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Oral presentation

Exposé oral

**Written submission from the
Kineepik Métis Local #9**

**Mémoire du
Kineepik Métis Local no 9**

**Regulatory Oversight Report for
Uranium Mines and Mills in
Canada: 2022**

**Rapport de surveillance
réglementaire des mines et usines
de concentration d'uranium au
Canada : 2022**

Commission Meeting

Réunion de la Commission

December 13-14, 2023

13-14 décembre 2023



Report on Regulators

Perspectives on Indigenous Valued Ecosystem Components (I-VEC's)

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Traditional Knowledge Keeper

Good Morning. Thank you for offering your time to hear a changing story for northern Saskatchewan.

I am an academic and a traditional knowledge keeper. Today, I will share my perspective on Indigenous Valued Ecosystems Components (I-VECs)


Presentation Agenda

Indigenous Valued Ecosystems Components

Opening Story

One of Many, for the context of this presentation, we will share this one story.

It is a Story of Policy, Process, and Comfort in Current Policies



**KINEEPIK VALUE
ECOSYSTEM
COMPONENTS**

KML Pre-statement for Denison EIS

ABSTRACT

Document of Kineepik Metis Locals Valued Ecosystem Components. An indigenous preview for consideration as Denison moves forward to completing an Environmental Impact Statement for the Wheeler River Project.

Walter Smith
Manager of Environment and Education Training and Culture.

A Case Study – Kineepik Metis Local (Kineepik) and Denison Mines, CNSC, and Saskatchewan Environment completed the Kineepik Indigenous Valued Ecosystem Components study over six months. The document contained information from several community public meetings, information from an occupational land use study, and several leadership meetings about the project and the potential impacts on Kineepik Traditional Territory. The proponents, with Denison Mines as the lead sponsor, supported the process financially and professionally.

Kineepik included the language and cultural practices, community demographics, educational levels, employment at all levels, traffic, boreal caribou, forestry, water, air, flora, and fauna from the community perspective. We included the opportunity to develop higher capacity in the environment monitoring and started to assume how we would decommission the operations after the projects were concluded.

This information is incorporated into the EIS. The community owns the information and is now a valuable information tool for other proposals such as adult education programs, language and culture programs, and capacity funding from regulators. The community determines how to use the information in partnership with industry.

The information helps the community organize itself and moves the focus to solutions.

Presentation Agenda

Indigenous Valued Ecosystems Components

Topics

- I- VEC's
- Reviving Indigenous Languages
- New Information as part of I-Vec's
 - Triggered Response Capacity
 - Collateral Effect
 - Cultural Integration
- Supporting STEM (Science, Technology Engineering and Mathematics)
 - EIS
 - Professional Development
- Indigenous ITK/TEK Professional Development
- Questions





We have three new mines being in development in northern Saskatchewan. We have the NexGen's Rook 1 project north of La Loche and Clearwater Dene Nation, the Denison Wheeler River Project north of Pinehouse, Kineepik and Patuanak and English River First Nation, and the Foran's McIlvenna Bay Project by Deshambeault Lake and Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation. These projects will bring economic opportunity to northern and Indigenous communities. Each project introduces new technology, including underground tailing management systems, the Insitu Leach Recovery system, and using Electric vehicles in the mining process. All these projects will use some form of automation and artificial intelligence in the mining processes.

Impact-benefit agreements are signed or negotiated with the Rights Bearing communities near their operations. These agreements will allow for shared prosperity. Yet professional, management, and leadership opportunities will be limited for members of the Indigenous communities. Transference of knowledge and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Technology) education will be limited in the Indigenous communities.

This economic and educational leakage will impact Indigenous communities. This is the story we must change moving forward. We can use Indigenous Valued Ecosystem Components to help in that process.

Indigenous VEC Statements

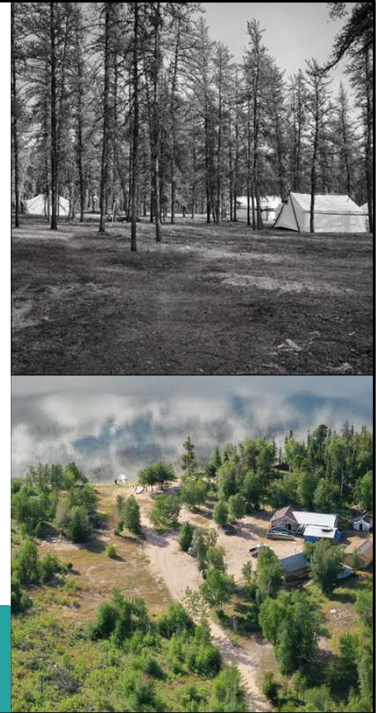
Create Opportunities to Learn from and Teach with Indigenous Communities

New Information and Knowledge

Indigenous-Valued Ecosystem Components I-VECs

Vec's What are they?

Indigenizing Vec's



Valued Ecosystem Components or VEC is a term used in writing an environmental impact statement or EIS. It is a study of environmental components that may be affected by the development of projects and can include a wide array of activities. It is a Western term, and it is good to study components that may affect the environment.

“Indigenous-Valued Ecosystem Components, I-VECs” refer to the data collection process and eventual statement of the crucial components of Indigenous culture that hold significant importance for Indigenous communities. The I-VECs can include language and cultural practices, community demographics, educational levels, employment at all levels, traffic, forestry, water, air, flora, and fauna from the community perspective. The Indigenous communities will adjust and determine which proponents to include.

For example, creating a cultural calendar with communities can be a valuable part of I-VECs learning process as Indigenous communities build a document of cultural and language activities they engage in annually. This usually includes celebrations and cultural events and can offer the opportunity to engage and share in that culture.

Indigenous VEC Statements

Create Opportunities to Learn from and Teach with Indigenous Communities

New Information and Knowledge

Reviving Indigenous Language
Cree Michif and Dene



An essential aspect of I Vec's is participating in "Reviving Indigenous Language." This must be a collective effort in partnership with Indigenous communities, industry, academia, and governments operating in Indigenous territories. Resources and commitment will be required to preserve and allow for the resurgence of Indigenous languages. In northern Saskatchewan, we refer to the Cree, Michif, and Dene languages. This will involve actively promoting and incorporating the Indigenous languages into these exploration and development project's daily activities and environment.

This Indigenous language revitalizing process underscores our shared responsibility for the decline of these languages, emphasizing that everyone, whether aware of it or not, bears a degree of responsibility for their role in the endangerment and current extinction process of Indigenous languages and must contribute to restoring those languages.

This will facilitate better relationships with Indigenous people and will show respect and honor to the people in the regions you are operating in.

Indigenous VEC Statements

Create Opportunities to Learn from and Teach with Indigenous Communities

New Information and Knowledge

Triggered Response Capacity



As we develop an I-VEC statement, we can review how projects can cause a “Triggered Response Capacity,” a phenomenon observed within Indigenous communities wherein their primary focus shifts from addressing their own cultural and societal needs to meeting the demands of the industrial sector. This shift entails community leadership allocating time and resources for industrial education, safety compliance, regulatory compliance, and responding to industry-related requests.

Indigenous communities must participate in the Duty to Consult process; this includes providing information in feasibility studies and environmental impact assessments. They also must negotiate agreements and fulfill industry-specific training requirements. Engage community members for Industry. As a result of this process and transition, the community's ability to engage in and preserve Indigenous cultural practices and language diminishes, and there is a reduced opportunity for the retention of the Indigenous language and cultural practices.

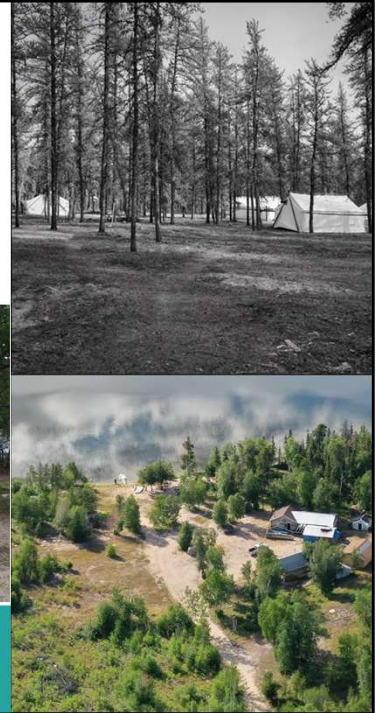
The intensity of this response tends to increase in tandem with the rise in Collateral Effects associated with the community's involvement with the industrial sector.

Indigenous VEC Statements

Create Opportunities to Learn from and Teach with Indigenous Communities

New Information and Knowledge

Collateral Effect



“Collateral Effect” – refers to the unintended and often adverse consequences experienced by Indigenous people when governments, industries, and academia introduce new processes, operations, or economies within their traditional territories. This phenomenon requires the Indigenous community to adapt its current culture to accommodate the cultural interference resulting from external developments. Several instances have exemplified these collateral effects, including:

The era of the fur trade

The Natural Resources Transfer Agreement process

The introduction of Commercial Fishing and Commercial Wildrice

The enactment of the Northern Administrative District Act (NAD)

Collateral effect from Uranium and Base Metal mining and Forest industries in northern Saskatchewan.

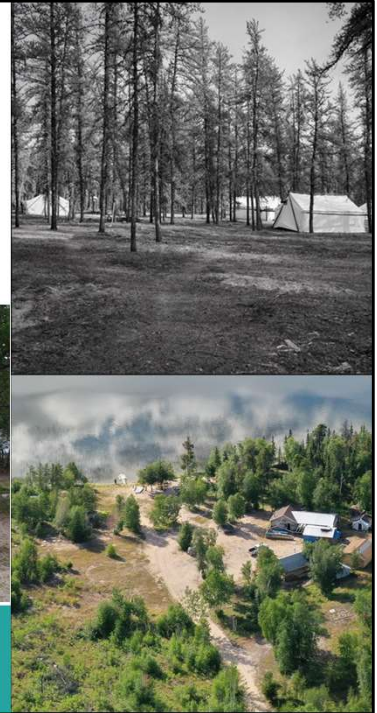
These events have consistently led to significant cultural changes within the Indigenous community. Indigenous communities typically lack the means to prevent these collateral effects; thus, they must accept and adjust to these cultural changes independently.

Collateral Effect must be recorded as part of the I-VECs documentation, and collectively, communities and Industry can work through the transition.

Indigenous VEC Statements

Create Opportunities to Learn from and Teach with Indigenous Communities

Cultural Integration



Cultural Integration in Mining Development – is the process of incorporating Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) through the development of the I-VEC document into the early phases of exploration programs, particularly before the commencement of mining projects. This integration entails the collection and utilization of indigenous VEC (Traditional or Indigenous Values, Environmental Knowledge, and Cultural Heritage) data to inform and guide development and exploration activities.

By actively involving indigenous communities and engaging with their TEK, mining exploration companies will enhance environmental stewardship. By valuing and applying indigenous environmental knowledge, exploration efforts can minimize ecological disruptions and reduce the potential environmental impact of mining operations.

In summary, Cultural Integration through TEK acknowledges the critical role of I-VEC data in shaping responsible mining exploration. This approach aligns with environmental and cultural considerations, ensuring that mining projects are conducted to respect and benefit the environment and the communities intimately connected to it.

Indigenous VEC Statements

Create Opportunities to Learn from and Teach with Indigenous Communities

Supporting STEM

EIS

Professional Development



We all have extra work if we are to reconcile. Indigenous communities need a push to move towards STEM education, and the mining operations near them are the perfect place to start. We need to aggressively remove educational and economic leakage from projects so that Indigenous communities can integrate Western and Indigenous knowledge into their prevue. Industries, governments, and academia must create and participate in developing Math and Science education in Indigenous communities where Industry is progressing.

One tool in this work is creating and supporting opportunities for Indigenous Valued Ecosystem Components study in partnership with Indigenous communities. Ideally, it will be led by a community champion supported by industry.

Finding support for STEM, I-VECs, and professional and leadership development will be essential if this is to be expedited.

Indigenous ITK/TEK Professional Development

Building Knowledge in Partnership with companies builds better and Faster IBA agreements.

Supporting data collection with communities as exploration projects grow into Projects.

This data can allow communities to build grant and research proposals, which builds additional capacity.



Industry must work towards increasing knowledge as extra work as projects move deeper into Indigenous territories. This can be accomplished in many ways, including participating in community events, humanizing the exploration personnel to communities, and supporting STEM/Education and the transference process.

Learn from community Indigenous people what the Doctrine of Discovery is, the Royal Proclamation, Research the Smallpox Epidemic and hear the truth about Indigenous treatment in the Fur Trade.

Public documents to review include the Royal Commission on Aboriginal People, Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, the United Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, the Northern Administrative District Act, and The Saskatchewan Natural Resources Act. Learn the history of the treatment of Indigenous people after the 1885 Resistance, which occurred here in Saskatchewan, and ask questions as to why the Indigenous population of Canada is at 4.5% or 1.8 million out of 40 million people when not long ago it was at 100%

Work with communities to understand and move away from the current over-representation in justice and social issues. This is the path less traveled. It is a challenging journey. We must all be brave and move towards our shared story of reconciliation. Thank You

Questions

