



STATEMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NunatuKavut Community Council reiterates message that there is no Akami-Uapishk^u-KakKasuak-Mealy Mountains National Park Reserve without NunatuKavut Inuit

HAPPY VALLEY-GOOSE BAY, LABRADOR, December 20, 2023 – NunatuKavut Community Council (NCC) President Todd Russell issued the following statement today:

*“The Senate of Canada recently passed an amended Bill S-14, *An Act to amend the Canada National Parks Act, the Canada National Marine Conservation Areas Act, the Rouge National Urban Park Act and the National Parks of Canada Fishing Regulations*. It is extremely troubling that the latest version of the Bill S-14 drops NCC members as traditional land users of the Akami-Uapishk^u-KakKasuak-Mealy Mountains National Park Reserve.*

The process around the passing of this Bill at the Senate was unacceptable. The process was clearly hijacked by groups like the Innu Nation, who made false and misleading statements to the Senate Committee. The remarks were defamatory and painted a very inaccurate picture of NunatuKavut Inuit presence in the Park area. Senators then made decisions relying on this misinformation, despite being presented with accurate information from both NCC and the federal government.

The longstanding connection that NunatuKavut Inuit have to the lands, ice and waters within the Park area is well-documented. Inuit traditional knowledge and land use studies show extensive hunting, harvesting and trapping activities in the Park by NunatuKavut members and there are those that still live in and around the Park Reserve. NCC has played a central role in the creation of the Park and a Shared Understanding Agreement (SUA) was reached after years of engagement. Kicking Indigenous peoples off their own lands and denying our people’s historical relationship to the park severely breaches Canada’s obligations under the SUA, infringes on our Treaty rights and puts the Park itself in jeopardy. The Mealy Mountains National Park can only be realized with the full and fair engagement, consultation and consent of NunatuKavut Inuit.

We are very hopeful that Bill S-14 will be restored to its original form and intent as it goes through the next legislative stage at the House of Commons. We call upon the Government of Canada to uphold the honour of the Crown, the SUA and respect the rights of NunatuKavut Inuit and our connection to our traditional lands and places.”

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About: The NunatuKavut Community Council (NCC) is a governing organization that represents the rights and interests of Inuit who come from south and central Labrador. NCC is committed to advocating for section 35 rights, interests, and priorities of NunatuKavut Inuit. Rooted in the rich traditions and culture of NunatuKavut Inuit, NCC works diligently towards self-government and self-determination, while fostering community growth and sustainability.

To learn more about NCC and NunatuKavut Inuit, please visit our website at www.nunatukavut.ca and we invite you to check out our new Story Map page which helps tell our story. Please also join in the conversation at

facebook.com/nunatukavut and X/Twitter @nunatukavut.

To read previous statements on this matter, please check out the News & Media section of our website at <https://nunatukavut.ca/news-media/latest-news/>

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