

Tres-Or Resources and the Timiskaming First Nation: Building a History Together

Chief Polson, Timiskaming First Nation
Duffett, L., Tres-Or Resources Ltd.

Tres-Or Resources and the Timiskaming First Nation (“TFN”) signed a five year Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) in September 2007. The MOU is part of a formal consultation process regarding Tres-Or’s mineral exploration activities within the TFN Reserve lands and traditional territorial lands over which the TFN has asserted Aboriginal title in both Ontario and Quebec.

The parties have entered into agreements since 2003. The purpose of this MOU is for the parties to renew their relationship consistent with the Haida, Taku River and Mikisew cases, whereby they agree to continue to work together on a cooperative basis in connection with TFN’s interests and Tres-Or’s further activities within the TFN lands. The relationship is based upon the following fundamental principles; trust, good faith, mutual respect and mutual benefit.

The MOU does not purport to grant, transfer, alienate or create interests in any land. Nor is it intended to waive or derogate from the Aboriginal and treaty rights of the TFN. The parties recognize that any transactions regarding the TFN lands should only occur in accordance with established procedures and that the right to explore and develop these lands requires consultation with the TFN, represented by the Chief and Council.

The MOU is an agreement based on cooperation and education in the spirit of partnership. First Nations represent the youngest and fastest growing population in Canada and now is the time to develop partnerships between the First Nations and mining industry.

Engagement with the First Nations community should take place at the earliest possible stage. Consider this relationship-building as a strategic investment in the future that will over time, contribute to a more certain business climate.

It is possible for the First Nations and mineral exploration and mining sectors to work together. Much has been learned over the years on how not to develop a relationship. Now is the time to use these lessons to build positive, working relationships with all resource companies.

Every stage of mineral exploration or development has new or different opportunities. Therefore, each new stage needs an agreement that addresses new issues and opportunities. The Tres-Or – TFN consultation resulted in a negotiated MOU during the grass roots and exploration phases, advancing to an Impacts and Benefits Agreement (IBA) for advanced exploration, development, operation and closure. Building a history together will lead to beneficial and positive relationships between resource companies and the First Nations.