



**Dene National / Assembly of First Nations
Office (NWT)**

5120- 49th Street
P.O. Box 2338
Yellowknife, NT, X1A 2P7
Website: www.denenation.ca

Phone: (867) 873-4081
Fax: (867) 920-2254
Toll Free: 1-866-511-4081



**52nd DENE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
WILIIDEH SITE (YK RIVER)
JULY 18-20, 2022**

RESOLUTION #22/23-013

SUBJECT: Keepers of the Water Resolution

MOVED BY: Chief Edward Sangris, Dettah, Yellowknives Dene First Nation

SECONDED BY: Chief David Etchinelle, Begade Shotagotine

DECISION: Carried Unanimously

WHEREAS, the Dene Nation has convened the Dene National Assembly, Wiliideh Site (YK River), Chief Drygeese Territory, Akaitcho Region, Denendeh on July 18-20, 2022; and

WHEREAS, Canada has proposed to create regulations under the *Fisheries Act* that would permit the release of treated tar sands tailings into the Athabasca River watershed; and

WHEREAS, tailings are a toxic by-product of bitumen extraction containing pollutants like arsenic that are stored in artificial lakes that now cover more than 250 square kilometres, and after treatment tailings still contains high levels of naphthenic acids and salinity; and

WHEREAS, the Athabasca River flows into the Deh Cho and runs through Treaty #8 and Treaty #11 territory to the Arctic Ocean and circumpolar ecosystems; and

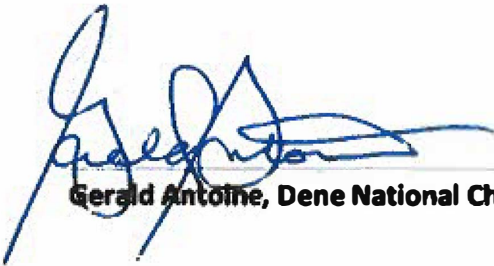
WHEREAS, the release of treated tar sands tailings into the Deh Cho watershed poses serious risks to the rights of Dene in Treaty #8 and Treaty #11 territory; and

WHEREAS, Canada is required to work with downstream Dene on the development of regulations that allow the release of treated tailings, and requires Canada to obtain the free, prior and informed consent of downstream Dene before implementing such regulations; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Dene Nation opposes the release of treated tar sands tailings into the Deh Cho watershed and requires Canada to abandon its plans to allow such action; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Dene Nation calls on Canada fulfil its obligations to obtain the free and prior consent of the downstream Dene.

Certified copy of a resolution adopted on the 20th day of July 2022 in Willideh Site (YK River), Chief Drygeese Territory, Akaitcho Region, Denendeh.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Gerald Antoine', is written over a horizontal line.

Gerald Antoine, Dene National Chief

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