NIPISSING FIRST NATION A-Kii, Bemaadzijik, E-Niigaanwang The Land, the People, the Future

Soil Remediation Project

Information Package for NFN Residents

Background

In 1956, the Nova Beaucage mill operated in Yellek to process ore containing niobium and uranium. The mill closed after only seven months of operation, leaving behind contaminated ore tailings. These were deposited at the mill site, spread during grading work, and used as fill material in local construction, including several private residences.

NFN has spent over 25 years advocating for clean-up of these contaminated lands—some of which were returned to us without remediation. Through our Land Code process, an agreement with Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) secured federal funding for clean-up. In 2015, the Ministry of Transportation Ontario (MTO) also committed to remediate its site.

The project costs are 65% funded through ISC and 35% funded by the MTO.

NFN's construction company, Nipissing Miller, is leading the work with oversight from NFN's Environment Manager and three environmental firms: WSP, EXP, and QM.

What is Niobium and Is It Harmful?

The contaminated material is classified as **Naturally Occurring Radioactive Material (NORM)** - rock that naturally contains elements like niobium and uranium.

A Human Health Risk Assessment completed in 2012 found:

- Low risk to human health
- No harm to fish or wildlife
- No contamination of vegetation

Fish and wildlife in the area remain safe to eat, as they do not ingest the rock material. The primary potential risk to humans is through airborne dust during direct handling of the material. However, the unearthed soil is naturally damp, which significantly reduces the likelihood of dust becoming airborne. In addition, roads are regularly sprayed with water and calcium to suppress dust during transport.

Comprehensive dust management plans and continuous real-time airborne monitoring are in place at all work sites. Wind speed and direction are closely monitored, and all activities are paused if conditions increase the risk of dust migration.

All workers on site have received extensive training prior to working on the sites and are outfitted with dosimeters to monitor any potential exposure.

NORM material will be removed to rehabilitate the sites for future use, including placing topsoil and seeding to restore them to a natural state.

Why PPE and Safety Measures?

Workers wear disposable Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) including coveralls, gloves and masks to prevent direct exposure while handling the material and to ensure they don't carry any contaminated dust outside of the controlled work areas.

- All workers are **scanned** before leaving the controlled work area and wear **dosimeters** to monitor exposure. To date, no exceedances have occurred.
- Real-time **airborne monitoring** is continuous at all work sites.
- Extensive training and protocols are in place for all workers.

Environmental Protections

There is **no risk to the broader community**. Measures for each work site include:

- Detailed **Health & Safety Plans**
- **Dust and soil management** plans
- Oversight by multiple qualified professionals
- Trucks are **inspected, sealed and scanned** before leaving the site

Disposal Plans

The primary disposal site is the Agnew Lake Tailings Management Area (ALTMA) near Sudbury—an existing, federally regulated site for low-level radioactive waste. However, approval delays persist due to federal licensing requirements and a disposal site in Sarnia has been approved in the interim.

Current Status

Work is ongoing to remove niobium-impacted material from NFN lands, with the goal of completing cleanup activities by the end of 2025.

Hauling operations to remove the stockpile from Lot 24 in the Bineshii Business Park were recently completed safely and efficiently, and that material was disposed in Sarnia. Approval has now been granted to continue transporting material to the Sarnia disposal site, at least until approval is received to dispose of the material at the Agnew Lake Tailings Management Area (ALTMA).

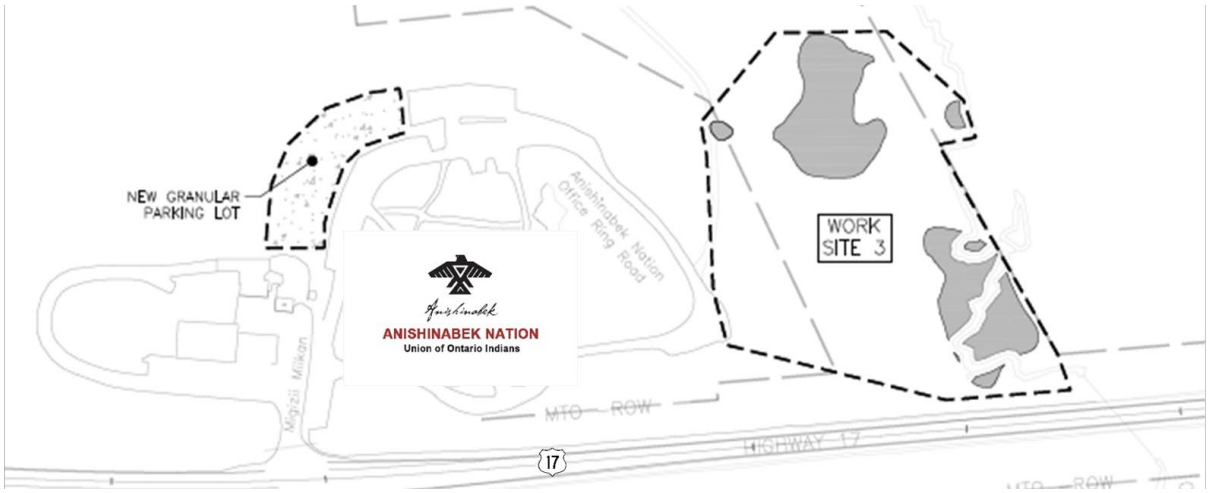
Lot 24 will continue to serve as a staging area, where material from other sites will be stockpiled using triaxle trucks and then transferred into larger end dump trucks for transport. This approach improves efficiency and reduces truck traffic.

All environmental provisions and traffic control employed during the previous works will remain in place for this continuation of the work.

NFN Work Sites

- **Site #1**: Former Nova Beaucage Mill Site – 15,539 tonnes of material to be removed, along with concrete pad foundation.
- **Site #2**: Section of Nova Beaucage Road at the corner of Ernest Avenue (18 tonnes) and the old Nova Beaucage Road allowance (7,080 tonnes).

- **Site #3**: MTO Lands east of Anishinabek Nation head office (11,409 tonnes).



Contacts

Should you have any questions or concerns related to the work taking place on Nipissing First Nation, please call:

For project operations and progress updates:

Gen Couchie
Business Operations Manager
705-753-2050 ext. 1243

For project background and environmental concerns:

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Land Manager
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Environment Manager
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For health and safety concerns:

Ray Alatalo, B.A.A. (Envir. Health), C.P.H.I. (C)
Environmental Public Health Officer for Indigenous Services Canada
705-698-4682

All other inquiries should be directed to NEConstruction@ontario.ca or projectinfo@nfn.ca.

For more resources and fact sheets about Naturally Occurring Radioactive Material (NORM), please visit the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission's website.

Private Meetings Available

To schedule a private meeting with members of the project team, please call Gen Couchie at (705) 753-2050 ext. 1243 or email genc@nfn.ca. Meetings can be held at your home, the Duchesnay Hall, or the Administration Office.