

SASKATCHEWAN RECEIVES OWNERSHIP OF FEDERAL MINERALS (December, 2009)

Call it a mineral deal 80 years in the making. Saskatchewan is receiving title to more than 34,000 hectares of federally-owned minerals in the province. Transfer of title also comes with payment to the province of \$32.9 million in consideration of revenues earned from these minerals in recent years.

Energy and Resources Minister Bill Boyd announced today a settlement and release agreement with Natural Resources Canada. The agreement resolves an existing lawsuit by the provincial government related to the ownership of Soldier Settlement Board minerals. This issue dates back to the transfer of natural resources to Saskatchewan under the terms of the 1930 Natural Resources Transfer Agreement (NRTA).

"This new agreement is good news for our province," Boyd said. "It removes the uncertainty over ownership of these minerals and will provide future revenues for the province as the minerals are developed. Through the positive working relationship we enjoy with our federal counterparts, we were able to fairly resolve what had been a longstanding issue."

"We have reached a settlement that is fair to both governments," said Lisa Raitt, Canada's Minister of Natural Resources. "It demonstrates Canada's continued commitment to working with all governments, while serving the interests of all Canadians."

The Soldier Settlement program was an agricultural loan program which operated after World War 1. The issue between the two governments was whether the minerals acquired by the Soldier Settlement Board through the operation of this program were transferred to the province when the NRTA came into effect in 1930.

As part of today's agreement, Saskatchewan will relinquish any claim to ownership of an additional 24,000 hectares of Soldier Settlement Board minerals within the boundaries of surrendered Indian reserves. This decision will assist the Government of Canada to honour its commitments to Saskatchewan First Nations.

The provincial government will also honour federal crown mineral dispositions held by private companies and issued before the transfer of title.

Under the terms of the agreement, the provincial government agreed to a full and complete release from its lawsuit related to the ownership of Soldier Settlement Board minerals.

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