

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