

Column Two

The Algonquin Land Claim – Capital Transfer and Lands

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As the Algonquins of Ontario (AOO) continue to work toward a modern day treaty, they look forward to a bright future of self-sufficiency, economic stability, and opportunities for current and future generations.

Key elements of the current Preliminary Draft Agreement-in-Principle (AIP), released on December 13, 2012 by the AOO, Ontario and Canada, include a capital transfer and land component. These elements are essential to build a long-term sustainable future for the Algonquin people, and respond to present day social, cultural and economic needs.

The Preliminary Draft AIP states that Canada and Ontario will transfer \$300 million to one or more Algonquin Institutions, which will be Trusts established for the benefit of the Algonquin beneficiaries. These funds will be transferred in three payments over a two-year period starting on the Effective Date of the Final Agreement.

Income generated from the capital transfer will make a real and positive difference in the cultural and societal fabric of the Algonquin people by removing barriers for the creation of economic opportunities and social support programs. These funds will also lay a foundation for a rewarding and vibrant future for Algonquin youth by increasing employment opportunities and access to education and training.

The Algonquin Institutions that will receive, manage and invest this capital will be transparent and accountable to all Algonquin beneficiaries. The AOO will develop the governance structure, mandates and powers of these Institutions to ensure the most effective protection of all beneficiaries' interests.

Land has been critical to the way of life for the Algonquins and will play an important role in the cultural recognition and future economic sustainability of the AOO. The Preliminary Draft AIP establishes that Ontario will transfer not less than 117,500 acres of Provincial Crown Land to one or more Algonquin Institutions. This lands package consists of more than 200 parcels of land ranging in size from a few acres to more than 30,000 acres.

The AOO's proposed land selections were each chosen for the following purposes:

- (a) Historical/Spiritual
- (b) Community Recreation and Environmental Protection

- (c) Economic Development, Resources, Tourist Commercial
- (d) Future Institutional, Residential, Industrial Development

The Provincial Crown Land in the Settlement Area is 3.3 million acres. Nearly 2 million acres constitutes Provincial Parks, including Algonquin Park (1.8 million acres), where the AOO will have extensive management planning input. This leaves approximately 1.3 million acres of Provincial Crown Land to be considered for AOO land selections. The proposed lands package comprises approximately 4% of the Provincial Crown Land in the land claim Settlement Area.

Through the transfer of this land, existing access to cottages, private properties, or navigable waterways will not be lost or compromised, and no new First Nation reserves will be created.

A Treaty will provide economic development opportunities that will not only benefit the AOO, but will also provide a tremendous benefit to our neighbours living within Eastern Ontario.

This column is the second in a series providing insights into Algonquin history, the foundation for the land claim, elements of the Preliminary Draft AIP and next steps in the journey. The next column will focus on the Parks and Protected Areas component of the Preliminary Draft AIP. For more information visit www.tanakiwin.com.