



**CMD 26-H102.3**

Date: 2026-02-16

**Written Submission from the  
Métis Nation - Saskatchewan**

**Mémoire de la  
Nation métisse de la Saskatchewan**

In the matter of

À l'égard du

**Saskatchewan Research Council**

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**Saskatchewan Research Council**

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Application to renew licence for the Gunnar  
Mine Remediation Project

Demande visant à renouveler son permis  
pour le projet de remise en état du site  
Gunnar

**Hearing in Writing**

**Audience par écrit**

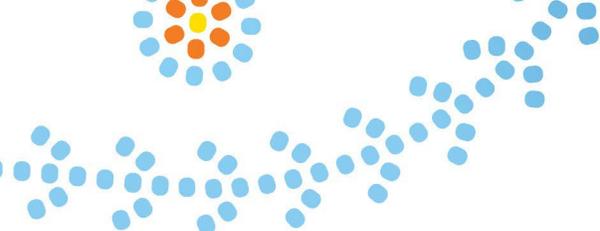
May 2026

Mai 2026



**Métis Nation–Saskatchewan (MN–S) Written  
Intervention  
Saskatchewan Research Council’s Application for the  
Gunnar Mine Remediation Project CMD 26-H102**

**Ministry of Lands & Resources, Agriculture, and Environment  
March 2026**



## **Overview:**

The Saskatchewan Research Council (“SRC”) maintains a license to operate the Gunnar Mine Remediation Project and, on May 23, 2025, submitted an application to the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (“CNSC”) to renew its Waste Nuclear Substance and Radiation Devices license for a period of five years. This application would allow SRC to complete the remaining remedial work before beginning their decommissioning process.

On December 3, 2025, the CNSC Staff issued Commission Member Document 26-H102 (“CMD”) regarding SRC’s renewal application. Following review of the CMD, the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan (“MN-S”) has prepared these written submissions to help inform the Commission’s decision on SRC’s application.

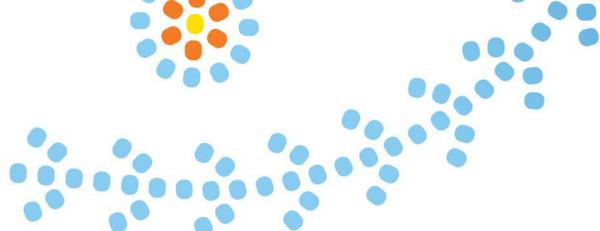
The Gunnar Mine Remediation Project (“Project”) affects Métis Aboriginal rights, including Métis Aboriginal title to the lands and resources in the Project area. In particular, these mines and mills impact the right of the Métis Nation in Saskatchewan to freely access and use our lands as we have throughout previous generations, without interruption, and without individual and community anxiety regarding the health of plants, animals, and fish around and within the Project area, while denuding our lands of their resources, wealth, and opportunity.

## **Background:**

The Métis emerged as a distinct Indigenous people and nation in the historic Canadian Northwest during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Saskatchewan is a part of the “historic Métis homeland,” which includes the three prairie provinces, Ontario, British Columbia, the Northwest Territories, and the northern United States. The Métis have a shared history, common culture (song, dance, dress, national symbols, etc.), unique language (Michif, with various regional dialects), extensive kinship connections, distinct way of life, traditional territory, and collective consciousness.

### *Métis as s. 35 Rights Holders*

The Métis claim Aboriginal title to the historic Métis homeland, which the Government of Canada attempted to extinguish through the issuance of “scrip” and land grants in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The historic Métis homeland encompasses the areas on which many active and legacy uranium mines and mills are, or were, located.



The MN-S is the exclusive representative of the rights of the Métis Nation in Saskatchewan affected by the Project. The Federal Court has recognized that “section 35 rights matters such as title... are held at the Nation level”.<sup>1</sup> The MN-S is the government of the Métis Nation in Saskatchewan, as recognized by the Government of Canada (“Canada”) in the 2023 Métis Nation within Saskatchewan Self-Government Recognition and Implementation Agreement between the MN-S and His Majesty the King in Right of Canada (“Self-Government Agreement”). The Self-Government Agreement recognizes that the MN-S is exclusively mandated to engage in consultation with Canada where Canada’s conduct has the potential to adversely impact Métis rights within Saskatchewan.

The Métis Nation in Saskatchewan are pursuing our Aboriginal title claims, including, but not limited to, the 1994 Northwest Saskatchewan Métis title claim. In January 2025, the MN-S produced more than 3,000 pages of research material and more than 24,000 records in relation to the 1994 Northwest Saskatchewan Métis title claim.

Canada has agreed to negotiate the 1994 Northwest Saskatchewan Métis title claim under the 2018 Framework Agreement for Advancing Reconciliation, as well as under the Self-Government Agreement. In 2025, the Supreme Court of Canada commented that “it is clear that Saskatchewan has knowledge of MNS’s claim for Aboriginal rights and title, and it is this knowledge which is relevant to the duty to consult analysis.”<sup>2</sup>

*United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (“UNDRIP”) contains several articles that are relevant to the present review, including articles 19, 25, 26, 27, 29, and 32:

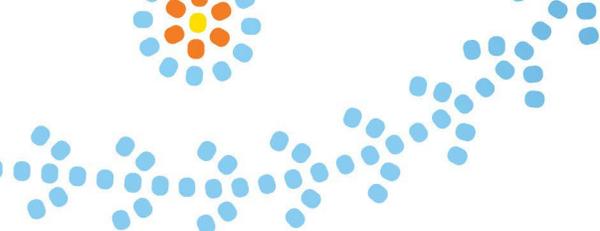
**Article 19**

States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them.

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<sup>1</sup> *Kebaowek First Nation v. Canadian Nuclear Laboratories*, 2025 FC 319, at para. 150.

<sup>2</sup> *Saskatchewan (Environment) v. Métis Nation – Saskatchewan*, 2025 SCC 4, at para. 54.



## **Article 25**

Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard.

## **Article 26**

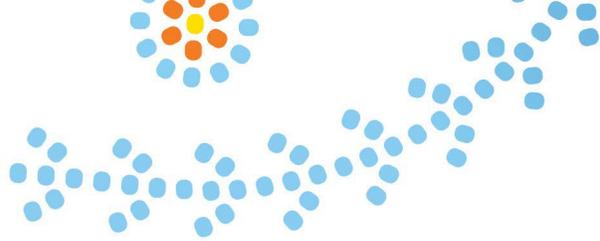
1. Indigenous peoples have the right to the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned, occupied or otherwise used or acquired.
2. Indigenous peoples have the right to own, use, develop and control the lands, territories and resources that they possess by reason of traditional ownership or other traditional occupation or use, as well as those which they have otherwise acquired.
3. States shall give legal recognition and protection to these lands, territories and resources. Such recognition shall be conducted with due respect to the customs, traditions and land tenure systems of the indigenous peoples concerned.

## **Article 27**

States shall establish and implement, in conjunction with indigenous peoples concerned, a fair, independent, impartial, open and transparent process, giving due recognition to indigenous peoples' laws, traditions, customs and land tenure systems, to recognize and adjudicate the rights of indigenous peoples pertaining to their lands, territories and resources, including those which were traditionally owned or otherwise occupied or used. Indigenous peoples shall have the right to participate in this process.

## **Article 29**

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to the conservation and protection of the environment and the productive capacity of their lands or territories and resources. States shall establish and implement assistance programmes for indigenous peoples for such conservation and protection, without discrimination.



2. States shall take effective measures to ensure that no storage or disposal of hazardous materials shall take place in the lands or territories of indigenous peoples without their free, prior and informed consent.

3. States shall also take effective measures to ensure, as needed, that programmes for monitoring, maintaining and restoring the health of indigenous peoples, as developed and implemented by the peoples affected by such materials, are duly implemented.

### **Article 32**

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for the development or use of their lands or territories and other resources.

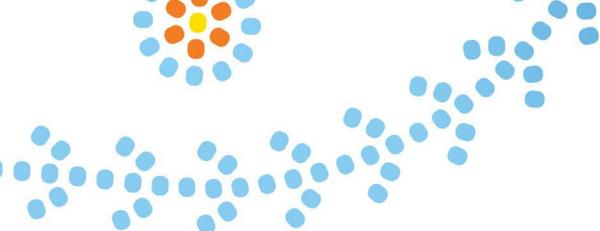
2. States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free and informed consent prior to the approval of any project affecting their lands or territories and other resources, particularly in connection with the development, utilization or exploitation of mineral, water or other resources.

3. States shall provide effective mechanisms for just and fair redress for any such activities, and appropriate measures shall be taken to mitigate adverse environmental, economic, social, cultural or spiritual impact.

The MN-S endorses UNDRIP's standards, particularly with respect to the principle of free, prior and informed consent ("FPIC") set out therein, and maintains that these standards should form an important part of this review. The Project has the potential to cause significant impacts on our Aboriginal rights and interests and our Homeland, and the CNSC must ensure that its regulatory processes recognize and respect our laws, our Aboriginal rights, and our distinct and important connection to our Homeland.

### *Reconciliation*

In 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada issued its 94 Calls to Action, among which were recommendations for private industry, including:



92. We call upon the corporate sector in Canada to adopt the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a reconciliation framework and to apply its principles, norms, and standards to corporate policy and core operational activities involving Indigenous peoples and their lands and resources. This would include, but not be limited to, the following:

i. Commit to meaningful consultation, building respectful relationships, and obtaining the free, prior, and informed consent of Indigenous peoples before proceeding with economic development projects.

This Call to Action confirms the critical role that private industry plays in furthering reconciliation. The MN-S maintains that the CNSC and SRC must recognize and respect our Aboriginal rights, including through meaningful consultation and relationship building, aimed at securing our consent and support for the Project.

### **Review of the SRC's application to renew the license for the Gunnar Mine Remediation Project**

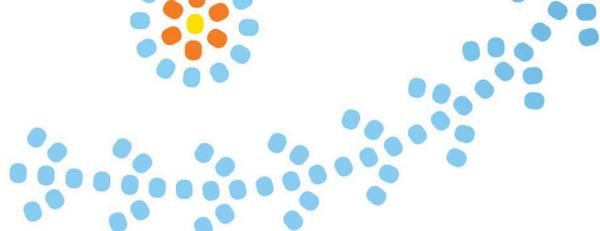
The MN-S has focused its review on the section of the Gunnar Mine Remediation Project: Environmental Protection.

#### *3.9 Environmental Protection*

The CNSC staff conclude that the Project maintains a “satisfactory” rating, and that the environmental protection programs were effectively implemented and protect the environment and the public. Despite this rating, the environmental protection programs’ past performance contains various findings that are of concern to the MN-S.

There have been nine events reported to the CNSC relating to various safety and control areas (“SCAs”), each event having been considered “low safety significance” and have been closed by CNSC staff. The reported events include:

- a small fire;
- a vehicle accident which led to an injury to a worker;
- the discovery of legacy explosive material;

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- high water levels at adjacent Lake Athabasca;
  - non-authorized visitors outside field season; and
  - minor health and safety events.

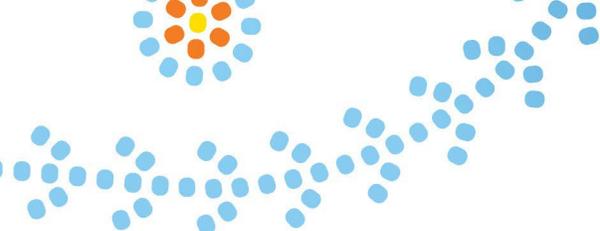
During the previous license term, there were five notices of non-compliance issued as a result of inspection findings by CNSC staff. The findings covered areas such as:

- lack of proper radiation protection signage near the entrance of the site;
- geotechnical deficiencies including minor subsidence's and drainage issues;
- inconsistent or missing information on labels for radioactive waste stored on-site; and
- adherence to radon progeny monitoring practices.

These reported events and notices were rated as low safety significance and as not resulting in any residual impact on the environment by CNSC staff.

The MN-S is concerned that these CNSC labels imply that the Project's level of adverse impact to surrounding lands and to the exercise of Métis rights is acceptable. In the MN-S's view, all of the Project's adverse impacts should be identified and minimized, even when they fall below the CNSC's significance thresholds. The present process does not consider or reflect the Métis Nation in Saskatchewan's rights-based concerns or perspectives, does not contemplate Métis title claims, and does not incorporate Métis laws for governing our lands and resources, as contemplated by UNDRIP. The MN-S seeks a meaningful table with the CNSC to assess the severity of these impacts and the appropriate mitigation measures. As outlined below, the MN-S seeks further opportunities to engage with the CNSC prior to any decisions to advance the Project.

Comments and concerns have been raised by the MN-S's Métis Locals (i.e., communities) who have and exercise Aboriginal rights in proximity to the Project's facilities, including for the purposes of carrying out cultural and traditional practices. These Locals maintain Métis traditional knowledge, land use, and history within the Project area and the surrounding environment. For example, Métis Local 50 – Uranium City has raised concerns about the Project's site staff removing a dock in the marina, failing to clean up and leaving behind debris, including two tires, and causing damage to the marina and the surrounding land and water. Another concern that has



been raised by Locals about the Project was that there is a gravel tank farm that has begun to slide into the Athabasca Basin, and there is a serious risk that the gravel tank farm could get swept away if it is not cleaned up or properly removed. The marina is a valued spot for Locals and our Citizens to use as a camp to be able to freely, without fear or concern, practice our constitutionally protected Aboriginal rights, including our harvesting rights, and the MN-S wants ensure that environmental health and general safety in the area are maintained so that Locals and our Citizens can continue to exercise these rights. The concerns set out herein are not exhaustive.

The MN-S also seeks further transparency from the CNSC and from SRC, especially regarding any spills or unexpected concentrations in effluent release, both as they occur and as mitigation measures are developed and implemented. This sharing of information is critical to a meaningful consultation process between the MN-S and the CNSC and SRC, and to building a relationship of trust between industry, regulators, and the Métis community.

### **Conclusion**

The MN-S is concerned that the Project may cause adverse impacts on our Aboriginal rights, including our Aboriginal title claim and harvesting rights. We seek a robust process aimed at securing consent, involving further opportunities to meaningfully engage with the CNSC to discuss our concerns and to collaboratively identify appropriate accommodation measures.