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Oral presentation

Submission from Tim Yearington

In the Matter of the

Canadian Nuclear Laboratories

Application for the renewal of the Nuclear
Research and Test Establishment Operating
Licence for the Chalk River Laboratories

Commission Public Hearing

January 23-25, 2018

Exposé oral

Mémoire de Tim Yearington

À l'égard des

Les Laboratoires Nucléaires Canadiens

Demande de renouvellement du permis
d'exploitation d'établissement de recherche
et d'essais nucléaires pour les Laboratoires
de Chalk River

Audience publique de la Commission

23-25 janvier 2018

Filed online on December 12, 2017

Kitchizibi Algonquin Knowledge Matters: My name is Tim Yearington. My Algonquin spirit name is Grey Thunderbird. I am a Kitchizibi (Great River) Algonquin descendant of this traditional territory; the very lands now occupied by Canadian Nuclear Laboratories at Chalk River and the town site of Deep River.

I currently work as an Elder, cultural counselor and spiritual adviser with Correctional Service Canada in Kingston. As an Indigenous Elder it is always my duty and responsibility to mindfully speak up, in a good way, about issues that are of grave concern to many people; Canadians who we now refer to as, "All Our Relations".

The Chalk River site is located just upriver from our most sacred Kitchizibi Algonquin medicine site known today as Oiseau Rock/Bird Rock on the Ottawa River. This site is known to us as Pinesi-Asin or Thunderbird Rock. As such, I need to honour the critical call of duty from my ancestors of this territory to orally present an important Thunderbird teaching with all of you because it matters. And in this day and age it will matter more and more to many people and to many generations. Given the way things currently are in Canada, it is now safe for us, Indigenous People, to share with you our important opinions and concerns we have about what is being proposed in this territory with the granting of a new licence to Canadian Nuclear Laboratories.

The teaching and counsel I wish to share involves the much overlooked inherent value of our precious, pristine and picturesque Kitchizibi Algonquin territory. This teaching directly involves the legend of an ongoing war between the thunderbirds and the serpents in their endless struggle for power and control. With the current issue at hand there is definitely a modern day, real life human struggle for power and control still happening here. We Algonquin are taught that our legends and teachings are to be shared face to face, orally, so I desire to speak about these things with everyone in person. It is now high time to express a 'big picture' perspective about how the current short sighted, short-term plans for illogical nuclear waste disposal at Chalk River will have long-term consequences that will affect both our near future and our distant future. It will affect the land, the water, the creatures, the environment and all the people whose very human health depends on the health of the Great River; the Kitchizibi.

With all my heart I encourage you to please grant me an opportunity to orally intervene. I wish to give valuable Indigenous knowledge and vital Algonquin information to everyone so that our wise, traditional point of view will be taken into serious consideration, too, for all the right reasons in order to aid the decision making process.

Miigwetch. Tim Yearington