



## **PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **MI'GMAWEI MAWIOMI CHIEFS PUT A HALT TO HYDROCARBON EXPLORATION IN GESPE'GEWA'GI**

Thursday, August 31, 2017- The Chiefs representing the three Mi'gmaq communities of Gesgapegiag, Gespeg and Listuguj met yesterday with representatives from the Quebec government and the CEO of Junex. The Chiefs' message was clear. The Mi'gmaq have not been consulted, accommodated nor have they given their consent for any exploration permits in Gespe'gewa'gi and as such, all exploration must stop and a meaningful plan for consultation and accommodation with Mi'gmaq citizens must begin immediately.

"The message has always been clear to the government. This territory is our responsibility and we are the eco-stewards and our consent for any resource extraction is required " stated Chief Darcy Gray, Chair of the Mi'gmawei Mawiomí.

Permits for hydrocarbon exploration were granted by the Québec Government to lease holders without prior consultation to any of the three Chiefs and Councils. Repeated requests to the Provincial Government for such action have been ignored and as a result the Leadership felt that it needed to urgently meet with Québec and Junex in order to clarify that the absence of adequate and meaningful consultation and accommodation in Gespe'gewa'gi would no longer be tolerated by the Mi'gmawei Mawiomí and therefore, judicial actions were being prepared to protect Mi'gmaq Rights and Title, including treaty rights.

"We are demanding a process that sees our citizens having their say on any hydrocarbon development on our territory. It is the right thing to do," affirmed Chief Rod Larocque of Gesgapegiag.

Following the message delivered by the Mi'gmaq Chiefs at the August 30<sup>th</sup> meeting, Junex has agreed to stall all its activities in the Gaspésie, while the Mi'gmaq and Québec undertake the discussions required to elaborate a process of meaningful consultation and accommodation that will ensure the protection of Mi'gmaq Constitutional rights and the safeguard of the environment. "It is the responsibility of the government of Quebec to fulfill their legal obligation and until then, exploration should not continue by Junex or any other proponent," said Chief Manon Jeannotte of Gespeg.

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