



NESKANTAGA FIRST NATION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Neskantaga First Nation Launches Land-Based Action to Halt Unauthorized Mining Exploration

Chief and Council to Travel by Snowmobile to Deliver Cease and Desist to PTX Metals Inc.

Neskantaga First Nation, Treaty No. 9 Territory — This morning, Neskantaga First Nation will carry out a land-based action to defend its homelands by delivering a cease and desist letter directly to PTX Metals Inc. at the company's winter exploration camp associated with its W2 Project near Springer Lake, approximately 40 kilometres from the community.

A delegation led by Chief Gary Quisess and members of Council, accompanied by approximately ten snowmobiles, will depart from Neskantaga and travel overland to PTX's camp to deliver the letter by hand. The action follows months of unanswered correspondence and the Crown's failure to intervene despite clear objections raised by Neskantaga First Nation.

"This is not a protest. This is governance," said Chief Gary Quisess. "We are going to the land because that is where our authority comes from. PTX does not have our consent to be there, and the Crown has failed to act. When governments do not uphold the Treaty, we are forced to defend our homelands ourselves."

In October 2025, after PTX announced plans to establish a winter exploration camp for the 2025–26 season, Neskantaga First Nation and Nibinamik First Nation jointly wrote to Ontario, clearly stating that the proposed activity was not authorized on their homelands and that consent was withheld. The letter asked that the Crown step in to facilitate meaningful consultation and dialogue between the affected First Nations and the Crown. Ontario **never responded** to that letter.

With no response from the Crown, and with PTX proceeding regardless, Neskantaga First Nation determined that it had no remaining option but to act.

Cease and Desist Issued

The cease and desist letter being delivered orders PTX Metals Inc. to immediately halt all exploration-related activities associated with the W2 Project. The letter asserts Neskantaga's inherent jurisdiction under Anishinaabe law. This territorial authority survived Treaty No. 9, and is affirmed by section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982.

Neskantaga calls on the Crown to intervene to stop unauthorized industrial activity.



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“Treaty partnership means respecting when a First Nation says no,” said Chief Quisess. “It does not mean proceeding anyway and hoping we are too exhausted or under-resourced to respond.”

Crown Responsibility

Neskantaga First Nation is calling on both the Government of Ontario and the Government of Canada to immediately halt PTX’s exploration activities and to meet their fiduciary obligations as Treaty partners. The Nation emphasizes that failure to intervene not only violates constitutional duties but actively forces First Nations into direct land defense to protect their territories.

“This situation exists because the Crown chose silence instead of responsibility,” Chief Quisess said. “Nothing happens on our lands without our consent. That principle is not negotiable.”

Land, Life, and Responsibility

The Springer Lake area forms part of Neskantaga’s ancestral territory, where community members continue to hunt, trap, travel, and maintain relationships with the land. The Nation views PTX’s activities as part of a broader pattern of aggressive mineral exploration across the Ring of Fire region that is proceeding faster than consultation, faster than assessment, and faster than the Crown’s willingness to uphold its own laws.

“Our people have been here since time immemorial,” said Chief Quisess. “We will still be here long after these companies are gone. Our responsibility is to the land and to the generations who come after us.”

Media Availability

Media are invited to follow developments. Updates will be provided as the delegation travels to and from the PTX camp.

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