



**Lac Des Mille Lacs First Nation**

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## **LAC DES MILLE LACS FIRST NATION NEWSLETTER – April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2011**

### **Boozhoo Membership and Families,**

We hope that this Newsletter finds all in good health! We have had another long winter and welcome the coming of spring and warmer weather. Please find enclosed some important updates and information regarding our First Nation.

### **UPDATE - ELDERS GATHERING 2011**

**Chi Miigwetch** to all of our Elders and families that came and took part in the ceremonies and activities at this year's Elders Gathering. It continues to be a much anticipated and greatly enjoyable event for our Elders and families. As has been the case each and every year, there were family members who had not seen each other for many years. One Elder commented that she had been away for 20 years and had not seen many family members over that time and was absolutely thrilled to have the opportunity to re-connect. We are so pleased to be able to assist our Elders in gathering together and re-establishing acquaintances along with strengthening Community and family ties.

In Chief White Cloud's opening message to the Elders and families gathered, she stated that these last three years has seen a great healing occurring within the relationships and people of the First Nation. As the people come together, laugh and grow together, we are moving ever closer as a Community. The vision is to return to our Homeland. The Chief stated that "before we can "physically" return, we have to first "spiritually" and "socially" be ready to return." "These types of events have enabled us to come together so that we are now poised to "physically" return to our homeland in the very near future."

Miigwetch to all Elders who participated in the "Elder Interviews--Information Gathering" that were also conducted during this time. The information gathering will assist us with our on-going negotiations of the Flood Claim as well as assist us in recording our First Nation's history and traditions.

This year we also provided for our Elders to have Group Pictures taken. Once the photographer completes his development of the pictures, we will be mailing them out to each Elder in attendance. Plans also include a larger group picture to be displayed in the Band Administration office.

The wonderful entertainment by Comedian Don Burnstick and the Whitefish Bay Jiggers, Dancers and Grand Ole Opry was much appreciated. The laughter, dancing and singing was evident throughout the entire weekend. A very special thank you to all who made this Gathering a wonderful experience.

### **UPDATE - LAC DES MILLE LACS FIRST NATION FLOOD CLAIM**

Negotiations with Canada and Ontario regarding the First Nation's Flood Claim are on-going and making progress. Your Negotiation Team has spent a great amount of time and effort in educating the Crowns (both Federal and Provincial) that this Claim is in fact a very unique claim. Our claim is not simply about a few acres of land lost under water but it is in fact about the destruction of a Community and a way of life. It is about the negligence of the Crown to do anything about it for more than half a century and to live up to their obligations under the Treaty.

At the beginning of these negotiations, Chief White Cloud informed the Crown that the First Nation was willing to negotiate a fair and just settlement to this long outstanding claim and that our people would not settle for anything less than a justifiable settlement for the losses they have endured.

We assure the membership that our First Nation's Negotiations Team, made up of the top historical researchers, legal counsels, appraisers, economists and surveyors to be found, continue to work very diligently on this endeavour. All members of the Negotiations Team are experts in their fields and have extensive research and experience in dealing with claims against Canada and the Provinces. We thank you all for your continued support and patience in this matter.

Face to face meetings with the Crown continue with meetings scheduled in May and June of 2011. It is the intention of Chief and Council to have a full update on progress of the negotiations to be presented at the Annual General Membership meeting later this summer. For those members unable to attend the Annual General Membership meeting a hard copy of the presentation will be sent out in the mail.

Chief and Council would like to acknowledge all of the many hours of hard work that all members of the Negotiations Team have put in as they continue to build a case for the First Nation. Chi Miigwetch to all involved and responsible for our forward movement with this claim and as well to the membership for their patience and support. A special thank you as well to those members who have found old articles, pictures and history pertaining to our First Nation that they have shared with the Negotiation Team. All information is helpful to our research as we continue with this journey to see justice done for our People.

#### **UPDATE - CAPITAL PLANNING STUDY**

As the membership is aware, in 2009 Chief White Cloud was able to convince Indian and Northern Affairs Canada that the People of the Lac des Mille Lacs First Nation wished to re-establish their Community Site on Reserve 22A1 on beautiful Lac des Mille Lacs – the site of our original Community. Funding was approved by INAC in late 2009 to have a Capital Planning Study completed for Reserve 22A1 and the First Nation hired JR Cousins Engineering to prepare the Study. That Study is scheduled for completion in August of 2011. Enclosed in this package you will find a copy of the Community Development Plan that has gone through a number of drafts, been reviewed by Council, Elders and membership, and will now be presented to INAC with the final report in August of this year.

After many discussions with recognized Spiritual Elders within the Treaty #3 Territories and a desire to begin to re-develop our Community, the Chief and Council have made the decision that the first building to be erected on Reserve 22A1 will be a Round House. This building is of great cultural and spiritual significance to our First Nation.

Chief White Cloud announced at the Elders Gathering that with the Elders Blessings, plans are now underway for the construction of the Roundhouse to begin in the summer of 2011. Although the Round House will not be recognized as an immediate need by INAC in the Capital Planning Study, Chief and Council believe that there is no better way than to begin the process of re-establishing our physical Community than with the construction of the Round House. The site will be at the Gathering Area where we have been feasting the lands, spirits and drums for the last seven years.

*Note: This spring we will also be performing and carrying out special ceremonies on the land in preparation for rebuilding so that all spiritual aspects and needs are met and satisfied.*

#### **UPDATE - STRATEGIC PLANNING**

Keeping in line with the need for good governance and direction your Chief and Council saw a need for the development of a Community Strategic Development Plan and an Economic Development Plan. Funding was secured in 2010 from Fed Nor/Industry Canada for the development of these two plans. Enclosed you will find the Final copy of the Lac des Mille Lacs First Nation 2011-2016 Community

Strategic Plan and the 2011-2016 Economic Development Plan. These Plans will assist the First Nation as it continues on our journey of re-establishing and re-building the First Nation.

Many thanks to Chief and Council, Administration, Staff, members of the Elders Council and the membership for their input into the development of the drafts and final documents of the plans for our First Nation.

## **UPDATE - EXPLORATION & MINING ACTIVITY IN OUR TRADITIONAL TERRITORIES**

As most of you are aware there has been a mining exploration boom in Northwestern Ontario over the past year as the world market for precious minerals has skyrocketed. Our Administration is working very diligently in tracking all Exploration/Mining Companies that are active within our Traditional Territories and have managed to make contact with them requesting that they enter into **Memorandums of Understanding** with the First Nation so that we are prepared should exploration reveal mineral deposits that warrant mining.

To date we have signed **8 MOU's** with various junior exploration companies that are actively drilling in our Territory and are continuing the consultation process with other companies. Through these MOU's our First Nation have been able to secure on-site employment and/or training opportunities for our members. We have been able to have a number of our members take part in Diamond Driller Helper Training programs that provided immediate employment upon completion.

In the case of the Osisko Hammond Reef Gold Corporation, the First Nation signed a Resource Sharing Agreement with Osisko in December 2010 that will benefit our First Nation as they continue with their advanced exploration of the Hammond Reef. As per the Resource Sharing Agreement, our First Nation is in the process of setting up a Trust Account for revenues generated and received.

Indications reveal that Osisko continues to be hopeful with their findings at the Hammond Reef location and that they will begin the Environmental Assessment of the project this summer. We have been informed that their plans are to begin construction of the mine site in late 2012 if they are successful in getting the EA approved by the Federal and Provincial Governments.

Your Administration has been very active in negotiating with Osisko and seeking out Mine Construction Companies that may be involved in the construction of the Hammond Reef should it become a reality with the goal of forming Joint Venture Agreements that will benefit the First Nation. Our aim is to not only secure training and employment opportunities but to also provide a revenue stream to the First Nation through Economic Development and the formation of JV Companies.

**Should the First Nation enter into Joint Venture Agreements or other Economic Development Ventures/opportunities, there will be a need to appoint Board Members to various Boards. We request that anyone interested in sitting on Boards representing your Community, to submit a letter of interest to the attention of the Chief and Council. It is preferable that Board members have a background or experience in one of these areas: business, economics, finance, forestry and/or mining sector.**

We would like to remind the membership that should the Hammond Reef Gold Project develop into an active mine we have readied the path for many employment opportunities for our membership. **We would like to once again request that the membership assist us with the building of a Skills Inventory. This is of the utmost importance to the First Nation. We would ask that all members, employed or not, who may wish to seek employment within the mining industry provide our Administration with an updated resume and/or a letter of interest so that we may have this information on file once employment opportunities become available.** Being able to go to our Skills Inventory will provide us with an avenue to notify members of opportunities as they become available.

## **TREE PLANTERS – SUMMER EMPLOYMENT**

There are a few companies that have contacted the First Nation Band Office informing us that they will be planting trees in our Traditional Territories once again this summer and are looking for band members who would like to be employed in tree planting. Please contact the Band Office if you are interested.

## **SAVANNE RIVER RESORT – OPPORTUNITIES 2011**

The following opportunities are available at the Savanne River Resort in May of 2011: Housekeeping, Maintenance/Dock Hand and Assistant Management. There is also the possibility of employment for 2 summer students aged 14-19. We request that those with an interest in the above, submit a letter of intent, complete with an updated resume, to the Band Office as soon as possible, attention Quentin Snider.

## **FIRST NATION NATURAL RESOURCES YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM**

The FNNRYEP, delivered by Outland Reforestation and operating out of Camp Firesteel just west of Upsala provides summer employment and training for First Nation Youth between the ages of 16 and 19 who are attending school and plan to return to school in the fall. Our First Nation is guaranteed two first year spots for 2011 with the possibility of having more spots available. We also have Youth from our First Nation who will be participating in their second and fifth years in the program. Participants receive a number of certificates through on-the-job training during this program and are also paid a daily wage. Further information on the program is available on the Outland Reforestation website or by contacting Quentin at the Band Office. Those Youth between the ages of 16-19 who are attending high school or Post Secondary Education that have an interest in taking part in this program are encouraged to send a letter of interest and their resume to the Band Office as soon as is possible. We would also remind last year's first year students to make contact with Quentin if you have an interest in taking part as a second year student so that we can ensure your participation.

## **QUARTERLY MEETING**

The next quarterly meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 15th from 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. at the Victoria Inn. The intent of these quarterly meetings is to keep our membership and families updated and are convened with the intent of being a productive and positive undertaking. The topic at this meeting will be a presentation by J.R. Cousins regarding our Capital Planning Study. We look forward to positive and meaningful dialogue, feedback, input and updates at these meetings.

## **2011 POW WOW COMMITTEE**

We are asking those interested in sitting on this year's Pow Wow Committee to leave their name with Danielle at their earliest convenience. Each year, we are seeing an increase in the attendance in both participants and visitors. This year's Pow Wow is scheduled to be held on July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>. Miigwetch to all volunteers who make this Pow Wow such an enormous success!

**CHI MIIGWETCH** to all of our volunteers, members and families who come out to participate and/or assist in any of the number of events that we hold throughout the year. You are very much appreciated!! Our Regalia Making project is well underway with various beading and sewing activities. There has been such a great interest in this area that a second project is planned for the fall of 2011. Miigwetch to all who make this a valuable and enjoyable time of learning and fellowship. Plans are also underway for an Ojibway language "nite" this fall. Watch for updates in the next newsletter!