

DECLARATION

November 11, 2024

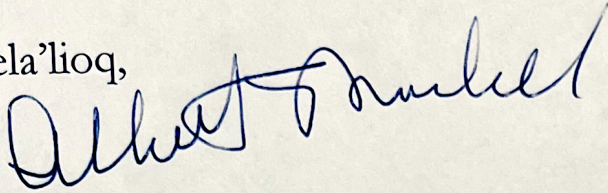
On behalf of the Elders of Unama'ki, together with Keep Coxheath Clean Association, we declare that the Coxheath Hills should be protected in perpetuity. The area is the ancestral, unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People and a traditional trapping line of Eskasoni First Nation. We firmly oppose the sale or lease of land on the Coxheath Hills for the purpose of mining, which is destructive to the environment. We are guided by Netukulimk—which teaches us to protect Mother Earth for the ancestors, present, and future generations. An open-pit sulfide-ore copper mine in this location goes against our teachings and values.

It is our responsibility to defend our non-human relatives (“Msit No'kmaq”). The Coxheath Hills and surrounding areas are rich in biodiversity, as shown in a recent ACAP BioBlitz (ecological survey). They are home to several at-risk and endangered species, including the little brown bat, Atlantic salmon, yellow lampmussel, Canada Lynx, and the olive-sided flycatcher. The Hills are also a source of clean water and natural medicines. As caretakers of Mother Earth, we must protect and live in harmony with all its inhabitants. The pollution from open-pit mining in this area would disturb the delicate balance.

There are other, more sustainable and appropriate ways to manage the “give and take” of our interactions with this land and our ecological resources. Land-based education provides culturally-relevant learning, intergenerational knowledge transfer, and promotion of Mi'kmaq language and traditions. This site could be used for land-based education by all Mi'kmaq communities in Unama'ki as well as the wider public. There is also great potential for ecotourism. The Coxheath Hills Wilderness Recreation Association has already developed a much-loved, year-round hiking/snow-shoeing trail systems in the area. These trails could be expanded and could include new mountain biking trails, bringing more tourists to the CBRM.

In closing, we reassert our rights as the original and continued stewards of this land. Our position is clear- we refuse to allow an open-pit mine to operate on the Coxheath Hills. We will take all possible steps to resist such a development.

Wela'lioq,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Albert Marshall", written over the printed name.

Dr. Albert Marshall
Elder and Knowledge Keeper
Eskasoni First Nation