



PR#341

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Sleeping Giant Mystery Solved**

*Belmopan. June 21, 2021. 12:35 p.m.*

On June 19, 2021, a joint team comprised of geologists and the engineer from the Geology and Petroleum Department, forest rangers from the Forest Department, and guides/cut men from St. Margaret's Village visited the area near the Sleeping Giant Mountain range that has been emitting plumes of smoke.

The team found no evidence of any geological activity at the site, and none of the gases normally found at geothermal vents or fumaroles were present. Radiation levels were normal.

The Forest Department found the cause or source of the plumes of smoke to be a deep smoldering detritus fire, possibly ignited from a lightning strike at the site, which occurred around June 8, 2021. The area is located on top of a ridge comprised of Paleozoic non-volcanic basement rocks, and is covered by a thick mat of detritus or decaying organic matter and dead trees which are fueling the continuous slow burning or smoldering. At the time of the visit, the area affected was approximately 100 meters long and 40 meters wide. The Forest Department is monitoring this slow burning fire to determine the best course of action.

The ministry thanks the villagers who took the team to the site for their invaluable assistance.

**Ends**