

April 13, 2015

Honourable Bernard Valcourt, MP
Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and
Northern Development
10 Wellington Street, 21st Floor
Room 2100
Gatineau, Quebec
K1A 0H4

Honourable David Zimmer, MPP
Minister of Aboriginal Affairs
Suite 400, 160 Bloor Street East
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 2E6

Dear Ministers:

Re: Algonquin Land Claim

Please find attached a copy of a letter that was sent to the Co-Chairs of the Committee of External Advisers and the Municipal Advisory Committee on February 23, 2015. To say that we were disappointed with the response would be an understatement.

In 1994, and again in 2006, all three parties to the negotiations signed a Statement of Shared Objectives outlining several key principles and commitments on which the negotiations would be based. Among these was one that promised to “Consult with interested parties throughout the negotiations process and to keep the public informed on the progress of the negotiations.”

Not only has there been a clear failure to live up to this commitment, but the suggestion that there is a lack of clarity ‘on the way forward’ and a promise to “circle back” once this clarity has been achieved is profoundly concerning at this stage of the negotiations for a myriad of reasons.

The members of the Committee of External Advisors (CEA) and the Municipal Advisory Committee (MAC) did not volunteer to sit on these committees, but were asked by governments to provide their advice and expertise. Despite this, committee members have never been told how this advice has been received or incorporated. Nor has the public been told how their input and concerns from the “public information sessions” two years ago were addressed.

The lack of courtesy and the lack of information that is being provided seriously undermines the credibility of the negotiation, stakeholder consultation, and public information process, and leaves both committee members and the 1.2 million members of the general public who live in the area of the claim in the dark, when the exact opposite repeatedly was promised by Canada and Ontario. Any suggestion from the negotiators or other government sources that stakeholders and the public have been kept informed is factually incorrect.

Our request for a meeting of the committees stands. If this is not going to occur, we are seeking a formal response from the Committee chairs and/or the two chief negotiators explaining why the request is denied, and giving us a firm timeline for when the often promised updates on the state of the negotiations will be provided.

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This land claim does not exist in a vacuum, it is not in an area where only the principles are affected, but rather it exists in a settled landscape, where businesses, landowners, municipalities, stakeholder groups and over a million residents will be impacted upon to varying degrees. If nothing else, they deserve the courtesy of a response that treats their concerns with integrity.

Yours in Conservation,



Greg Farrant
Manager, Government Affairs & Policy
Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters



Phil Morlock
Canadian Sportfishing Industry Association
Government Affairs Committee

GF/PM/gh
Attach.

cc: Members of the Committee of
 External Advisors
 Members of the Municipal Advisory
 Committee
 Jay Aspin, MP
 Tony Clements, MP
 Royal Galipeau, MP
 Cheryl Gallant, MP
 Guy Lauzon, MP
 Pierre Lemieux, MP
 Larry Miller, MP
 Gordon O'Connor, MP
 Pierre Poilievre, MP
 Robert Sopuck, MP
 Gary Schellenberger, MP

 Scott Reid, MP
 Vic Fedeli, MPP
 Randy Hillier, MPP
 Jack MacLaren, MPP
 Jim McDonnell, MPP
 Norm Miller, MPP
 John Yakabuski, MPP
 Greg McFarland, Chief of Staff
 Moirra Wolstenholme, Director of Policy and
 Regional Affairs
 Ron Doering, Gowlings
 OFAH Board of Directors
 Angelo Lombardo, OFAH Executive Director
 Matt DeMille, OFAH Manager, Fish & Wildlife
 Services