

11 February 2020

YESAB Executive Committee
Whitehorse, Yukon

Dear Mr. Eftoda,

We have been gathering in Watson Lake to talk about the impacts of mining on Kaska people and specifically on Indigenous women and girls. We want the YESAA process to change to address our concerns about the health and well-being of our lands, waters and social impacts on indigenous women and girls. Our concerns align with the calls for action from the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Inquiry and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and also with the concepts and purpose of the Paris Accord on Climate Change.

We want to extend our voice to the critical need to have these concerns considered in the assessment of the Kudz Ze Kayah mine in the form of a Social Impact Assessment that takes a holistic view of the combined effects on our wellbeing.

The legislation, YESAA, does not allow First Nation and Indigenous women's concerns and traditional knowledge sufficient voice, and the process through the YESAB is critically flawed. In addition, the Kaska Nation was not part of the forming of the YESAA, which came out of the Umbrella Final Agreement – the Kaska people were not signatories to this agreement.

Critical concerns about the safety and wellbeing of women working in industry exist and must be addressed. Violence against women has also occurred (and continues to occur) in the communities from the first development in the Kaska territory and we want that to stop.

Kaska traditional knowledge about the caribou herd has not been considered in the mine development and is an obvious critical gap in the entire application and assessment process. Kaska people want to continue to be stewards of the land and request support through the process to enable this.

We request a meeting with the Minister to further discuss our concerns and the inequality we have experienced. We further ask that we be involved in an on-going review of how these concerns have been implemented in the YESAB process.

The undersigned members of the gathering are in support of this letter.

CC. Hon. Jeanie Dendys, Minister of Tourism and Culture (jeanie.dendys@gov.yk.ca)
Hon Pauline Frost, Minister of Environment (Pauline.Frost@gov.yk.ca)
Chief Morgan, Liard First Nation (chief@liardfirstnation.ca)
Chief Caesar, Ross River Dena Council (jackcaesar21@gmail.com)
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