



A CIRCLE OF ALL NATIONS  
A CULTURE OF PEACE

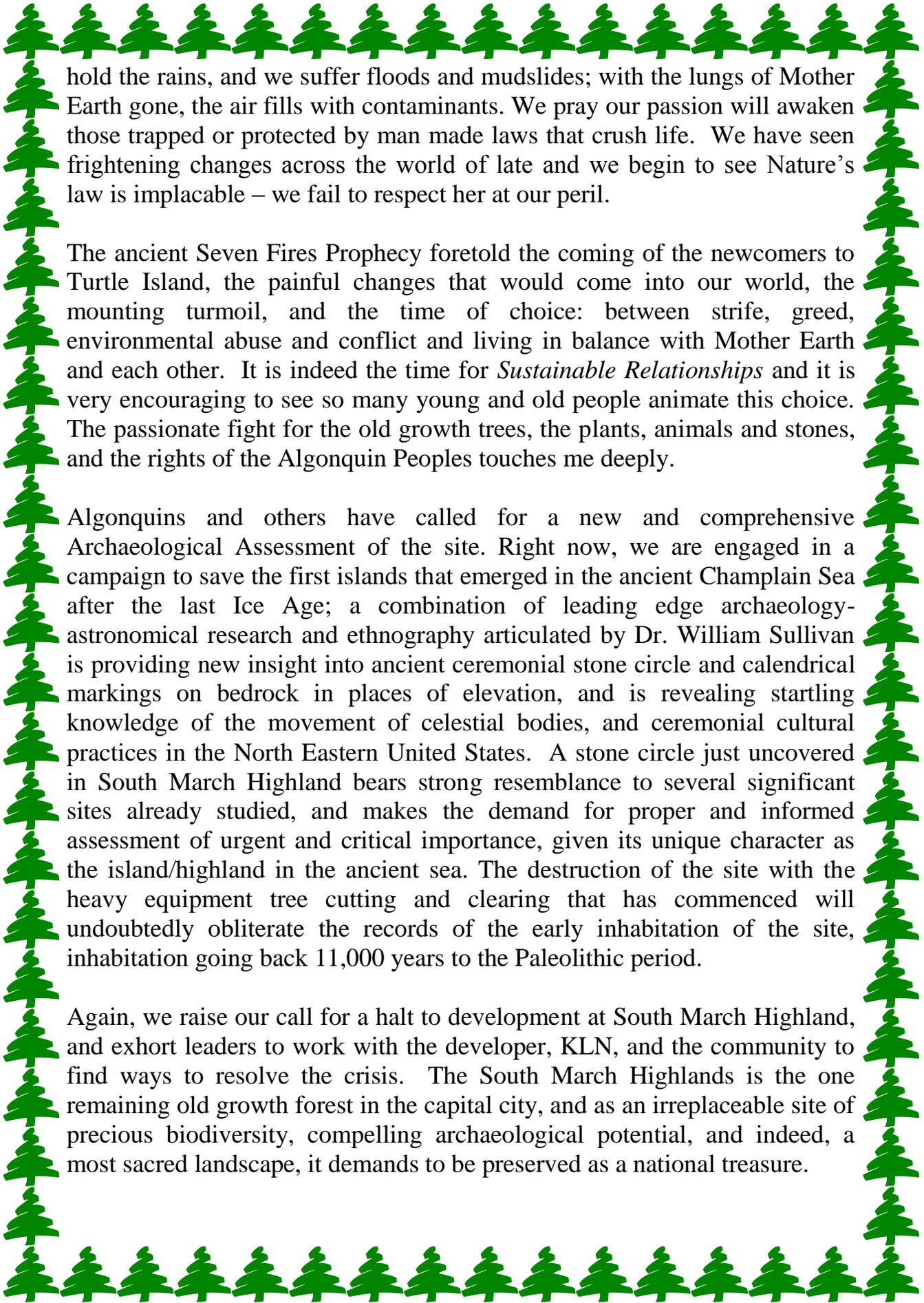


Message from Grandfather William Commanda  
Closing Ceremony  
**Sacred Fire for South March Highlands,**  
Queen's Park, Toronto  
February 13, 2011

Kwey Kwey, Bonjour, Greetings,

I am sorry that I am not able to join you today – sadly, at 97, my body won't let me do all the things I would like to do. This is a historic moment – to see the Sacred Fire awaken so many hearts and minds to the destruction of the unique old growth forest at South March Highlands. I thank Dan Amikwabi Bernard for bringing the message about this passionate grass roots campaign in the capital city to this place of decision-making; I thank my friend Danny Beaton, a great fighter for Mother Earth, for joining his prayers with ours; I thank the South March Highlands team – Paul Renaud, Steve Hulaj, Julie Comber, Adam Caldwell, Ron BigBear Goddard, the Algonquin leaders and countless others for their passionate and tireless vigilance, fact finding, research, outreach, petitioning and prayers. They have done much to educate and motivate us to stand with Nature. I also thank you who are listening with open minds and hearts to our prayer to save this precious ancient forest of immense bio-diversity, the many species at risk and vulnerable wildlife from destruction. I hope you will all be mobilized to join this urgent call to give voice to the wild things and the wild places.

For forty years, I have carried the Sacred Wampum Belts of the Anishinabe Peoples, and their energy is strong today. The Three Figure Welcoming Wampum Belt was created in the 1700s, and the Indian in the centre agreed to share his values and his grand natural resources in equal parts with the newcomers, then the French and English; today, the Indian still stands between the old settlers and newer immigrants, close to the land. We have been invisible for a long time, but today, we are surrounded by many in the cry for the forest. As we cut the trees, we erode the soil, the earth cannot



hold the rains, and we suffer floods and mudslides; with the lungs of Mother Earth gone, the air fills with contaminants. We pray our passion will awaken those trapped or protected by man made laws that crush life. We have seen frightening changes across the world of late and we begin to see Nature's law is implacable – we fail to respect her at our peril.

The ancient Seven Fires Prophecy foretold the coming of the newcomers to Turtle Island, the painful changes that would come into our world, the mounting turmoil, and the time of choice: between strife, greed, environmental abuse and conflict and living in balance with Mother Earth and each other. It is indeed the time for *Sustainable Relationships* and it is very encouraging to see so many young and old people animate this choice. The passionate fight for the old growth trees, the plants, animals and stones, and the rights of the Algonquin Peoples touches me deeply.

Algonquins and others have called for a new and comprehensive Archaeological Assessment of the site. Right now, we are engaged in a campaign to save the first islands that emerged in the ancient Champlain Sea after the last Ice Age; a combination of leading edge archaeology-astronomical research and ethnography articulated by Dr. William Sullivan is providing new insight into ancient ceremonial stone circle and calendrical markings on bedrock in places of elevation, and is revealing startling knowledge of the movement of celestial bodies, and ceremonial cultural practices in the North Eastern United States. A stone circle just uncovered in South March Highland bears strong resemblance to several significant sites already studied, and makes the demand for proper and informed assessment of urgent and critical importance, given its unique character as the island/highland in the ancient sea. The destruction of the site with the heavy equipment tree cutting and clearing that has commenced will undoubtedly obliterate the records of the early inhabitation of the site, inhabitation going back 11,000 years to the Paleolithic period.

Again, we raise our call for a halt to development at South March Highland, and exhort leaders to work with the developer, KLN, and the community to find ways to resolve the crisis. The South March Highlands is the one remaining old growth forest in the capital city, and as an irreplaceable site of precious biodiversity, compelling archaeological potential, and indeed, a most sacred landscape, it demands to be preserved as a national treasure.



Megwetch!

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