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became the most talked-about  
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is published quarterly by  
Lynda Powless  
Publisher  
Turtle Island News Publications and  
Multi-Media Inc.

Other publications include:  
**Turtle Island News**  
**Turtle Island News Daily**  
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\$29.95 Canadian / \$33.50 American (US)  
\$37.50 Air or Other

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Ohsweken ON N0A 1M0

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## BRUCE POWER SIGNED SUPPLIER AGREEMENT

Aerial shot of Bruce Power facility .....see story on page 24



Cover Photo: Former Liberal justice minister Jody Wilson-Raybould walks to Parliament Hill in Ottawa on Tuesday, Feb. 26, 2019. (Photo by The Canadian Press/Sean Kilpatrick) .....more on page 5



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# Yukon Gold Rush is gone

It has been a long time coming but Canada's Mining Industry has learned any success to business in the resource sector is tied to First Nations.

It doesn't matter that the global resource industry is aware of the potential of mineral exploration in Canada and the successful investment that can come with it.

Or that Canada ranks among the top 20 for mineral potential and investment attractiveness.

What does matter is Indigenous land rights came into play.

The turbulent years of 2015 hit and suddenly the industry found itself faced with a new reality. First Nations disputed lands were no longer ripe for plunder.

In 2015 a Fraser Institute survey found 77 per cent of respondents felt uncertainty from disputed land claims, particularly in B.C. were a deterrent to investment. Ontario, B.C., and Quebec didn't favour much better. In Ontario 62 per cent of respondents and 41 per cent of respondents, agreed disputed land claims hung a shadow over investment.

That uncertainty increased when court cases became wins for First Nations leaving a nervous industry in their wake.

In the 2015 Rio Tinto decision the Supreme Court of Canada ruled in favour of the Saik'uz First Nation and Stellat'en First Nation opening the door to future aboriginal title litigation against private parties... mining companies. In the past only governments could be sued. But in 2015 the court ruled First Nations no longer needed to prove aboriginal title to bring a damage

claim against private parties and that hit hard against an industry use to sticking a shovel in the ground anywhere. But it especially hit hard in B.C., where more than 100 per cent of the province is under claim.

The ruling meant all mining projects were at risk of potential lawsuits.

That is until the light bulb turned on and mining companies began to understand, they didn't need to confront First Nations but work with them.

Fast track to 2019 and over 25,000 delegates attending the annual Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada (PDAC) convention and among them you find a pretty healthy Indigenous delegation and a sign times have changed.

The association's membership realized it was better to work with First Nations than without them.

In Canada, you would be hard pressed to find a mine and or potential mine that isn't in or close to the traditional lands of First Nations people. Faced with court rulings and a United Nations Declaration on Indigenous Peoples Rights (UNDRIP) suddenly working with First Nations made more economic sense.

Today First Nations are not only working in the industry but have become partners in exploration becoming part of the process to ensure their values, traditions and concerns for the land are respected. Negotiations are also playing a key role in the economic progress of First Nations communities with First Nations people having opportunities for training, education and jobs that are part

of negotiation packages and investment opportunities offered. The results have paid off for both sides of the agreement.

Mining corporations are working in stable environments and benefitting from the knowledge of the Indigenous people who's lands they are working on. Indigenous communities are not only receiving a share of the profits, but in some cases are partners or investors and enjoying the benefits of longterm employment and growing economies.

At Prospectors & Developers Association of Canada's (PDAC) convention investors, analysts, mining executives, prospectors, geologists, and government officials, from over 125 countries mingled with Indigenous people.

The mining industry that faced years of economic challenge has found a renewal. A sense of trust and stability.

So as the world focuses on climate change the industry is looking to resources like copper, steel making coal and molybdenum for clean energy cars and wind turbines, and silver and selenium for solar cells that means mining has the potential to be a clean energy leader while combining First Nation values of stewardship and protection of lands and waters.

The end results are when First Nations people talk to the mining industry they aren't talking to strangers anymore. You find First Nation accountants, lawyers and geologists answering the calls.

The days of the gold rush attitude of 175 years ago are behind us.

Hi this is a great write-up. I'm going to email this to my friends. I stumbled on this while exploring on bing I'll be sure to come back. thanks for sharing.  
Schlender3919@

pretty valuable material, overall I consider this is really worth a bookmark, thanks Charnoski3053@

Thanks for sharing this great write-up. Very interesting ideas! (as always, btw)  
Kilean2902@

I'm no pro, but I feel you just made a very good point. You certainly know what you're talking about, and I can definitely get behind that. Thanks for being so up front and so honest. Stabb7216@

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## POLITICS

# How Jody Wilson-Raybould became the most talked - about woman in politics

*Here's everything you need to know about the woman who could take down Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.*

By Rosemary Westwood

Jody Wilson-Raybould was born into politics. She's the daughter of Sandra Wilson, a teacher, and Bill Wilson, a prominent First Nations leader who once told Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau that both his girls "want to be prime minister." She comes from the Musgamagw Tsawataineuk and Laich-Kwil-Tach Peoples of North Vancouver Island, where she's a member of the We Wai Kai Nation. That she now finds herself at the centre of the SNC-Lavalin affair is both shocking and not entirely out of keeping with her meteoric career and reputation as a political powerhouse.

Here's how Wilson-Raybould became the most talked-about woman in Canada:

**2000–2003:** Wilson-Raybould, who earned her law degree from UBC, works as a B.C. crown prosecutor. She oversees cases in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, an area that grapples with poverty, addiction and mental health issues. Later talking to Maclean's about prosecuting Indigenous offenders while recognizing the need for more social services, she said, "There was nothing that, as a prosecutor, we could substantively do."

**2003–2009:** She moves to the B.C. Treaty Commission—the independent group charged with facilitating treaty negotiations between the federal and B.C. governments and B.C. First Nations—and is soon elected to the role of commissioner, and then chief commissioner in 2008. She earns a reputation as both driven and politically connected, a "born leader." She marries Tim Raybould, a consultant to First Nations, in 2008.

**2009–2015:** Wilson-Raybould is elected as the regional chief of the Assembly of First Nations in 2009 and re-elected in 2012. She's among the Indigenous leaders who meet with Prime Minister Stephen Harper during the Idle No More protests in 2013, and she later tells the CBC that she serves as a consensus-

builder in "a world where there are complex and often controversial issues on the table." Her popularity makes her a high-profile recruit when she announces she'll run for the Liberal Party in the Vancouver Granville riding. "Amazing addition to #TeamTrudeau," tweets Gerald Butts, Trudeau's then-senior advisor and future principal secretary.

**October 19, 2015:** Wilson-Raybould wins her seat in the federal election, and rumours swirl of a cabinet post.

**November 2, 2015:** She's named justice minister and attorney general in the new Liberal government. "V.Proud 2 be named Minister of Justice & Attorney General of Canada. Amazing team, Amazing time-Gilakas'la!" she tweets. Her appointment is roundly praised and seen as a key gesture that Trudeau will take Indigenous issues—particularly missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls—seriously. Trudeau and Wilson-Raybould embrace at her swearing in.

**September 17, 2018:** The challenges presented by the SNC-Lavalin case are raised during a meeting between Wilson-Raybould, Trudeau and clerk of the Privy Council Michael Wernick. She later claims he asked her "to find a solution." She says she asked Trudeau whether he was "politically interfering" with her role, which he denied. It's one of many instances she'll later describe of what she says was political pressure to funnel the SNC-Lavalin case through the new "deferred prosecution agreement" law created by the Liberal government to allow companies to pay their way out of a criminal trial. Meanwhile, her tenure as justice minister has thus far been defined by her goal of improving Indigenous relations with the government, and she even appears at times to criticize her boss over the file.

**December 2018:** Wilson-Raybould's chief of staff privately tells her he's feeling pressure from Gerald Butts, then principal secretary to the prime minister, over the SNC-Lavalin case—details of which emerge in her later testimony.



Jody Wilson-Raybould leaves a Justice committee meeting in Ottawa after her explosive testimony about the SNC Lavalin scandal (Photo: Adrian Wyld / The Canadian Press)

**January 14, 2019:** Wilson-Raybould is named minister of veteran affairs in what's widely viewed as a demotion. Pundits note the chill in her body language as she's sworn into the role. She takes the unusual step of releasing a 2,000-word press release the same day (which she also posts to Twitter), in which she declares that justice must be "free from even the perception of political interference" and that the attorney general must "always be willing to speak truth to power." Viewed simply as a defence of her record at the time, the statement is later seen as a condemnation of the SNC-Lavalin saga.

**February 7, 2019:** The Globe and Mail publishes a report that Trudeau's office pressured Wilson-Raybould to help secure deferred prosecution for SNC-Lavalin. A few days later, the prime minister claims that Wilson-Raybould "confirmed" to him that he said she's in charge of prosecution decisions.

**February 12, 2019:** Wilson-Raybould resigns as minister of veteran affairs and announces she's retained the counsel of Thomas Cromwell, a former Supreme Court justice, to examine her options. She has not spoken publicly about the allegations since the story broke, claiming she's prevented from doing so by solicitor-client privilege, but she remains active on Twitter during that time, mostly posting images of community events.

**February 19, 2019:** Despite her resignation, Wilson-Raybould attends a cabinet meeting (after reportedly being kept waiting for two hours (Continued on page 21)



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# PROSPECTORS AND DEVELOPERS ASSOCIATION OF CANADA



## PRIME MINISTER JUSTIN TRUDEAU *in fireside chat with Glen Muller*

*By Dennis Hanagan  
Writer*

**P**rime Minister Justin Trudeau says mining companies have done more to build relationships with Indigenous communities than the federal government.

Trudeau made the blunt comment at the annual Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada convention in Toronto in an interview format with PDAG President Glenn Mullan.

Trudeau said the relationship between the federal government and Indigenous people has been broken for centuries and the government “hadn’t done a very good job over the past years of creating those partnerships.”

On the other hand, the mining industry, said Trudeau, has done a good job building relationships with Indigenous people. “You all have been at the forefront of

partnerships, of cooperation, of working together with Indigenous peoples just by being so present in the remote areas of Canada.”

He said it’s led to 16,000 Indigenous people working in the mining industry which, he added, is the top employer of Indigenous people in Canada. He told how the industry has developed supply-chain jobs with Indigenous communities and relies on services delivered by Indigenous-owned and operated businesses.

He said mining companies are “leading the way” in developing equity and resource-sharing partnerships with Indigenous people. “It’s the kind of thing that is recognizing the Indigenous peoples as the original caretakers and stewards of this land,” said Trudeau.

Trudeau said the industry well knows that the way to get projects built “is to do it

thoughtfully in partnership with the local communities and local voices.”

He said that’s pretty much the case around the world although, he added, “there still are some places that try to ram things through and barrel through. But they’re getting more and more resistance on the ground and they’re getting more and more questions from consumers (asking) what went into this product that I’m buying and how is it good for the planet or bad for the planet.”

Regarding Bill C-69 Trudeau said it’s aimed at eliminating, for mining projects, the separate processes that overlap at the provincial and federal levels. “It takes care of the doubling impact. It’ll be one assessment for one project which the industry has asked for a long time.”

Mullan spoke of an economic disconnect between northern (continued on page 8)



## PDAC

(continued from page 7) Aboriginal communities and southern Canada. He said the mining industry has been trying to build bridges where there weren't any before.

From there Mullan veered on to the topic of reconciliation saying it means much more to the mining industry other just than saying "I'm sorry." He said it's about building partnerships, capacity, improved infrastructure, health care and housing in northern communities.

Mullan asked Trudeau how he sees his government working with the mining industry to enhance reconciliation. Trudeau repeated himself saying the mining industry must work with Indigenous people.

Asked how the minerals industry could work with the federal government toward a low carbon environment, Trudeau said companies are already working in that direction with innovation "to waste less, to pollute less."

Trudeau said customers around the world are expecting, particularly from Canada, rigorous levels to ensure no negative impacts on future generations. "That can be sociological levels but it is obviously environmental issues," he said.

Mullan has spent time in Nunavut, Quebec. He said the Inuit there are "brilliant partners, collaborative partners and very progressive to work with."

*Right: Trudeau made some blunt comments at the annual Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada convention in his fireside chat with Glen Muller (Photo Dennis Hanagan)*

*Below: overhead shot of floor of annual Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada convention in Toronto (Photo Dennis Hanagan)*





# MINERAL PLAN



*Hans Matthews, president of the Canadian Aboriginal Mining Association*

*By Dennis Hanagan  
Writer*

TORONTO — A plan aimed at improving the relationship between Indigenous peoples and mining operations on their lands was unveiled at the annual Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada convention.

The plan is a collaborative effort of the federal and provincial governments, Indigenous people and the mining industry. It's called the Canadian Minerals and Metals Plan.

Nunavut Deputy Premier David Akeagok, on hand for the unveiling, is optimistic about the plan.

"We needed a Canadian plan to attract more competition and mining into our country and work with our Aboriginal groups inclusively, so that's been the overall aim," Akeagok said in an interview.

"It's a good plan that will bring in investors and bring jobs that our people need."

Akeagok said his territory has four operational mines and cited Agnico Eagle gold miner as an example of how the industry should work with Indigenous people.

"It's one clear example of how a mining company comes in, builds a mine, helps the communities, builds the infrastructure around them and produces jobs that are long lasting for the community," Akeagok said.

"We don't get to see that often. But the

mining industry is here. It's new to us as a territory. I have to give the mining industry credit, too, because we as government advocate for a sustainable development, and they are as close as they can get."

He said mining has brought not just government jobs but a diversity of work to his communities. "We have the mining sector, we have the fisheries, we have government so there's options for our people. Our population

worked with hundreds of communities and mining companies.

He said his hope is that the minerals and metals plan will "expedite and continue" his association's trend of facilitating the growth and health of Indigenous communities with their involvement in the minerals sector.

"The plan brings to light several concepts which will be a paradigm shift in how Indigenous communities and mining



*Nunavut Deputy Premier David Akeagok listens to the announcement of the Canada Minerals and Metals Plan. (Photo by Dennis Hanagan)*

is not big, but there's very good opportunities ... Through this plan, that's what it does, it captures this collectiveness," Akeagok said.

"This plan helps our territory by advancing and by promoting to the rest of the world our doors are open for business."

Hans Matthews of the Wahnapiatae First Nation and president of the Canadian Aboriginal Mining Association (CAMA) told an audience of about 150 gathered at the Canadian exhibit that his association has

companies can move forward together," Matthews said.

He said that while the plan recognizes some mines are on Indigenous lands the CAMA's view is that "all mines are on Aboriginal and or treaty lands."

He said the Mining Association of Canada states in the plan: "For Canada's mining companies reclaiming the land we borrowed is a responsibility we take seriously."

Matthews made (continued on page 10)

## PDAC

## MINERAL PLAN CONTINUED

(continued from page 9) a point of saying the mining companies realize they operate on “borrowed” lands.

Matthews said there are currently about 455 agreements between mining companies and Indigenous communities. “This is a positive trend,” he said.

He said the mining sector and Indigenous communities are moving away from an expropriation and litigation mentality to negotiation and community consent.

“Governments are now understanding that approval of resource projects must be based on historic nation-to-nation covenants, recognition and implementation of treaties and more recently the truth and reconciliation recommendations of the United Nation Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.”

He said the minerals and metals plan is “part of this positive evolution.”

He said the plan creates a vision to

acquire “certainty of investment” and attract investment to Canada, promote timely approval of mineral projects, build and protect Indigenous communities while protecting lands and culture, attract Indigenous communities as investors and business partners, and encourage today’s youth to be project technology experts.

The plan also says women, including those from Indigenous communities, should be supported to become involved in mining, including by eliminating barriers and supporting sensitivity training for front-line workers.

Matthews said the plan says Indigenous communities must be equal partners so that Canada can sustain a strong mining sector. “Clearly now we have a vision and a framework for an action plan.”

Amarjeet Sohi, federal natural resources minister, said the plan makes clear that Canada cannot afford to stand still in

its mining industry. “As other countries take action to support their own mining industries Canada must do more to keep pace.”

Siobhan Coady, natural resources minister for Newfoundland and Labrador, said the plan is making “major strides” to create new economic opportunities in exploration and mining to foment well-paying, middle class jobs “particularly in rural and northern areas.”

She said at top of mind is advancing the participation of Indigenous people and protecting the environment.

*Hans Matthews, president of the Canadian Aboriginal Mining Association, speaks at the CMMF announcement.*  
(Photo by Dennis Hanagan)





# NEW ABORIGINAL ASSOCIATION



*Red Rock First Nation band member and entrepreneur Jason Thompson is co-founder and treasurer of the Anishnawbe Business Professional Association ( Photo Dennis Hanagan)*

*By Dennis Hanagan*  
 Writer

A new Aboriginal business association for Ontario's north was announced at the annual Prospectors and Developers of Canada convention in Toronto in early March.

Red Rock First Nation band member and entrepreneur Jason Thompson, co-founder and treasurer of the Anishnawbe Business Professional Association (ABPA), said in an interview there has not been a group to advocate specifically for Aboriginal businesses in Northern Ontario.

"Right now Northern Ontario is on the cusp of an economic boom. We want to ensure our Aboriginal and Anishnawbe businesses are benefiting from this. No more lost conversations. We want to be a part of it," Thompson said.

He said there are Aboriginal businesses that are "more than capable" of delivering good quality products or service. ABPA's region stretches from Sudbury to the Manitoba border.

Thompson said that even with his own business, Superior Strategies, as he tried to deal with large corporations he was often told they didn't know his business existed.

"Well we're going to change that," he said in an interview. "We're going to be out promoting and ensuring people know we exist."

He said he hears a lot of businesses and organizations asking how to do business with First Nations businesses or communities. "We want to help be that conduit to ensure those discussions are being had."

He said ABPA will help support strategies

around inclusion. He said there are studies that demonstrate the positive business impacts of having an inclusive culture.

"This is one aspect through some wealth generation that's going to help some of these social challenges we're having in our communities by hiring local Indigenous folks."

Thompson said Aboriginal unemployment in the north "is quite high. There are communities, I'm hearing, with unemployment rates up around 90 per cent. We definitely want to change that."

He said ABPA also wants to showcase opportunities and careers to Aboriginals that many don't get to see. He said his new group added the word professionals to its title to bring in lawyers and accountants to be mentors.

# DAVID PAUL ACHNEEPINESKUM CEO WITH MATAWA

By Dennis Hanagan  
Writer

**D**avid Paul Achneepineskum is CEO with Matawa First Nations Management. His region is home to the Ring of Fire in the James Bay lowlands, one of the largest potential mineral reserves in Ontario.

Its chromite – good for the production of stainless steel -- would make things a lot easier for Canada and the United States which have had to rely on offshore sources for the mineral, mainly from South Africa.

But how would mining fit in with the Ring's pristine condition. That's what concerns Matawa chiefs and their people, Achneepineskum said in an interview.

There are no current mining operations in the Ring, said Achneepineskum. The closest is in De Beers further northeast near Attawapiskat. Musselwhite is to the southwest.

"Our chiefs have said there's no really serious consideration about our concerns, and we're going to have to say 'no' to development, for now," said Achneepineskum.

He said it's not just chiefs that discussions have to take place with. The people, too, have to be consulted, he said.

"It's not just the leadership. The leader is the point for initial contact, but it's the grassroots people living in our communities that are using the land. They need to be involved, they need to be consulted."

And, added Achneepineskum, the consultations have to be ongoing; once isn't good enough. "That hasn't been done. That hasn't been respected. We've always believed if there is serious discussions with the First Nations there would have been more progress."

It's a situation that perhaps involves a bit of angst because Achneepineskum feels his communities – Matawa's total population is more than 10,000, he said – could benefit from mining.

"We see a lot of benefits in the foreseeable future ... in business and economic development," said Achneepineskum. And for starters, he said, First Nations have to be equal partners with industry and

government.

"Our communities could have equity ownership in a mining company. We could have equity ownership in the infrastructure that's going to be required in terms of roads ... as well as in the transportation end of it," said Achneepineskum.

(At the PDAC convention a new organization called the East-West Ring of Fire Coalition (EWRFC) advocated for an east-west road to access the Ring of Fire. The group said an all-season road will increase economic opportunities.

(Noront Resources Ltd. originally proposed the road. In a press release EWRFC said it "passes close to Cat Lake, Mishkeegogomang, Lac Seul, Webequie, Nibinamik, Eabamatoong, Saugeen and Slate Falls First Nations. Other adjacent communities include Sioux Lookout, Pickle Lake, Ignace and Dryden.)

Achneepineskum also foresees benefits including community infrastructure such as water and sewers and housing. "We could have wealth creation for our communities for the current and in the future."

The day before TIN spoke to Achneepineskum a joint announcement by government, industry and Indigenous representatives at the Canada exhibit unveiled the Canadian Minerals and Metals Plan that offers a vision for advancing Indigenous participation in mining.

Before the announcement Achneepineskum had heard nothing about it. "There again the government's not clearly communicating with the people and their communities. They may have consulted with some of the leadership across Canada but certainly not in our communities."

Matawa has been actively involved with the federal government and its Bill C-69 known as the "Impact Assessment Act," said Achneepineskum.

"We see some benefits. We've said right from the beginning the Indian environmental process cannot be project by project. You've got to look at the whole region ... Make sure all the negative impacts are known about and see what kind of impacts they will have in the future. We want to keep that land as pristine as possible."





# DAVID OMILGOITOK OF KITIKMEOT



By Dennis Hanagan  
Writer

In Nunavut the Kitikmeot Inuit Association (KIA), the sole shareholder of Kitikmeot Corporation in Cambridge Bay, leases land to TMAC Resources Inc. which mines gold 145 kilometres south of Cambridge Bay, and to Sabina Gold & Silver Corp which is developing another gold mine around Bathurst Inlet.

David Omilgoitok, Kitikmeot Corporation's president and CEO, said in an interview at the PDAC convention that TMAC estimates its mine life will last a century. "It's just gone into production so we should see another 100 years of production, we hope," said Omilgoitok.

The Kitikmeot Corporation group of companies participates at the TMAC Hope Bay gold mine project through

various contracts with the company, said Omilgoitok. He said that with its Inuit Impact and Benefits Agreement TMAC provides "significant financial contributions" to KIA.

Omilgoitok said mining companies listen "very well" to local communities. The permit process and regulatory regime in Nunavut involves the Inuit, the government of the Northwest Territories and the federal government. "It's stable, very robust. It's a bit time-consuming but it's a well-known process for the mining industry, which they like," Omilgoitok said.

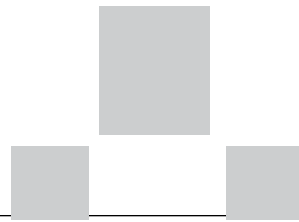
Cambridge Bay is within polar bear country so Aboriginal Business Magazine took the opportunity to ask Omilgoitok how climate change is affecting the polar bear population.

"I'm not a scientist, but I live there. Some winters are colder than others, some

are warmer. Certainly, there's impact from climate change. I find that we have quite a few polar bears not far from Cambridge Bay," Omilgoitok said.

"I think the population is healthy, and I'm told by many Inuit that the population of polar bears in the north is actually quite healthy. Science, both traditional and contemporary, don't necessarily agree, but I think the population is quite healthy," said Omilgoitok.

Bear is a food source for some, not everybody, Omilgoitok said. "Those that harvest polar bear either eat the polar bear or distribute it to those that cannot hunt," he added.



# CHIEF DEAN SAYERS ON DOUG FORD



By Dennis Hanagan  
Writer

Chief Dean Sayers of the Batchewana First Nation of Ojibways, northeast of Sault Ste Marie, agrees with a Ford government statement that Ontario is open for mining business, but Sayers said that openness has to be done in a way that respects the “unextinguished jurisdictions” of Indigenous people.

“We will work with Ontario, we will sit down with them. They need to send the proper people to our tables with mandates that can have fruitful discussions,” Sayers told *Aboriginal Business Magazine* at the annual Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada convention in Toronto in early March.

“There’s an absence of mandate on a number of fronts at the tables I’m aware of with the province,” Sayers said.

He said he’s looking forward to the province’s post-budget days because he thinks there will be movement on a few fronts, including the fulfillment of Robinson-Huron Treaty of 1850 to share the land’s wealth with Indigenous people.

Part of the early northern expansion of what would become Ontario, the Robinson Treaties opened the area’s natural resources

to initial exploration and exploitation, says the website for Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada.

Sayers said that just recently Indigenous people won a court decision in Ontario telling the province and Canada “they have to get to the table and properly deal with us as far as the sharing of the wealth of the land is concerned.”

He said Canada and Ontario are at the table now with a mediator. “We expect to have fruitful discussions for everybody that lives on our lands today. These discussions are related to forestry and mining and natural resource extractions,” said Sayers.

Sayers noted that at the ribbon cutting to launch Ontario’s new Mining Working Group there was no Indigenous presence. “There needs to be a true representation at all levels when we talk to the world about the resources of our lands, and there was an absence today,” Sayers said.

“The ribbon cutting – you didn’t see any Indigenous people there. And it’s our resources.”

At the announcement Premier Doug Ford said mining companies want to get rid of unnecessary red tape and regulations and want to make sure there’s a “one-stop

window shop” when it comes to getting permits.

He said mining companies want certainty when it comes to government and Indigenous communities because with certainty “all parties thrive, all parties prosper, create good-paying jobs.”

Ford said Ontario is no longer competing locally. “We’re competing against people around the world ... If they (mining companies) don’t have certainty they’ll take that billion-dollar investment and they’ll just go reinvest it somewhere else.”

“If they have arguments with any government, any communities, they’re done, they’re gone. We don’t want that,” Ford said. “We want them to work with every (government) department, the Indigenous community.”

Greg Rickford, minister of Energy, Northern development and Mines, said Indigenous communities are showing leadership as Ontario seeks to “build corridors to prosperity.”

Rickford said his government wants to make sure Indigenous communities and municipalities “have a refreshed take and approach as to how we do business with the companies.”



## FORUMS

*By Dennis Hanagan  
Writer*

TORONTO – First Nations have to stop relying on others for capital to engage in mining projects and start relying on themselves, says Darrell Beaulieu, president and CEO of Denendeh Investments Incorporated in the Northwest Territories.

“We’ve got to get out of that dependency mode and start generating our own source of revenue,” Beaulieu, a former chief of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation, said at the annual four-day Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada (PDAC) convention in downtown Toronto in early March.

“You can even leverage that (revenue). I think that First Nations financial authority has developed some financial strategies to lever even funding from your land claims or funding

from your programs,” said Beaulieu.

He said the federal government is starting to consider 10-year funding programs “so if you’re going to get it over ten years it can be leveraged so you can start building your projects within a few years whether it’s social infrastructure, housing or hospitals or schools etcetera,” Beaulieu said.

He said a huge step that has been made and has the potential to “scale up” is the employment-business contracts. “The capacity-building and the training that comes with that leads to equity,” he said.

Beaulieu said over the past couple of years Denendeh Investments created an exploration and mining company and acquired some properties. “That leads to Indigenous participation and resource development and that creates certainty for investors and a huge potential for benefits to Indigenous communities for all sorts of revenues for employment training and business opportunities.” (Continued on page 16)

*Below: Audience at the Aboriginal forum. (Photo Dennis Hanagan)*



*Darrell Beaulieu was among several Indigenous speakers at the PDAC's convention he served three terms as chief of the Yellowknives Denes. (Photo Dennis Hanagan)*



FORUMS CONTINUED

(continued from page 15) Beaulieu was among several Indigenous and non-Indigenous speakers at the PDAC's two-day Aboriginal program. Denendeh Investments is owned by the 27 Dene First Nations communities in the NWT.

The Aboriginal program has been a regular part of PDAC conventions for several years. Speakers discuss how Indigenous communities can be involved in the mining industry. Many remarks focus on the need for companies to consult with Indigenous communities as well as the benefits Indigenous communities want from mining companies that extract minerals on their lands.

Many of those 'wants' centre on jobs, either directly in the mines or in spinoff businesses. Jobs mean wages and salaries and that can translate into improved standards of living.

But with those benefits come Indigenous concerns that their ancestral lands not be ruined. That's where the need for remediation work comes in so that companies leave the land the way they found it –productive and with rivers and lakes that are drinkable and conducive to aquatic life.

Don Bubar, president and CEO of Avalon Advanced Materials and former chair of PDAC's Aboriginal Committee, said it can be challenging for Indigenous parties to find large amounts of capital in order to get into mining projects. But he said equity participation doesn't have to start at the time a mine is getting underway.

"It can start right when the claims are staked. That's where I see the real opportunity for Indigenous people in the north is just develop the skills as prospectors. Prospecting is just traversing the land, collecting information about the natural environment," said Bubar.

It's something hunters and trappers can do. Instead of focusing on the flora and fauna keep an eye out for rocks and minerals, said Bubar. "Bring along a rock hammer and look for signs of mineralization and outcrops. You find something, stake it."

Keeping in mind that the staker becomes the owner, the lucky prospector can then go looking for equity partners. "I'm trying to remind people to not forget about that as a basic way to achieve equity participation and mineral development at the early stages," said Bubar.

He said he's also trying to awaken people to opportunities that exist in the Northwest Territories in regard to new emerging materials such as lithium and rare earths "that do not have large markets. They're not really well suited to developing at a very large scale at the initial stages."

"It's actually better to develop these at a small scale and get your product into the market and then build scalability into it as you establish yourself as a reliable producer and grow your business as demand for these new materials grows," said Bubar. "We're certainly going to see growth and demand for lithium and rare earths."

He said the minerals create "a really interesting opportunity" for Indigenous business to enter at an early stage because often capital requirements are not hundreds of millions of dollars or billions but a few tens of millions.

"That kind of capital for a project that has demonstrated its economic opportunity represents a real investment opportunity for Indigenous business to get a real equity stake ... (and) extend that into other business opportunities."

Beaulieu said the Cree Mineral Exploration Board in Quebec has a program to fund some of their trappers and people who live on the land to collect samples "because they know the land best."

He said such a program can stimulate youth to get into geosciences and work on the land "where their grandfathers and grandmothers were so now you've connected a new way of making a living and being on the land where your ancestors are from ... It connects our past with the current."

Charmaine McCraw, a member of the Bigitigong Nishnaabeg First Nations on the north shore of Lake Superior, holds a

management position with ORIGIN that connects Indigenous people with jobs.

McCraw said mining projects have to be shared with the entire Indigenous community where they're taking place. "A lot of the time a company will come into a First Nation and talk with the chief and council, and that's all," she said.

She said economic opportunities must be driven and championed by the community that's being affected. She said companies can help prepare communities for long-term



*Charmaine McCraw, member of the Bigitigong Nishnaabeg on the north shore of Lake Superior. (Photo Dennis Hanagan)*

projects by encouraging them to develop a comprehensive community plan "because that ensures that project has a place in that community plan."

She said Indigenous communities plan in a circle "so we need to make sure any opportunities throughout the (project's) entire lifecycle are tied into that circle." She added communities should try to have a non-political board involved in projects. Otherwise, said McCraw "that can cause a lot of issues."

Merv McLeod with management consulting firm (continued on page 17)



(Continued from page 16)

MWA McLeod Wood Associates Inc. based in Fergus, Ont., said it still occurs that benefits to a First Nation community are the last

mineral sector offers.

“The fact is we have an uphill battle in that regard in many communities where

Beaulieu said mineral development is providing revenue, jobs, education scholarships – “which will lead to housing



consideration.

“They should be the first consideration ... If it’s left to near the end it shows what the priority is and it also ends up in a hurried relationship, and it’s very difficult to do because it causes issues,” McLeod said.

Bubar advised Indigenous communities to set up an economic development corporation with a board of directors. “They are a very, very important first step for First Nations in remote locations to start to participate in the economy generally.”

Bubar spoke about environmental non-governmental organizations throwing a wrench into mining projects. He said the broader community needs to be made better aware of the opportunities the

environmental NGOs have gone in ahead of the mineral industry and spread fear about the risks of mineral development,” said Bubar.

“Sure there are risks, but there are also opportunities, and environmental impacts can be managed. Increasingly new technology is coming along to make it even easier to manage the risk associated with mineral development,” said Bubar.

He said in some cases mineral development projects won’t even need to use water to process ore and remediation can happen alongside projects under development. He said risks can be managed. “How different it is now compared to 30 or 40 years ago,” Bubar said.

*Above:*

*Exhibitors, including Indigenous groups, pack the exhibitors’ hall at the annual convention of the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada in Toronto. (Photo Dennis Hanagan)*

and community infrastructure and hospitals and health and wellness in the communities.”

Referring to environmental groups “coming up” from the United States and warning of risks, Beaulieu said they’re not providing housing or jobs. “You have to look at the reality of living in our communities. What’s the alternative?”



## Geologist Maxwell

### RECEIVES THE PDAC'S AWARD

Wahgoshig First Nation when Xstrata was planning exploration around the Kidd Creek Mine in northern Ontario. The selection of a woman to work with the geological team led to her subsequent posting as the community's environmental monitor. Her acceptance inspired other Wahgoshig youth to consider applying for junior roles.

In 2010 Maxwell faced the demanding task of re-evaluating several mines that Noranda closed and Xstrata inherited. He had to coordinate expert teams for every aspect of the re-evaluation. The teams did everything from reprocessing thousands of diamond drill samples to resource modelling and project management.

In a statement the PDAC said

***"Maxwell has demonstrated outstanding technical abilities, professionalism, and a commitment to safe and socially responsible exploration. He is a role model for Indigenous youth who aspire to a career in the industry."***

*Robert Maxwell, a member of the Sachigo Lake First Nation near the Ontario - Manitoba border, receives the PDAC's Skookum Jim award. ( Photo Dennis Hanagan)*

*By Dennis Hanagan  
Writer*

**G**eologist Robert Maxwell, a member of the Sachigo Lake First Nation near the Ontario-Manitoba border, is the recipient of the 2019 Skookum Jim award presented at the annual Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada convention in Toronto in early March.

Maxwell received the award for his contribution to the Canadian mineral exploration and mining industry for setting the bar on drilling safety and community consultation.

Maxwell, born in Pickle Crow, an abandoned Ontario gold mining town, began his 39-year career with Thunder Bay-

based Noranda as an exploration geologist.

He's worked across Canada and abroad for companies such as Noranda's subsidiary Falconbridge and then Falconbridge's successor Xstrata. Most recently he's been with Glencore which acquired Xstrata in 2013.

As a member of the Canadian Diamond Drilling Association (CDDA), Maxwell advocated for better risk management at the drill site. His experience working with drillers was valuable to the discussion.

In 2012 he received the David Barr Award from British Columbia's Association of Mineral Exploration for his contribution to health and safety in the field.

In 2008 Maxwell worked with the

The award is named after Skookum Jim. According to the website Great Unsolved Mysteries in Canadian History Jim was born in the mid 1850s. He was the first son of the Tagish First Nation chief in the Yukon. Skookum can be translated as "strong."

Around 1887 Canadian government surveyor William Ogilvie hired Jim and two others to pack supplies over the Chilkoot Pass. Jim lugged 156 pounds of bacon over the pass in a single trip.

He was remembered by Ogilvie as "reliable, truthful and competent to do any work I gave him." The website suggests Jim struck it rich in the Klondike, selling his claim after 1900 and returning to Tagish Lake. He died of a kidney ailment in 1916, roughly age 61. His passing was reported on the front page of the Dawson Daily News.





# Wasaya Airways

By Dennis Hanagan  
Writer

**S**haron Smith-Baxter is communications and marketing manager with Wasaya Airways based in Thunder Bay. It serves more than 25 First Nation communities, some reachable only by air. It's the dedicated airways for Goldcorp and flies a Dash 8-300 to get staff in and out of the Musselwhite mining camp in northwestern Ontario on a daily basis.

As for mining interest in the far north Smith-Baxter said it goes up and down. "A few years ago there was a lot of talk about the Ring of Fire. Now there's changes in government, things have died down a bit. But we're still here because there are still a lot of people that are still working on that."

Zach Tait, Wasaya sales manager, finds that mine reps want to talk to First Nation communities, visiting first the leadership and ensuring protocol is met. "That's one of the best things that a company can do." He said the companies also have a high expectation of service from Wasaya. Being on time is a key requirement.

Sometimes mines come into new ownership and that affects First Nations, Tait said. "First Nations must be on top of those things to ensure the transition is smooth and agreements are still valid."

Smith-Baxter said Gold Corp has



**Sharon Smith-Baxter and Zach Tait with Wasaya Airways. (Photo Dennis Hanagan)**

Aboriginal liaisons who promote and support Aboriginal people working for the mines. "They go out there and recruit and try and train them so they will actually have a percentage of Aboriginal employees

for the mine."

Wasaya is marking 30 years of service. Part of its mission is to lead the development of programs to educate and employ First Nation people in aviation.

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## First Nations In Southwestern Ontario

# Economic Development

By Colin Graf

A group of 7 First Nations in southwestern Ontario have decided the way to develop and grow economically is to start planting their eggs in each others' baskets.

The Southern First Nations Secretariat (SFNS) is rolling out several new ideas to convince their member communities to support each others' businesses and service providers, including a new online directory of indigenous businesses in the region, says Jennifer Whiteye, executive director of the SFNS.

service to bed-and-breakfast to restaurants and home renovations, she hopes the website will become the first place administrators and ordinary First Nations people will head to when they're looking for shopping or services. Whiteye expects the business directory will continue to grow as her staff work to identify more business operators on their members' lands and get them to list online.

"We want to know who the businesses are in our community and make sure each community knows where the businesses are," she says. Whiteye also wants to ensure

Bkejwanong (Walpole Island First Nation), to work on the business directory and other plans to prevent "leakage" of band money to non-indigenous businesses.

The Secretariat began to study leakage in 2016, according to Whiteye, and found 5 main areas where money is flowing away from member nations; education, legal fees, group benefits, busing and transportation, and electricity.

While the business directory is one tool to help with this, other initiatives are underway, she says.

While Whiteye recognizes in the area of education some money is bound to escape when young people attend post-secondary education away from home, she says staff are trying to reach agreements with some educational institutions for "localized and targeted" training and education in their home communities. She thinks this would be especially effective in areas of high leakage, such as construction and legal work.

She hopes to coax band administrators to implement preferential hiring and tendering policies for members of the 7 nations, and to also persuade them to implement joint purchasing of group benefits for band employees. That could allow bands to get better deals from insurers by improving economies of scale, and might even extend to local businesses in the future, according to Whiteye.

Creating a regional First Nations economy in the southwest is a realistic goal that's already happening "on a small scale," says Tooshkenig, citing the directory as one example. Another idea is to compile an inventory of assets, not only physical, but also a database of people, skills, and cultural knowledge across the 7 southwestern nations. Connecting culture to economic opportunities makes a lot of sense for First Nations, says Whiteye. Along with the possibility of inviting tourists on to First Nations, many Canadian businesses and service agencies are looking for cultural sensitivity training for



*Tooshkenig, professional golfer and business entrepreneur from Bkejwanong (Walpole Island First Nation)*

Her agency provides services for the Aamjiwnaang, Chippewas of the Thames, Chippewas of Kettle & Stony Point, Delaware-Moravian of the Thames, Munsee-Delaware, Oneida of the Thames, and Caldwell First Nations.

With about a dozen listings so far, from auto

local administrators go to the directory when tendering contracts.

The Secretariat's efforts were boosted last fall by \$74,000 from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs, which allowed the hiring of Tooshkenig, professional golfer and business entrepreneur from



their employees; a service that could be provided by her member nations. "The sky's the limit on the connections that can be made," Whitey enthuses.

"The focus is on empowering the communities. How can we cooperatively and collaboratively work together in order to recapture some of that money" that leaks away, says Tooshkenig.

While the business directory started as a tool to link regional First Nations to each other, it has taken an unexpected turn, says Tooshkenig. Returning to his office from an employment conference at the Chippewas of Kettle & Stony Point First Nation, the coordinator discovered

outside companies are also starting to use the directory, which only went online last Dec.

"Some of the larger players are looking for opportunities to hire First Nations people, and while we let them know the directory is really locally-focused, that doesn't stop anyone from using it. That's how business starts," Tooshkenig explains.

Working with outside industry creates a "tremendous opportunity for First Nations people working in those sectors. Businesses are quite happy (to hire indigenous workers). When you look at our demographics, our populations are becoming more skilled, we have a workforce

that is available and has the know-how," he adds.

Tooshkenig says this has been happening even before the existence of the directory. He says 3 or 4 indigenous businesses secured contracts with large industrial companies such as Ontario Hydro and Union Gas last summer while attending a procurement conference at Kettle & Stony Point.

There are around 200 First Nations businesses in southwestern Ontario, which generate around \$25 million annually, according to the SFNS business directory website. Around 3,500 business transactions take place daily on the same First Nations, according to the site.

**Jody Wilson-Raybould** (continued from page 5)

while "her former colleagues hotly debated her request to address them about the SNC-Lavalin affair") but refuses to comment publicly on the controversy.

**February 25, 2019:** Trudeau partly waives solicitor-client privilege and cabinet confidentiality, setting the scene for Wilson-Raybould to finally speak publicly.

**February 27, 2019:** In what's described as "blistering" testimony, Wilson-Raybould tells the House of Commons Justice Committee of 10 meetings, 10 conversations and a series of emails with various members of the prime minister's office during which she says she received "veiled threats" and experienced "political interference" from the PMO and various other officials. She says she believes she was removed from the justice portfolio over SNC-Lavalin, which Trudeau

denies.

**February 28, 2019:** Trudeau tells reporters he's considering "next steps" for Wilson-Raybould's future in the Liberal caucus. MPs hold an emergency debate in the House of Commons on Wilson-Raybould's testimony. Butts writes the House of Commons justice committee requesting he be called as a witness to give his side of the story in the SNC-Lavalin affair.

*With files from the Canadian Press.*

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AWARD

# Jeff Thomas

## Wins Governor Generals Award



Jeff Thomas

By Justin Lethbridge  
Writer

**A**fter winning the Governor Generals Award in Visual and Media Arts, Jeff Thomas can now say that he accomplished goals he set out 40 years ago. When he started photography, Thomas made it his goal to confront photography based, Indigenous stereotypes. Specifically he wanted to highlight the urban, Indigenous experience.

"I wanted to address what I felt was the invisible existence that Indigenous people experience in urban areas." Thomas told the *Aboriginal Business Magazine*. "I decided that would be my battleground."

The Governor General Awards celebrate Canada's most remarkable careers in the visual arts. Winners receive a special-edition medallion produced by the Royal Canadian Mint as well as \$25,000 and recognition. For Jeff the greatest thing isn't the money, it's the response he's gotten since the award was announced.

"It's amazing to see the response, people have been calling to congratulate me, to tell me what my works has meant to them.



*Father Daughter, 2009 - Toronto, Ontario*



*Strong Hearts - Kevin Haywahe, Assiniboine, 1990-2018*

That's the most important benefit, to see the effect my work has had on my community. I didn't set out to win any awards, I set out to accomplish a social impact and with this award I can now say that I accomplished the goals I set 40 years ago."

Thanks to his mother, Jeff's interest in photography started at a young age.

"My mother took me to a photographers studio to enter me in a most beautiful baby contest. I can't remember how old I was, I just know I was really young. I remember going in and being fascinated with all the lights, with the camera, with accessories, all of it. I guess that's when the seed was planted."

When he was a junior in high school, Jeff saved up all his money to buy his first

camera as his love of photography grew. Yet even into his early twenties photography remained just a hobby. Until a tragic accident when he was 24-years-old.

"I was driving back to Buffalo after a weekend visit to the Six Nations reserve," Jeff remembered, "I got halfway home and fell asleep at the wheel. With my son in the car, I ran into a pole."

Despite being ejected from the car, his son survived the accident while Jeff was paralyzed from the chest down. It was following the accident, while he was laying prone in the hospital that he made a promise to himself.

"I made a vow that if I recovered from this accident, I was going to dedicate my life to making some sort of contribution to my Indigenous community."

He would regain the use of his legs and while on his journey of rehabilitation, discovered the tool by which he could make good on his promise.

"Part of my rehab was to go for walks. I started taking my camera with me on these walks and I would take photos of everything. My camera became part of my therapy."

Following his accident, Jeff was told



*Corn Husks - Drying White Corn, 1980, Six Nations, Ontario*





*Rebiding-the North American Indian - Acts of Commemoration*

he wouldn't be able to do much of anything. He used that as motivation and using his camera as a tool, began rebuilding his life. He soon identified the lack of photos of Indigenous people in urban environments as well as the lack of Indigenous photographers and set out to change that.

"My early projects were about finding balance as an Iroquois living away from my people and my culture in an urban setting. I have this Iroquois identity that my elders at the Six Nations taught me and yet I live in the city. This balance is what led me to describe myself as urban-Indigenous."

Not just a photographer, he is a storyteller using a photo or a series of photos to tell a story. He has focused on a wide range of topics, from his son Bear to Pow Wow's to elder Iroquois men living in Buffalo. His work has been featured in major collections in Canada, the United States and Europe.

In 1998 he was awarded the Canada Council's Duke and Duchess of York Award in Photography which is awarded each year to the most outstanding recipient of the Canada Council's project grants to visual artists in photography. In 2008 he won the Karsh Award which is given out in Ottawa every four years to a local artist for their outstanding body of work and significant contribution to the artistic discipline in a photo/lens-based medium. He has also won a REVEAL Indigenous Art Award and has been inducted into the Royal Canadian Academy of Art.

Jeff has been based in Ottawa since 1993

engage a younger audience. I've always felt that there was something more immersive than an art gallery and now technology will allow that immersion. Right now I'm trying to figure out what story I can tell using virtual reality."

Despite having his life derailed by a car accident, Jeff has gone on to enjoy a long,



*Europeanization - My father Was A Factory Maintenance Painter - George Catlin*

and while he did a lot of travelling in his earlier years his mobility has decreased in recent years. Despite his limitations at this point in his career, he's still working.

outstanding career.

"I was only 24 when I had my accident, suddenly I wasn't able to do anything that I wanted. Back then I never imagined that I



*Bear Portraits - Culture Revolution, Toronto, Ontario, 1984*

"The evolution of technology has allowed me to keep working, you no longer need to stand in a dark room all day. I'm very fortunate that new technology has allowed me to keep going. I want to incorporate these new technology to produce stories that can

would go on to have a 40 year career doing something that I love... As artists we're politically motivated and have a means that can benefit our community and I feel I've done that."

## AGREEMENT

# Bruce Power signs supplier agreement with locally-based First Nation construction company

**B**ruce Power has signed a supplier agreement with a new, locally-based, First Nation-owned joint business venture to provide construction services to Bruce Power, as part of the company's ongoing investment program.

Makwa Development Corp., which is owned by Nawash residents Scott Lee and Shane Chegahno, has joined forces with Tron, a construction company based on Saskatchewan's English River First Nation that brings extensive experience working in Canada's nuclear sector. Tron and Makwa recently signed a Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) to create a fully First Nation-owned venture,

with experience in the nuclear sector and a goal of maximizing employment of local Indigenous people.

"The Makwa-Tron joint venture will be 100 per cent First Nation-owned," said Lee.

"The entity will be situated on the Nawash First Nation and will hopefully create immediate opportunities and benefits for both the Nawash and Saugeen First Nations and their respective Band Members. Our hope is that our community members as well as businesses owned by community members will be able to derive benefit from the coming decades of Bruce Power operations in the SON

Territory."

Mike Rencheck, Bruce Power's President and CEO, said the Makwa-Tron joint venture will provide Bruce Power with a variety of services during the Life-Extension Program. Tron's experience ranges from infrastructure and utilities construction to electrical and instrumentation installation, as well as vessel fabrication, among other disciplines.

"Bruce Power is committed to developing wealth-creation solutions for Indigenous peoples on a number of fronts, and these types of business partnerships are a key element to achieving this," Rencheck said. "The Makwa-Tron joint venture

will provide community members with excellent jobs and give Bruce Power the skillsets we require to advance our investment program."

The Hon. Greg Rickford, Minister of Energy, Mines, Northern Development, and Minister of Indigenous Affairs Ontario, praised the partnership and the many benefits that it will generate.

"It's very encouraging to see this collaboration between Bruce Power, MAKWA Developments, and Tron/Des Nedhe Development," Minister Rickford said. "These are the types of partnerships that support economic development, create good jobs, and provide opportunities for First Nations communities to share in Ontario's prosperity.

"Indigenous communities possess immense skill and expertise for endeavours like this, and this project will undoubtedly showcase the benefits of local partnership, and encourage similar economic development into the future.

Sean Willy is President and CEO of Des Nedhe Development, which started as a company in 1991 as an economic development vehicle for the English River First Nation. It has grown steadily, through vibrant partnerships and sound community leadership. Des Nedhe Development manages a broad and secure portfolio of successful companies in the resource, construction, supply, manufacturing, communications, and real estate sectors, he said.

"Through community foresight and planning, we have been forging new paths," Willy said. "We are building on traditional values and an entrepreneurial spirit, while delivering opportunities that add value for our customers and our people. It has become one of the leading Indigenous economic development organizations in the country."

## Indigenous Leadership Programs

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by Chris Amat



# Kapyong Barracks,

## a site in Winnipeg that will become one of the most recent urban reserves in Canada.

### Urban reserves are tests of reconciliation

By Gregory C Mason, Associate Professor of Economics, University of Manitoba

Over the past 20 years, the courts have validated long-standing claims by First Nations that Canadian governments have systematically ignored and violated the terms of treaties negotiated between 1871 and 1921.

One approach to mitigating treaty violations is the additions-to-reserve process.



*Kapyong Barracks, Winnipeg a 64-hectare parcel of land soon to become an urban reserve.*

the periphery of larger cities, and rarely inside a major metropolis.

This is set to change with Kapyong Barracks, a site in Winnipeg that will become one of the most recent urban reserves in Canada.

conclude in the next year; that's when the truly hard work will start. Two requirements underpin this new venture.

Maximizing revenue first, and most importantly, most First Nations appear to be focused on maximizing the revenue from these new lands.

This is an economic logic that will likely result in Kapyong being developed in much the same way as the surrounding community, with upscale residential and retail/commercial properties.

Despite the common misconceptions I've heard from some of my Winnipeg neighbours, Kapyong will not be a trailer park, nor will it feature much low-income housing, despite the efforts of anti-poverty advocates.

The two existing urban reserves in Winnipeg, owned by Long Plain First Nation and Peguis First Nation, feature a gas station, a post-secondary college, office and retail space leased to Indigenous and non-Indigenous businesses and, quite possibly in the future, a cannabis store. The goal of making money guides development that is consistent with surrounding land use.

Second, all urban reserves enter into a Municipal (Continued on page 26)



*Fourteen years after troops pulled out, and a decade after First Nations groups began fighting the federal government in the courts for the property, the long-awaited demolition of the former Kapyong Barracks in Winnipeg has begun.*

In short, First Nations purchase land from a private owner and apply to transfer it to their reserves.

Government helps in the process. Under the Treaty Land Entitlement process, Manitoba has also set aside \$190 million to assist First Nations to acquire private land for the purpose of adding to their reserves.

Between 1969 and 2017, the federal government approved 1,689 additions to reserves and of these, 119 were urban reserves. Most of them were in small communities or on



*Long Plain Chief Dennis Meeches*

Comprising a 64-hectare parcel deep within an affluent area of the city, this urban reserve will be a unique and practical test of reconciliation.

The finalization of this reserve and transfer to seven Treaty One First Nations will likely

## RESERVES

(Continued from page 25)

### Development and Services

Agreement with the city that requires the First Nations to pay an annual fee in lieu of taxes. This covers the cost of police and fire protection, transit, water, sewer and other services purchased from the city. As part of the agreement, the First Nations agree to undertake development compatible with the surrounding area.

This all sounds good, but it is also easy to imagine missteps.

Consider the fees for services. At 64 hectares, the Kapyong lands could have an assessed value of at least \$300 million if developed to be an upscale residential and retail hub. At the current mill rate, that could return about \$4 million in property taxes and a similar amount in school taxes.

Will Treaty One First Nations accept paying this kind of money immediately on undeveloped land? As development proceeds, the fees for urban services should approximate the property and school taxes the city would have received had Kapyong been sold to individuals.

### First Nations do pay taxes

A common misconception exists that First Nations businesses and people do not pay tax, leading many businesses in the area to fear that commercial ventures on an urban reserve have an unfair advantage.

### This is false.

In general, First Nations people, those designated as so called status Indian, are liable for income and other taxes, just as any Canadian. The key exception is that profits and incomes received by status Indians from First Nations-owned businesses on a reserve are not subject to tax.

Many nuances exist to Indigenous tax law, but the notion that commercial activity on an urban reserve has an unfair advantage is overstated.

Assuming the goal of the Treaty One First Nations is to generate maximum revenue for their bands and to pay the city for services, then simple economics dictates that both Indigenous and non-Indigenous businesses that operate on the reserve must pay the same leases and fees as businesses off



Wendake is a Huron-Wendat Nation urban reserve in Quebec surrounded by the La Haute-Saint-Charles borough of Quebec City.

reserve.

While some First Nation leaders may be reluctant to tax their own band members and their businesses as a matter of principle, others argue that it's the only way to finance self-government and support the provision of essential city services.

The seven Treaty One First Nations that will assume control over the Kapyong lands face the challenge of creating a unified voice to advance their mutual interest. This will entail creating an independent umbrella economic development agency, focused on generating revenue and answerable to the communities.

This new agency must be accountable to band membership. But as with all governments, undue political pressure, including potential interference by First Nations leadership in the management of economic activity of the urban reserve, could jeopardize revenues and attenuate the benefits that flow back to the communities.

There are sure to be difficult discussions ahead.

The question of casinos causes ruptures and debates. It's possible First Nations leadership may want to develop a casino on the Kapyong lands, a common activity on urban reserves in Saskatchewan.

Will local residents oppose this land use, citing congestion and a desire not to have legalized gambling close to their residences?

This is but one example of the challenging negotiations that lie ahead.

### Negotiation, not litigation, is key

It would be easy for debates on land use to degenerate into a rights contest in which First Nations pit their rights against the NIMBY (not in my backyard) reaction of existing land owners.

But the existing land owners and non-Indigenous residents of Winnipeg need to accept urban reserves as a tangible and legitimate expression of reconciliation. First Nations leaders should also view the urban reserve as an important foothold in the urban economy of the future and continue to work with other Winnipeg landowners who have valid interests in how that development proceeds.

Everyone must resist the temptation to run to the courts when negotiations become difficult. Economic benefits will slow to a trickle as soon as litigation replaces negotiation.

Finally, governments, First Nations, federal, provincial and municipal must engage in transparent negotiations so all citizens, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, remain fully informed on progress toward fulfilling this exciting new form of urban land ownership.

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