

ALGONQUINS OF ONTARIO SEEK ANSWERS ABOUT ABORIGINAL ARTIFACTS

The Algonquins of Ontario welcome the recent announcement by KNL Developments, owners of the lands north of the Kanata Beaver Pond, to hold off on any tree cutting until the AOO have examined evidence to confirm or dispute the presence of significant aboriginal artifacts within the KNL lands.

These lands are located within Algonquin Traditional Territory which is the subject of Land Claim Negotiations between the Government of Canada, the Province of Ontario and the Algonquins of Ontario.

Over the course of the last few months, the AOO have been increasingly concerned by the divergent opinions on the presence or absence of significant aboriginal artifacts within these lands.

Robert Potts, Chief Negotiator for the AOO stated that the “interest of the AOO is to clarify whether there is indeed potential for significant aboriginal artifacts within the KNL lands.” Mr. Potts highlighted that the AOO respect private property rights, but underscored that “if aboriginal artifacts exist it is crucial that these resources be preserved and respected in a manner consistent with Algonquin traditions.”

The AOO have engaged the services of an Archaeologist with significant experience with Algonquin history and culture to conduct a review of existing documentation and to provide recommendations for next steps. The AOO are expecting this report to be completed by the end of January.

Mr. Potts acknowledged that the decision by KNL to hold off on any tree cutting and site disruptions in the short term is critical – as it provides the AOO with the opportunity to make an independent and informed assessment of the existing information before deciding what if any further steps need to be taken.

The Algonquins of Ontario are represented by 16 individuals who have been elected by their 10 communities throughout the Traditional Territory. The mandate of the Algonquin Negotiation Representatives includes developing the overarching principles of an Algonquin Treaty with the intent of negotiating its terms with the governments of Canada and Ontario.

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