



CHIPPEWAS OF THE THAMES

FIRST NATION

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CHIPPEWAS OF THE THAMES BAND MEMBERS A NEW LAND CLAIM IN NEGOTIATIONS

June 8, 2009

Dear Band Members,

Recently Chippewas of the Thames accepted an offer by the Government of Canada to negotiate one of our largest land claims to date - the 'Big Bear Creek Claim'. The claim is for 5,120 acres of unsurrendered Chippewa land that the government sold in 1832 without consultation or compensation.

In 1996 Chippewa land claims research department (a separate entity to the land claim trust) began in-depth research to proceed with the Big Bear Creek Claim. After three years of research and writing our research department had collected and transcribed over 500 documents to support our claim and Chief and Council submitted the attached narrative in 1999.

On August 1, 2008 we received Canada's offer to negotiate and the Council responded with a Band Council Resolution to accept Canada's offer. Currently we are in the beginning stages of negotiations and the Council has been very supportive of the land claims process. With that in mind I would like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of our past leaders including our research team that made this claim possible. As a researcher and director, Jody Kechego has led the way with this claim for the past 14 years and in recognition of this fact our Council has appointed him to be our negotiations advisor.

As for a timeline, we are negotiating under the Specific Claims Policy that is accountable to a new legislation that was introduced in October 2008- 'The Specific Claims Tribunal Act'. Under this act, Canada has three years from the time the claim is accepted for negotiations to settle with the Band. If there is no settlement within that three year time frame then Chippewa can opt to take the claim to an independent tribunal.

For any questions regarding the process of negotiations or questions on the Big Bear Creek Claim in general feel free to contact myself or our Director of Research, Jody Kechego at the Band Office.

Sincerely,

Chief Vaughan Albert