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## FIRST NATION QUESTIONS LACK OF CONSULTATION FOR ALBERTA AI DATA CENTRE

*Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation, in northern Alberta, received no notice from the province regarding O'Leary's proposed AI Data Centre on its territory while O'Leary says he has a "permit"*

**TREATY #8 TERRITORY, January 13, 2025** -- Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation is raising alarms about the proposed partnership and project between the Municipal District of Greenview and O'Leary Ventures to build what the proponents call the largest industrial datacentre in the world on the First Nation's territory. Sturgeon Lake's territory spans to include the Greenview Industrial Gateway and, as such, they are routinely consulted on projects in this area. They are the closest First Nation, geographically, to this proposed development.

Sturgeon Lake has constitutionally protected Treaty rights including to be consulted on the use of this land, yet the First Nation only learned about this proposal through a press release. "There has been no consultation. The way they act and talk; it's as if our land and water is there for the taking, and we are expected to get in line to receive the so-called economic benefits. Our people are here to remind Mr. O'Leary and Greenview of the international Treaty, Treaty No. 8, that allows us all to share this land. There is protocol. There are legal requirements. They are not being followed," said Chief Sheldon Sunshine.

The proposed AI data centre is in the heart of Sturgeon Lake's territory, where their people have traplines, where they exercise their way of life that is guaranteed under Treaty No. 8 and where they draw their water, from the Smoky River.

"This area is our historic traditional lands. We have hunted, trapped, fished and gathered within this territory since time immemorial. I grew up exercising these practices in this area with my father and my grandfathers. Our people built those side roads – Canfor Main, Simonette, Highway 40. We are forever intertwined and connected to this area. Our people travel the Canfor 4000 road and Highway 40 to our ceremonial grounds in Jasper," said Councillor Rosalyn Goodswimmer. "But we were never notified of potential development plans for this area; no notice nor a courtesy email from the province, the Alberta Energy Regulator or the Aboriginal Consultation Office – so this press release in December 2024 really shocked me."

In an open letter to Premier Danielle Smith, Sturgeon Lake has many questions about statements made by Mr. O'Leary on Fox News, suggesting that Ms. Smith had already issued O'Leary a "permit for 500 acres" as well as Greenview statements that they already have "water licences." O'Leary also suggested that he had visited "sovereign wealth funds" to raise the \$70 billion investment. Of concern to Sturgeon Lake, is the timing of this proposal, on the heels of Premier Smith being entertained by Donald Trump alongside O'Leary and the president-elect's recent threats to annex Canada as the 51<sup>st</sup> State, also welcomed by O'Leary.

Sturgeon Lake is also questioning the lack of any known regulatory process related to this project. Minister Nate Glubish wrote an op-ed that his office were assisting O'Leary's group in "navigating Alberta's regulatory framework." Sturgeon Lake has received no notice of applications nor dispositions for the use of this land, despite writing to the Minister of Energy, Brian Jean, and Greenview in May of 2024.

"We do not get assistance with Alberta's regulatory framework. We are one hundred percent dismissed by Alberta's regulators, such that the large majority of our territory is now "taken up" by development, Crown land sales or farming," said Chief Sunshine.

"Before the province of Alberta existed, our ancestors entered into Treaty No. 8 in 1899. We are here to remind everyone that Treaty No. 8 is the foundation; it requires our free, prior, and informed consent for a project of this scale. We will not accept anything less."

**Website Link to Open letter: <https://www.sturgeonlake.ca/news/>**

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