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Dear Sirs,

I am writing to you as a professional historian and archaeoastronomer in order to share with you my reasons for an intensifying sense of alarm and dismay at recent developments at the South March Highlands in Ottawa. It is not my intention to offend anyone, and I write in haste to share with you the results of several years of research with an interdisciplinary team (described further below), work that strongly indicates the South March Highlands contains irreplaceable archaeological remains. Some of the most important of these remains are surface features directly threatened by the running of heavy equipment “blind” on top of a snow pack. Therefore I feel under an obligation to share this information with appropriate authorities, in hopes of contributing to a just and enlightened resolution of a difficult situation.

From the materials I have seen to date, I have reached the conclusion that the public servants charged with the resolution of the question of whether or not to place a large housing development at South March have yet to be made fully aware of the nature of the challenge this decision represents. It is my hope that you will consider carefully the information in this missive, information that indicates the very high probability that the South March Highlands constitutes an important World Heritage site.

I am offering this information because, as I read the back and forth of this issue, it has always been the position of the developer, of his archaeologist, of the various city, provincial, and national authorities involved, of respected Native Elders, and of many, many thousands of citizens that, should it be shown that there is important cultural and archaeological material at the site, then logging should not proceed at least until such material has been studied and its significance understood. Given this publicly expressed unanimity of opinion **by all parties**, I respectfully suggest that the information below enumerated must necessarily trigger a halt to logging at South March until the issues raised can be resolved. Otherwise the expressed wish of all parties is violated.

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SUMMARY

Although no comprehensive archaeological survey of the South March Highlands has been conducted, already available archaeological evidence, agreed to by all parties, combined with recourse to other sources of information make clear the extremely high probability that the South March Highlands represent a unique and irreplaceable laboratory for understanding the human experience during the Upper Paleolithic (that is the end of the last Ice Age), and the transition to and adaptation to the new post-glacial world (the Archaic Period) up to the present. Evidence already exists of ceremonial and calendrical activities but the extent of such activities, as evinced by stone markers has never been properly explored and will certainly be totally destroyed if heavy logging equipment is run over the entire site. Understood in this light, continued logging would represent a willful destruction of an irreplaceable cultural resource, the equivalent of burning a library without even knowing its contents. As the information herein enumerated has emerged only in the last three years, it renders moot previous archaeological reports written without benefit of recent discoveries.

I. SOUTH MARCH HIGHLANDS AND THE CHAMPLAIN SEA

As the ice began to melt, at the end of the last Ice Age about 12,000 years ago, a way to the Atlantic ocean was opened up all the way into the Ottawa River basin, and south into what is now upper New York state, including an important site on the Champlain Sea marine beach terraces at Fort Drum, New York. As a local high point of land, the South March Highlands emerged as an island in a vast, newly created sea populated by ocean-adapted people (possibly navigating in large umiaks) engaged in marine hunting.

These same sea-faring people left their mark to the south on the beach terraces at Fort Drum in New York, on the shores of the same Champlain Sea from which Island South March emerged. At Fort Drum, a very large ceremonial complex containing an enormous array of matched pairs of boulders marking the four cardinal directions and the solstices was discovered a number of years ago. Recently a well respected archaeoastronomer was asked by the United States Army to give his opinion of the site. According to the officer who accompanied him, he arrived skeptical, but left convinced that the site was an authentic and very old calendar. The testimony of this officer has been recorded in a film centered on a site in Massachusetts called Turners Falls, to which it will momentarily be necessary to make reference.

The South March site contains at its high points areas of bedrock, scraped clean by glacial activity. It is a fact well established in Native American ethnographic literature

that topographical eminences were considered by the aboriginal people to be places of special power. In particular any such spot that included **exposed bedrock** was considered particularly powerful. This statement is authoritatively corroborated in a work called *The Wolves of Heaven* by Carl Schlessier. The preface to the book states that the elders of the Cheyenne nation, a group of Western Canadian Shield, Algonquin-speaking, native people who emigrated into the Dakotas about 500 B.C.E. were tired of being told by anthropologists that they had arrived in the Black Hills in the 18th century of the current era, and they wanted to set the record straight. So the information in this book is not an “interpretation” of an Algonquian world view, but an authentic indigenous exposition of it.

The significance in aboriginal thought of exposed bedrock at a topographical eminence, then, is understood by reference to a set of beliefs held by the Algonquin-speaking Cheyenne, but also so widespread throughout the Americas that I doubt any professional ethnographer would find quibble with it. In the native view, expounded at length by the Cheyenne Elders, there exist three worlds: the world below, the domain of the ancestors, the middle world, that is the land of the living, humans and all their relations – the winged ones the four-legged, the creepy crawlies, the swimmers, the two-leggeds – and the world above, the domain of the Powers Above, the Sky People of the starry world. On earth the domain of the world below, begins at bedrock, the womb of mother earth, from which all life comes and to which it returns. It is the responsibility of the living to honor the struggles and sacrifices of the ancestors, by maintaining harmony in the middle world for the benefit of all living beings through ceremony properly conducted, as taught by the ancestors, involving offerings to the powers above. When a human being stands on a high hill, feet on bedrock, head in the sky, with the intention of making ceremony, he or she is therefore at a place of unusual power, connected to all three worlds simultaneously – past, present, and future, the domains of the ancestors, of the living, and of the higher powers.

It is neither my task nor my intention to persuade you, or anyone, of the rightness of such a belief, only to point out the South March highlands, the first land to emerge from the Champlain Sea, must have been considered, by the first people who inhabited a world emerging from the ice, to be a sacred place, and therefore one would expect to find there evidence of ceremonial activity. Alone, rising from the waters, it was destined, by its geological configuration, to become a ceremonial center. Today it remains almost intact, at the center of Canadian governance.

It is your decision whether it will remain so tomorrow. And it is my task to explain to you why I am convinced, even as I write these words in dreadful haste, that an irreplaceable part of the cultural heritage of Canada, and all the world’s people is, day by day, being incrementally destroyed. Since no complete archaeological study of the South March site has been undertaken, it is necessary to make reference to a comparative site which will make it possible understand the gravity of the stakes in Ottawa.

II. UPPER PALEOLITHIC SITE AT TURNERS FALLS, MASSACHUSETTS

In 2007 at a small town on the Connecticut River called Turners Falls in Massachusetts, the Federal Government announced the awarding of a \$20,000,000 grant for the purpose of extending the runway at the rural town's airport. The plan was to bulldoze a hill adjacent to the runway into a hollow at the end of the runway, saving the costs of trucking in fill. Because U.S. Federal law allows any federally recognized tribe to call for an archaeological assessment of any development project they feel might destroy cultural patrimony, the Narragansett Indian Tribe of Rhode Island, invoked their rights because of their ancient historical connection to this place.

Turners Falls holds a tragic place in the early history of Massachusetts. There is (was) a magnificent waterfall here where a legendary salmon run took place each spring. Indians from the southeastern New England coast, from Connecticut and New York met there each spring to fish and then again in late summer (mid August) for ceremony. King Phillips War broke out in 1675 (the bloodiest war in U.S history in terms of casualties per capita, on both sides). The Narragansett were pulled in when refugees they were protecting in Rhode Island (women children and elders) were put to the sword and burned alive by Puritan militiamen. The winter of 1675-6 was a time of bitter famine. The Indians in southeast Massachusetts sent the women and children to Turners Falls first because their lives were at risk, and second to exploit the rich abandoned maize fields there in hopes of avoiding a second brutal winter of hunger. The names of towns in this area today - Deerfield, Greenfield, Northfield, describe what the Puritans found already *in situ*, cleared fields of rich bottom land created for the growing of maize and tobacco. In the spring of 1676 a small band of warriors who had traveled with the refugees rustled some cattle downriver in Hadley. A Captain Turner pulled a militia together, approached the camp of the refugees from above, before dawn, fell on the camp and killed everyone they could 300 women, children, elders –women throwing their children over the falls, like that.

What surprised local archaeologists and caused an airport commissioner to roll his eyes and make a comment about “Indian tree-huggers” a statement which got him fired by the Governor a few days later, was that the tribe was not concerned about the archaeological site already known inside the airport perimeter. This site at the end of the runway, opposite the “threatened” hill was a sandy terrace, facing east towards the hill. This was a 12,000 year old occupation site, which was on the beach of what is called Glacial Lake Hitchcock, an enormous body of fresh water, an inland sea extending from Northern Vermont to Middletown Connecticut in what is now the area of drainage of the Connecticut River. As far as the Narragansett were concerned, they said it was fine with them if that asphalted over the whole site, let the ancestors rest in peace. No, what concerned them was the hill across from the site. They said the stonework all over this hill was placed there by Native American, that the hill was a ceremonial prayer hill, and they were prepared to go to the mat over the protection of this place..

Well, this caused an uproar, but the Deputy Tribal Historic Preservation Officer of the tribe, Mr. Doug Harris was determined to draw a line in the sand at this place and at this

time. He set about assembling a team of people, a local woman very knowledgeable about a wide range of enigmatic stone constructs in the woods of western Massachusetts, an engineer, an astronomer, a film-maker, and, as it happened, me, an archaeoastronomer. When I entered this little drama, half the hill had been logged off in direct violation of federal law. I met with the team at the site for the first time on August 12th 2007 on the eve of the Perseid meteor shower, the time of the annual summer meet in days gone by. As we walked up the hill you could see big, flat triangular stones (what are called “Manitou Stones” locally) spudded up out of the ground and lying in the dried mud of heavy equipment tire tracks, a scene that came to my mind later watching the film *Avatar*. I had seen some stone sites before, a chamber near my home that functions as a calendar, but I had never seen anything like this. It was a low, that is completely non-functional, stone wall about two feet wide and of indeterminate depth into the ground just visible above a cover of leaves, a construct that snaked its way up the hill from southwest to northeast for about 1500 yards to the top of the hill which had an area of exposed bedrock.

The reason Mr. Harris brought people together on that hill at that time was that something unexpected turned up as the result of the logging. First of all there, because of the logging, a newly created, unimpeded view to the west across the Connecticut River valley. And second, the logging had revealed a section of wall heretofore unnoticed. The bulk of the wall mass composed of smallish stones of black granite ranging from about ten to forty pounds, but in this one section of wall there were two very large (probably about a hundred and fifty pounds each) white, smooth river boulders that someone has carried up there and placed a few feet apart along the wall. Behind them was a third, triangular stone pointing to the horizon at an angle somewhat north of west. Short of a blinking neon sign saying, “Stand here dummy,” I couldn’t think of a more obvious signage announcing an observation point. Tasked by tribal elders to find out where the sun set on an important ceremonial date, Mr. Harris pulled us together as witnesses and to determine with as much exactitude as possible exactly where the sun set over the hill across the valley known as Pocumtuck, after the local tribe that once inhabited this region. According to colonial records and by custom to this day, the Narragansett perform important ceremonies on and August 12/13 April 30/May 1. Interestingly the sun rises and sets at the same point along the horizon on these days, some 260 days apart.

Two days later, Eva Gibavic, the woman mentioned above, was on top of Pocumtuck with a GPS and found, right where it “should have been” a construction of stones arranged to form a window, and oriented towards December solstice sunrise. We were beginning to enter a world where it was possible to predict where one could go to find further stone markers.

It really did not require a lot of heavy lifting to begin to read the site. In Algonquian mythology, but also in the myths of all the peoples of the Americas, North, Central, and South alike the Milky Way is considered the path of Spirits. It is the road the ancestors walk to “get to the other side.” The land of the dead, in the myths of all the peoples of the Americas, lies in the southern Milky Way between the constellations we call Scorpius and Sagittarius. At the time of winter solstice the sun is right there at the entrance to the

land of the dead. These beliefs were recorded from the early 1600's by Roger Williams who was kicked out of Massachusetts by the Puritans because he liked Indians and believed in freedom of religion. He ended up in Rhode Island with the Narragansett. What he said of the Narragansett was that it was their belief that the creator had his lodge at the entrance to the land of the ancestors, in the southwest.

So here, at the Turners site, a long wall snakes downhill from northeast to southwest. During the summer, the Milky Way runs northeast southwest through the sky, and at this time you can see Scorpius and Sagittarius low in the southwest. In Algonquin lore, the meteors of the Perseid shower - which emanate from a source seen in the Milky Way in the northeast and blaze down the Milky Way in a southwesterly direction - are said to represent the souls of dead warriors on their way to Creator's lodge. To this day the Narragansett enter the dancing circle during August 13 ceremonies *from the northeast*, which is to say they were oriented towards the ancestors and abode of Creator.

Now you may well be wondering just how "connected" an ice age site in Massachusetts, and subsequent religious practice can realistically be thought to be comparable to what was going on way up in Ottawa. Briefly, here are three facts to consider.

First, as a practical matter, Glacial Lake Hitchcock and the Champlain Sea were separated by only a few miles. If you go today to a place called Rochester, Vermont, there is a high mountain pass there, the Brandon pass, that contains an old Indian trail connecting the Connecticut River Drainage, from the Champlain drainage. If you walk that trail today you come upon a cairn field, more than two hundred stone piles many more than eight feet high, with the stones sorted from large to small, bottom to top. At the time of the last ice age, when South March was almost certainly an important place of ceremony (your archaeologist Robert McGhee will have made these points better than I in his response to the developer's archaeologist's report of several years ago) just this small bit of land in Vermont separated the Champlain Sea from Glacial Lake Hitchcock. A boat ride, a short hike, and another boat ride and, with the right winds, you could have traveled from Ottawa to Turners in under a week.

Next, I draw your attention back to that mountain, Pocumtuck, over which we watched the sunset. As mentioned investigation up there immediately revealed a corresponding stone structure. But if you extend that line further west another 15 miles it goes directly over Burnt Hill, an other worldly place with extremely unusual dolmens. So we, or more particularly Eva Gibavic and the engineer Tim Fohl decided to see what would happen if they extended the line back eastward towards the coast. They found that it crossed a number of important sites, including the stone calendar chamber near my home mentioned. But nobody was prepared for what we found out about where the line left the mainland. It crossed directly through the largest secondary burialsite (final, communal resting place of all the People) in southern New England at Wellfleet on Cape Cod. We had begun to find a sort of geodetic grid based on the bearings at sunrise and sunset on important ceremonial dates linked to sites on high hills with accompanying stonework.

Later we found a second line of sites along another bearing, this time emanating from the tip of Nantucket Island and passing through a very important set of ceremonial sites in Lakeville, Massachusetts, the heartland of King Phillip, thence through a very important chamber at Pratt Hill, thence to the calendar chamber near my home (which is like the fulcrum of a pair of tongs, with the Turners Falls line and this second line crossing just here.) This second line connects the December solstice sunrise and June solstice sunset points on the horizon. And would you care to guess where this second line, extended westward leaves the continental United States and enters Canada. It goes directly through the massive calendar site at Fort Drum in New York.

As mentioned Fort Drum was on the southern shore of the Champlain Sea oriented northwest and south of South March Island. At least a dozen 12,000 year old sites have been found along this southern shoreline. Among the features found at all these sites are boat building tools and Labrador chert. These seafaring ancestors of the Algonquin-speaking peoples and their presence 12,000 years ago in the Champlain Sea and at Glacial Lake Hitchcock write the forward to a new chapter in our understanding of how a huge section of North America, emerging from the ice, was first explored and then conceptually laid out.

(All of this information was put into a film, called "Great Falls," produced by Ted Timreck, a Peabody award winning film-maker and fellow of the Arctic Institute of the Smithsonian. The film was submitted to the National Register of Historic Places – in lieu of paperwork - and on the basis of this film, Turners Falls is now eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. This was an important breakthrough for the tribes of southern New England, ending years of official denials that the native peoples in Massachusetts built anything whatsoever in stone. In fact it is not an exaggeration to term this Federal recognition as a conceptual revolution, one I hope you will be able to see applies equally to the situation at South March Highlands.)

Third, I draw you attention once more to Mt. Pocumtuck. Here, as recorded by the local Historical Society in 1893 is a story about the origin of that mountain:

"The Pocumtuck range, according to Indian tradition, is only the petrified body of a huge beaver, which used to disport itself here in a pond of corresponding dimensions. This animal, by continuing depredations on the shores, had offended Hobomuck, who at length determined to kill it. Accordingly, armed with a trunk of an enormous oak, he waded into the water and attacked the monster. After a desperate contest, the beaver was dispatched by a blow across the neck with the ponderous cudgel. The carcass sank to the bottom of the pond and turned to stone. Should any skeptic doubt the truth of this tradition he is referred to the beaver itself. Wequamps (Mt Sugar Loaf) is the head, north of which the bent neck shows where fell the fatal stroke; North Sugar Loaf, the shoulders, rising to Pocumtuck Rock the back, whence it tapers off to the tail and

Cheapside. All this is now as plainly to be seen by an observer from the West Mountain as it was the day this big beaver pond was drained off."

Please note that, according to the story this giant, dangerous beaver sank to the bottom of a body of water, not to emerge again until the "pond" was drained. What you have here is a story that has been passed down for more than 12,000 years, when the beaver lay beneath Glacial Lake Hitchcock. And equally interesting is the fact that, among its more famous megafauna brethren such as the woolly mammoth and saber-toothed tiger, there also existed at the end of the last ice age a giant beaver roughly the size of a black bear, about eight feet long, weighing 600 pounds with teeth the size of bananas.

The reason I bring this up is that this same myth is found in the Ottawa river basin. The quotes below are from "Algonquin History in the Ottawa River Watershed by James Morrison, Sicani Research and Advisory Services

"Algonquin people believe they have always lived in the Ottawa Valley, an understanding which is reflected in their traditional stories. The anthropologist Frank Speck collected a number of these Algonquin legends, including the following narrative about the pursuit of a giant beaver, when carrying out fieldwork at Timiskaming Reserve in the summer of 1913.

Wiskedjak Pursues the Beaver

Wiskedjak was traveling about looking for adventures. He never succeeded in anything he tried to do. He never did well and was always hungry. In his travels he came to Kiwegoma "Turnback-lake" (Dumoine Lake). Now he even had no canoe, but he was a great swimmer. When he came to Kiwegoma, he found it even too big to swim, so he started to walk around it. He wanted to hunt beaver. On one side of the lake, he came to a round, high mountain that looked like a beaver-lodge. In front of it he found deep water, just as there is in front of a beaver lodge. And a little way off shore was a little island with many grasses; just as the beaver provides a winter supply of greens for himself near his lodge, so this island he supposed to be the beaver's winter supply and the mountain his lodge. Wiskedjak wanted to get this great beaver, but did not know how to get at him. Then he thought of draining the lake, so he went way around to the lower end and broke away the dam so that the water would run off. Soon the water began to go, and Wiskedjak lingered about, waiting for it to get low enough to get at the beaver. Pretty soon he took a nap. When he woke up, it was rather late and he hurried back to the mountain only to find that the beaver had gone. Now he thought the beaver might have escaped over the dam with the water, so he started back, and sure enough he saw the beaver going over the dam. "Now", said he, "I lost my beaver". He followed hard after him and had lots of trouble to keep up. He followed him past Coulonge River and Pembroke Lakes. But when the beaver reached Calumet chutes, he was afraid to go through and took to the portage. Then Wiskedjak saw him and chased him harder over the portage. When he got to the lower end, he lost sight of the beaver and started back up river (Ottawa River). When he got to the upper end of the portage, he saw fresh tracks. "Well", said he, "there has been somebody here. I wonder if I could trace him. We might have something to eat". Then he followed the track to the lower end of the portage where he had already been, but nobody was there. So he went back to the upper end of the portage and there saw more fresh tracks leading to the lower end. These he followed to where he had been twice before, but saw no beaver. He then discovered that they were his own tracks he had been following and gave it up. The tracks back and forth can be seen plainly today imprinted on the stone of Calumet portage, which the Indians call Wiskedjak tracks (Speck 1-3).

This story can be interpreted in a number of ways. On one level, it can be taken as a myth of national origins. Though the beaver's final resting place varies, the sites all fall within the historic range of the

eastern *anishnabeg*, basically between the north shore of Lake Huron and Montreal. But there is a core of even deeper historical truth to the legend. Giant beavers, along with many other now-extinct megafauna, inhabited North America between 10 and 12,000 years ago. Their remains have been found in various locations, including Ontario. Moreover, the story of the trickster-transformer draining Lake Superior or Dumoine Lake in pursuit of the beaver, who then creates rapids and portages as it flees to the east, evokes the natural history of the great lakes basin and the Ottawa River watershed in the aftermath of the last great ice age.”

The Algonquian story of the culture hero doing battle with a giant beaver is an amazingly intelligent means of conveying with vivid images the chaotic ever shifting water world at the end of the last ice age. The animal who dams waters is defeated, the waters released, order restored and the watersheds as we recognize them today created. That the Pocumtuck Indians at Turners had the same story as the Anishinaabe in Ottawa tells you just how close culturally the two groups were and, I hope opens the way for me to make a few closing comments on what I see as culturally consistent stone structures in the South March Highlands.

III. STONE STRUCTURES AT SOUTH MARCH HIGHLANDS

I have seen the video of the small stone circle and nearby small boulder. I have also been informed that a Native elder has visited the site and found that it is surrounded at a modest distance by four larger boulders placed at the four cardinal directions. According to the developer’s archaeologist this small boulder lies “to the northeast of the stone circle.” In Canadian rock art, the glyph for the sun is either a circle or a circle with a dot in the middle. (See *Reading Rock Art*, by Grace Rajnovich, PhD.) There is a distinct notch in the boulder pointing you to the stone circle. The ensemble says look southwest [at sunset]. Need I say more?

As for the four boulders at the cardinal directions, any native ceremony I have ever attended begins with an invocation directed to the four directions to invite into the circle the approval blessing and protection of what are considered powerful and benign spirits. By contrast the intercardinal direction [NE/SW ANDSE/NW] leading to the openings to the supernatural worlds – the domains of the ancestors and of the sky people - are intrinsically more hazardous, and thus the “protective” presence of the four boulders aligned to the cardinal directions.

Given the apparent significance of the arrangement of these stones at South March, I found the report of the developer’s archaeologist particularly unsettling, and yet at the same time, as mentioned already, we are only now just beginning to discern the outlines of a system of networked sites, containing sophisticated astronomical, geographical and cultural information. Previous surveys have not had the benefit of these new viewpoints, which might be summarized as follows: The stone sites are like the hardware of an information system. The mythology is analogous to the “app” or software the sites are designed to “run”, and the sky is the operating system. Still I think the archaeologists comments demonstrate as well as anything how misguided the current logging at South March Highlands is. He says,

“Proceeding south-west from the stone circle, the land rises slightly on to the crest of one of the many bare bedrock knolls which protrude through the forest within this portion of the KNL Lands. Most of the surface of the knoll is smooth, although towards its western end, a cluster of irregular, shattered rock fragments are present. Some rocks appear to have been recently removed from this area to support a nearby fence stake.”

It doesn't seem to occur to him that at the horizon the site directed him to walk to somebody helped him/herself to stones to support the fence that is supposed to protect the site, thus disturbing the site. And when he says, “there is no need to assume that these rocks were positioned by human hands,” I have to say I find that statement uninformed. And when he applies “logic” to the site, stating that the circle must be a boundary marker, well fine, but who's to say that the landowners didn't use an existing construct as a convenient was to make the division. We find many instances of that here in Massachusetts.

I think you can probably see now why someone in my position feels obligated to state that this logging simply must stop until this site gets a proper archaeological inspection. I saw the developer quoted in a newspaper saying that he was logging in winter out of a desire to protect the site. Can you see why logging that land in winter is absolutely the worst possible thing you can do, forcing the workers to operate heavy equipment “blind” with no clue what surface features lie beneath the snow they are driving over?

It is my sincere wish that I have been able convey to you gentlemen why the new information that is being developed about sites like South March Highlands, mandates that cooler heads prevail and that steps be taken to avert the destruction of a national treasure. All that is required is aq cessation of a few months, until the snow melts and a team of competent investigators can evaluate the site. It is hard to conceive a more effective strategy for utterly ruining this wonder of human genius than the turning loose of heavy equipment on this site in the dead of winter.

High ground with bedrock invites ceremony. Ceremony requires timing. Timing requires calendars. The Algonquin people constructed their calendar instruments of stone and placed them on high hills so that they could control their astronomical observations. As such an important hill, the first land to appear from beneath the Champlain Sea, the South March Highlands are virtually certain to be at the center of a network of sites. If you destroy the surface features at South March, you lose the Rosetta Stone that indicates the entire ceremonial landscape of the Ottawa area and beyond. I implore you to use your power to stop this logging until it can be determined just what the Canadian people have here at South March Highlands.

Sincerely yours,

William Sullivan, PhD.

