Protecting Our Water, Our Community, Our Future

Agnew Lake Tailings – What We've Learned & Where We Go From Here

Welcome

What's This All About?

The Province wants to truck in 18,600 m³ of niobium mine tailings from a site near North Bay.

The destination? Our Agnew Lake Tailings Management Area – a site already holding decommissioned uranium waste.

Our question: Is this safe? And where's the proof?

Why We Hired Hutchinson Environmental

We received 1,000+ pages of technical reports from the Ministry.

We brought in experts – Hutchinson Environmental Sciences Ltd. – to decode it and give us the real story.

Their conclusion? Too many assumptions, not enough facts.

Here's What They Found

The Ministry claims that this project is "low risk."

Hutchinson's report does not conclude that the project is safe, it just concludes that there is not enough data.

The ministry's conclusion is built on missing data, outdated testing, and incomplete models.

What's Really in the Niobium Tailings?

Radioactive elements: Uranium-238, Thorium-230, Radium-226, Lead-210 and Polonium-210.

Toxic metals: Cadmium, arsenic, selenium – all dangerous to water, wildlife, and human health.

This isn't just "gravel" – this is chemically and radiologically active materials.

Old Testing, Bad Assumptions

The only leach testing included in the data was from 2020 – using a method designed for landfills, not water and streams.

Detection limits were too high – they missed what matters.

We've asked for updated leach testing using realistic, site-specific conditions.

Water Moves – But How?

The Ministry assumes water flows east from the site.

But there are no deep monitoring wells. No verified hydrogeological model.

There's also a fault line under the site that could carry contaminants deep and far.

If they're wrong, contamination could spread much farther than they think.

What We've Already Seen at Agnew Lake

Uranium in groundwater near the Middle Dam.

Uranium, radium, cadmium and cyanide at East and West Dams.

Cobalt and uranium in spring runoff.

Arsenic in sediment.

This site is already in crisis. Adding more waste only increases the risk.

CNSC Sampling – A Step Forward

Thanks to your concerns, CNSC did extra water testing in May.

12 sites sampled: Agnew Lake, Spanish River, John and Ministic Creeks.

Spring run-off isn't the ideal time—but they listened, and that matters.

The Missing Science

- No fish testing.
- No aquatic plant studies.
- No surveys of invertebrates (the bugs fish eat).

These are basic tools of ecological risk assessment—and they're not being used.

Our Wildlife Matters Too

The risk to burrowing animals from radon gas—ignored.

These animals dig into the soil, where radioactive gas could accumulate.

This pathway was known—and left out of the most recent risk model.

Construction Without a Map?

Where's the Dust Management Plan?

Where are the erosion controls?

Where are the tailings placement diagrams?

We're being asked to trust a plan we haven't even seen.

Baseline Monitoring – We Need It Now!

We can't measure impact without knowing what's already there.

We need data on water, sediment, fish, and more—before the trucks roll in.

We need regular testing in Agnew Lake and the Spanish River

No more flying blind.

A New Twist – Some Tailings Going to Clean Harbors

The MTO just told us: part of the niobium tailings will be sent to Clean Harbors, a licensed hazardous waste site near Sarnia.

If some of the tailings can go there—why not all of them?

If they're hazardous enough for Sarnia, they're too hazardous for Agnew Lake.

Five Critical Information Requests

1. Cumulative effects – what happens when uranium and niobium mix?

2. Updated risk assessment – with new leach data and proper wildlife exposure.

3. Construction & safety plans – stop promising them. **DELIVER THEM**.

4. Baseline sampling program – now, not later.

5. Long-term monitoring plan – 5 years is not enough for radiation that lasts 1,600 years.

Our Position Is Clear

Until the science is complete and the risks are understood—no tailings should be moved to Agnew Lake.

This isn't just a technical issue. It's a community safety issue.

We will not be a dumping ground for incomplete science.

David Suzuki – July 2, 2025

" The foundation of our existence, is nature, clean air, pure water, rich soil, food and sunlight. That's the foundation of the way we live and, when we construct legal, economic and political systems, they have to be built around protecting those very things, but they're not…

I'm urging local communities to get together, citizens are going to have to be at the front lines."

Thank You & Next Steps

Thank you for your continued attention, passion, and advocacy.

We'll keep pushing for transparency, accountability, and data—not assumptions.

We want to work with science, not shortcuts.