

A Message from Mother Earth

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I would like to address another issue that I have been having about Muskrat Falls. From what I can see and what I have heard on the news and from people who work there, things are not going very well on the site.

To me, it seems from the beginning there have been issues; always something happening with construction, workers and companies.

First, when Muskrat Falls construction started, there was that ship that sunk and was never retrieved. Then, there was a company that set up a camp at Gull Island. That was before the camp was beautiful - lots of berries. But the company didn't last. I'm not sure what happened - that land was torn up for nothing.

I'm sure I'm not the only person who feels sad and hurt about the destruction at Gull Island - it really hurts me. I used to pick berries with my late sister Rose there. I am sure there were others as well.

There used to be a road there and people camped there too. Now, nobody can drive in there.

The elders in our community are very concerned, especially the ones who have grandchildren working on site, when hearing the concerns of their grandchildren at their workplace.

I can not speak of all my concerns, but I can tell you there are many nights I cry, thinking of our elders and the thousands of years we Innu used the land to provide for families, and taught our children about our culture, and to watch it all be destroyed.

I feel obligated to speak for the Innu about our concerns since, for many years, we canoed the river with intentions to protect our future.

We as elders will not be here forever, but we still do our best to protect what is left for our future generations. They too will protect our culture.

I honestly feel that all the issues that are happening during construction are because a greater spirit, Mother Earth is trying to tell you that this is wrong. But the company is not listening.

The spirit is telling you not to destroy the land and habitat of the animals. Our Mother Earth is telling us this.

- Elizabeth Penashue is an Innu elder who lives in Sheshatshiu