



Buffalo River Dene Nation
Band No 398
Box 40
Dillon, Sask S0M 0S0

October 4, 2022

To Nicole Frigault,

The following is a letter of support from the Buffalo River Dene Nation (BRDN) to be included in the formal federal draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) public review for NexGen's Rook I Project.

BRDN and NexGen have a long history of engagement and collaboration together, with relationships being developed with BRDN community and leadership as far back as 2016. From engagement during exploration, through the Study Agreement (SA), and most recently the implementation of the Impact Benefit Agreement (IBA) for the Rook I Project, NexGen has been diligent in their engagement activities. They have ensured that all programs were well defined and well communicated, and consistently demonstrate their commitment to working in partnership with BRDN to continue to develop and support community programs and initiatives that focus on culture, education, career training, and building economic capacity for long term community benefits.

Study Agreement

Among the many engagement initiatives that NexGen has undertaken, the establishment of the SA between NexGen and BRDN commenced in September of 2019, and serves as an impactful demonstration of NexGen's commitment to engaging with the local Indigenous communities. The SA, fully funded by NexGen, defined a collaborative approach to identifying potential impacts of the proposed development and operations of the mine, as well as identifying potential avoidance and accommodation measures in relation to the Rook I Project. As part of the SA, a Joint Working Group (JWG) was established to support the inclusion of BRDN's traditional knowledge throughout the EA process. These meetings created a balanced and transparent approach to engaging on technical aspects as well as providing the opportunity for our people to educate NexGen on our ways of life and how important our culture and the lands are to us. This was never more apparent early on than when NexGen accepted an invitation to have a JWG meeting at our Elders lodge in Vermette Lake in January of 2020. Having the elders and our engagement team meet with NexGen in a special place like Vermette lake truly showed how committed both NexGen and BRDN are to environmental assurances and the cultural and traditional practices of our people. In addition to the JWG, the SA provided capacity support for our community to undertake an independent Traditional Land Use Study (TLU), that was used to support BRDN's traditional knowledge throughout the EA process, in addition to becoming a much needed asset for the Nation to capture and document the history of our people and our traditional lands.



Impact Benefit Agreement

The important work that was done through the SA led the the signing of an Impact Benefit Agreement (IBA) between NexGen and BRDN on December 14, 2020. This agreement reflects trust, respect, and confidence between NexGen and BRDN, and is a major opportunity for our community now and for future generations. The IBA sets out how BRDN and NexGen will continue to work together to continue NexGen’s proven commitment to the highest standards of environmental and social stewardship, including education, career training, and economic capacity building. Included among the IBA benefits to BRDN are mechanisms to maximize local employment, local contracts, and continued community investment in culture, education, and health and wellness, to ensure long-term positive developments to our community. From a broader perspective, this IBA acknowledges the importance of environmental protection – a fundamental principle to BRDN upon which the most diligent consideration is taken by BRDN leaders, council, and community members.

Rook I EIS

With regard to the Rook I Project draft EIS, BRDN would like to formally acknowledge NexGen’s collaborative and transparent approach to the EA process. Through established community meetings, working groups (including JWG) and capacity support for technical consultants, BRDN was given the opportunity to provide feedback and recommendations in the drafting stages of the EIS, and this feedback is reflected in the Rook I Project EIS that was released by the CNSC for public review on July 13, 2022.

We are pleased with the strong collaboration and meaningful relationship that has been established between NexGen and BRDN. It is a relationship founded on our shared values of honesty, respect, and accountability, and we are confident that the foundational work that has been done since 2016 has resulted in a strong partnership that will set the stage for the responsible development of the Rook I Project, and generational benefits for our community. This approach not only addresses reconciliation but we have now have seen companies working in our traditional territory following this lead, creating more and more trust that the mining industry is genuinely wanting to listen to, and work with, Indigenous communities.

BRDN fully supports the Rook I EIS. It provides the confidence to BRDN that NexGen’s commitment to environmental stewardship, community advancement, and the health and safety of our community, is genuine and already proven. We look forward to working in partnership with NexGen to secure a healthy and prosperous future for our community for generations to come.

Sincerely,



Chief Norma Catarat

cc. NexGen