



Oral presentation

Written submission from the Kineepik Metis Local #9

In the Matter of the

Cameco Corporation, Rabbit Lake Operation

Application for the renewal of uranium
mine/mill licence for Rabbit Lake Operation

Commission Public Hearing

June 7-8, 2023

Exposé oral

Mémoire de la Section locale 9 des Métis de Kineepik

À l'égard de

Cameco Corporation, établissement de Rabbit Lake

Demande visant le renouvellement du permis
d'exploitation de mine et d'usine de
concentration d'uranium pour l'établissement
de Rabbit Lake

Audience publique de la Commission

7-8 juin 2023



PINEHOUSE/KINEEPIK
RESPONSE TO
RELIENSING OF
MCARTHUR RIVER KEY
LAKE AND RABBIT
LAKE

KML statement for relicensing

ABSTRACT

Document of Kineepik Metis Local response to a 20 year license application. Pinehouse the most impacted community for the Key Lake and McArthur River milling and mining operations.

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Contents

Kineepik and Pinehouse Background..... 2

Relicensing Request 2

Change Process 3

Environmental Impacts 3

ROR Process 4

Progressive Reclamation..... 4

Math and Science Education..... 4

Language and Culture 6

Global Changes 7

Canada’s Northern Corridor..... 7

Legislation and Case Law 7

NRTA 8

Signature Page 10



Kineepik Metis Local

Kineepik and Pinehouse Background

Kineepik Metis Local and The Northern Village of Pinehouse (also referred to as 'Pinehouse Lake') is one of several communities hosted along the Churchill River (Mississippi) located in the Northern Administrative District (NAD) of Saskatchewan. Pinehouse demographic is a Métis, and First Nations community with over 95% identifying as Indigenous. As a community we are Indigenous rights bearing people, we work status blind and treat everyone equally with no distinction in services for any community member. Pinehouse is located at 55°31'N, 106°34' W, approximately 109 kilometres northeast of the Village of Beauval, 48 km north on Saskatchewan Highway 914N (an all-weather gravel road also known as the Key Lake Road) from the junction with Highway 165E in the Churchill River system. Pinehouse is situated on the southwest shore of Pinehouse Lake, one of many lakes on the historic Churchill River system; the River enters the Lake about 20 km north of the northern village.

Pinehouse is 220 km south of the Key Lake Uranium Milling Operation and 300 km of the McArthur River Uranium Mining Operation. We are the first community by road to these operations. Every commodity, product that enter the mines through a road or leaves must travel through our traditional lands and municipality. To say that as an Indigenous community we are impacted by uranium development is an understatement. At the inception of the uranium development our workforce needed to retrain the skills in our community to meet the needs of Industry. Our Indigenous community members needed to change our cultural and language practices from that of an Indigenous community to meet the western societal expectations of the uranium industry. A process that is still ongoing after 50 years of engagement. We are the most impacted Indigenous community by the uranium mining industry.

Relicensing Request

Cameco (operator) and Orano submitted a request to the CNSC regulators for a 20 year operating license of the Key Lake, McArthur River, and Rabbit Lake Uranium mining and milling operations. The justification for these longer term licenses is for regulatory certainty and predictability for the operations. Cameco and Orano contend that the current health safety and environment record should be considered as an example of strong stewardship. Pinehouse agrees that Cameco and Orano both have award winning health safety and environment practices. We are provided many documents that showcase their efforts on managing safety and environment. Our community members come home safe with increased capacity fully understanding that the operation they work at are safe and relatively environmentally friendly.

Cameco and Orano also contend that this will enable the operations longer term planning capacity and budgeting decisions for investment. There is also a statement that both Cameco and Orano have mature management systems and established engagement practices in northern Saskatchewan. When a corporation is focused with 50 years experience and the growing professional expertise with leadership and monetary resources from the profits, the expectation is that corporation systems will mature and become better over the course of time. The capacity



Kineepik Metis Local

being built in personnel by these corporations is impressive with hundreds of professionals created such as engineers, accountants, lawyers, chemists, geologists, and of course senior managers.

Pinehouse and Kineepik understand the need for longer term planning and capacity and making budgeting decisions for investments. We as a community also require the time and resources to improve as a community. We contend that we do not have same privileges or advantages as industry, regulators in improving our communities. We would request a full review of the systemic processes that caused this reality be considered. We can elaborate on this further in future presentations during the 20 year license period. We believe it is important that both regulators and industry fully comprehend from an Indigenous community perspective how this evolves and what policies were manifested to create this inequity in privilege that create an unbalanced capacity.

We as a community are informed there is no significant change process as part of the longer term license in the operations and that any substantial change requests to the operations would require a full regulatory process review and come to community for consideration as part of the engagement process. We consider the current increase in automation and use of artificial intelligence a significant change for our community. We do not have enough supports and understanding of this process change, which will significantly impact employment and training of future workers. Again, our education systems cannot meet this change currently and will cause Pinehouse both economic and education leakage.

Change Process

Again, as a community, Pinehouse does not have any significant issues with the license request in general and we agree that a 20 year license will provide significant regulatory certainty and predictability for both Cameco and Orano. We do request that both industry and the regulators consider what is the expectation is for the Indigenous people of Pinehouse over the course of the 20 years operating license term. What should our management systems in education, health and wellness look like at the end of 20 year license. As a community we have participated in several relicensing processes over the last 50 years. Each process concluded with the license being granted and our lived experience indicates that this license will also be granted. While making these consideration understand that this license will end just three years for the projected end of mine for both Key Lake and McArthur River operations.

Environmental Impacts

We do contend that no matter the effort by CNSC or Saskatchewan Environment regulators or Industry their will be health, safety and environment incidents. There will be continuing impacts as the industry develops, matures, and ends. This is proven with historical incidents at these operations over the years, which include two mining operations being flooded and the sloughing of the tailing management pit wall inter alia. There will also be an environmental impact legacy



Kineepik Metis Local

on the surface lease and underground facilities at the end of the operations. There will be an impact on Indigenous people and the lifestyles we live. We accept these impacts as necessary for the continued development of the uranium mining industry as the world moves towards non-carbon emitters for energy production.

ROR Process

As a community we participate in the Report on Regulators (ROR) process and have determined that this annual process creates opportunity for Pinehouse to voice any issues about Cameco and Orano and its respective operations to the regulators. Pinehouse is also a signatory to the Collaboration Agreement with Cameco and Orano, a process that creates many opportunities for bilateral dialogue on our relationship. We schedule meetings quarterly with an annual community public meeting with Cameco and Orano personnel present to answer question to the general public. We also have opportunity to call meetings at anytime to host a conversations.

Our community also has a growing relationship with the CNSC and to a lesser extent with Saskatchewan Environment. Our expectations are that these relationship will evolve and will manifest to a capacity for our communities to create our own Indigenous processes for regulations. While we make these statements in support of the 20 year operating license, we as community, regulators and industry need to create metrics on an Indigenous community evolution caused by industry. We need to improve at the same speed with the equality (not equal) in resources as Industry. None of us can say with confidence that transference is occurring currently as it should for a community such as Pinehouse.

Progressive Reclamation

We are requesting and working towards developing Pinehouse personnel to an increased capacity “supported by industry and regulators” that we have the full ability and understanding to start programs that include the progressive reclamation of the mining and milling operations for the duration of the 20 year mine license. This effort can only be successful through community leadership supported by government, industry, and regulators. We collectively must create metrics that will show the evolution of this capacity within the community of Pinehouse. We have started this process through strategy development. This evolution in capacity over the next 20 years should and must leave capacity to manage the legacy of ongoing environmental impact, monitoring and mitigation during and after industry concludes operations.

Math and Science Education

We have benefitted with our 50 year relationship with Industry. This relationship created many entry level employment positions and business opportunities that have evolved over the decades into some supervisor, trades, and technical level positions. We are pleased that most entry level position are now staffed by Residents of Saskatchewan’s North (RSN). Our community is well represented as employees and contractors at the operations and are growing our numbers slowly over the years. However, we have low employment numbers in journey person trades,



Kineepik Metis Local

professional and management positions. In reviewing these occupations there is a significant need for advance math and science programming for our community members.

With the operations moving towards more automation and using artificial intelligence and generally increasing the requirements for future employees. We will not be able to produce the workforce capacity in the current education paradigm to meet the needs of industry. This should concern us all, we as a community are losing, in parallel the capacity for reverting to our traditional lifestyles. We are already having food sovereignty issues currently and struggling with general health and wellness. We are also losing access to lands, where we collect foods and materials to continue living as Indigenous people. Please understand that we want to be part of movement as the uranium industry adjusts to the changing of economies from a carbon base to an electrical base economy. This license can assist Pinehouse, government, regulators, and industry if we work to increase the education opportunities and support language and cultural programming.

As an Indigenous community we have concerns and questions to these issues that require longer term solutions with partnerships with industry, regulators, and governments. **We ask you what is the threshold for western education required for an Indigenous community such as Pinehouse, which is proven the most impacted by these operations, to fully understand and participate in a modern uranium mining operation, while maintaining an Indigenous identity?** We believe the ability to provide science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) programming supported by Cree language and culture will change the current education paradigm and provide higher potential employees for future opportunities. This means we must create math and science programming for all current and future students if they are even to consider opportunities in the uranium mining industry. In considering these issues we conclude that our western or Indigenous education system in Pinehouse has not matured at the pace of the management system, nor the health, safety, and environmental models for industry or for that of regulators. We also contend that these other western agencies have methods of using profits from industry to increase the capacity, which are not currently legally available to Pinehouse.

In our 50 year relationships (the collective we) we have yet to produce any engineers, chemists, geologists, environment scientists or other professionals such as doctors accountants or lawyers that would build capacity for Pinehouse to engage with industry fully and meaningfully. We have concluded that we need focused expenditures in our math and sciences programming in our community, starting with early learning and throughout all levels of education immediately to create the opportunity for professional development and cultural change that is required to meet the future workforce requirements. We require an adult education center that offers young adults advanced math and science training. As we consider our request, we wonder as an Indigenous community, if we were a western community what progression our community might have experienced in the past 50 years. Would we have better housing, paved road, advanced training



Kineepik Metis Local

facilities, better support for health and wellness from the resources industry. The infrastructure in the Cree communities in Quebec such as Mistassini are much more advanced through the development of the Quebec Hydro. There is an established legacy fund currently in the billions. Yet in comparison we struggle to provide quality education, health and wellness here in northern Saskatchewan.

In truth to make this transition we will need to suffer through another cultural change as a community. Although we see this one as beneficial and will be directed by our community and supported by governments, industry, and the regulators. We are currently hosting these education transitions conversation as a community as we develop a strategy. We will create a model that is accepted by Pinehouse and report this at the future ROR processes and with the quarterly meetings with Cameco and Orano as part our agreements. We would request that the comparison of our transition to this new (STEM) culture is met with the same response by industry and regulators as they offer for environment incidents.

We are pleased that Cameco and Orano are investing in Math and Science programming already and looking at opportunities to increase that investment. We receive limited donations to scholarships and are offered placements at mining operations, summer employment and apprenticeships. This creates capacity slowly, but we do not have the time to wait for the next shift towards automation, artificial intelligence, and movement towards a carbon neutral future, as it is upon us now. We look forward to the tax dollars that are derived from our lands being expended through reinvested on the Indigenous people most impacted by the operations. Into education, health, and wellness facilities, roads and houses. We look forward to working collectively and improving the region where the commodities come from in this next 20 year license cycle.

Language and Culture

Today we have limited Cree language speaker in Pinehouse with zero fluency in anyone under the age of 35 years old. While we cannot account to the specific reason to why this loss of language occurred, we can attribute in part the need within our population to learn the language of industry (English) to be accepted into the mining operations. This is a significant statement as this loss of language created a disconnect between our youth and the community elders. We also consider policies such the recognized languages in Canada being English and French and not Cree. Cree Language only exists in Canada as a homeland language whereas English and French are practiced in England and France inter alia. This means if we lose the Cree language it becomes extinct. With no transference occurring with anyone under the age of 35 there is no other outcome, without immediate support.

We are pleased that Cameco and Orano are both responding by considering supports to our language and culture programs, as we strategize on how we can rebuild our Cree language through an evolving Collaboration Agreement. We will be pleased to provide metrics on this



Kineepik Metis Local

language rebuilding process through the ROR process each year as well. We would also appreciate efforts with our regulators to recruit Cree language speakers and for the commission members to consider gaining capacity in Cree language. We would challenge industry to recruit senior managers that are fluent in the Cree language and to for industry leadership to consider gaining capacity in Cree language.

Global Changes

As a community we realize that globally there is a transition occurring in economies towards non carbon based fuel sources with developing batteries and transportation leading the change. There is also a growing need for more technology based resources for growing robotics automation and artificial intelligence. Adding pressure to this dynamic is the need to create solutions to combat global warming. The western world will need to find additional non renewable resources to meet this transition. The resources required to meet this change will come from new mining discoveries in northern Canada. These new discoveries will require additional infrastructure to be developed. Much of these process will occur in regions where Indigenous people are the majority such as our community of Pinehouse.

Canada's Northern Corridor

There is an increase in exploration activities in known mining regions to meet the current needs. To meet these future needs there needs to be resource projects developed in areas that are underdeveloped. There are current studies for a project called "Canada's Northern Corridor", to localize infrastructure projects such as highways railways pipelines and electrical transmission lines to access lands in northern Canada to move resources across the country to places in transportation corridors. One could infer that these studies are intended to meet the future resources need from the underdeveloped regions of northern Canada. We believe that Pinehouse will be a path for one of these infrastructure developments. As such we need to prepare our population more for the increased intrusion into our territory as they search for resources such as uranium, base metals, and rare earths.

Resources that are currently needed for reliable based load power that is carbon free or carbon neutral, include uranium for nuclear energy to support the development of future small modular reactors. Other minerals such as rare earth elements and base metals for the development of batteries, telecommunications, automation, and artificial intelligence. Northern Saskatchewan is well known for hosting large uranium deposits and is a strong potential for base metals and rare earth elements. There are known quantities of these resources with much of the land being explored for additional resources. One only needs to review the current mineral leases in Saskatchewan to show this increasing activity.

Legislation and Case Law

Rights bearing Indigenous communities such as Pinehouse are starting to engage in the new legislations and building strategies for the future. One where resources on Indigenous lands are



Kineepik Metis Local

shared and the benefits are long term and sustainable, such as they are with Hydro Quebec. Legislations, such as the Impact Assessment Act, The Duty to Consult and Accommodate, Truth and Reconciliation and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls are requesting reconciliation. These along with international principles such as the United Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People. This along with the section 35 of the Canadian Constitution, which is evolving through increasing case law, to include free and prior informed engagement for projects on traditional Indigenous lands.

Many communities are focused/distracted by growing social issues and community infrastructure needs and the politics are led by these issues. These engagement processes contain substantial information and require time and capacity from communities, which are not currently available in affected communities. Much of the engagement capacity is held by external agencies who offer support only to the context of industry response and leave limited transference. Another legacy issue of economic and education leakage leaving the north. Rights bearing communities need education, support, and time to understand and participate in what is occurring and what is coming.

There is an opportunity for reconciliation through organic capacity building in communities such as Pinehouse from these developments and future projects. NAD is the still underdeveloped and lacks professional capacity to engage as equals or meaningfully. This can pose issues for engagement to achieve consensus for project development. There is a risk associated with the lack of professional capacity for much of these needed conversations to occur in a meaningful and respectful process. The need to create meaningful education processes that are blended with Indigenous knowledge and western systems can potentially fast track projects if communities are provided certainty for long term planning and sustainability through these mining and milling operations.

NRTA

When you consider Indigenous organizations are now questioning policies such as the natural resources transfer agreement (NRTA) between federal and provincial agencies a process that occurred without any Indigenous consultation, the need to build understanding and capacity through increase expenditures on math and science education and language and culture is now. We expect that together we can create a strategic process on both important needs that in the 20 years operating license we can all be proud of a legacy that reflects reconciliation that is led by the Indigenous community.

We thank you for the opportunity to present to the commission and to speak about our challenges as an Indigenous community here in Canada, northern Saskatchewan, Pinehouse. We are working earnestly to overcome systemic challenges. We are building capacity organically to create a workforce capable of safety working at these mining and milling operations. We want to part of the climate change solutions. To do so we want equitable resources from the very land we



Kineepik Metis Local

live to make this cultural transition. Our request is not frivolous and does not require extended conversations, only commitment and agreement that our statements are logical and sound. Should this be the case we will increase the effort on developing the correct strategy to produce results that Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound (SMART) and report these at ROR and quarterly meetings with Cameco and Orano.

We as a community support this license request, we must, for the western systems privileges a society, that is not currently in existence in northern Saskatchewan.



Kineepik Metis Local

Signature Page

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