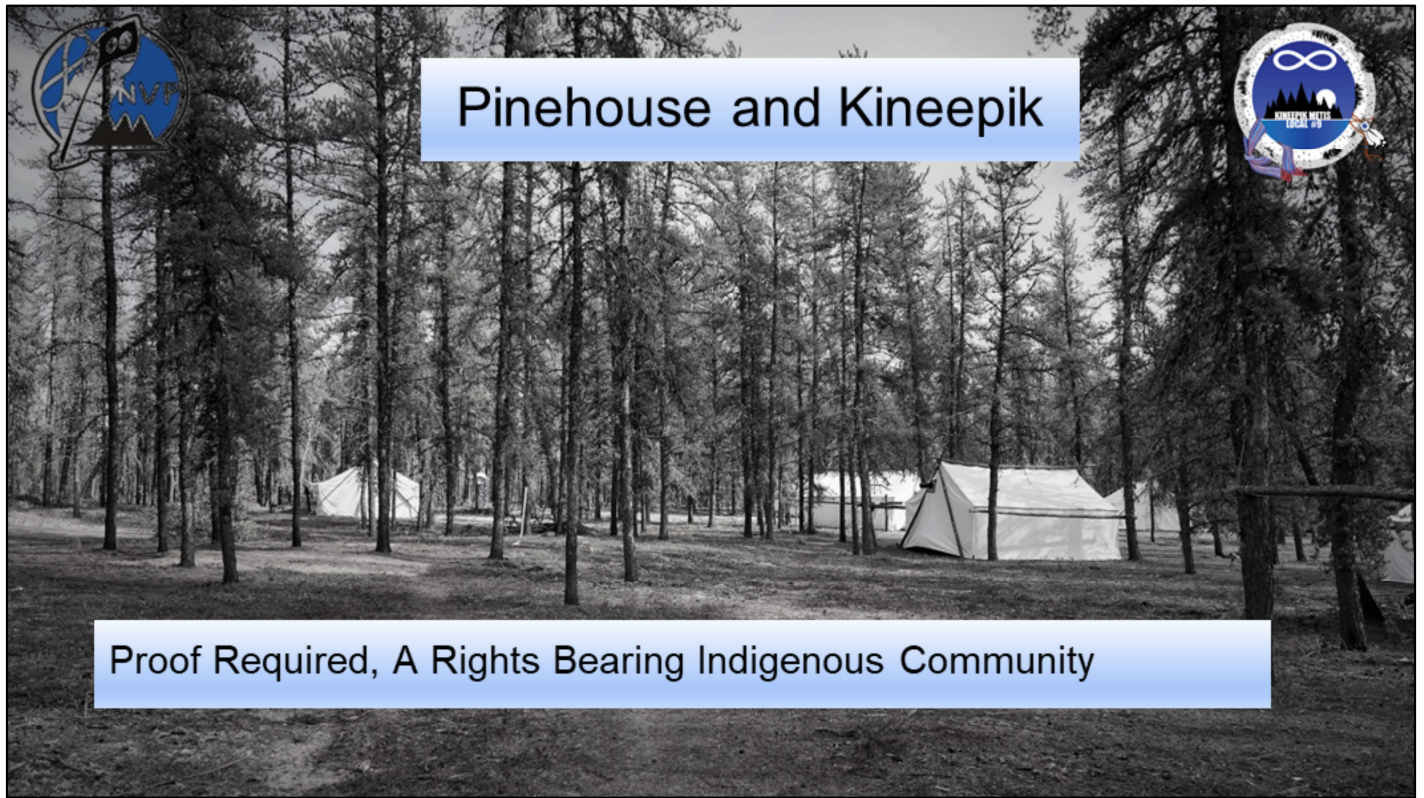
Create a legacy in which we reconcile and be proud we were on the better road, A Road Less Travelled.



Did you know, like most northern Saskatchewan communities Pinehouse has a demographic in which more than 70% of our population is under the age of 29. Now when you consider that we live in the second poorest region of Canada, just ahead of the northern region of Manitoba, which is verified from a report from the Conference Board of Canada . We have an opportunity to utilize all this youthful energy to create value for the north and for Saskatchewan and Canada.

The alternative, is status quo with over-representation in health and justice costs. Either way we the people of this province will spend significant amounts of time and money. It is logical to think that fiscally, the responsible process would be to create value as this would repay any initial costs in future value.



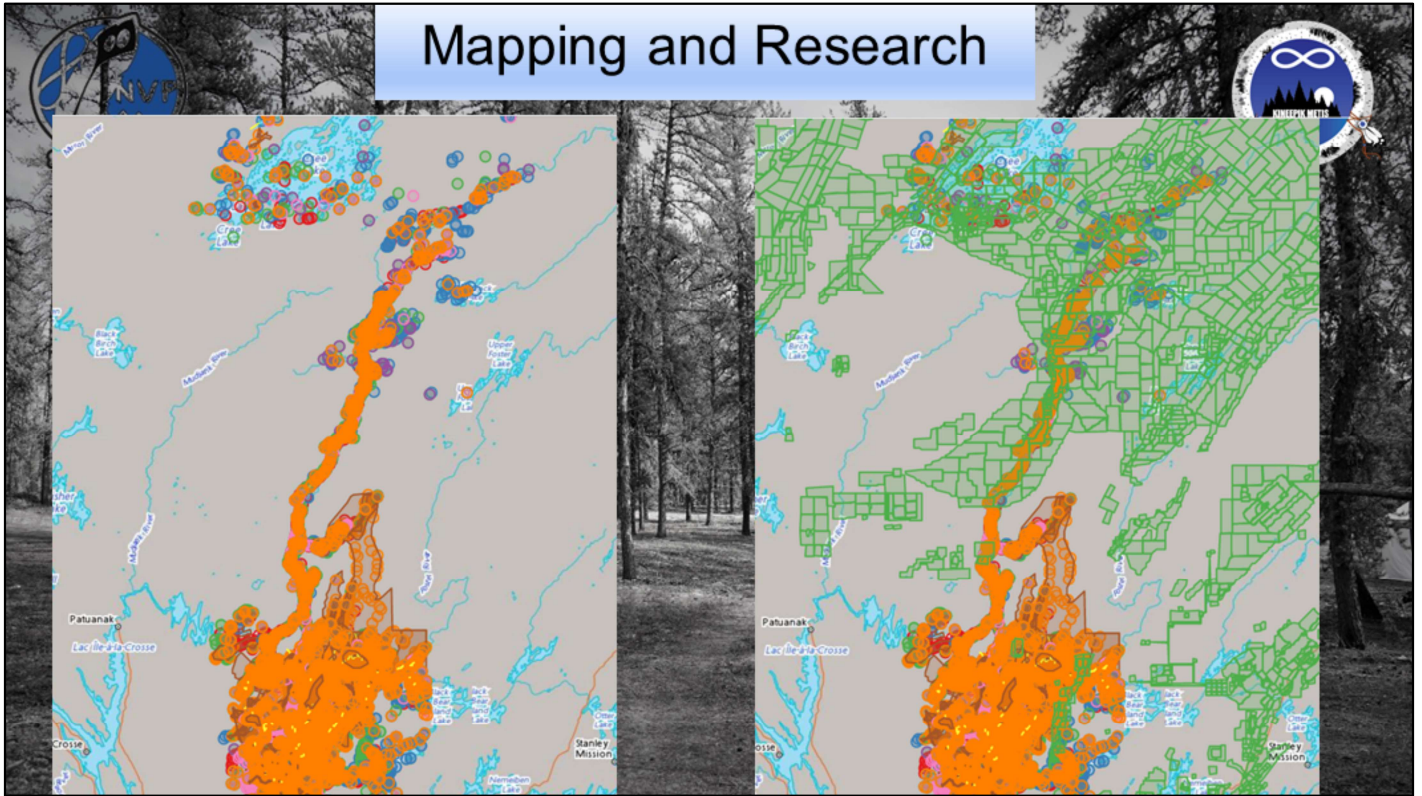


Pinehouse is located in the traditional territory of Kineepik Métis local. It is the center of our world and way of life. Kineepik and Pinehouse completed in partnership with Cameco, Orano and Denison our occupation and land use mapping area extensively with 38,572 features representing 60 different land-use activities over an 11,000 sq km range north of Pinehouse. We digitally mapped and proved that we use the land for food, medicine, wellness and materials and have done so since time immemorial.

This research showed we have proven constitutionally protected section 35 rights. While we have yet to complete this process for all the areas in which we practice our traditional and harvesting activities, we have proven that the land is central to who we identify as a people. Our belief is that this is true for all Indigenous communities and the land around those areas.



## Mapping and Research



The current occupational and land use area This left show our digitally mapped area thus far, the right show current mineral dispositions overlayed over our areas. We use this land to offset the effects of colonization and institutional racism. We also use this land to maintain our identity as a people. We use this land to live as we have always had. We would like to continue to live this way perhaps in a partnership model for the future with similar modern conveniences in our communities as we share the wealth of this land.

We have developed the ability to monitor mineral disposition and they have grown every month. This process of creating these digital maps for proof of land use was necessary but came at a significant cost to our community. Who is responsible for this process. While it has significant positive impact, we could have focused on our growing social development needs.

We would welcome the opportunity for partnership and to learn together as we create a new braided model.



The Way Forward  
Agreements Academic and Legal

*With the Community growing in understanding  
organically towards a blended culture*

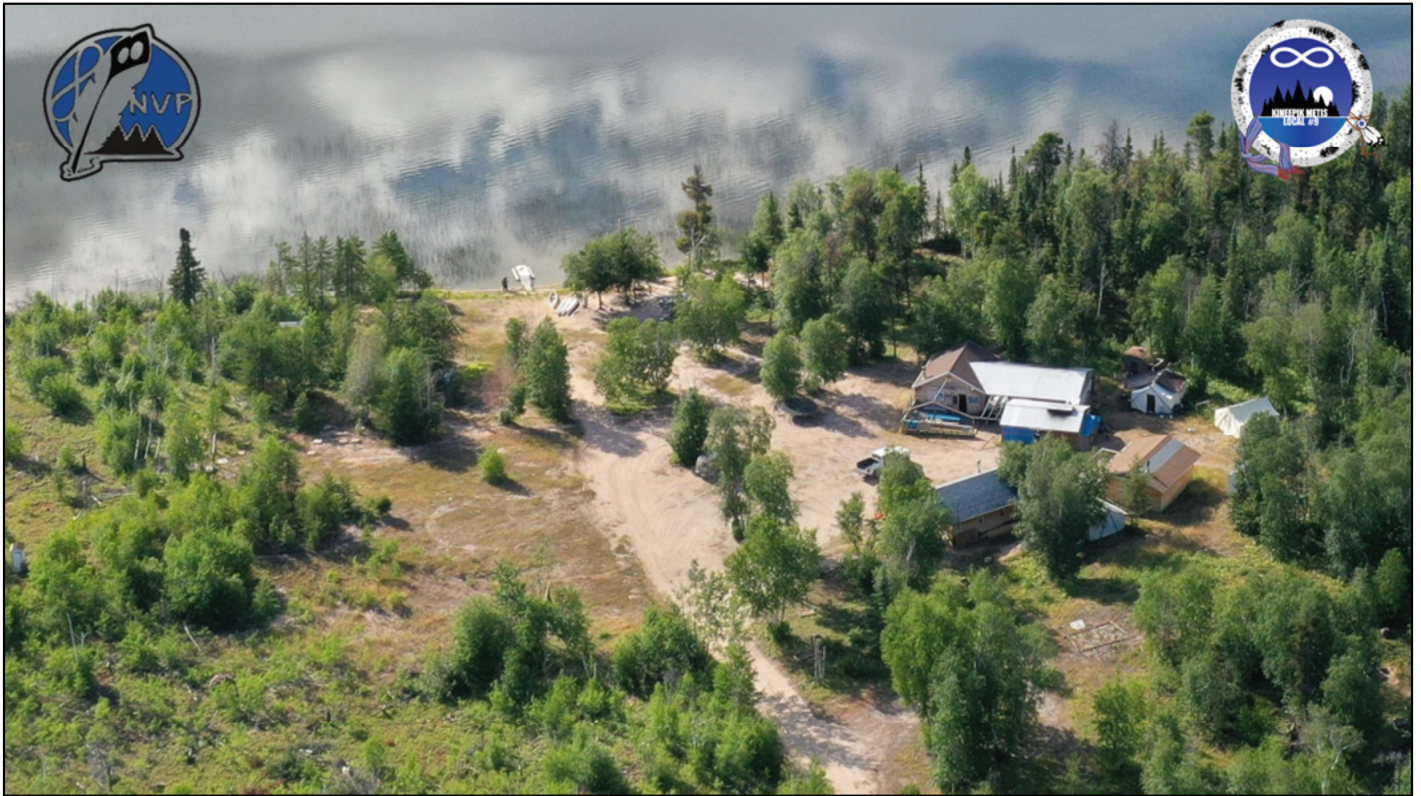
We have realized the greatest gains with Industry and agencies through formalized partnerships with identified targets for improvements. We signed a Collaboration Agreement (CA) with Cameco and Orano, in 2012. We have also signed an exploration agreement with Denison Mines at the 2022 Elders Gathering.

These agreement supports our community in meeting basics needs such as; housing, homelessness, managing addiction treatment, supporting our Elder's, students, youth recreation. In parallel we are building industrial and commercial capacity organically in what we call a braided model. Through this we have created community owned corporations such as Pinehouse Business North Limited Partnership, Pinehouse Housing Corporation. We are also starting to build an Indigenous Governance model through Kineepik Metis Local.

These partnership create value and eased the burden of poverty and are showing as a healing process. They are actually warding off the affects of colonization organically with new concepts beginning to shape a new blended culture. We use some of this value to promote our Woodland Indigenous culture including developing our cultural calendar that promotes the use our language and culture through immersion.







The burden of practicing two cultures is necessary. We work diligently in preserving who we are and who we have always been. When you consider the need for culture and language preservation for a small nation like the Indigenous people of Kineepik. We must be capable enough to understand federal and provincial laws in order to complete complicated applications for programs and requirements for businesses. Yet we must persevere if we want to continue identifying as Indigenous.

The privilege that Industry has is that they only need to practice in Canadian western culture following policies that, although may be contested, are designed to promote Industry.





Land users are using this opportunity to develop our understanding to educate each other, to share frustrations, but also to inspire hope. Pinehouse and Kineepik will be involved in the development of resources in our mapped lands. A new spirit of hope and engagement is developing, and we are optimistic that with education and support – our land users will become more actively involved in the oversight and maintenance of our cultural landscapes for many years to come.





## Community Conscience

Awakening our Spirits

Here in Pinehouse we are within a state of cultural revival. We are providing opportunities to reconnect with Indigenous Identity through our Reclaiming Our Community (ROC) model. This model is now decades old and has created significant momentum in our community. This community engagement process is evolving into a community conscience and moving towards an organic beginning of self governance.

We are ready to speed this process up but we cannot do this without partners with true intentions on reconciliation and understanding of the true history.



To be honest we are quite amazed at how much we have accomplished, and we are able to preserve and grow in our language and culture. We are also impressed at how well our community is doing despite biblical historical challenges. Again, we credit this success to partnerships such as the one we have with governments, industry and a strong communication process with our community.

We expect to grow with our partnership in time with the renewed interest in reconciliation. We will not be passive in watching the activity occurring in our territories, we will work with intention to build capacity. We understand partnerships that are written with stated objectives and outcomes with realistic timelines that allows Indigenous communities to make future plans and continue to improve.





With respect to our working together on project, we are so thankful and will say that we may not have serviced the downturn without your contracts which provided business and many employment opportunities. We look forward to our future as we reclaim our community (ROC) and our identity. We look forward to increasing our partnership and to developing a legacy we can all be proud of.

Again, we want to state how grateful we feel and are so happy you came to visit to see with your own eyes what we do with profits. We build houses for people who previously could not dream of owning one. We build recreational facilities so our children can dream about the NHL or the Olympics. We build an elder complex so our most vulnerable feel safe in a modern facility.

We still have a long way to build to get to a southern standard but gives us more work partner with us and watch us do it.

# Questions

