

Tobique First Nation, NB May 2013

Wulustuk Times

Wulustuk - Indigenous name for St. John River

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Wulustuk Times:

Each month we gather and publish the latest, most current and relevant native information for our readers. Proceeding with this concept, we feel that a well informed person is better able to see, relate with, and assess a situation more accurately when equipped with the right tools. Our aim is to provide the precise tools and the best information possible.

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BORDER FEE TO ENTER USA PROPOSED - PLAN RESCINDED APR. 29!!!

p.paul

Across the entire North American continent people living on both sides of the US/Canada border have always seen themselves as true lifetime friends, close neighbors or even a 'family' with similar ties, dreams and lifestyles in each. We are essentially seen on a global perspective as one people.

This close relationship has gone through many a test and challenge over the years or centuries and still we, as a people, persevere in holding a collective view of ourselves as sort of a 'family compact' with only minor glicks or differences of having a border between us.

In many cases families on both sides live within minutes of each other, or in a very close proximity of their neighbor, brother, sister, mom and dad, etc, and that bodes perfectly for a friendly, peaceful relationship where each side can visit the other any time they like.

This closeness is especially true and honestly relevant in the many border-towns across the country where a mere crossing of an international bridge or a ten-minute drive on the opposite side can put you right at mom's dinner table at any time.

This is a precious commodity and an enduring reality we commonly share with one another when living in a close-knit border towns across the two vast countries.

A close tie like this is indeed held dearly from a family standpoint but extends to an invincible lock or bond in times of crisis or in larger threats upon either country. This ideal sense of oneness we dare not forget or overlook.

But the big question remains, what the blazes is behind all of this talk of 'border fee' upon entering the U.S.?

Personally, as a frequent user of a border crossing point in NB and as a concerned person, I have touched base with some respected personnel on this matter, on both sides, and to date, no one has responded with a clear, convincing or a conclusive statement why this issue has been raised so suddenly at this time. Everyone seems to have a negative opinion on it so far.

However, the media has had a heyday in reporting the official responses and reactions to the border fee and according to their reports a fee to enter the U.S. will not be taken lightly at any government or consumer level on either side.

The Canadian officials were especially concerned by the abrupt announcement and are determined to oppose any such fee collection upon entering the U.S.

Rescinded. For some reason however, a brief statement released by American officials on April 29th said that the proposed border fee would not be put into effect. Great news, so now we can remain as good friends and neighbors as always!

WORLD COMMUNITY URGES COMPREHENSIVE RESPONSE TO HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS FACING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN CANADA

News release

(Geneva) Many of Canada's closest diplomatic allies and trading partners are urging the federal government to do more to address the serious human rights issues facing First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples.

On Friday, Canada's human rights record was examined in a peer review process under the United Nations Human Rights Council.

During the process, called the Universal Periodic Review, more than 80 states offered comments and recommendations on Canada's human rights record. The vast majority of state comments related to persistent human rights violations experienced by Indigenous peoples in Canada. These include violation of land rights, inequalities in education, health, drinking water and sanitation, food insecurity, control over lands and resources, and racial discrimination.

More than 20 states raised specific concerns about high levels of violence against Indigenous women in Canada. New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland and others urged Canada to adopt a comprehensive and coordinated national action plan to end such violence. Ireland called on Canada to also conduct an independent national inquiry into missing Indigenous women and establish effective databases. Australia recommended that the Aboriginality of victims of gender-based violence be accurately recorded.

The United States noted that on a per child basis, federal funding for child and family services in First Nations communities “has fallen to less than 80 percent of that provided by provincial and territorial governments for services in predominantly non-Aboriginal communities.” The United States urged Canada to “ensure parity of funding and services between Aboriginal and non Aboriginal communities.”

The United Kingdom, Finland and Germany were among states that highlighted the importance of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Canada endorsed the UN Declaration in November 2010 but has denied any obligation to implement its provisions.

A number of states highlighted the importance of open collaboration with UN experts like the Special Rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous peoples and respect for recommendations from UN treaty bodies.

Inequalities in access to drinking water and sanitation systems were also noted. Norway, for example, recommended that Canada take measures to ensure that all Canadians have full and equal access to clean water and sanitation.

Canada was previously examined under the Universal Periodic Review in 2009. Many of the same concerns were raised at that time. Although Canada acknowledged “the underlying principles” of state concerns, actions to date on their specific recommendations remain inadequate.

The report of the latest review will be released by the United Nations on Tuesday, April 30.

N.B.'s FIRST ELECTED FEMALE CHIEF REMEMBERED

Margaret Labillois dies
CBC News

The family of Margaret Labillois gathered Sunday afternoon to honour the memory of the prominent First Nations elder in New Brunswick.

Labillois passed away Friday evening. She was 89.

Labillois hails from Eel River Bar First Nation, near Dalhousie.

She was the first person from her community to graduate from high school and served in the Royal Canadian Air Force during the Second World War.

Labillois was the first woman to be elected a chief in New Brunswick and a member of the Order of Canada and the Order of New Brunswick.

"On our reserve she brought back the culture. She went into the elementary school teaching our students here, our language and she instilled this in all of her children: what it means to us, who we are as traditional people," said Colleen Gauvin, Labillois' eldest daughter.

Gauvin said her mother is survived by 69 children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

"I see in my grandchildren the traditional way, cultural way, going to sweats, learning our language. They are going to take their rightful place in society. This took my mother quite a few years to get to where she is and and I hope that our grandchildren, my grandchildren, will carry on her legacy," she said.

The funeral will be held at St. John Bosco Church in Dalhousie on Tuesday morning.

SUICIDES FORCES FIRST NATION TO DECLARE STATE OF EMERGENCY

Lack of resources, mining development 'exhaust' Neskantaga First Nation
CBC News

A small First Nation in northern Ontario has declared a state of emergency after two suicides in less than a week, bringing the toll to seven deaths and 20 suicide attempts in Neskantaga in the past year.

Leaders in the community, which lies in Ontario's remote James Bay lowlands about 480 kilometres northeast of Thunder Bay, say pressures from nearby mining development are contributing to the problems.

About 400 people live in Neskantaga, and a recent health report said about half of them struggle with addictions — three quarters them younger people.

That leaves about a handful of employable adults to help grief-stricken family members and do all the other jobs in the community.

A First Nations leader in the region said meeting the demands of the burgeoning mining industry is only adding to Neskantaga's misery.

"It's just a lot of pressure, I think, from the outside," Nishnawbe Aski Nation Deputy Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler said, "as well as trying to deal with what's happening right in their community."

On Wednesday, the community issued a cry for help from all levels of government and Ottawa has promised additional nursing and counselling staff.

"Our hearts go out to those who have lost friends and loved ones to suicide," said Health Minister Leona Aglukkaq in a written statement.

"Health Canada will work closely with the community and send both additional nursing and counselling staff to assist during this difficult time."

One spokesman for a mining company in the region said there's no doubt his industry is creating an extra burden in small communities.

But "high unemployment [and] lack of opportunity can be addressed by having resource development," said Glenn Nolan, who is in charge of Aboriginal Affairs for one of the mining companies in the area.

WATER SUMMIT PLANNED AT HAZEN PARK CENTRE (OROMOCTO RIVER CENTRE) JUNE 21/22

Wolastoq, the Maliseet people call it: beautiful river. For as long as stories tell, the Saint John—a maze of blind bays, tributaries, lakes, and marshlands—has been the lifeblood of New Brunswick. The towns that grew along its banks structured their lives around its flows: its freezes and thaws, its log drives and floods, and the run of Atlantic salmon coursing from the Bay of Fundy upriver to spawn. Today, in a changing world, we must act to ensure that these resources remain healthy and secure. WWF is working to help the Saint Johns' communities establish that vision and bring it to life.

Over the next 5 years, WWF will work in partnership with local organizations, scientific experts, communities and river stewards from all walks of life to advance two key objectives toward the ultimate goal of restoring the Saint John by:

(1) Establishing a broadly shared vision and commitment, among diverse stakeholders, to engage in collaborative action to restore and sustain the health of the Saint John River and its waters.

(2) Bringing the best science to the table to develop an action plan to restore more natural flows to the river and its tributaries.

WWF is bringing its convening ability and scientific focus to help chart a sustainable path for the Saint John. Our intent is to help demonstrate a future where it is possible to meet the water needs of both people and nature, not just here, but in watersheds across the country.

This summer the WWF Living Rivers Initiative on the St. John River will host the inaugural St. John River Summit. This event will be held in Oromocto, New Brunswick on June 21-22, 2013 and will draw together a diverse group of organizations, agencies, rights holders, municipalities and industries, along with residents from within the watershed.

The Summit will focus on bringing together the many agencies, organizations and others active on the St. John River and creating the space for residents, stakeholders and rights holders to learn about the river and engage in constructive dialogue around its health and the stories that connect us. The Summit will also provide opportunities for participants to get out and about on the St. John and Oromocto Rivers - to have a personal experience. The Summit will include a "trade show", presentations, open discussions and opportunities to experience the river. It will introduce a diversity of players and residents to the river and will reinforce shared learning and experiences through relationship building.

For more information please contact Simon J. Mitchell, WWF Living Rivers Initiative Advisor at smitchell@wwfcanada.org or 506-238-4429

YOUTH 4 LAKES WALKERS PRESSING FOR BETTER CARE OF OUR WATERS

Atikokan Progress

“The next generation will feel the effects – your kids and mine.”

It’s a message that should resonate in the Canoeing Capital of Canada.

Youth 4 Lakes, a small group of dedicated Treaty 3 Aboriginal youth walkers, brought their message of the importance of preserving our lakes

to Seine River and Atikokan, as they continue along Highway 11 on a 2,100 kilometre trek which began in Winnipeg and will end at Ottawa's Parliament Hill, likely at the end of May.

The walkers from Manitoba and Kenora, aged 13 to 36, embarked from the Manitoba legislature March 28 after a "spirited drum fest," where walk leader Ben Raven addressed a crowd of several hundreds.

Raven spoke of the importance of standing up for the protection of Canada's waterways, and the repealing of the omnibus Bill C45 which passed in February, which they fear will strip away environmental protection measures for lands, resources and waterways. (The legislation was a major catalyst of the Idle No More movement). "Some of these bills are being pushed through so fast," said Raven.

This walk is a daunting undertaking, but many of the participants are already seasoned walkers for this cause. A month and a half before this journey began, they joined about 50 other youth, who walked from their northern First Nation communities to the steps of the Legislature in Winnipeg.

Raven was initially inspired by his activist cousin who supported the grassroots Idle No More movement that began last winter. "She has always been about the land; she's very cultural, very traditional." In support of her efforts, he started a water walk, carrying water from her Hollowater FN community (about 2.5 hours' drive northeast of Winnipeg) to the city.

Raven, from Manitoba's Jackhead FN, has witnessed the effects of human-caused disruption to his community's waterways. The community is located on the shore of Lake Winnipeg, which was recently named the world's most threatened lake for 2013 by the Global Nature Fund.

"When I was a kid I used to swim in the lake and dive off the bridge, and now you can't do that because there is so much algae from poor filtration due to the diversions," said Raven. "You can boil the water, but you still can't drink it."

In 2011, Health Canada reported that 122 First Nations in the country were under various types of water advisories.

Sixteen-year-old Victor Thomas also joined in on the seven-day, 374 km water walk south from his Skownon FN. His community also suffers from its share of water woes, several times experiencing massive flood damage

that has reportedly affected about one-third of the community. They blame the narrowing of the West Waterhen River Bridge for creating the flooding situation there.

Victor's mother Melinda, the lead support vehicle driver, said that now, the entire community is on alert because of the high precipitation and rapid ice melt in the river (between Lake Winnipeg and Lake Winnipegosis).

"A lot of homes are threatened; I've been thinking a lot about the flooding the past couple of days."

"Water is a very important issue" to First Nations everywhere, said Seine River's youth advocate Darcy Whitecrow, who welcomed the walkers to his community last week. (The Seine River watershed is actually undergoing a Health Canada and First Nations study to examine the potential contaminants and the effects on its residents).

The walkers are visiting communities along the way, sharing what they see as a common concern. They have often been given warm welcomes, accommodation, and the opportunity to share their message with students, youth and even passing motorists who stop to ask.

"Our message is being heard," said Raven, adding that youth can educate themselves to the issues, like Bill C45. "It's not really hard, it's more about wanting to know."

Canadians ignore the importance of water preservation at the expense of their offspring, he said. "The next generation will feel the effects – your kids and mine. It's never race or culturally based. A lot of people portray it as an 'Indian movement' and I can't stress it strongly enough that it is [more than that]. It's a bigger cause for all of the people of Canada and our water and lands."

Heading east

Whitecrow and some youth welcomed the group at Mine Centre Sunday, April 7 and walked with them to their community, where they hosted them that night.

"Seine River had a gathering before they left, with honour songs and a travelling song with a traditional drum to send them on for a safe journey eastward," said Whitecrow.

He and several youth walkers continued with the group to Atikokan, where they spent the night at the ANFC. Then it was on to Quetico Park Tuesday,

“as a show of our respect for their cause walking for lakes and rivers,” said Whitecrow.

“It’s giving a lot of hope, especially to youth, and that’s good because a lot of hope has been lost in our communities,” added Raven.

The Youth 4 Lakes walkers have been averaging 40 to 50 km per day, with 62 km their longest. Kenora’s Edmund Jack (who carries a ‘Thunder Stick’) contended with some pretty severely blistered feet by the time the group arrived at the ANFC, but remains undaunted. He has also walked for causes previously, and said he didn’t have to think about whether or not to join this one: “I just got up and went.” He’s enjoying meeting other walkers out on the road, and to hear of the different causes they’re supporting.

Raven notes that already “it’s tough out on the road – I won’t deny it. It’s harder on you mentally than physically.”

In addition to worries about potential flooding, Melinda learned her grandfather passed away a few days before the group reached Atikokan. Melinda and Victor headed back home – but didn’t make it far. “I talked to my husband and he encouraged us to keep going and support these youth,” she said. In the end, they came back. “We were emotional, but we couldn’t leave them; they’re family now.”

The youngest members of that ‘family’ are Raven’s cousin Amanda Jones, 16, and his 13 year-old god daughter Alyssa Nepinak. Thanks to cell phones and internet, they have been able to keep in touch with family and friends, which helps with homesickness, said Jones, who has never been as far east as Ottawa. “It’s hard, but we’re getting through it. My family and friends are pretty proud of me and whenever I say I want to go home they encourage me to keep going.”

Raven said the group sought some sponsorship from organizations prior to embarking and welcomes donations through its FaceBook group (to check it out make sure to use the numeral in the name, Youth 4 Lakes, as opposed to Youth for Lakes, a former account that has since been hacked, said Raven).

He added that whoever wants to join the walk for however long is welcome to help share the message, because “numbers are going to be heard.”

DAN'S CORNER: - DEATH OF OUR MARINE ENVIRONMENT ONE DROP AT A TIME

I remember, as a boy of five or six years of age, going with my family to the Tobique River to spend Sunday afternoons swimming and picnicking. Our whole family; my mom, my dad, my brothers and sisters, and me. It was a happy time.

At that time, we could pick any body of water - brook, river, lake or ocean - to swim in without fear of contracting some bacteria, toxin, chemical or pollutant. We didn't worry about waste by-products, carcinogenic materials or herbicides. These things were furthest from our minds as we enjoyed the beautiful things the Creator provided for us.

This is no longer true. Today, even the water we drink can kill us. Farmers pour millions and millions of gallons of pesticides, herbicides and insecticides into our Earth Mother. These toxins then make their way to our rivers, lakes, oceans and into our ground water. Chemical annihilation. And all of this takes place for the "bottom line" profit. It is not as it was in the days of our grandparents when crops were grown naturally, organically. Then, it was a process aimed at feeding people good, healthy, nutritious food. It was much less about "bottom line profit", shelf life, looks or supporting big business.

Homeowners contribute to the death of our marine environment too, and their reasons are so much more insidious. While farmers often use chemicals on crops just to compete in the market place and make a meager living, homeowners do it for ego. They pour millions of gallons of pesticides and other harmful chemicals on their lawns every year so they can create some kind of personal artificial kingdom that reflects their status. All of these chemicals seep into Earth Mother and find their way to our water systems.

The biggest culprits are the big businesses and big corporations. These "fat cats" have no more regard for the safety of our Earth Mother and the water supply than did their ancestors in 1492 Europe. It is their arrogant, uncaring attitude that has brought our Earth Mother to the point where she can hardly sustain us, to the point where our marine environment is dying, systematically and painfully. Human beings are killing our Earth Mother off one drop, one tree, one blade of grass, one animal species at a time - in the name of big business, in the name of improvement, and in the name of fixing things.

Scientists and big business rush headlong toward the destruction of our Earth Mother. It will mean suicide, self-destruction, if things do not change. The pumping of pollutants and chemicals into our Earth Mother and into our air will eventually poison the cradle of all life: our waters.

This arrogant attitude presumes to dominate and conquer our Earth Mother. It presumes that we, as small, fear-filled human beings, are to control this world and everything in it with the most-powerful (richest) ones making the decisions.

That is not what the Creator put human beings here to do. He made our Earth Mother perfect and asked us to care for her and nurture her so, in turn, she would always be able to sustain and nurture us. It was a reciprocal relationship. How do human beings improve perfection? The improvements are destroying our Earth Mother and will eventually destroy us.

We look at the ocean. It is so large we fail to notice how it is being killed off. We have been fooled into thinking scientists will discover some way to revise the oceans and all marine life, so we close our eyes to the poison that still comes from big business, the farmers, and thoughtless homeowners. There is no magic cure to nullify the effects of this kind of genocide. The polluting has to stop.

We have to begin by recognizing the facts and acknowledging what has been, and what still is, taking place to destroy our marine life and our water supplies. Once we accept this and reconcile it on a personal level, we must take positive steps to stop this systematic genocide. But, it begins with us individually, with the recognition that our marine environment is being poisoned one drop at a time, and if we do not act soon, those drops will add up to suicide for our Earth Mother and all of us.

GRAND MOTHER TALES

Nicholas Smith

You may have seen the fairly recent YOU TUBE film “The Journey,” about the mid winter Lakota reconciliation ride by horseback from their present homeland to their 1850 homeland. It was also the place where 38 of their forefathers were hung in a mass hanging by order of President Abraham Lincoln. The trip was most meaningful for the participants returning to their

homeland in Minnesota that none had never seen. The trip was made as a reconciliation event of that horrendous incident that included grandchildren of the some of the victims. These determined riders made their trip during a winter's worst period of snow, cold and strong winds. They were given food and sleeping places at night for both horses and riders by descendents of white settlers now ashamed of the action of their forefathers.

I could not help but be reminded of an seventeen century incident that included the Penobscot, Passamaquoddy and Maliseet. In 1675 the well-known King Philip was killed. His wife was drowned attempting to hurriedly escape when her canoe swamped crossing Narragansett Bay. The result of King Phillip's War saw the Europeans extending their settlements without negotiating with Indians. The Indians concluded that it was necessary to raid and attack the settlements where the populations were making the greatest gains.

Richard Waldron was one of the earliest settlers at Cochecho, NH. (Now Dover). He built the first saw mill there, had a store trading with Indians, became a judge and was given the rank of Major as a leader in the wars against the Indians. He had a role in King Phillip's War. The Indians also noted that when trading with Indians, he had a heavy thumb on the scale so Indian customers did not receive what they should have in trade for the furs.

Major Waldron invited all the Indians including those to the east: Penobscot, Passamaquoddy, and Maliseet to come to Cochecho on July 3, 1676, to sign a Treaty of Peace, Maliseet, Penobscot, and Passamaquoddy were represented at the signing of the treaty. Over the years Over the years many Indians came, some from great distances, to trade with Major Waldron. However, in 1676 Massachusetts became uneasy about so many roving Indians around many of their towns. In September there were about 400 Indians around Cochecho. Many of the settlers were nervous that so many unknown Indians came to their town. Some were from the east and had signed the Peace Treaty. On September 6, 1676, Major Waldron suggested a sham battle to show their trust in the Treaty. The Indians were told they would not need their guns for the battle. The settlers were on one side, the Indians formed opposite them. Suddenly the Indians realized that they were surrounded by armed soldiers. Although most were rounded up and sent to Boston as prisoners, a few were able to escape. Several were hung in the Boston prison but most were sent to the

Caribbean and sold as slaves. Two hundred years later there was an unsuccessful attempt to locate families of those who were sent to the Caribbean.

This act of deception quickly made the rounds of all the neighboring Indian communities. There was an increase in aggressive activity against the white settlements that continued to grow at a fast pace. No large well-planned action took place until June 1889 when the people of Cochecho found a large number of Indians, many unknown to them, in their town. Two Indian women went to the three garrison houses asking permission to sleep there for the night. It was common for traveling Indians to stop at a settlers house and ask to sleep by the fireplace over night. They usually received a positive reply. "If we want to leave during the night, how do we open the gate?" the women asked. They were shown how to open the gates. When all was quiet and everyone was soundly asleep, they opened the gates. The waiting Indians entered, placed a guard at the gate while the main body of Indians rushed to Major Waldron's bedroom. Waldron awoke, saw Indians, jumped out of his bed, grabbed his sword and went after them, The Indians retreated . The Major went back to his room to get his gun. The Indians followed him. One hit the Major on the head with tomahawk. The felled Waldron was carried to a table and made to sit up while the Indians shouted, "Who will judge Indians now?" The Indians demanded food. After eating, each Indian cut a strip across Waldron's chest with his knife saying "I cross out my account." Then they cut off his nose and ears forcing them into their victim's mouth. One Indian held the Major's sword beneath him and the weakened, once proud man, fell on it wounding himself mortally. Before the Indians left the town twenty-two settlers were killed and twenty-nine were made prisoners.

This was a well-known story that grandmothers told their grandchildren. I heard it first at Woodstock, later from Penobscot and Passamaquoddy. All versions were almost exactly identical, a good example of how well a people without a printed or written copy listened, retained and passed on messages. Although the story was included in Maliseet teachings, it is not in school history books. I checked local documents at the time of the events and found their print form was almost exactly like the Indian oral form, an excellent example of the reliability of Maliseet oral history.

DEAN'S DEN: - HE SPOKE OF...

A computer that sits on my lap
The road I drive on is asphalt
I don't need to set any trap,
I've a hospital bed for an illness
A school to learn how to cope
Windows, doors, and lights for the night
A sink, a bathtub - and rope,
An electric stove and a ... !"
His look ... what caused me to halt
And I realized I had become
A part of the problem - the fault!

He spoke of depleted resources
Fulfilling of want - with no heed
Of the plight and pity - of progress
Of willingly watching earth bleed,
He spoke of the flora and fauna
Of desecration, abuse, and of place
Greed, and pure profanation
Of material rapids that race,
He spoke of "life's journey", together
Of so little that's left now to loose
He spoke of pride, and of people
Of ... not, really, being able to choose!

D.C. ButterfieldHe Spoke Of

I don't know how to explain it
But he seemed so vivid and real
He spoke of a time long, long ago
And I too could feel the appeal,
He spoke of "simple" - and freedom
When man was one with the earth
And only took what was needed
Respectful of value - and worth,
He spoke to me with derision
"Look what's been done to the land

The rivers, the meadows, the forests
That once were pristine and grand!"
He spoke of living thru seasons
Everything provided - on time
They knew, existed - with nature
Its pulse - its throb - and its rhyme,
He spoke, and his face and his features
Were plainly chagrined and pained
"You've lost so much, so much, meaning
And what, and what, have you gained?"

"I don't need to wonder 'bout supper
Or sleep on a hard makeshift floor
I don't need to hunt for my family
I can buy my meat at the store,
I have a fridge, washer, and dryer

Believe in yourself! Have faith in your abilities! Without a humble but reasonable confidence in your own powers you can be successful or be happy.