



PRESS RELEASE

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OFFICIAL SIGNING CEREMONY FOR TSIKARISTISERE TRUST

The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne is proud to announce the successful signing ceremony of the Tsikaristisere Trust, which took place on Thursday, January 23, 2025, at the Tsi Snaihne Recreation Center. This event marked the formal establishment of the trust, with Trustees and Council members officially signing the documents in the presence of community members.

In 2015, Canada presented a Land Claim Settlement Offer to the Mohawks of Akwesasne, including the opportunity to reclaim 18,282 acres of land through Canada's Additions to Reserve Process and a monetary settlement of \$239,808,436.00. This settlement addressed claims related to the historically leased lands known as Tsikaristisere, or 'Dundee.'

Following negotiations, the final agreement was put to a referendum vote, conducted online and by ballot from October 1 to December 8, 2018. The community approved the settlement, with the results validated on January 7, 2020.

The creation of the Tsikaristisere Trust marks a major milestone in this journey, reflecting a commitment to responsibly manage the settlement's resources. The Trustees are tasked with holding, managing, and investing the Trust Property in accordance with the terms of the agreement for the benefit of the Beneficiaries. A primary priority of the Trust is the purchase of land to be set apart as reserve land for the Mohawks of Akwesasne under Article 3.2 and 5.0 of the Settlement Agreement and additionally, through community consultation, the following areas were identified as community needs and priorities:

- Land management activities and programs, including the Additions to Reserve process;
- Education or training;
- Advancement of culture, heritage, and/or language;
- Environment;
- Green energy initiatives;
- Economic development;
- Housing;
- Indigenous rights;
- Infrastructure;
- Public safety;



- Emergency;
- Social welfare, health, and/or wellness;
- Sports, recreation, and/or the arts; or
- Other essential public services.

Since the initial payment from Canada, the settlement fund has been in the RBC and as of December 31, 2024, is now valued at \$259,683,600.93. These funds are now able to be transferred to the Tsikaristisere Trust, where they will grow at a significantly quicker pace.

Grand Chief Leonard Lazore addressed the significance of the moment, stating: "Tonight marks a milestone in our journey to reclaim what rightfully belongs to our people. This trust represents more than just a financial step; it embodies our people's rights, our collective vision for the future, and the power of what we can achieve when we come together."

Acting Executive Director Shannon Roundpoint added: "When Akwesasne began discussions on the settlement of the Tsi Karistisere claim, the return of land and access to funds for important community needs were the driving hopes that are now becoming a reality. Thank you to the trustees for stepping up into a role that will pave the path for future generations; it will be rewarding for them as well as the community. We also extend our appreciation to the community members who have stayed engaged in this process, and to the technical team for their hard work."

For more information about the trust, please contact the Internal Technical Team (ITT) at itt@akwesasne.ca or ARRO Program Manager Cheyenne Lazore at 613-575-2250 ext. 2134.

Niawenhkó:wa.