



Peguis First Nation

P.O. Box 10

PEGUIS RESERVE, MANITOBA ROC 3JO

Telephone: (204) 645-2359 Toll Free: 1-866-645-2359 Fax: (204) 645-2360

Website: www.peguisfirstnation.ca

July 23, 2012

Honourable Gord Mackintosh
Minister of Conservation & Water Stewardship
330 Legislative Building, 450 Broadway
Winnipeg, MB R3C 0V8

Tracey Braun, Director Environmental Approval Branch &
Darrell Ouimet, Environment Officer
Manitoba Conservation, Environmental Approvals
123 Main St Suite 160,
Winnipeg MB R3C 1A5

Dear Minister Mackintosh:

Re: Public Registry File #4254.10 - Sunterra Horticulture Inc. - Sunterra Peat Mine Development

Peguis First Nation is objecting to the renewal of peat quarry leases, granting of any pending peat quarry leases, and the proposal for another peat mine expansion – Public Registry file #4254.10, Sunterra Horticulture Inc. This proposal affects our rights, our lands and waters, while also contradicting the Crown's intention to consult in a meaningful manner.

We expect you to make sure that notification regarding lease applications or renewals, license applications, response to correspondence from our First Nation, and meaningful consultation occurs before any further leases or licenses are approved. To date there has been no accommodation or compensation to our First Nation for existing peat leases or mines, either.

One of our concerns about the effect on the lands and waters, and peatland environmental services, is that it appears no combined or cumulative assessment by your experts regarding expansion of peat mining in our TLE Notification Zone, and Peguis First Nation Traditional Territory. We also wonder whether the application of the consultation policy for Aboriginal Peoples means that our concerns about the environmental impacts, risks to water, species, and habitat from peat mining are ignored in your departments' process.

Decimation of the peat bogs goes against stated provincial objectives in regards to moose management. This affects us as First Nations people in our ability to harvest moose as traditional food. If moose populations cannot bounce back it will have a very negative effect on our traditional harvesting practices. All moose habitat must be managed sustainably.

There are also many traditional medicines and berries in these bogs and their loss will hamper our traditional practices in these peatlands.

We are particularly concerned about a new pattern – that is the issuing of peat leases and peat expansion in the vicinity of Lake Winnipeg. Surely this contradicts all your Government's intentions to return the lake to its former state of health and function.

We also would like to see a complete stop to any possible peat leases inside parks, crown land designations, and protected areas.

Peguis First nation is formally communicating our objections to the proposal by Sunterra Horticulture Inc. File #4254.10.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike Sutherland', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mike Sutherland
Councilor Peguis First Nation

CC: Tracey Braun, Director Environmental Approval Branch, Darrell Ouimet,
Environment Officer