

## **Chief Mel Grandjamb - Scrum Remarks**

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Good morning. My name is Mel Grandjamb and I am Chief of the Fort McKay First Nation. I am honoured to stand here today with our Councillors and community members who have all travelled a great distance to be here.

As you may know, Fort McKay is a strong contributor to Alberta's oil sands. We employ 1,400 people in oil sands related businesses and we contribute over \$70 million annually in taxation and federal employment programs like EI and CPP. We have helped to grow Alberta's industry for decades, and will continue to support industry for decades to come.

**We are proud to be a part of Alberta's energy sector.**

In court this morning, our lawyers will put forward an argument to overturn the Alberta Energy Regulator's approval of Prosper's Rigel project, which intends to place its central processing facility near lands sacred to Fort McKay in the vicinity of the Moose Lake area.

**Let me tell you about Moose Lake.**

It is the last undisturbed wilderness within our traditional territory. It is where our ancestors lived for thousands of years. The Fort McKay hamlet is surrounded on three sides by oil sands mines; 70 percent of our traditional territory has been allocated to oil sands leases. Moose Lake is the last place in our traditional territory where we can practice the traditions of our ancestors and pass them on to future generations.

To keep our culture alive for our children and our children's children, **we need to protect the ecological and cultural integrity of Moose Lake.**

That is why, as a last resort, we are here seeking the court's help to protect our Treaty rights and to ensure responsible development in this sacred place.

But even as the court process proceeds, Fort McKay is hopeful there is another way forward.

**That way forward is the Moose Lake Plan.**

We have worked collaboratively with government and industry for almost two decades to secure its commitment to an access management plan.

The plan would establish a 10 kilometre zone around our Moose Lake reserves within which development could proceed in a *managed* way that reduces the impacts of development and protects the landscape and its inhabitants.

I think most Albertans would be pleased to learn just how hard Fort McKay has worked to address industry's concerns even as we protect our Treaty rights.

**When we began working with Alberta, we promised that this plan would not sterilize bitumen. We've kept that promise.**

**Now, after years of good faith negotiations and compromise, it's time for Alberta to keep *its* promise to us.**

We believe Alberta's new leaders will agree that the Moose Lake Plan is fair and reasonable.

It's a win-win-win solution that would:

- protect our most sacred lands,
- enable industry to proceed responsibly, and

- allow us to build further partnerships in the oil sands to the benefit not just of Fort McKay but of all Albertans as we have for three decades.

**And yet, the latest version of the Moose Lake Plan has proceeded in fits and starts since 2015 and the most recent draft has been virtually ignored for more than a year.**

The previous government could not close the deal. But **this new government can. *This*** government can prove to Canada and the world that **energy development can be a tool for reconciliation.**

**We're here today asking Premier Kenny and the Government of Alberta to approve the Moose Lake Plan.**

**Let's cross the finish line together.**

I will now take questions.