



WEST QUEBEC COALITION AGAINST MINING URANIUM

**Presentation to the CCAMU
Citizens' Uranium Enquiry**

Ottawa, Ontario
April 22, 2008

<http://no-uranium.blogspot.com>

Purpose of our presentation

- Provide a quick update on the situation in West Quebec
- Present our views about what consent should be required before exploration can take place
- Suggest a path ahead based on the Quebec experience

What is WQ-CAMU?

- Community association of concerned citizens
- Building coalitions and alliances to fight uranium mining in West Quebec
- Conducting outreach, advocacy and education activities
- Your representatives today:
 - Michael Patenaude, Arleen Prost



West Quebec citizen concerns

- Human rights
 - Property owners, municipalities, public, Aboriginal
- Health
 - Workers, immediate neighbours, downstream neighbours
- Environment
 - Earth, air and water
- Economy
 - Tourism, agriculture, residential and recreational property

Major claims areas (W. Quebec)

Fort-Coulonge

Otter Lake

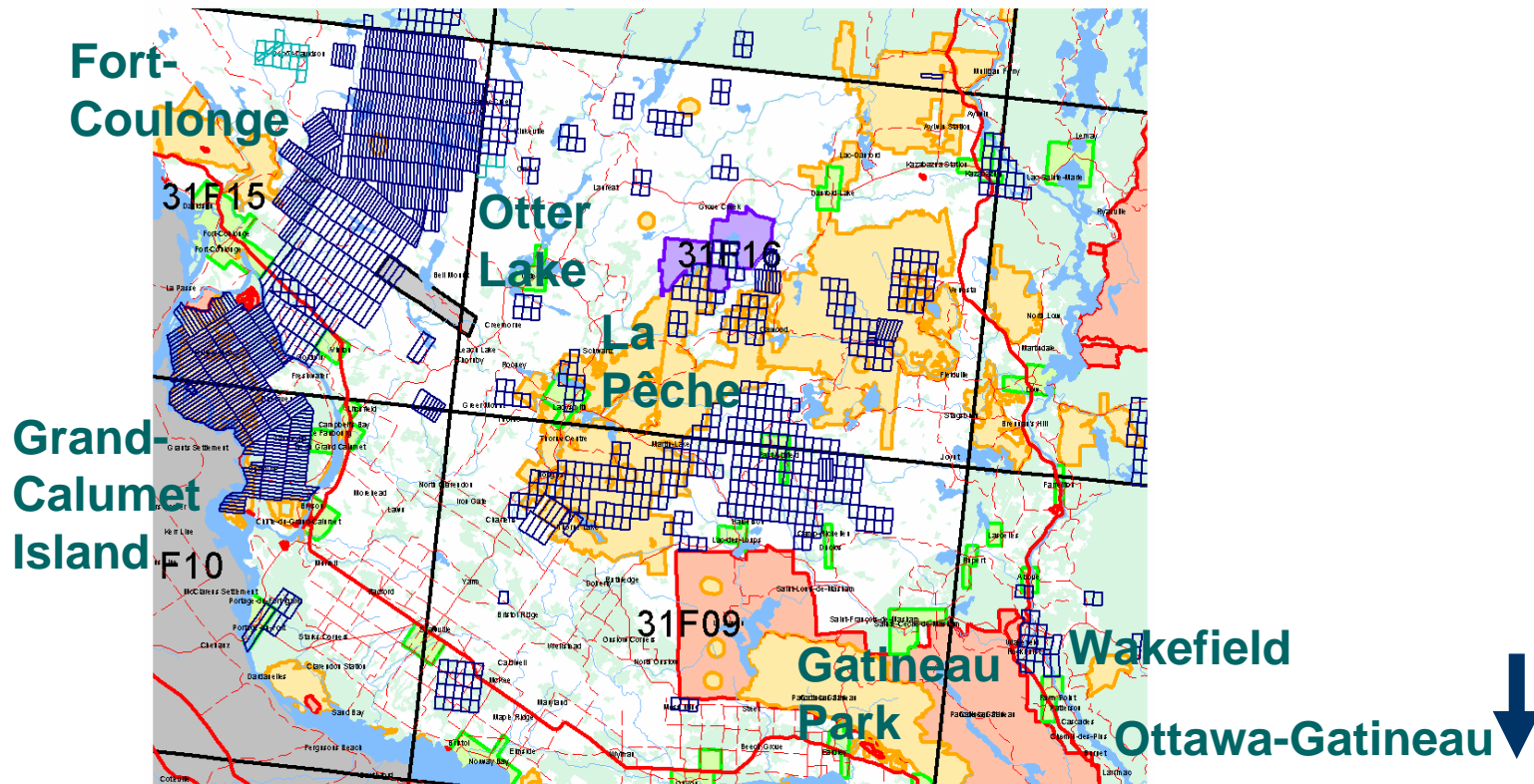
Grand-Calumet Island

La Pêche

Ottawa-Gatineau



Claims map (W. Quebec)



Consent

- *“To give permission or approval to something proposed or requested.”*
- Before exploration begins, we believe consent should be required from all affected stakeholders:
 - private property owners
 - municipal/county councils
 - Aboriginal residents
 - Crown land users (including the public at large)

What are the issues?

- All:
 - Current mineral rights regimes create unnecessary conflict
- Private property:
 - Surface vs. sub-surface rights
- Municipal/county territory:
 - Long-term land use planning; health and welfare
- Aboriginal title:
 - Consultation and accommodation
- Crown land:
 - Public's right to use; other economic purposes

Why is exploration consent important?

- Ensures land use planning precedes exploration
- Our right as part of the democratic process
- Reflects modern concepts of political culture – decision-making where impacts are greatest
- Helps balance competing demands – our local resources vs. demand from foreign markets; short-term profits vs. long-term environmental degradation
- Helps avoid bias towards pre-determined privileges on land use (mineral rights)
- Encourages people to become informed

Consent in Quebec (*Mining Act*)

- Consent is required from private property owner before land can be accessed for any purpose (prospecting, exploration, mining)
- Provision exists for private property to be expropriated by mining proponent, in the courts
- Ministerial approval required before expropriation proceeds
- Ministry of Natural Resources and Wildlife policy is to refuse all expropriation requests

Proposed changes in Quebec

- Private property consent provisions made into law (not just policy)
- Required consent expanded upon in *Mining Act* to include other interests:
 - Municipalities/counties
 - Crown land users (including the general public)
 - Aboriginal people
- Mandatory **independent** public hearings prior to Government granting mineral claims

Implications for Ontario

- This one change to mining legislation could make a big difference
 - Grant rights under law that should have been there all along
 - Set a more level playing field
- It would not require a complete (and therefore time-consuming) review of the Mining Act - just a single amendment

A possible way forward....

- Progress on a limited but important front might be realistic in the short-term
- All groups concerned with uranium exploitation should request consent provisions be added to Mining Legislation in Ontario, Quebec and beyond
- Scope of required consent has to be inclusive

More Information

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WQ-CAMU / COQCEQ Mission

- We are a community group that works to protect our human, environmental, and economic health from the risks associated with uranium. Our goal is to obtain a permanent moratorium on uranium exploration, mining, and processing in MRC du Pontiac and MRC des Collines de l'Outaouais. To meet this goal our group advocates, educates, and builds coalitions.
- Nous sommes un groupe communautaire travaillant à la protection de la santé humaine, environnementale et économique des risques associés à l'uranium. Notre objectif principal est d'obtenir un moratoire à long terme sur l'exploration et l'exploitation d'uranium dans la MRC du Pontiac et dans la MRC des Collines de l'Outaouais. Afin d'y parvenir, notre groupe défend, éduque et bâtit des coalitions.



References

- Quebec Mining Act, Division V, Article 235
- Frequently Asked Questions, Mines Division, Ministère des ressources naturelles et Faune, Government of Quebec (<http://www.mrn.gouv.qc.ca/english/mines/uranium.jsp>)
- Letter from Ministère des ressources naturelles et Faune to Ecojustice Canada (<http://no-uranium.blogspot.com/2008/02/reply-to-ecojustice-canadas-letters-to.html>)
- Letter from Ecojustice Canada (formerly Sierra Legal) to Minister of ressources naturelles et Faune (<http://no-uranium.blogspot.com/2007/07/sierra-legal-defence-fund-open-letter.html>)
- Discussion on “Oppose Uranium Exploration and Mining in West Quebec” blog (<http://no-uranium.blogspot.com/2008/02/reply-to-ecojustice-canadas-letters-to.html>)
- Instructions on how to deny consent to an exploration company (http://no-uranium.blogspot.com/2007/05/take-action-now_14.html)
- Consent (definition): <http://www.yourdictionary.com>