

WHITE RIVER FIRST NATION

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Media Release

White River First Nation Statement on Victoria Gold Mine Situation – Calls for Public Inquiry

June 27th, 2024 - For Immediate Release. Beaver Creek, Yukon: White River First Nation (“WRFN”) is watching closely the developments with the disaster at the Victoria Gold Mine. WRFN stands in full support of Na-Cho Nyak Dun First Nation, and all Yukoners in hoping for both the best possible resolution for this immediate crisis, and a path forward to ensure that this never happens again in the Yukon.

White River First Nation Chief Bessie Chasse said, “Firstly, WRFN is thankful that nobody was injured in the immediate incident aftermath. Our Elders have told us to be the stewards of our land, water and wildlife as a priority. This disaster and the potential irreversible downstream impacts on our watersheds are incredibly alarming. This situation is exactly why we have been so diligent with ensuring that mining projects like Newmont’s Coffee Creek Gold and Western Copper and Gold’s Casino, are held fully accountable for their plans and activities. Too often with mines like Faro, Mount Nansen, Minto and Yukon Zinc we have seen companies complain about slow regulatory processes, and then leave massive environmental issues behind them, that Yukoners and all taxpayers have to suffer the consequences of. The Yukon Government is too focused on approving mines without thinking through the implications of those approvals.”

“Once a plan is in place to deal with the immediate crisis, we are calling on the Yukon Government to hold a fully transparent Public Inquiry into why this disaster took place, to find out what failed Yukoners, and to develop regulatory measures and recommendations to ensure that this kind of disaster can never happen again in our Territory. The Yukon Government must stop their policy of approval now at all costs. The consequences to Nations’ rights, culture way of life and the environment cannot continue to be put at risk” Chief Chasse went on to say.

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