



Bingwi Neyaashi  
Anishinaabek



Media Release

## Alliance Between First Nations, Municipal Leaders, and Industry Formed to Defend a Way of Life

Welcomes Nathalie Des Rosiers as Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry

**January 18, 2018** – An Alliance of First Nation and non-First Nation leaders representing rights holders, stakeholders, municipal leaders, unions, and Ontario's forest sector has been formed to defend our way of life, with a mandate to grow the responsible use of natural resources in northern and rural Ontario.

Chief Thomas Johnson Jr., Seine River First Nation, said, “In light of reconciliation and economic sustainability, we as First Nations and non-First Nations must rally in support of one another to defend our shared forestry interests and lands unique to northern and rural Ontario through a working alliance, forged on the principles of unity, strength and prosperity. Our collective action reaches beyond today by working to secure a sustainable future for the generations to come. As the Chief of Seine River, I stand in solidarity with The Alliance. I am calling all treaty partners to join and support us in moving the reconciliation agenda forward.”

The Alliance was recently formed in response to the potential negative impacts of proposed species at risk (SAR) and Endangered Species Act (ESA) policy on communities and the forest sector across northern and rural Ontario.

“We’ve looked after the land for hundreds of years,” said Chief Joe Ladouceur, from Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek First Nation. “We know how to manage our own forests. The government is taking food off the tables of First Nations.”

Jamie Lim, President and CEO of the Ontario Forest Industries Association (OFIA), stated, “Workable provincial and federal policy developed with input from stakeholders, rights holders, practitioners, and professional foresters will maintain and grow good paying jobs in northern and rural Ontario. Members of The Alliance are committed to increasing sustainable harvesting, growing their local economies while continuing to respect science-based environmental values.” Lim continued, “Workable provincial and federal policy is the fundamental key to maintaining and growing good paying jobs in northern and rural Ontario.”

Members of The Alliance were hopeful following the announcement in August by the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry, Kathryn McGarry, to delay the posting of species at risk forestry prescriptions

under the ESA. This was to provide time for government to achieve a better understanding of the impacts of climate change, the cumulative impacts of all activity on a broad, dynamic land base, and a better appreciation of the socio-economic implications of provincial species at risk policy. However, The Alliance has been left wondering what decisions have been made in the meantime. Premier Kathleen Wynne’s cabinet shuffle on January 17<sup>th</sup> has added further uncertainty with what will happen in the future.

“We welcome Minister Nathalie Des Rosiers to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and sincerely thank Minister Kathryn McGarry for her efforts at the MNRF,” said Wendy Landry, President of NOMA and Mayor of Shuniah. “We made a lot of progress under the leadership of Minister McGarry and it is critical that the government deliver on their commitments made in August in order to ensure we create opportunities for investments that will drive the economy not only for the north, but Ontario as a whole.” added Landry.

President of FONOM and Mayor of Kapuskasing Al Spacek said, “I am proud that Ontario is recognized as a world leader for providing balanced and sustainable forest management plan through the Crown Forest Sustainability Act and that forestry is in fact, a climate change champion.” Mayor Spacek continued, “We are asking government to not fall for anti-forestry group tactics and push through policy that could negatively impact our province’s most renewable sector, forestry.”

Chief Ed Wawia from Red Rock Indian band concluded by saying, “The socio-economic impacts of the proposed rules have the potential to be catastrophic for First Nations communities. Government has not meaningfully engaged or informed our communities of the impacts these policies could have within our jurisdiction. We are asking government to make this right. If these proposed new regulations are implemented, access to our traditional areas, the sustainable forestry businesses we have built and the jobs dependent on them will be compromised.”

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