Thanks for Strengthening Our Partnership

2018 has been a busy and productive year for Orano and the Athabasca Basin communities as we collectively live up to the Ya’thi Néné Collaboration Agreement commitments and find successes in various ways. We are proud of all the hard work done by the members of the Joint Implementation Committee (JIC), the Athabasca Joint Engagement and Environment Subcommittee (AJES), the Business Advisory Committee (BAC) and the Community Trust.

One example of our successes is the first ever environment trainee, Ms. Jennifer Noey, completed a full year of training in the environment department at McClean Lake, and we now have another Athabasca Resident, Mr. Ron Fern, who has stepped into the environment trainee role. Meeting this commitment is a great example of the benefit of working together – Orano gains an excellent Athabasca Resident employee in a technical area of our operation, and the employee gains on-the-job experience in an emerging field of interest.

The AJES subcommittee is proud that throughout 2018, the Traditional Foods Study for Black Lake and Stony Rapids was completed, with significant assistance from our community relations liaison, Mr. Rick Robillard. He completed about 100 interviews with members of the Black Lake First Nation, with elders, young adults, older adults, and both men and women. The knowledge shared during the interviews will form Black Lake/Stony Rapids specific information about what foods are important, how much, and where they are gathered. This Traditional Foods Study was developed in consultation with the AJES, and provides important information for the community. In 2019, a similar Traditional Foods Study will be developed for Fond du Lac First Nation.

In November, we had our annual CEO / Leadership meeting to discuss areas of interest and concern about the Ya’thi Nene Collaboration Agreement. This was the second meeting held, and helps to inform senior staff from Orano about the areas of priority for the coming year.

For 2019, the uranium market is predicted to continue to be a challenge. Our hearts go out to those Athabasca residents and businesses that have been impacted by the decision for the McArthur River/Key Lake operations to remain in care and maintenance. At McClean Lake, we will continue to focus our efforts on providing opportunities to Athabasca Basin residents and businesses.

Before I close, I would like to acknowledge that it has been one year since that terrible day in Fond du Lac, with the plane crash that took Arson Fern Junior’s life, and altered the lives of so many others. We observe that many Fond du Lac community members are working hard to help the community through these difficult times, even one year later, and our hearts are with you as you continue your healing journey.

In closing, on behalf of our Corporate Social Responsibility staff, Glenn Lafleur, Connie Mercredi and Carolanne Inglis-McQuay, and everyone at Orano, I wish you a safe holiday season and a hopeful and joyous 2019.

Tammy Van Lambalgen
Vice President, Corporate Social Responsibility & General Counsel
AJES Traditional Food Study Workshop and Community Presentation
at Black Lake's Father Porte Memorial School
November 19, 2018