



Nishnawbe Aski Nation

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NEWS RELEASE

Thursday November 15, 2007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NAN LEADERSHIP AGREE TO MOVE FORWARD WITH BILATERAL PARTNERSHIP WITH ONTARIO

TIMMINS, ON: Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) Grand Chief Stan Beardy today announced a one year commitment of NAN's 49 First Nation communities to work with the Government of Ontario to jointly develop a results-based process to address and resolve current challenges in the areas of consultation and accommodation, resource development, mining, parks, and licensing and permits within NAN territory – an area covering two-thirds of the province of Ontario.

“The Chiefs of Nishnawbe Aski are looking forward to getting to the meat of the issues on a priority basis and are prepared to take the Government of Ontario to task with the verbal commitments made,” said NAN Grand Chief Stan Beardy, adding the importance of developing a results-based process to achieve goals in the next year. “We’ve completed exploratory discussions, we’ve got the commitment from both sides - now we’re looking for substance. We’re looking for results to improve the quality of life for our people and communities.”

Beardy's announcement comes after a three day Assembly of NAN leadership to determine next steps to ensure meaningful discussions with the Government of Ontario, including a verbal commitment by new Minister of Aboriginal Affairs Michael Bryant to put the new government-to-government relationship between NAN and Ontario on the “front burner”.

Today's decision builds on two previous agreements (March 2006, April 2007) by NAN Chiefs and the Government of Ontario designed to address the unique social and economic challenges of NAN First Nation communities.

NAN Chiefs have set priorities on creating resource revenue sharing legislation, First Nation led land use planning, revising the Ontario Mining Act to include Supreme Court decisions based on consultation and accommodation, building a First Nation approach to parks, and overhauling the approach to licensing and permits in NAN territory.

Nishnawbe Aski Nation is a political organization representing 49 First Nation communities in the territory of James Bay Treaty 9 and Ontario portion of Treaty 5.

The bilateral process currently called the “Northern Table” is coordinated by a NAN Chiefs Steering Committee.

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