



NESKANTAGA FIRST NATION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Neskantaga Calls Out Ford's Push to Kill Federal Oversight on Ring of Fire

Premier's attack on the federal impact assessment comes just hours after Neskantaga formally requested review of the Eagle's Nest mine

(Toronto, Ontario) — Just one hour after **Neskantaga First Nation** filed a formal request for the **Eagle's Nest mine** to be designated for a **federal impact assessment**, Premier **Doug Ford** called for that same process to be **terminated altogether**.

In a speech today announcing a new “community partnership agreement” with Webequie First Nation, Ford urged Ottawa to **end the Ring of Fire Impact Assessment**, dismissing it as “red tape holding back the economy.”

For Neskantaga, whose homelands and river systems stand to be directly affected by Ring of Fire mining and road development, Ford's remarks are a **direct attack on Indigenous rights and on Canada's own legal safeguards**.

Neskantaga has not had a functioning medical facility since their nursing station was flooded in April. The community has been under a boil water advisory for 30 years—the longest BWA in Canada. There are ongoing states of emergency around a drug epidemic and suicide epidemic and the community has no high school facilities. And still, the province expects the First Nation to come to the table to discuss resource extraction.

“Doug Ford's government has been missing in action while our people face a six-month health crisis with no nursing station and unsafe drinking water,” said **Chief Gary Quisess** of Neskantaga First Nation. “Now he wants to dismantle the only federal process that gives us a voice in what happens to our lands. That's not leadership—it's colonialism in 2025.”

The **Impact Assessment Act** exists to ensure that projects with major environmental and cultural consequences—such as roads, mines, and processing facilities in the Ring of Fire—receive meaningful federal oversight and uphold **Treaty and Aboriginal rights**. Neskantaga's request filed this morning asks the **Impact Assessment Agency of Canada** to formally designate the **Eagle's Nest mine**, a multi-billion-dollar nickel and copper project proposed by Wyloo Metals, for federal review.

“The fact that Eagle's Nest has not already triggered a federal assessment is outrageous,” said Chief Quisess. “Our ancestors are buried along the Attawapiskat River. Our lives depend on these waters. We will not allow the province to fast-track development while our community is still fighting for clean water and adequate health care.”



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Neskantaga continues to oppose the **Northern Road Link** and **Webequie Supply Road**, both of which threaten to cut through the **Attawapiskat River system**—the heart of Neskantaga's territory and culture. The community maintains that no development will proceed without **free, prior, and informed consent**, as required under **Treaty 9**, the **Canadian Constitution**, and **UNDRIP**.

“Ford says the Ring of Fire is about nation-building,” said Chief Quisess. “But nation-building starts with protecting life, dignity, and clean water—not by silencing the very Nations who live on the land.”

Here we stand: where we always have and always will.

Our lands and our rights are not red tape. They are the law.

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