



For Immediate Release

Anishinabek applaud legal victory for Grassy Narrows First Nation

UOI OFFICES, NIPISSING FN (August 19, 2011) – Anishinabek Nation Grand Council Chief Patrick Madahbee says that a decision by the Ontario Superior Court of Justice which upholds the Treaty rights of the citizens of the Grassy Narrows First Nation is a victory for all First Nations.

“We applaud Grassy Narrows First Nation in their recent victory to protect their traditional lands,” says Grand Council Chief Patrick Madahbee. “This win for Grassy Narrows is a victory for everyone. Protection of land, a way of life and honoring Aboriginal and Treaty rights is a formula that spells out ‘living up to promises’ for all.”

The decision, recently rendered by the Ontario Superior Court of Justice, finds that the Government of Ontario does not have the power to take away the rights in Treaty 3 by authorizing development, including logging and mining.

“Grassy Narrows, in their struggle to protect their traditional lands, have persevered and have proved that their Aboriginal and treaty rights were constitutionally protected rights that were not being honored by the Crown,” says the Grand Council Chief.

“It is unfortunate that this challenge lasted for as long as it did. The people of Grassy Narrows have felt the repercussions of pollution of their lands and waters for decades,” says Madahbee. “It is promising to know that an impact assessment will be conducted to assess their losses. This will never replace the angst that was suffered nor repair the physical effects of the industrial operations that took place, but there is hope in their future.

“This decision will have implications for many of our First Nations across this vast land involved in land and tenure disputes - with the difference being that, we now have a greater leverage to take on the challenges we face regarding our lands and resources.”

The Anishinabek Nation established the Union of Ontario Indians as its secretariat in 1949. The UOI is a political advocate for 39 member communities across Ontario, representing approximately 55,000 people. The Union of Ontario Indians is the oldest political organization in Ontario and can trace its roots back to the Confederacy of Three Fires, which existed long before European contact.



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