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Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs

Ministère des Affaires autochtones

Information Centre
Algonquin Land Claim

Centre d'information
Revendication territoriale



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June 11, 2013

MEMORANDUM TO: Mayor and Council

I am pleased to provide you with the attached Open Letter to Property Owners' Associations in the Algonquin Land Claim Territory. The purpose of the letter is to provide an update on the negotiations and some basic information about the Preliminary Draft Agreement-in-Principle (PDAIP). Please feel free to share it widely.

With respect to municipal interests, I would like to once again express my appreciation to those municipal representatives who have provided information and advice as the negotiations have progressed. Ontario's approach to the negotiations, as well as the content of the PDAIP, have been shaped by the professional and knowledgeable contributions of our municipal advisors, in particular the active role taken by the Municipal Advisory Committee Focus Group.

There has been some confusion about the role of municipalities in the negotiation process, and I would like to clarify this. Resolving the Algonquin land claim is a responsibility of the federal and provincial governments, since it deals with an assertion of Aboriginal rights relating to land and natural resources. The municipal level of government does not carry responsibility for land claim negotiations.

Since the formation of Ontario's Municipal Advisory Committee in 1996, the province has engaged with the municipal sector in an effort to develop appropriate arrangements for the future Algonquin ownership of lands in a highly-populated area with long-standing municipal jurisdiction. The advisory committee, and the MAC Focus Group consisting of senior municipal staff, have provided practical advice in this regard.

More recently, members of the Ontario negotiation team have met with representatives of local municipalities in which Crown lands have been identified for potential transfer to Algonquin ownership. These meetings have helped Ontario ensure that our technical information is correct and they have provided us with information related to municipal planning considerations regarding specific land proposals. These were technical, fact-sharing discussions. At no time did the Ontario negotiation team ask the municipalities to give their consent or support with respect to particular land recommendations.

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As the negotiations progress, we look forward to continued consultations with local municipal governments. Our goal is to facilitate a smooth transition from Crown land to Algonquin-owned land that will be under municipal jurisdiction. The discussions will become more focused after the Agreement-in-Principle as we gain more information about Algonquin proposals for particular lands and how they can best fit into the municipal landscape. This will require active involvement of the local municipalities, as well as the Algonquins of Ontario and representatives of the Ontario negotiation team.

In the meantime, should you or your ratepayers require further information about the Algonquin land claim negotiations, please direct them to me or to the Ontario Information Centre in Pembroke, via the contact information on this letterhead.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brian Crane', followed by a small comma.

Brian Crane
Ontario Chief Negotiator

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June 14, 2013

An Open Letter to Property Owners' Associations in the Algonquin Land Claim Territory

As Ontario's Chief Negotiator for the Algonquin Land Claim, I am pleased to provide you with the following update and attached Ontario Fact Sheet on the negotiations. Please feel free to share this information.

Some Background on the Algonquin Land Claim

The Algonquin land claim is the largest and most complex land claim in Ontario under active negotiation, covering a territory of 36,000 square kilometres that is populated by more than 1.2 million people.

If successful, the end result of these negotiations will be Ontario's first modern treaty. Matters being addressed in the negotiations include land ownership, harvesting rights (hunting, fishing, trapping), forestry, parks and protected areas, Algonquin eligibility, Algonquin heritage and culture, and the capital transfer to settle the claim.

Current State of the Negotiations

In December 2012 the three negotiating parties (Canada, Ontario and the Algonquins of Ontario) provided a Preliminary Draft Agreement-in-Principle (AIP) for public review. This document sets out the main elements of a proposed land claim settlement, including:

- the transfer of approximately, but no less than 117,500 acres of provincial Crown land to Algonquin ownership
- transfer of \$300 million to the Algonquins of Ontario
- defined Algonquin rights related to lands and natural resources.

Since then, members of the Ontario negotiation team have conducted more than 120 meetings with people who have direct interests in the Crown land parcels proposed for transfer. This includes meetings with those who hold land use permits or other forms of tenure on the identified Crown lands, as well as those who require access across identified Crown lands to reach their own property.

In addition, nine regional public information sessions were held this spring, attended by more than 2,200 people. At those meetings, property owners raised questions about:

- continued access to private cottages and land
- what the Algonquins intend to do with the lands they receive
- environmental pressure on fragile lakes and ecosystems
- year-round Algonquin hunting activities and the potential effect on safety and conservation.

Here is a very brief summary of how those interests are being addressed:

Continued access to private lands

All three negotiating parties have agreed that no one will lose access to their cottage or private property as a result of the transfer of Crown land to Algonquin ownership.

Intended use of lands after transfer

The Algonquins' intentions for proposed settlement lands are varied and evolving. There are still years of work ahead before land transfers will be completed. During these years, more information on proposed land uses will be provided by the Algonquins. Municipalities will be involved in the process leading to Official Plan and zoning designations that will be applied to Algonquin lands at the time of transfer.

Environmental concerns

Algonquin lands will be subject to all laws of general application, including normal development controls related to lake capacity or other environmental protections. Algonquin development proposals will be subject to the same technical study requirements, provincial criteria, municipal official plan and zoning requirements, and restrictions as any other property owner.

Year-round hunting

Algonquin harvesting rights will be subject to provincial and federal laws that are necessary for conservation, public health and public safety.

For more information

The Preliminary Draft AIP is available on-line at Ontario.ca/Algonquinlandclaim or by phoning the Ontario Information Centre at 613-732-8081 or 1-855-690-7070. I encourage you to visit this Ontario website for further information and updates on the negotiations.



Brian Crane, Ontario Chief Negotiator

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June 6, 2013

Head, Clara & Maria United Townships
15 Township Hall Road
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Dear Members of Council:

We would like to invite you once again to the Canada Day celebrations on July 1st. We thank you for your generous support.

As last year, we shall be having a Welcome Table and would appreciate members of Council (with their spouses/partners or with another councillor) to provide an hour or so each to welcome people and to answer questions.

We would also appreciate the Reeve or designate to say a few words and then to cut the cake at the end of the barbecue.

We have changed the hours from 12:00 - 4 to 11:30 - 3:30 pm so that those who have plans for fireworks and other celebrations have time to get home and prepare.

Many thanks for your kind attention. We look forward to another great day in the Townships!

Sincerely,

Cathy Balla-Boudreau
for the Canada Day Committee