

Environmental Concerns

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To: chiefdeansayers@batchewana.ca <chiefdeansayers@batchewana.ca>

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4 attachments (8 MB)

FED_CanadaWaterAgency_MPDuguid.pdf; Provenzano_FirstNationsLetter.pdf; Response_NaccaratoProvenzano.pdf; MECP_Cameron_ResponseFINAL.pdf;

Dear Chief Dean Sayers,

I am writing you to discuss my concerns regarding spills to the St. Mary's River by Algoma Steel Inc. (ASI) in 2019. I recently wrote an e-mail to Mayor Provenzano stating my intention to write Kathleen Padulo (Director of the Environment, Chiefs of Ontario) and local First Nations regarding my concerns. I realize I have not given you and local First Nation leadership an opportunity to review and discuss my concerns. As protectors of water and your traditional territories, I would appreciate if you would provide your opinion as a leader who is responsible for the governance of this area. I am unaware if Mayor Provenzano, the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) and Mr. Malcom White (CAO of the city) have discussed with you issues I brought to their attention over the past two years. Some of my concerns were sent in e-mails that would have included Dan Sayers Jr. who is a member of the Algoma Community Liaison Committee (ACLC).

Under Part X Sec. 92 1(b) of the Environmental Protection Act, Algoma Steel Inc. (ASI) is required by law to report spills to the city and region. On March 09, 2019, ASI estimated that 4.78 million litres of untreated water were released into the St. Mary's River resulting from a power failure of their main electrical system. The process to obtain information regarding the event and other spills, has taken almost two years due to a long MECP Freedom of Information process and the delayed response from Mayor Provenzano and the city. The ministry has not provided an explanation as to why with their knowledge, they did not require ASI to report the spill to the city. The spill was never formally acknowledged to the public by ASI or to their ACLC which is a requirement of their Environmental Compliance Approval (ECA).

I have established my own company (EcoSenshi) whose primary purpose is to ensure transparency and accountability by industry and government to protect the health of the people and the environment. I greatly respect your culture, commitment to all creation and your traditional land claim rights. On my website (www.ecosenshi.com) which will be published shortly, I have included a section acknowledging First Nations stewardship of the environment. First Nations have long understood the will to protect the people and the environment comes with great responsibility and commitment. Like First Nations, I firmly believe that the people and the environment come before the economy, and responsible governance must demonstrate this. Laws of the Ontario Environmental Protection established to protect the people and the environment must be upheld by the ministry and honoured by all governments. The failure and inaction to hold polluters accountable can potentially result in significant impacts to the environment, wildlife as well as the health and rights of residents in the communities impacted by a spill.

I believe in honouring your word, and these words resonate with me and my mission:

"We begin to fear that those sweet words had not their birth in the heart, but that they lived only upon the tongue; they are like those beautiful trees under whose shadow it is pleasant for a time to repose and hope, but we cannot for ever indulge in their grateful shades – they produce no fruit." - **CHIEF SHINGWAUKONSE**

As a courtesy and out of respect to local First Nation leadership, I plan to delay my letter to Ms. Padulo so that you can engage in a meaningful understanding and resolution to this issue on your traditional lands. I would appreciate if you would please review the attached documents and discuss my concerns with the leadership in our community. Please let me know if you require further information or have any questions or comments.

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