



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Tuesday, January 23, 2018**

## **The Algonquins of Ontario Seek Long-Term Relationship Agreement at Public Hearing regarding Relicensing of Chalk River Laboratories**

**Pembroke, ON** – The Algonquins of Ontario (AOO) called on the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) to fulfill its Duty to Consult in an oral presentation today as the three-day Public Hearing kicked off regarding the Chalk River Laboratories' site licence renewal.

The CNSC is the federal body mandated to regulate the use of nuclear energy and materials. As an intervenor, the AOO presented an overview of its written submission to the CNSC following its review of Canadian Nuclear Laboratories' (CNL) Licence Renewal Application for Chalk River Laboratories for a ten-year period from April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2028.

The Chalk River Laboratories are situated upon the unceded Algonquin Traditional Territory to which Algonquins are the sole recognized holders of unextinguished and constitutionally protected Aboriginal rights and title. The site is also situated on lands that are the subject of ongoing Treaty negotiations amongst the AOO and the Governments of Ontario and Canada.

In its submission, the AOO strongly disagreed with a determination made by CNSC staff that renewing the licence of CRL did not raise the Duty to Consult. The AOO contend that this determination fails to acknowledge the absence of consultation or accommodation during initial development of the site in 1944, and the limited consultation or accommodation during its ongoing operations. The AOO also outlined concerns of potential impacts of the licence application to lands and resources, health, Algonquin sociocultural and economic systems, commercial harvesting as well as cultural heritage resources.

Consequently, it is the AOO's position that as an agent of the Crown, the CNSC is responsible for ensuring the Duty to Consult is properly carried out.

Presenting on behalf of the AOO at the Public Hearing, Lynn Clouthier, Algonquin Negotiation Representative, stated, "The last four centuries have brought profound changes to our Territory. We watched as Mother Earth was exploited and degraded and all without regard or agreement from Algonquins. As our Mother has struggled to adapt, so have we. Our culture and identity have been nearly extinguished. Change continues. Now we are joined by many others in our imperative to protect and respect Mother Earth for future generations."

Amongst forty key accommodation measures and information requests, the AOO urged the CNSC to impose a condition upon the licence for Chalk River Laboratories that CNL must work to establish a formal consultation and accommodation arrangement with the AOO in the form of a Long-Term Relationship Agreement. This Agreement is necessary to formally acknowledge the use of unceded Algonquin lands by CNL and Atomic Energy of Canada Limited. Along with identifying how the benefits of the operation of the Chalk River Laboratories would be shared equitably with the AOO, the Long-Term Relationship Agreement would also establish a wide-range of accommodation measures including, but not limited to, oversight, communications,

environmental monitoring, employment, site rehabilitation and remediation and collaborative decision-making.

Following the presentation Clouthier emphasized that, “We believe that the best way forward is to put in place a formal Long-Term Relationship Agreement as a condition of license renewal. In the spirit of reconciliation, we look forward to working collaboratively with the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission, Canadian Nuclear Laboratories and Atomic Energy of Canada Limited to see this Agreement realized.”

The AOO’s written submission to the CNSC is available at:  
<http://www.tanakiwin.com/crlrelicence/>.

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### **About the Algonquins of Ontario**

The Algonquins of Ontario are comprised of ten Algonquin communities located across the Settlement Area. These include the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation, Antoine, Kijicho Manito Madaouskarinig (Bancroft), Bonnechere, Greater Golden Lake, Mattawa/North Bay, Ottawa, Shabot Obaadjiwan (Sharbot Lake), Snimikobi (Ardoch) and Whitney and Area.

These ten communities are working together, based upon a Protocol signed in 2004, which provides a unified approach to negotiate a modern-day Treaty.

On October 18, 2016 the Algonquins of Ontario and the governments of Ontario and Canada reached a major milestone in their journey towards reconciliation and renewed relationships with the signing of the Agreement-in-Principle (AIP). The signing of the AIP is a key step towards a Final Agreement that will clarify the rights of all concerned and open up new economic development opportunities for the benefit of the AOO and their neighbours in the Settlement Area in Eastern Ontario.

The AIP is not a legally binding document. Rather, it paves the way for continued negotiations toward a Final Agreement that will define the ongoing rights of the AOO to lands and natural resources within the Settlement Area. If achieved, the Final Agreement will take the form of a modern-day treaty with Aboriginal and treaty rights protected under Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982.

### **For more information, please contact:**

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*Please note: Megan Aikens will be attending the CNSC Public Hearing in Pembroke from January 23-25, 2018. She can be reached immediately by email and will respond to all phone calls and voicemail during designated recesses in the Public Hearing.*