

MEDIA STATEMENT

Fort McKay First Nation: “Moose Lake shows Canada how responsible resource development can be a tool for reconciliation”

Wednesday, February 26, 2020

Fort McKay — The Chief and Council of the Fort McKay First Nation released the following statement today:

“The Fort McKay First Nation is pleased that the Alberta Court of Appeal has granted the Alberta government’s request for a stay of the Queen’s Bench order issued Tuesday, February 18. Last week, the Queen’s Bench judge instructed Alberta to deliver a decision by this coming Friday, February 28 whether to approve Prosper Petroleum’s Rigel oil sands project located in close proximity to our Moose Lake reserves. Instead, today’s decision will allow us to complete the three-month roadmap to finalize the Moose Lake Plan to which Fort McKay and Alberta agreed at the end of January following the *Moose Lake Together Summit*.

“As many Albertans are now aware, the current configuration of Prosper’s project would have significant adverse effects on the Moose Lake area. Our community was encouraged when Alberta appealed the Queen’s Bench decision. Alberta’s action signalled this government’s commitment to a collaborative solution that recognizes the importance of Moose Lake to Fort McKay and respects our constitutionally recognized and affirmed right to exercise Aboriginal and Treaty rights and traditional land uses.

“The three-month roadmap gives us the time we need to resolve outstanding issues to complete the Moose Lake Plan together in partnership. We can’t forget what a historic moment this was for Fort McKay and for Alberta. After 20 years in which previous governments fell short, we now have the finish line in sight. We are working together with industry participation to develop a management plan that protects the exercise of Treaty rights, preserves ecosystem integrity, and permits carefully managed, responsible resource development.

“Fort McKay and Alberta have, together, already made significant progress in our shared goal to complete the Moose Lake Plan, which will give leaseholders like Prosper immediate clarity regarding operating parameters that will inform business decisions.

Moose Lake can show Canadians a way forward: it can show how responsible resource development can be a tool for reconciliation in Canada.”

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