



**Dene National / Assembly of First Nations  
Office (NWT)**

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**52<sup>nd</sup> DENE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY  
WILIIDEH SITE (YK RIVER)  
JULY 18-20, 2022**

**RESOLUTION #22/23-013**

**SUBJECT: Keepers of the Water Resolution**

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**MOVED BY: Chief Edward Sangris, Dettah, Yellowknives Dene First Nation**

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**SECONDED BY: Chief David Etchinelle, Begade Shotagotine**

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**DECISION: Carried Unanimously**

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**WHEREAS**, the Dene Nation has convened the Dene National Assembly, Wiliideh Site (YK River), Chief Drygeese Territory, Akaitcho Region, Denendeh on July 18-20, 2022; and

**WHEREAS**, Canada has proposed to create regulations under the *Fisheries Act* that would permit the release of treated tar sands tailings into the Athabasca River watershed; and

**WHEREAS**, tailings are a toxic by-product of bitumen extraction containing pollutants like arsenic that are stored in artificial lakes that now cover more than 250 square kilometres, and after treatment tailings still contains high levels of naphthenic acids and salinity; and

**WHEREAS**, the Athabasca River flows into the Deh Cho and runs through Treaty #8 and Treaty #11 territory to the Arctic Ocean and circumpolar ecosystems; and

**WHEREAS**, the release of treated tar sands tailings into the Deh Cho watershed poses serious risks to the rights of Dene in Treaty #8 and Treaty #11 territory; and

**WHEREAS**, Canada is required to work with downstream Dene on the development of regulations that allow the release of treated tailings, and requires Canada to obtain the free, prior and informed consent of downstream Dene before implementing such regulations; and

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that Dene Nation opposes the release of treated tar sands tailings into the Deh Cho watershed and requires Canada to abandon its plans to allow such action; and

**THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that Dene Nation calls on Canada fulfil its obligations to obtain the free and prior consent of the downstream Dene.

**Certified copy of a resolution adopted on the 20th day of July 2022 in Wiliideh Site (YK River), Chief Drygeese Territory, Akaitcho Region, Denendeh.**



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**Gerald Antoine, Dene National Chief**

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