



Oral presentation

Exposé oral

**Written submission from
Rick Robillard**

**Mémoire de
Rick Robillard**

In the Matter of the

À l'égard de

**Cameco Corporation, Rabbit Lake
Operation**

**Cameco Corporation, établissement de
Rabbit Lake**

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

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

Commission Public Hearing

Audience publique de la Commission

June 7-8, 2023

7-8 juin 2023

April 24, 2023

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Senior Tribunal Officer, Commission Registry
Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission
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Senior Tribunal Officer:

Edlanet'e (Hello).

I am Rick Robillard and I am from the Denesuline community of Black Lake, which is located near the top of northern Saskatchewan. We are proud Dene people that traditionally followed the Beverly Caribou herd north to the barren lands in the spring and south to the boreal forest in the fall.

When I was Chief of the Black Lake Denesuline First Nation, 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 community members. I was the Black Lake First Nation Chief that signed the Ya'thi Néné Collaboration Agreement in June 2016. In my Dene language, Ya'thi Néné means Land of the North. I was also one of the elected councillors that signed the IMA in 1999.

I signed the collaboration agreement, which stemmed from the IMA, because it was a way to work with industry as partners. To develop uranium resources in the region for the benefit of both the communities and industry. My father had been Chief before me, and I wanted to continue his legacy of working with industry for the betterment of my community and the people.

I saw how the negotiations and processes under the agreement brought the leadership together. In 2016, the Black Lake Denesuline First Nation, along with the First Nations of Fond du Lac and Hatchet Lake, and the four communities of Stony Rapids, Wollaston Lake, Uranium City and Camsell Portage signed a historic agreement with Cameco and Orano. The Ya'thi Néné Collaboration Agreement is designed to enhance workforce and business development, environmental stewardship and community investment in the Athabasca Basin.

As Chief and currently, as the community liaison for Black Lake Denesuline First Nation and the northern hamlet of Stony Rapids, 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. Enhanced the former Athabasca Working Group monitoring program with 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, \$867.7 million has been provided to the Basin communities under the agreement. This means monies spent with our community owned businesses, employment opportunities for our members, and investment into community priorities.

I have been fortunate to see the industry from a number of different 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, with industry to support our relationship as one of the community liaisons under the collaboration agreement.

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 am a proud of who I am and where I come from. I am first and foremost a Dene person and I have spent most of my life in the community where I continue to practice a traditional lifestyle. Cameco has a 35-year history in northern Saskatchewan with its uranium mining and milling operations and I believe that we will continue to see opportunities because of the strong relationship we have with industry.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit an intervention letter in support of Cameco's 20-year licence renewal application for the Rabbit Lake, Key Lake and McArthur River Operations.

Marci Cho

Rick Robillard