



Slate Falls Nation

48 Lakeview Road
Slate Falls, Ontario
P0V 3C0

Tele: (807) 737-5700

Fax: (888) 431-5617

MEMORANDUM #3: SLATE FALLS FIRST NATION SUMMARY AND OBSERVATIONS FROM MAY 26, 2026 MEETING

Provided to IAAC on: June 8, 2026

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide our summary of the core points and messages from the meeting with IAAC staff in Thunder Bay on May 26, 2026 respecting the Springpole Gold Project.

Slate Falls Attendees Reiterated that Water and Water Systems are Central to Slate Falls Way of Life

A common theme during our meeting was central importance of water to Slate Falls Nation's way of life. Leaders and Elders indicated that protecting the water is of the utmost importance to Slate Falls Nation because everything relies on the water. As one Elder put it, "if you contaminate the water, you are going to kill off everything." Elders and leaders expressed that being downriver of the mine means there is no way to protect the fish, animals, trees, plants, sacred sites, and medicines that Slate Falls relies on for its way of life. Everything that Slate Falls people need to live "is along and within the shoreline." Community members emphasized that everything Slate Falls people need to live is tied to the shorelines and downstream waters and the current proposal would kill these relationships with the land and water.

IAAC Comments Reinforced that IAAC Has Not Yet Adequately Considered Effects to Slate Falls and its Rights

Slate Falls members expressed that IAAC's approach of limiting its assessment by the statutory requirements of *CEAA, 2012* is too narrow for considering Project impacts to the health and wellbeing of Slate Falls. They noted that the approach IAAC explained it has used in the environmental assessment minimizes consideration of mental health stress already being felt in the community from knowing that there may be a mine upriver from the

community. One member shared openly that he had been raising concerns about the mine for years and that it was already having serious impacts on his mental health.

Community members asked how IAAC's conclusions protect human beings, noting that reliance on generic thresholds and monitoring does not answer community health concerns.

IAAC Perspectives Continued to Be Completely Absent

When Slate Falls leadership and members asked IAAC to share its views on matters of importance to Slate Falls, IAAC in most cases repeated Slate Falls perspectives back at the meeting attendees. In other cases, IAAC reiterated that it was constrained by *CEAA, 2012* in how it examined issues. Both of these approaches were successful in preventing real dialogue and meant it was impossible for Slate Falls attendees to understand IAAC's views on critical issues like Canada's understanding of Project impacts on Slate Falls' rights.

IAAC representatives indicated that "there is a clear perspective from Slate Falls that you are not comfortable with the mine" but said absolutely nothing about what IAAC's perspective is on the impacts to Slate Falls' rights.

IAAC representatives were unable to adequately respond to the repeated question from Slate Falls leaders and Elders about *why IAAC concluded there are no significant effects to current use*.

Elders expressed repeatedly that they were not getting answers from IAAC and that the Agency was "not being honest with us".

IAAC's Continued to Push Mitigation Measures that are Insufficient

Slate Falls Nation challenged IAAC's reliance on monitoring and general conditions as mitigation, noting that monitoring does not prevent contamination and that more protective mitigation measures are needed. Slate Falls Nation reiterated that it has provided detailed submissions to IAAC and remains ready to work on additional mitigation measures. IAAC has not yet addressed these concerns with Slate Falls Nation.

Slate Falls Reiterated the Need for IAAC to Fulfill the Crown's Duty to Consult and Accommodate

Slate Falls leaders and Elders also clearly articulated that IAAC has not met its obligations to Slate Falls yet, including that better and more responsive mitigation measures and conditions are required. For example, one Elder indicated that "it's not enough what you are doing. Come back with something else, once you have done more. You need to protect the water. Not just a little bit: the whole thing."

Slate Falls' community members also expressed disappointment and frustration that they were denied the opportunity to visit the mine site with IAAC in conjunction with the May 26 meeting. Members shared examples of other barriers to participating in consultation, for example, being denied attendance at open houses.

Slate Falls leaders and Elders shared that IAAC is failing to understand the entire watershed and that it would be important for them to go and see this together. One member expressed the uniqueness of the mine site in connection to the waterways surrounding it, explaining that the way the water flows is in four different directions which is a special feature of this area.

Slate Falls leaders and Elders expressed that Canada is not meeting its fiduciary responsibilities or UNDRIP related obligations including obtaining Slate Falls' consent to the Project and respecting the right to self-determination.

Many Community Questions went Unanswered

IAAC was unable to answer (either satisfactorily or at all) many of the questions that Elders and leadership raised at the meeting. These questions must be answered to Slate Falls satisfaction as part of a meaningful consultation process:

1. Who is going to protect the environment and the people? This question was asked directly by leadership in response to IAAC's reliance on monitoring as a "mitigation" measure. IAAC did not respond to this question.
2. Has IAAC considered the generations to follow when it reached its conclusions on federal effects? Community members asked whether their children and grandchildren were considered in IAAC's determinations. IAAC did not respond to this question.
3. Why is IAAC placing Slate Falls Nation at the lowest rank? Members expressed that IAAC's approach makes Slate Falls Nation feel minimized or "at the lowest rank". IAAC representatives failed to meaningfully respond to this question, indicating that IAAC and Slate Falls Nation have different "perspectives" and it is IAAC's job to "properly note [Slate Falls] perspectives".
4. How will IAAC ensure that nothing contaminates the water? Members challenged IAAC to show how contamination will be prevented, not merely monitored. IAAC repeatedly deferred this to Ontario's water quality standards.
5. Does Slate Falls Nation matter to Canada? Leadership asked directly whether Slate Falls Nation matters to Canada, given the draft conclusions. Instead of answering this

question, IAAC representatives responded by indicating that their “job is really constrained”.

6. What is Canada doing to protect Slate Falls Nation’s rights so the community does not need to move because the water is contaminated? Members asked what Canada is doing now to protect rights in light of downstream risks. IAAC referenced that it would be monitoring the water quality which Slate Falls has repeatedly indicated is not a mitigation measure.
7. Where does the Community-Based Land Use Plan fit into Canada’s approach? Slate Falls Nation asked how the CBLUP is being considered in the federal process. Despite the repeated submissions from Slate Falls indicating that the CBLUP must be considered as a guiding document and expression of the Nation’s perspective, IAAC perplexingly indicated that CBLUP was developed in partnership with Ontario and that “mines are regulate by Ontario”. After rebuttal from Slate Falls representatives, leaders, and Elders, IAAC did not answer this question further.