The Explorationist Newsletter is brought to you as a 'member service' of the Ontario Prospectors Association. The purpose is to share news and information amongst its members and also to act as the association's 'Political Voice'.

The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Ontario Prospectors Association, including all of the members and Directors. The writers accept full ownership of their contributions.

CONGRATULATIONS

The Porcupine Prospectors and Developers Association (PPDA) and the Northwestern Ontario Prospectors Association (NWOPA) deserve congratulating after their successful April Symposia.

The NWOPA event, “Beyond Superior – Explore Northwestern Ontario” had a record attendance of over 400 with booth and poster space maximized also. The speakers presented a good cross section of exploration and pertinent topics from around the northwest. This year saw the presentation of projects that continue to expand on their potential and success. The increase in public attendance to the second year of the Investors Forum provided a fresh audience for presenters of projects. The public also walked the exhibit floor getting a sense of what is happening in the industry. The evening saw Activation Laboratories and Accurassay Laboratories putting on well attended hospitality events that and won’t be forgotten for some time. NWOPA’s award ceremony was held at lunch Wednesday with awards to:

**BERNIE SCHNIEDERS DISCOVERY OF THE YEAR AWARD 2007:**

- Gold Eagle Mines Ltd. (The Bruce Channel Gold Deposit)
- Kodiak Exploration Ltd. (The Hercules Gold Project)

**DEVELOPER OF THE YEAR AWARD 2007**

Canadian Arrow Mines Ltd. (The Kenbridge Nickel-Copper Project)

The PPDA event, “A Century of Mineral Discovery”, also had great to possible record attendance of over 310. The event held at the McIntyre arena had a great display area with ample room to have the large displays. Hats off to the organizers who put on a flawless show that highlighted the exploration efforts in the northeast. There was a great feast Monday night with Brad Wood of DeBeers receiving the Porcupine Discoverers Award for the Victor Mine.

OPA, NWOPA and PPDA would like to the participants, sponsors and volunteers for making these great events happen.

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD 2007

Ray Cousineau; Louis Cousineau; Bill Miron; John Ternowesky; Carter Nelson

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SUE HERBERT RETIRES

Sue Herbert has announced her retirement as Deputy Minister, Northern Development and Mines. I personally have had a great working relationship with Sue and enjoyed the chance to work with her. She expressed to that she really was taken by the “Mining Bug” and will miss the positive nature of our industry. Good Luck Sue please keep in touch.

HERE'S A GOOD NEWS STORY

Mishkeegogamang Ojibway Nation and Richview Resources Sign Memorandum of Understanding Tuesday April 15, 11:19 am ET

OSNABURGH, ONTARIO and TORONTO,
ONTARIO--(Marketwire - April 15, 2008) - Mishkeegogamang - Chief Connie Gray-McKay of the Mishkeegogamang Ojibway Nation and Sol Prizant of Richview Resources Inc. (TSX:RVR - News), today signed a Memorandum of Understanding committing to an ongoing relationship between the First Nation and Richview with respect to the company's exploration activities and the Thierry Mine Project. Richview is the sole owner of the past-producing Thierry Mine property in northwestern Ontario, adjacent to the Town of Pickle Lake. Richview is a Canadian company committed to responsible development of natural resources while respecting local environmental, community and social interests.

The MOU establishes the foundation for a positive and mutually beneficial relationship between Mishkeegogamang Ojibway Nation and Richview. These measures include training and employment, ongoing communication, financial contribution to the community and other benefits. In addition, the First Nation and the company have agreed to negotiate an Impact Benefit Agreement should the project proceed, as currently planned, to the operational stage. "We are very pleased with this agreement." said Chief Gray-McKay, "For too long the riches from our traditional lands have been taken without benefit to our community. Richview Resources' commitment in this MOU to share benefits with Mishkeegogamang is the principled approach we have been seeking and will now expect from all resource companies working in our traditional lands." Sol Prizant, President and CEO of Richview Resources said "Richview is committed to working in cooperation with the First Nation in all phases of our Project. Not only is it the right thing to do, we believe that it is simply good business to have First Nations as supporting partners in developments in lands they have used and occupied for thousands of years. This MOU represents the beginning of a mutually beneficial relationship with the Mishkeegogamang community."

The Parties have also agreed to conduct an assessment of the archaeologically and culturally significant sites, and areas of traditional use within the project area through a Traditional Ecological Knowledge Study. The study will identify sites of cultural importance which will be respected and protected during the exploration activities.

David Masakeyash, who acted as a head negotiator for the First Nation of this MOU commented, "These negotiations were successful because we listened to each other and addressed the concerns and objectives we each brought to the table. With this MOU and the commitment to enter an Impact Benefit Agreement if the project moves to the operations stage, the company's success is now important to us and we will support them to achieve that success."

"This is a great example of people working together to forge a partnership within Ontario's mining community." said Juli Abouchar, legal counsel to Richview during the negotiations.

Negotiations toward an Impact Benefit Agreement (IBA) will commence upon a decision from the Richview Resources Board to move from exploration to production. The MOU outlines the agenda and the process for conducting the IBA negotiations. Topics will include employment, training, business opportunities and financial compensation among others.

Platinex fights back on mining development

By ALANA TOULIN, The Chronicle-Journal
Thursday, April 24, 2008

Platinex's newly-announced mining developments in remote Northern Ontario have drawn some harsh criticism from NDP Leader Howard Hampton – something that has made the Toronto-area exploration company's president and CEO quite angry.

"I am very irate about what Mr. Hampton is doing," said James Trusler, who until now has mostly remained quiet throughout the long legal saga between his company and the Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation over mining rights on land claimed as traditional territory.

Hampton released a statement on Tuesday deeming it "outrageous" that the provincial government would award Platinex 72,000 acres of new mining claims while the leaders from the Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug (KI) First Nation remain in jail.

Since the new Platinex claims are located near Webequie First Nation, Marten Falls First Nation, Fort Hope First Nation, Neskantaga First Nation and Gull Bay First Nation, Hampton claims it sends a "chilling message" to other northern aboriginal communities.

"On one hand, First Nations leaders are jailed because they demand their constitutional right to be consulted and accommodated before potential environmental damage happens to their lands; while on the other hand Platinex is awarded extensive new mining rights after suing KI for $10 billion and nearly bankrupting the community in the process," he said in the statement. "Is this the message the McGuinty government wants to send to First Nations: If you stand up and ask for your constitutional rights to be recognized, you could
Trusler balked at Hampton’s remarks and said that his company has properly gone through the process set out by the Mining Act to obtain its exploration rights.

“We’re able to stake, we have a licence to stake, and we’re able to hire stakers and stake,” he said, adding that they are “quite willing” to work with other First Nations.

“I don’t really appreciate Mr. Hampton trying to escalate the situation – I think that’s really what he is doing.”

Trusler said Platinex will be coming out with a statement soon presenting its side, since he is sick of everything that has been “manipulated” throughout the court process with KI.

For instance, Trusler is quick to point out that Platinex is a small company that he has run from the basement of his home. It are environmentally conscious, he says, looking to mine platinum to be used in fuel cells that can be used to combat global warming, and they has a number of investors.

He lashed out at what he called a “large group effort” to undermine his business.

“If that’s the way the country is going to go, trying to snuff out small entrepreneurial efforts – who, by the way, are people trying to come up with solutions to global problems – it’s just asinine, really,” he said.

Additionally, Trusler alleges that Platinex almost faced bankruptcy itself after KI “removed” $300,000 worth of unspecified materials from it.

“The court ordered them to return it and they haven’t,” Trusler said. “It’s now worth about $600,000 if you look at the escalation in fuel prices.”

Jacob Ostaman, acting spokesperson for KI, showed disappointment that Platinex is expanding its explorations in Northern Ontario.

“We’re trying to send a message that the Mining Act is not appropriate in regard to First Nations’ interests,” he said. “To continue to issue mining permits, that’s a source of the problem. It’s disrespectful to our people that are in jail right now.”

A spokesperson for Northern Development and Mines Minister Michael Gravelle confirmed yesterday that there will be an expedited review of the contempt of court sentence for the six jailed KI Leaders.

**Press Release 13-08—April 15, 2008**

**Liberty Signs IBA for Its Shaw Dome Properties**

**EDMONTON, Alberta.** Liberty Mines Inc. ("Liberty or the Corporation") is pleased to announce the signing of an Impact and Benefits Agreement ("IBA") with the Mattagami, Matachewan and Wahagoshig First Nations ("MMW"). The IBA encompasses all of the Corporations mining properties in the Shaw Dome Nickel Belt ("Properties") near Timmins Ontario including the Redstone and McWatters Mines and the advanced Hart nickel project, and is in effect for the life of any mining project developed on the properties.

The IBA includes provisions for job training, employment, scholarships, business relationships and financial participation in community development projects. It also streamlines the exploration of the Properties and the permitting of economic deposits with direct consultation and input from the MMW.

“We have worked diligently to establish a good working relationship with the First Nations, to understand their culture and traditional rights and to arrive at a fair accommodation from the impact against their traditional rights from the giving up of crown land for mining” said Gary Nash, Liberty's President and CEO. "In return, the MMW provide potential business services to Liberty, an employable workforce and support for our many projects as we continue to expand in the Shaw Dome area”, he added.

**About Liberty Mines Inc.**

Liberty Mines Inc. is a producer of nickel and is focused on the exploration, development and production of nickel, copper, cobalt and platinum group metals from its properties in Ontario, Canada.

For further information please contact:
Dr. Gary Nash, PhD (Physics), President & CEO

**TIME TO UPDATE ONTARIO’S MINING ACT**

Madelaine Drohan

Thursday, April 24, 2008

**OTTAWA —** The KI-6 may not be household names in Canada, but the six imprisoned residents from the First Nations community of Kitchenuhamaykoosib Inninuwug in Northern Ontario may well force the provincial government to finally update its 135-year-old Mining Act.

Their six-month jail sentence, imposed by an Ontario Superior Court judge on grounds they were preventing mining exploration on land they claim north of Thunder Bay, has done more to publicize the unfairness and antiquity of the current mining law than all the peaceful protests that came before.

With the head of the Anglican Church in Canada comparing it to the action of colonizers, a group of high-profile Canadians, including Margaret Atwood and Stephen Lewis, demanding their release, and hundreds of aboriginal protesters gathering on the lawns of Queen's Park this week, Premier Dalton McGuinty was forced to acknowledge publicly that the Mining Act has to be modernized.
The government has known this for some time and started two years ago to do some preparatory work for a full-scale review. The question now is whether the Premier will follow through and demand that the ministers involved (Aboriginal Affairs, Environment, Economic Development and Trade, and Northern Development and Mines) set aside their differences and agree to an actual timetable with a real deadline to ensure what is now just a vague promise becomes a concrete reality.

In his comments to reporters, Mr. McGuinty alluded to some of the reasons why updating the legislation has remained on the government's backburner. Mining and mining finance is big business in the province. Ontario produces more non-ferrous metals and minerals than any other province in Canada, more than $10-billion worth in 2007. With some auto makers and other manufacturers in difficulty and the financial sector in turmoil, there is little inclination to make major changes that would affect another major industry.

It does not help that mining happens out of sight of Toronto. It takes place mostly in Northern Ontario, where there are few voters and even fewer government MPPs. The combination means that the concerns of the north do not resonate loudly in the hallways of Queen's Park. Just ask the northern residents who want to separate and join Manitoba on grounds that they might have more clout in a smaller province.

Further dampening any inclination to act is that aboriginal affairs is primarily a federal responsibility. The Constitution dictates that First Nations deal on a government-to-government basis with Ottawa, not with provincial governments. These jurisdictional layers make it easier to do nothing than to come to grips with the problem.

This has allowed some mining companies, including the one working near Kitchenuhamaykoosib Inninu-wug, which is called Platinex, to stake claims and proceed with exploration against the wishes of the community, while still remaining within the terms of the Mining Act. Something similar has occurred near Sharbot Lake, near Peterborough, where Frontenac Ventures was exploring for uranium over community protests. Bob Lovelace, a retired Algonquin chief and university professor, was also jailed for six months for protesting against this project.

The status quo will not hold, and not just because of the negative publicity generated by jailings peaceful protesters - although that has certainly turned up the heat on the provincial government. There are also two relatively recent Supreme Court rulings involving cases in British Columbia that have changed the lay of the land completely and put extra pressure on the Ontario government.

In the decisions, which involved a forestry project and a mine in B.C., the Supreme Court ruled that the federal and provincial governments had a duty to consult aboriginal groups and to accommodate their concerns even before aboriginal title or rights claims had been decided. This is an important missing piece in the Ontario Mining Act. It does not require these consultations.

Some mining companies do them regardless, knowing that it is better to work in a community where people feel their concerns have been addressed than to steam ahead with a mine development and risk protests later that will cost money and time. Indeed, although there are some outliers, the trend in the industry is to work more closely with aboriginal groups, not just in Canada, but also around the world.

If done well, it works for both parties: The communities get development and jobs and the companies get access to minerals and workers. The Mining Association of Canada is working with the Assembly of First Nations to craft an agreement on wide-ranging collaboration.

While a positive step, this is not a substitute for modern mining legislation. With prices for metals and minerals high and still rising in some cases, mining activity in Ontario is set to increase.

Unless the government gets the lead out and updates its Mining Act, confrontations between aboriginal groups and mining companies will continue to increase.

"The Mining Act, as it is currently written, is not in keeping with our standards and expectations and values that we share today," Mr. McGuinty said this week.

The onus is on the Premier and his ministers to do something about it now.
self-determination of First Nations; an agreement so as to recognize the necessity of, in this case, the economic opportunity for a First Nation; but at the end of the day, to try and achieve an agreement. Yes, we will pursue the constitutional minimums, of course. But the goal is to get an agreement.

Hon. Michael Bryant: The discussion with respect to Mining Act changes is one that I have had with the Ipperwash commission implementation committee, which included and was asked for by grand chiefs, and we talked about exactly that. We talked about exactly how that consultation would take place. I indicated on behalf of the government that in fact the discussion would not be the usual one whereby the government gives, historically, over the past 100 years plus-the First Nations leader would be lucky to receive a heads-up as to what the government’s intentions were. Instead, our approach is to collaborate from the beginning of this process to ensure that First Nations leadership is very much a part of how we make these changes. We’ve made that commitment and we’re working together to achieve just that.

Hon. Michael Bryant: Firstly, the member is mistaken if he suggests that in my first visit up there with Grand Chief Beardy I put any document on the table. On the contrary: I received a proposal from the KI chief and council and I listened, and at the end of that I suggested that we could find agreement, I knew, on a number of points.

Secondly, with respect to a joint panel and entering into consultations, I just said that that’s exactly what we’re doing right now. I want to be very clear: This government is engaged in consultation with First Nations leadership when it comes to changes to the Mining Act. Secondly, all efforts were made first to listen and then to try and come to an agreement with Chief Morris and council. That’s why he said on May 5 that he appreciated…

Minister of Aboriginal Affairs visits Shabot Obaadjiwan First Nation

By Jeff Green

Michael Bryant, Ontario Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, was in Sharbot Lake on May 8 to hold talks with the Shabot Obaadjiwaan First Nation. The main subject of the discussions was the uranium exploration at Robertsville, Ontario, a few minutes north of Sharbot Lake on Highway 509.

The minister and two aides met first with the Shabot Obaadjiwaan leadership: Chief Doreen Davis, Luanda Badour and Earl Badour, and then joined the Shabot Obaadjiwaan Justice Circle for further conversations and a meal. Algonquin Elder William Commanda also attended the meeting. The meeting took place in advance of a June 2 court date, which is slated to see the resumption of proceedings that were initiated late last July by Frontenac Ventures Corporation after an occupation of the Robertsville mine had been established by the Ardoch Algonquin and Shabot Obaadjiwaan First Nations. Frontenac Ventures is suing the two First Nations for $77 million, and the Shabot Obaadjiwaan have filed a cross claim in the case, which names the governments of Ontario and Canada. It is the contention of the Shabot Odaadjiwan that the exploration permit which Frontenac Ventures received from Ontario is not legal because there was no consultation with First Nations prior to its issuance.

The Shabot Obaadjiwan are seeking consultation with the province about the uranium exploration and are pressing for a moratorium on uranium mining until at least the resolution of the Algonquin land claim agreement. “We are not interested in negotiating an impact benefit agreement with the mining company,” said Chief Davis. “We pressed the minister for a negotiated resolution, in keeping with the recommendations of the Linden Commission into the Ipperwash tragedy. The minister indicated he would be speaking with the premier and the Ministers of Natural Resources, and Northern Development and Mines about his visit, but he did not commit the province to any particular action.”

Davis said the “meeting went well”. It was the first direct contact with the minister ten months into the ongoing dispute over uranium exploration on a 30,000 acre swath of land in North and Central Frontenac townships. Chief Doreen Davis said after the meeting, “The minister listened quietly and respectfully to the opinions of the elder, the council and justice circle. He seemed particularly moved when Elder Commanda unveiled the wampum belt he had brought with him.” The wampum belt, for which Elder Commanda is responsible, depicts three equal-sized figures holding hands in a row, and a cross. It represents an early agreement between the Algonquin, French and English to work together in partnership. The agreement was witnessed by a representative of the Vatican, as indicated by the cross.

According to Chief Davis it is Ontario’s choice how matters unfold from here. “We can negotiate or we can litigate; it is Ontario’s call. Shabot Obaadjiwan has agreed to respect the rule of law. But we will also use the law to protect our rights. If there is no positive response from the province before June 2, we will be proceeding with litigation against the Crown for failure to meet its lawful duty to engage in honourable con-
sultation."
The chief also spoke about the reasons why the Shabot Obaadjiiwan are so passionate about this issue. "We rely on these lands for our food, medicine and peace of mind. Our children's future happiness and well-being is dependent on the health of this land. We know that the health and well-being of the settlers also depends on the health of this land. We wish to ensure these lands are used for sustainable purposes. Uranium mining is the exact opposite. "Not only is this an issue of Aboriginal rights and a breach of the duty to consult by the Crown, but a significant environmental issue for everyone. We are fighting to protect our Aboriginal rights so that we can protect the environment and these environmentally sensitive lands".

This week, Kevin Dove, whose title is Manager, Issues Management and Media Relations for the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, issued the following statement about the meeting: “We believe that good neighbours talk to each other and that is exactly what the province, public and private sector and Aboriginal communities should do. We are committed to meeting our duty to consult with First Nations where activities may impact on Aboriginal or treaty rights. To that end, the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs is supporting the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines in its efforts to share information and consult with the Algonquins. The meeting the minister had with Chief Davis was another step in that effort.”

How to “Keep Mining in Canada.”
Notes for an Address to the Ontario Mining Association By Monte Hummel, President Emeritus, WWF Canada

Queen’s Park, Toronto, Ontario—March 19, 2008

I know it’s customary to say thanks for inviting me to be here today, but I really DO thank Chris Hodgson and the OMA, for a number of reasons…

Thank you because Chris has given me an open field to say anything I wish, and even invited some advice regarding the road ahead for all of us. Thank you because I think the environmental and conservation communities should return the favour more often that we do, seeking YOUR advice on how WE’RE doing these days. We’d learn a lot.

And thank you because I fully realize there have been days when Monte Hummel was NOT the OMA’s favourite person. In fact, I have it on pretty good authority that during the infamous Lands for Life/Ontario Living Legacy days, my picture was on a dartboard in the OMA Toronto office, and Pat Reid let fly with a few, right AT me…HARD!

So, I want to start off on a positive note:

a) I am NOT against mining. In fact, today I’m wearing my old “Keep Mining in Canada” button because I’m all FOR a profitable, environmentally responsible mining industry in Canada, bringing benefits to communities and shareholders alike. So for me the issue is not WHETHER we should have mining in Canada, but UNDER WHAT TERMS AND CONDITIONS, which I believe are shifting seismically these days.

b) The organization I represent, World Wildlife Fund, has walked this talk, by working with the mining industry here in Ontario, elsewhere in Canada and around the world. Sometimes this collaboration has been the subject of criticism from our peers, who prefer the occasions we’ve been in court with you. But I’m prouder of what we’ve done co-operatively…

For example, we worked with Garry Clark at the OPA to resolve all but a dozen of nearly 250 outstanding site-specific issues after the Living Legacy protected areas decisions.

We worked with your counterpart organization in Manitoba to identify 42 areas, adding up to over 4 million ha, that we BOTH agreed could be protected with no mining.

WWF has a global partnership with La Farge focusing on reducing green house gas emissions; a $1 million agreement with Inco (now Vale Inco) to work on a number of conservation initiatives nationally and internationally; and we are in discussions with and Alcan (now Rio Tinto Alcan) to assess the biodiversity impacts of mining.

We helped obtain a statement of support from the NWT and Nunavut Chamber of Mines for the negotiation of the largest land withdrawal for protection in Canadian history. This measured over 10 million ha, initiated by the Akaithcho Dene around Great Slave Lake.

And we worked with Falconbridge and Inco to clear the lakebed for announcement of a federal-provincial agreement to establish the Lake Superior National Marine Conservation Area—the largest freshwater reserve in the world.

These are only a few examples… there are many more.

c) We see some positive signs that the mining industry is trying to reach out in Canada and elsewhere:

For example the International Council on Mining and Minerals biodiversity initiative.

The Kimberly Process led by De Beers, to tackle so called “blood diamond,” and discussions we’re currently having regarding caribou conservation.

MOU’s between the Mining Association of Canada and the Canadian Boreal Initiative, and between MAC and Mining Watch re Canadian com-
pany operations overseas. And the MOU between the Assembly of First Nations and PDAC, announced just last week at their big annual convention here in Toronto. Again there are many more examples, on the part of industry associations and individual companies themselves. So these are all good points, intended to get you in a good mood for the not so good news in the rest of my talk…

My personal experience with your industry these days may seem to be of limited application to you, because I’m most active in the NWT and Nunavut, where of course different legislation applies. And my experience is mostly with ACCESS issues, which I realize tend to be the primary concern of PDAC. However, I hope you’ll hear me out, because I think what I have to say IS relevant to your interests right here in Ontario. That’s because access is the front end of the mining process everywhere. Without it, you go nowhere. And you guys either do your own exploration, or purchase and develop claims from those who do. Furthermore, access issues are associated with different versions of the same free entry mining system almost everywhere in Canada, including here in Ontario.

All of that said, as requested I now want to give you my personal opinions and gratuitous advice on four issues that are upon us all—issues which I think we need to solve together, sooner rather than later. Let’s face it; historically it would be hard to find two interests that have gone at each other with more bitterness than environmentalists and the mining industry.

I can tell you that on our side there are still some who literally have no time for you guys; and I’m sure there are those among you for whom the feeling is absolutely mutual.

Why is this? I believe our differences have arisen out of a number of site specific clashes, but also out of some fundamental differences that underlie these clashes. Here are my four examples, which I’m sure will sound only too familiar:

1) Your industry wants access to as large an area as possible for exploration in particular, because you just never know where those minerals are going to crop up. Conservationists, on the other hand, want large areas set aside and out of bounds, even to exploration. For you, this is like cutting off your blood supply. For us, allowing you into special places under any conditions is tantamount to no guaranteed protection at all. So that would appear to be a pretty clear Mexican standoff wouldn’t it? However, I think there could be some ways through this one. Stay tuned…

2) Miners honestly believe that mineral development is one of, if not THE highest use of land. Conservationists do not. On this one, we take our direction from the great American conservationist Aldo Leopold who said: “A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise.” Again, if reasonable heads on both sides prevail, I think there could be a route forward here too. Stay tuned….

3) The mining industry, conservationists and First Nations have all been the victims of poor land use planning by governments. For example, mineral dispositions have been issued to your industry by governments on lands claimed by First Nations, or in areas proposed for protection. This results in a conflict of interests and even ownership, whereby your industry gets whipsawed between community chiefs, conservationists and government.

I believe there is a way though this one too, especially if we all realize that our shared problem here is government. Stay tuned….

4) To the extent that it ensonces the free entry mining regime, I believe mining legislation and regulation here in Ontario, and elsewhere in Canada, is seriously outdated and not serving any of us particularly well. In fact, I predict there will be increasing protest against this overall approach to mining, not just by First Nations and conservationists, but by private landowners as well, and indeed by the general public.

And I believe that efforts to make the old days last as long as possible are doomed. Better to get on the program and play a leadership role in changing things than to try to hang onto the past. Stay tuned…

Okay, there’s a lot to chew on before lunch. So let me now briefly revisit each of these four points, with some free advice as to how we might actually work together to address such longstanding, seemingly irresolvable differences.
1) First, on the matter of you wanting access to all of it…it just ain’t gonna happen. But we CAN sit down, as we did in Manitoba, and identify areas where conflicts can be avoided, or at least minimized. Significantly, there was also a protocol between Manitoba and First Nations regarding how to bring these protected areas on stream. That means the industry needs to accept that at least some large areas are going to be protected with no mining. But equally, it means the conservation community needs to recognize those cases where mineral development is genuinely supported by the people who live there, who seek training, employment, and other long overdue economic benefits. In the NWT, candidate protected areas are withdrawn from industrial development on an interim five year basis, while resource inventories are conducted and cultural values are documented. This is a reasonable attempt to make sure that areas of high mineral potential are not locked up and foregone. Fair enough. Sometimes protected areas boundaries are adjusted, or special management zones are established before such areas are finalized, resulting in a greater diversity of interests being met and greater certainty for all parties.

2) Second, on what’s the highest use of the land, again I believe BOTH of us need to take a step in each other’s direction, and BOTH of us must respect aboriginal rights to decide the future of areas subject to treaties and land claims. So, there are times when the industry needs to graciously, if not enthusiastically, concede that protection IS the highest and publicly desired purpose for certain lands. At other times, conservationists need to positively support, not just grudgingly agree to, mineral development, where it is undertaken in a way that is supported by the people who live there respecting the environment, and delivering real benefits to northern communities. Further, since only a fraction of 1% of what is explored ever amounts to a commercially attractive mine, I believe we need to talk more about how we can use that fact to better accommodate each other. That might mean, for example, that once you guys have taken a look at it, then certain areas lapse into conservation status.

3) Third, on the issue of conflicts with First Nations, this is one which I think stands to be nothing less than a showstopper for mining right across Canada. The Haida and Mikisu Supreme Court rulings on the need to consult, and to not just CONSIDER but to ACCOMODATE aboriginal concerns when resource commitments are made, have been successfully asserted in BC, Alberta and the NWT in almost every case. There have been more mixed results in Ontario, at least so far. However, the backlash price your industry could pay for success in court to date is widespread reputational damage, a newfound solidarity on the part of Ontario chiefs to disallow mineral activity on their lands, and attention from international human rights and environmental campaigners of the kind the forest industry has been through over the last ten years. So, rather than keeping score on who is winning or losing, I believe you should be concerned that you are in the courts at all on this one. I can’t imagine that the uncertainty associated with this is desirable for your industry. My advice is to get ahead of this curve, and to broker discussions now between First Nations and government, to constructively change the whole context for this debate, rather than fighting it out in court. In many respects, I believe governments are ultimately responsible for this mess, by effectively promising the same piece of land to different parties. And if governments are not prepared or able to show leadership in resolving a problem of their own making, then they should not be surprised if those most affected engage in side discussions and bring forth a solution of THEIR own making. In any case, I seriously counsel you not to be complacent or self-assured about where you’re going to end up on this issue.

4) Finally, I predict that increasingly you will have not just First Nations, but angry private landowners at your door. The fact that the Province’s Mining Act and regulations allow rights to access a mining claim, to trump the rights of trespass is unacceptable in the 21st Century. This is as offensive to private landowners, as allowing mineral activity on their lands without permission is to First Nations. In fact, I know of occasions where the only way a landowner who did not own sub surface rights was able to protect his or her own land against third party staking, was to stake it themselves. Ironically, this is an example of using and breaking the Mining Act at the same time, because Section 54 disallows staking for purposes other than mining. That people have to go to this length to protect private property from mining is ridiculous. In my
view, it is another indication of the need to re-visit
and reform this legislation and free entry, in the face
of changed social realities.
Okay, that’s my four points, and I’m almost finished
I realize I’ve breezed through a lot of big issues here,
and that they are considerably more complicated
than I’ve indicated.
For example, for good reason, First Nations usually
want “government-to-government” negotiations, and
are not interested in entering into discussions as just
another “interested party” participating in some
“multi-stakeholder” consultation process.
Also, in my experience, rather than sitting everyone
down at once, which can lead to gridlock, sometimes
it’s a good idea to sequence problem solving, starting
with the two or three parties that are most offside
with each other, helping them to reach agreement,
then taking that agreement around to others for
modification as needed to bring others into the tent
as well.
In any case, I believe it’s time for true leadership,
and for people of goodwill to step forward all round.
In this regard, I respectfully suggest that the forest
industry has been through a traumatic dry run of
what’s ahead for your industry.
Talk to them. Learn from them.
As a forester myself, I have been deeply involved in
the cultural shift that has taken place in that industry
over the last decade, and I was impressed by public
statements this month from Jim Lopez, CEO of
Tembec.
Jim credited the company’s environmental
commitments for its financial survival through its
recent recapitalization, which converted $1.2 billion
US of debt into new equity.
I quote,” We had a lot of fans out there, and a lot of
people cheering for us, because we maintained our
environmental profile as we were going through a
hard time, and they wanted us to succeed...Not a
single significant customer deserted the company,
and only a few suppliers insisted on cash-on-
delivery, and employee turnover was extremely
low.” Well, my concluding question to you folks is,
“Does the mining industry have a fan base like this
out there?” Frankly, I don’t think so. Not yet.
But it’s doable, especially if you get out in front of
the issues facing your sector to avoid a train wreck. I
sincerely hope you succeed, because we DO need to
keep mining in Canada.

THE VALUE OF THE PROSPECTOR
From a speech delivered in 1938 by William
Sulzer, a former governor of New York state,
reprinted in the Northern Miner January 1994
The prospector is the most useful man to commerce
and the most valuable man to civilization. No
prospectors, no mines, no civilization.
Political economists tell us that, next to
agriculture, mining is the greatest industry. This
is true from the viewpoint that if our soil were
untilled, famine would stalk the land.
From a monetary standpoint, however, the mining
industry is the greatest in the world. The truth of
this assertion becomes apparent when one
considers that mining gives us the standard of
value by which the price of everything produced
by the brain and brown of man is measured.
Abandon mining and the value of every
commodity would be insignificant, humanity
would sink back to the barter-and-exchange age,
and financial paralysis would lock in its vice-like
grip the industries of mankind.
It would be the greatest calamity that ever befell
the human race, and in less than a century,
civilization would revert to barbarism of pre-
history when primitive man knew nothing about
copper, gold, silver, iron, lead, zinc and the
mineral resources of MOTHER EARTH.
Those who decry mining are ignorant of history.
If they knew anything about metals, they would
know that all business, all industry and all human
progress depend on the mines.
The wealth from mines, form the dawn of time, is
the epic of human advancement—of man’s heroic
march along the path of progress.
Show me a people without mines and I will show
you a people deep in the mire of poverty and a
thousand years behind the procession of
civilizations, that made Egypt great, that made
Rome great, and, in modern times, that have made
Spain, England and the United States rise beyond
the dreams of avarice.
The greatest benefactor of the human race has
been the prospector. The most beneficent men of
all times are the farseeing men whose brain and
brawn developed the Earth’s mineral resources.
These are the men who poured the golden streams
of mineral wealth into the lap of civilization, into
the channels of trade, into the avenues of
commerce, and into the homes of happiness.
All honour to the miner. All hail the
PROSPECTOR.

Symposia Dates
Ontario Exploration & Geoscience Symposium -
Sudbury, December 9 & 10, 2008
Northern Ontario Mines & Minerals Symposium -
Sioux Lookout, February 2009
Northwestern Ontario Mines & Minerals
Symposium - Thunder Bay, April 7 & 8, 2009
Northeastern Ontario Mines & Minerals
Symposium - Kirkland Lake, April 14 & 15, 2009