



For Immediate Release
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Pictou, Nova Scotia

A high-powered global corporate investigations firm sent a representative to “take the pulse of the community” about Northern Pulp on behalf of a mystery client. Why?

“We are committed to realizing a dream to provide clients in every corner of the globe with the fact-gathering services they need as they face exposure to any regulatory, compliance or reputational risk.” Mintz Group founder, Jim Mintz (1)

Friends of the Northumberland Strait (FONS) are concerned and curious about a high-powered global corporate investigations firm asking probing questions about Northern Pulp’s reopening plan on behalf of an unidentified client. Catherine Collins, an investigator with the Mintz Group, recently contacted a member of FONS, a Pictou town councillor, the Wilderness Co-ordinator of the Ecology Action Centre and others who have been outspoken in their opposition to Northern Pulp to ask questions about the company’s new proposal. She also spoke with some Northern Pulp supporters.

“We asked Collins several times who her client was, but we were told that her client would not agree to disclose their identity,” said Jill Graham-Scanlan, President of FONS. “We decided that three of us would meet with her anyway, to find out what this was about. From the questions Collins asked, it appears likely to us that the client is Northern Pulp, Paper Excellence, someone in the ownership chain of NP/PE, or someone hired by them.”

“Collins asked us what we thought of Northern Pulp’s new project, and what Northern Pulp would have to do to get our support - similar to questions Northern Pulp’s Environmental Liaison Committee has asked,” Graham-Scanlan stated. “We made it very clear that FONS holds fast to no pulp effluent in our waters and healthy air. We were clear that there has been a dramatic improvement in the air and water since early 2020, and there is no going back.”

Graham- Scanlan outlined some of the other questions Collins posed. “She asked what NP could do to make the mill environmentally sound. We told her that was not our job. She asked what the biggest reason was that the mill was not successful in passing an Environmental Assessment. We answered that NP did not meet environmental standards,” Graham-Scanlan said. “It seems unlikely any client other than someone connected to the NP ownership chain would be looking for this type of information.”

“It seems to us that Collins was also trying to find out what research FONS has done and to assess the strengths and weaknesses of FONS and other groups,” said Graham-Scanlan. “She asked how many members FONS has, whether we had done any water testing ourselves, whether we knew about any health studies that existed. We referred her to public information on the Nova Scotia Environment and FONS websites. She asked our opinion on whose voice would carry the most weight, of the many groups opposing Northern Pulp. We told her that all the voices were important. Collins also asked what we thought the change of government would mean for Northern Pulp. We refused to speculate on that and a number of other probing questions,” Graham-Scanlan added.

“Northern Pulp/Paper Excellence is working overtime these days to sell its new image as trustworthy and transparent,” says Graham-Scanlan. “We are intrigued that this unidentified corporate client who appears to be connected to Northern Pulp/Paper Excellence hired the Mintz Group to gather information and will not allow the investigator to reveal their identity.”

“FONS is also curious about how the mystery client plans to use the information compiled in this investigation, and whether they have hired the Mintz Group to do any other work beyond information gathering,” Graham-Scanlan noted.

In an April 2020 press statement, Mintz Group founder Jim Mintz said “We are committed to realizing a dream to provide clients in every corner of the globe with the fact-gathering services they need as **they face exposure to any regulatory, compliance or reputational risk.**” (2) (our emphasis)

The [Mintz Group’s website](#) describes the company as “A due diligence and investigations firm that helps clients identify, manage and mitigate risks across the globe - before relationships, during disputes and after allegations.” It also states, “For over 25 years, Mintz Group has been finding admissible evidence to help litigators prevail in court and at the negotiating table.” (3)

(1) <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/icv-partners-announces-investment-in-mintz-group-301036426.html>

(2) <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/icv-partners-announces-investment-in-mintz-group-301036426.html>

(3) <https://mintzgroup.com/services/during-disputes/opponent-research/>