

**WAPACHEE FAMILY STATEMENT:
COMEX PUBLIC HEARINGS ON BLACKROCK METALS MINING PROJECT
DECEMBER 4, 2018**

MAIN CHANGES TO THE GLOBAL CERTIFICATION OF AUTHORIZATION:

- Increase Life span of Project (13 years to 42.5 Years)
- Decrease production – 32 tons daily – 8,400 tons
- No construction camps (500 workers) – BR needs to restore and make ponds for goose landings.
- Environment - Use of Lac Denis
- Transportation (Main Access Road for Hunting)
- Family Economic/ Business Opportunities

History:

Philip Wapachee is the Tallyman of 0-59. Elder/ Matthew Wapachee is the predecessor of the family trapline and the father/ grandfather/ great-grandfather of the Wapachee Clan. He lives permanently on the family trapline. Although Mr. Wapachee is a member of the Ouje-Bougoumou Cree Nation, he does not have a house in Ouje-Bougoumou. He lives and occupies the family trapline 365 days a year.

Historically, the family traplines (0-57/ 0-59) were the main employers of the Wapachee Family. The main economic base for Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Wapachee since the 1940s had been hunting, fishing and trapping in order to sustain family life. These traditional economies must be taken into consideration to ensure the survival of the Cree way of life as we move forward into the realization of the BRMs project and other major upcoming projects.

Since the 1940s onward, the impacted family has continuously felt direct accumulative impacts of other multi-resource development activities within the family trapline; namely, intensive mining exploration activities, on-going forestry operations, countless forestry roads, unilateral expansion of Chibougamau township, Obalski recreational park, multiple cottages/ recreational leases (over 300 on the family trapline), abandoned mine sites (Corner Bay, Henderson I & II), Mine Principale (unresolved contamination) highway 167, CN Rail, Hydro Powerline, Sub-stations, Cree and non-Cree poachers/ hunters. There are other proposed (upcoming) major mining projects such as **Vanadium Corp** (south of BRMs project); **VanadiumOne** (north of BRMs project), **Corner Bay** mining project, etc... It is important to note that these major projects have their own

social and environmental assessment in which such process distorts the true overall social, environmental and cultural impacts.

In order to initiate a public awareness campaign, the Wapachee Clan presented a power-point presentation to the members and leadership of OBCN at a Community Assembly (February 1, 2017) on the global issue. Following the presentation, the membership and leadership passed a community resolution supporting the request to conduct an *Accumulative Impact Assessment* to better understand the accumulative impacts of these multiple-resource development projects on the family trapline 0-59.

Nowadays, the population of the Wapachee Clan reaches approximately 120 members and still growing rapidly. Meanwhile, the areas to carry out traditional activities are getting smaller. In preparation for the BRMs project, the Wapachee Clan has prepared and organized themselves in a way to ensure a workable and sustainable approach to balance traditional and contemporary economic lifestyle without altering the Cree traditional way of life.

Increase Lifespan of the BRMs Project:

The original life span of the BRMs project was 13 years. With the new modifications, 29.5 years has been added to the original life span; therefore, the total life span has now been increased to 42.5 years. For the Wapachee Clan, the 13 years was more acceptable because it would have allowed the sons (1st Generation) to continue pursuing their traditional activities within the area after retirement. Now this longer life span will affect the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Generations. This is a big concern for the directly impacted family as this increase life span of the project will contribute towards the loss of culture, traditions and hunting/gathering practices.

In June 2013, the Wapachee Clan worked on a detailed Family Use Map (Baseline Study) with social anthropologist/ Ms. Catherine Lussier. The participants identified Cree camps, areas for harvesting activities, highly valued sites and other sites of special interests. The family map contained detailed historical and contemporary sites of special interests. Therefore, the footprint of the project will diminish highly valued areas for hunting, trapping, fishing and other traditional activities. This will certainly have a direct impact on subsistence harvesting resources especially within the Bloc C section of the family trapline. It is in this section the family is able to engage in wildlife harvesting activities. Block A is occupied by multiple cottages/ land leases/ park; Block B is mostly Chibougamau lake; and Block C is the only area left for the family to harvest wildlife, and this is the same area where BRMs project is

located and other proposed developments. Block D is in the Innu territory (east of the height-of-lands). Please refer to the attached map.

Recommendations:

- *The 2013 Family Land Use Map was based on the original plans. The Wapachee Clan strongly recommends that the Blackrock Metals Inc., update the Family Land Use Map so that it reflects the new 42.5-year life span plan of the project.*
- *In addition, the Wapachee Clan recommends that BRMs come up with an annual family land use monitoring program to monitor social and cultural impacts. The monitoring program must include an evaluation of the effectiveness of mitigation measures put in place.*
- *BRMs will need to work closely with the community/ directly impacted families to find ways to minimize land use impacts.*

No Construction Camp (500 workers):

The elimination of the construction camp is good for the impacted family as other social and environmental issues would have surfaced such access to the territory by Cree workers and 'no hunting' zone etc...

In around 2009, BRMs leveled off a large area approximately 400m x 400m south of the mine/ mill site. There were numerous truck loads of material that was transported to the site and spread all over to accommodate trailers and other facilities. In the original plan, this proposed construction camp site would have accommodated 500 construction workers. This has changed. The construction camp will no longer be required.

The Wapachee Clan is fully aware of the upcoming construction work on the family trapline in the spring of 2019. The family anticipates heavy traffic and heavy machinery operations in various places of the family trapline during the construction phase of the project. The construction phase will certainly have a huge direct impact on wildlife habitats and traditional activities.

Recommendation:

- *BRMs should work in close collaboration with OBCN and the impacted family in the development and implementation of a suitable restoration and*

rehabilitation plan for this unused site. It could be turned into a goose hunting corridor.

- *BRMs should establish a consultations procedure to ensure the directly impacted family is adequately consulted prior to the commencement of works by BRMs and other private contractors.*

Environment - Lake Denis:

Considering the history of mining around Lac Dore and Lac Chibougamau, the impacted family is concerned with the potential environmental impacts the tailings ponds will have on the surrounding environment if it fails. The impacted family finds that BRM's tailings management and water management methodology follows basic regulations for tailings. In addition, the family questions if the size of the proposed tailings pond is sufficient enough to accommodate the second pit once the first pit is exhausted or will the future second pit require another tailings pond? According to the original plan, the tailings pond was designed to accommodate the second pit. The impacted family is no longer certain if it is.

Recommendations:

- *In order to address the concerns related to the tailings pond, BRMs should follow 'best practices' that are coming out from the mining industry to ensure these plans are in line with recent recommendations in order to avoid further contamination within the family trapline.*
- *BRMs should make sure that the tailings pond is efficient enough to accommodate the second pit of the mining project.*

Transportation (Main access road for traditional pursuits)

It is the impacted family's common understanding that BRMs recently announced that the rail spur is considered 1st option for transportation. The impacted family is in favour of this plan.

The once proposed heavy usage (hourly trucking) of the main access road was/ is unacceptable to the impacted families. This main access road runs from the central southern region and right up to the central northern most part of the family trapline. This would have definitely had a detrimental impact on highly valued areas and the Cree way of life.

The Wapachee Clan stress the concerns regarding the heavy usage of the main access road to Rabbit Camp, wildlife habitats, hunting/ trapping areas and other

sites of special interests. For the Wapachee Clan, the reinstated plan to have the railway spur run on the eastern side of the trapline from Route 167 to the proposed mine site (28 kms) is acceptable because: **1)** it will not highly affected areas valued for hunting, trapping and gathering especially for sustenance; **2)** it will be safer for the directly impacted family to continue using the main access road for traditional activities; **3)** it will be quieter around camps and wildlife habitat areas.

Therefore, the construction of the rail spur from highway 167 to the mine site is welcomed by the impacted family.

As of now, there has NOT been any proposed measures undertaken by BRMs to protect the small pond (clean drinking water) near Rabbit Camp. The pond is located around km 12 along the main access road. This concern regularly comes up in the family discussions.

Recommendations:

- *BRMs will need to inform the directly impacted family and public once the railway spur is resolved. The Wapachee Clan strongly recommends that BRMs resolve this matter before the beginning of the construction phase of the project.*
- *BRMs must put measures in place along the access road to protect natural resources and locations that are valued by the directly impacted family.*

Family Economic/ Business Opportunities:

It is important to note that the Wapachee Clan aims to ensure that there is a balance between development and environmental protection. The family wishes to ensure that traditional lifestyle can co-exist with modern uses of the family trapline.

In preparation for the BRMs mining project, the Wapachee Clan created MWW Entreprises Inc. MMW Entreprises Inc., is solely owned by the Wapachee Clan at 100%. In order to take advantage of the economic spinoffs from the BRMs project, the Wapachee Clan created Wapitche Construction Company to undertake short and long-term contracts. Currently, the Wapachee Clan's 3rd Generation of construction workers have obtained work experience at Stornoway, Eleanor and Nunavut Mines as heavy machinery operators and labourers.

Furthermore, there are also business opportunities the members of the Wapachee Clan wish to pursue. Members have an interest in creating partnerships with existing non-Cree and Cree companies that specialize in certain fields.

In terms of Training and Development, the 3rd Generation of the Wapachee Clan have enrolled and graduated from Class I Trucking and other heavy machinery operators' course(s). We acknowledge that BRMs will have in place a unique continuous in-house training and development program that will attract potential workforce.

As members of the directly impacted family who have been primary users of trapline 0-59 since the early 1940s, we strongly urge that BRMs and all stakeholders assert and respect the fundamental principles of sustainable development in all phases and sectors of the project. For the Wapachee Clan, sustainable development means to ensure mechanisms are in place to ensure that there is a balance between development and environment so that our traditional way of life can continue to survive on the family trapline. It also means that the members of the Wapachee Clan do NOT see themselves only as labourers and sub-contractors. We see sustainable economic/ business opportunities that can help our children shift into a more diversified economy once BRMs and other contractors leave the site after closure.