

## **Algonquin Identity Appropriated at Unveiling of New Nuclear Building**

### **Kebaowek First Nation Reacts to Algonquins of Ontario's naming of nuclear building "Clear Path" in Anishinaabemowin**

December 10, 2021

**Temiscaming** – Kebaowek First Nation denounces claims of Indigenous engagement and reconciliation in response to a December 3, 2021 [announcement](#) by Canadian Nuclear Laboratories (CNL) celebrating the naming of a new site entrance building at Chalk River Laboratories as the Minwamon Building, which means 'clear path' in the Algonquin language.

According to the corporate release, CNL is honoured to have been gifted the Minwamon name by the Algonquins of Ontario (AOO) as a "way to recognize our commitment to working together towards healing and reconciliation".

"This announcement comes at the expense of Kebaowek First Nation and other Algonquin Nations who are the rightful title holders," said Chief Lance Haymond of Kebaowek First Nation. As Chief Haymond explains, the Algonquins of Ontario are not a legitimate entity, but a corporate body created by the Ontario and federal governments in order to negotiate a land claim. The AOO's eligibility, enrollment and negotiation process is intended to negatively impact the rights and title of the legitimate citizens of the entire Algonquin Nation, including the Kebaowek First Nation.

"We are in active dialogue with both Canadian Nuclear Laboratories and the nuclear regulator and have insisted that the Algonquins of Ontario are not an entity entitled to consultation on projects in our territory, and they certainly do not represent our interests," Chief Haymond continues. "Despite our clear position, we continue to witness attempts to extinguish our rights as governments and businesses turn to them for easy Indigenous buy-in for nuclear projects."

Kebaowek is further troubled by the apparent lax approach of both the Canadian Nuclear Safety commission and Atomic Energy Canada Limited in upholding the honour of the Crown, which on more than one project occasion has resulted in a breach of the Crown's duty to consult and accommodate.

"This announcement comes as a shock and calls into question the good faith of Atomic Energy Canada Limited and Canadian Nuclear Laboratories to engage with Kebaowek," says Kebaowek First Nation council member Justin Roy. "We were never approached nor asked about the naming of this facility, despite our requests to formalize consultations with them on numerous nuclear matters at the site."

Kebaowek First Nation is one of eleven communities representing the Algonquin Nation in Canada. Their land has never been relinquished through treaty and they were never consulted when the nuclear facilities at Chalk River were established on their unceded territory in the 1940s. Faced with many significant nuclear projects and radioactive waste legacies on traditional Algonquin territory, Kebaowek First Nation has been vocal in its objection to the continuation of the [nuclear industry on their lands](#) without appropriate accommodation to the impacts on their rights. They also continue to call for a suspension of

the small modular reactor project proposed at Chalk River until such time as meaningful consultation and cooperation have occurred.

- 30 -

**Media Contacts:**

Chief Lance Haymond  
Kebaowek First Nation  
[lhaymond@kebaowek.ca](mailto:lhaymond@kebaowek.ca)  
819-627-3455

Rosanne Van Schie  
[vanschie3@gmail.com](mailto:vanschie3@gmail.com)