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# PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES:

The Mining and Northern Development Northern Superior Regional Round Table took place on Thursday February 2, 2017 at Thunder Bay on the traditional territory of Fort William First Nation. This was the first Regional Table meeting of its kind in the region as a result of the implementation of a new regional engagement framework put in place by the Union of Ontario Indians (UOI). This initial meeting was formulated as a sort of meet and greet and was an opportunity for the participants to become further equated with the regional framework. Figure 1 below denotes the Northern Superior Region of the Anishinabek Nation.



13 First Nation leaders, portfolio holders and technicians from the Northern Superior Region attended the Mining and Minerals portion of the Round Table that was part of a larger three-day meeting made up of round table discussions of various lands and resources related issues. In addition, the aforementioned 13 First Nation leaders were joined by UOI Lands and Resources staff who facilitated the Table discussions as well as representatives from the Ontario Ministry of Northern Development and Mines (MNDM).

The following table notes those who were in attendance for the Mining and Northern Development Table:



Name	Community or Organization
Chief Melvin Hardy	Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek
Chief Helen Angela Paavola	Namaygoosisagagun
Chief Edward Wawia	Red Rock Indian Band
Josephine Mandamin	Anishinabek Chief Water Commissioner (Thunder Bay)
Elder Mike Esquega	Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek
Candace Deschamps	Pic Mobert First Nation
Alyssa Ray	Red Rock Indian Band
Erin Shaw	Biigtigong Nishnaabeg
Ervin Waboose	Long Lake # 58
Hannah Desmoulin	Pic Mobert First Nation
John Kwissiwa	Pic Mobert First Nation
Richard Thompson	Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek
Terry Bouchard	Red Rock Indian Band
Clayton Ralph	Senior Aboriginal Liaison Officer, Aboriginal Affairs Branch - Mines and Minerals Division-MNDM
Jamie Taylor	Manager – Thunder Bay Area Team – MNDM
Jennifer Simpson	Aboriginal Geoscience Liaison of the Ontario Geological Survey-MNDM
Mike Dunlop	Coordinator – Investment Readiness Program – MNDM
Melanie Mathieson	Senior Aboriginal Liaison Officer, Aboriginal Affairs Branch - Mines and Minerals Division-MNDM
Cameron Welch	Union of Ontario Indians- Lands and Resources Policy Analyst
Rhonda Gagnon	Union of Ontario Indians- Lands and Resources Policy Analyst
Tammy Desmouli	Union of Ontario Indians- Lands and Resources Mines and Minerals Program Coordinator

## TABLE DISCUSSION:

As the Mining and Minerals Regional Table was scheduled in the afternoon of a multi-day gathering of Northern Superior leaders, First Nation portfolio holders and community members, the Anishinabek traditional protocol remained open from the first day of the meeting. After all protocol was observed, members of the table introduced themselves. MNDM personnel gave the Table some background on

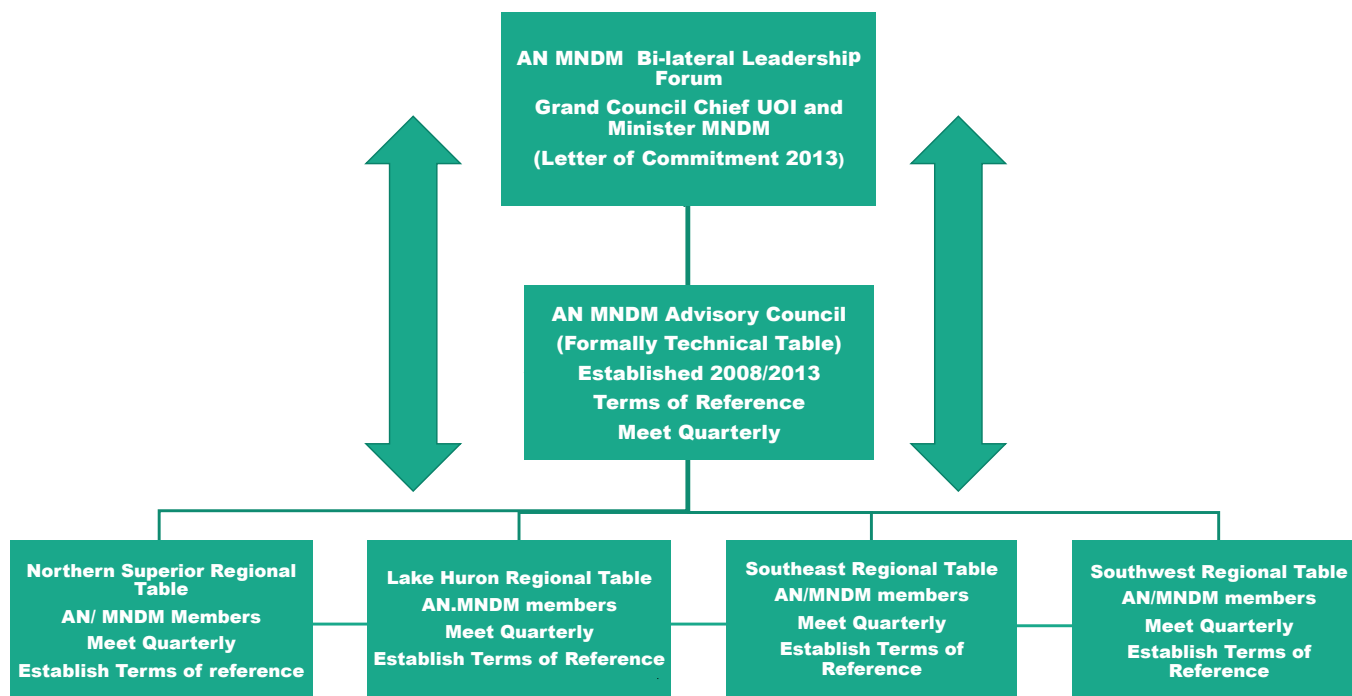


what types of work they do for the MNDM and briefly outlined how they could assist Anishinabek communities represented at the Table. Cameron shared the UOI and MNDM contact information sheets had had been distributed to the Table participants. He also requested that each participant fill out a contact information form so that UOI staff could update contact lists and make future individual follow-up calls with representatives from each community in the Region. A map of Ontario Geological Survey projects in Ontario was distributed to the participants. A timeline for the Mining Act Modernization process was also distributed to the Table participants and is reproduced below:

#### **Timeline of Mining Act Modernization**

- 2006 Ontario's Mineral Development Strategy is announced
- Prior to Mining Act Modernization (MAM) there were discussions with Aboriginal organizations and communities that took place in 2007
- July 2008 – Mining Act Modernization announced (Bill 173) as well as the Far North Planning Initiative (Far North Act)
- August 2008 – Ministry's "Finding a Balance" Discussion Paper released (Phase 1)
- 2008-2009 – Ministry of Northern Development and Mines (MNDM) starts initial engagements across Ontario with Aboriginal communities, organizations, Industry, prospectors, and public
- May 2009 – Bill 173 posted on the Environmental Registry for 60 days
- 2008-2009 – Union of Ontario Indians (UOI) receives funds from MNDM to carry out their own engagement sessions – 10 engagement sessions took place across Anishinabek Nation
- Engagement with the rest of the Province continues. MNDM continues to contact UOI First Nations on mineral exploration activities
- UOI and its First Nation representatives continue discussions and meetings throughout the Mining Act Modernization process
- 2011 Phase 1 ends
- January 27, 2011 - Mining Act Modernization Regulation Development with Union of Ontario Indians – Anishinabek in Toronto (Chiefs of Ontario Office)
- 2012- 2013 Mining Act Modernization continues (Phase 2) - Engagement sessions across the Province continue including UOI First Nations
- June 25, 2013 UOI and MNDM sign Letter of Commitment (LOC) - Technical Table is formed to support the meetings between UOI Grand Council Chief and Minister
- December 2013 – EBR posting
- 2013-14 Mining Act Modernization (Phase 3) - Engagement sessions across the Province continue including UOI First Nations
- 2015 Spring/Summer- Sessions on Mineral Development Strategy, Regulation 308, and MAM Phase 3 sessions are held
- 2016 – 2017 Mining Act Modernization (Phase 3) continues

What followed was an introduction to the MNMD/Anishinabek relationship delivered by Cameron. He introduced the Table to the Regional Table process and discussed the relationships between the Regional Table and the Advisory Council and Bi-lateral Leadership Forum that constitutes the relational forum between the two governments. The figure below was shared with the Table and is a representation of the newly introduced regional framework for engagement between Anishinabek communities and the MNMD:



The letter of intent that established the AN-MNMD Bi-Lateral Leadership Forum was presented and discussed. As was the evolving terms of reference for the Advisory Councils. Cameron then discussed the issues tracking analysis that he had conducted for the UOI and shared that he had tracked over 40 separate but inter-related issues that had been identified by Anishinabek community members and leaders and are still in need of resolution. He stressed the utility of the Regional Table process and suggested that regional priorities for action related to mining and development should be discussed at the next meeting of the Table. He then opened up the Table for discussion and asked the Table what they would like to see the Regional Table accomplish.



# ISSUES IDENTIFIED BY THE TABLE:

Several table participants expressed the need for, and interest in, participating in some form of training or a workshop on negotiating closure plans with mining proponents. Table participants expressed frustration with the fact that some First Nation communities in the region find themselves in a weakened bargaining position as a result of poverty, health issues and limited human capital at the community level. They felt that a workshop on the content and negotiation of First Nations interests in closure plans is essential in this region with on-going and potential mineral development.

A consistent theme of Table discussions was the need for environmental monitors to be in place in each First Nation community of the Region. It is envisioned that these monitors could help to locate and address environmental impacts of mining extraction activities as well as related infrastructure development in the region. As discussed, these monitors could also help to elevate the severe human resources challenges faced by First Nations in the region in responding to requests for comment on mining plans and permits or for consultation between First Nations and mining proponents. The Table recognized the economic potential of involvement with the mining industry and the need to balance much needed economic opportunity with the Anishinabek duty to safeguard the environment and act as stewards of lands and resources of their traditional territories. The creation of local environmental monitors and a monitoring program was seen as a tool to allow increased Anishinabek involvement in monitoring while maintaining sacred responsibilities of the Anishinabek. The Table also recognized the potential for such monitors to contribute to a number of additional aims of the government of Ontario by participating in monitoring projects related to ministries other than MNDM.

Table participants also clearly articulated the need for the MNDM to review the timelines that are associated with First Nation input on mining plans and permits. Representatives related that current restrictions on First Nation responses to proponents and government most often preclude First Nations from having an opportunity to formulate meaningful input during the mining sequence. Human resource limitations far too often mean that First Nations in the Region do not have the time or resources that they require to thoroughly review what they receive and then to develop a clear and concise response. The result is that early opportunities to identify issues and needs for accommodation and consultation are lost and this leads to decreased surety for all parties as the mining sequence continues. First Nations often face the situation of not being able to understand and articulate how a proposed activity would impact their Aboriginal and Treaty rights due to lack of physical and human capital. Table participants expressed the need for increased allowance of time for First Nations to analyse and respond to plans and requests for comments.

The First Nation representatives at the Table spoke of the utility of such Tables that are to take place on a quarterly basis. They lamented the fact that mining issues that are so important to many communities, have not been receiving the attention that they deserve at meetings between communities in the Region and meetings of community representatives and their counterparts in the provincial government. The Table also expressed the need for members of the Table to meet in a First Nation Caucus prior to sitting as a Table with MNDM representatives in the spring.

## NEXT STEPS:

This first meeting of the Northern Superior Regional Table was very much a form for new UOI staff and their counterparts at MNDM to meet with representatives of the Anishinabek communities of the region. The meeting was a success and Table participants expressed the desire to move forward with discussion of many issues important to their communities. The next meeting of the Table is to take place in April or May of 2017 at a location to be determined. It is important that the next meeting of the full Table be preceded by a First Nation Caucus where community representatives can discuss a number of issues before being joined at that Table by representatives from the MNDM.

Follow- up Items:

### Action

### Responsible Party(ies)

TOR for table to be reviewed	Table (all)
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