

Wellington County Municipalities Land Acknowledgment Project

Town of Minto Wellington County, Ontario

Prepared for:

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Executive Summary

ASI was retained by the Chief Administrative Officers (C.A.O.s) of six of the local municipalities within Wellington County to assist in the development of Indigenous land acknowledgements for the municipalities. The six municipalities involved in the Land Acknowledgement Project include:

- Township of Centre Wellington
- Township of Guelph/Eramosa
- Township of Mapleton
- Town of Minto
- Township of Puslinch
- Township of Wellington North

This report focuses on the land acknowledgement for the Town of Minto.

A territorial or land acknowledgement involves making a statement acknowledging the presence of Indigenous peoples past and present and recognizing Indigenous traditional lands and treaties. The land acknowledgements will also identify the displacement and exclusion of Indigenous peoples from their traditional territories.

In addition to developing land acknowledgements for the municipalities, the Land Acknowledgement Project also included the development of a short information booklet about land acknowledgements and their importance that can be used by municipal staff.

This report, as well as the land acknowledgements developed as part of this project, should be considered living documents to be reviewed on a regular basis and updated as needed.



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The study team also thanks the members of the Working Group which included the Chief Administrative Officers for participating municipalities, including Chairs Andy Goldie (Township of Centre Wellington), Derrick Thomson (Town of Minto), and Glenn Schwendinger (Township of Puslinch), as well as:

- Township of Centre Wellington: Dan Wilson
- Township of Guelph/Eramosa: Ian Roger
- Township of Mapleton: Manny Baron
- Town of Minto: Mark Potter (interim)
- Township of Wellington North: Mike Givens, Matthew Aston (interim), and Darren Jones (interim), and Brooke Lambert



Report Accessibility Features

This report has been formatted to meet the Information and Communications Standards under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (A.O.D.A.). Features of this report which enhance accessibility include: headings, font size and colour, alternative text provided for images, and the use of periods within acronyms. Given this is a technical report, there may be instances where additional accommodation is required in order for readers to access the report's information. If additional accommodation is required, please contact Annie Veilleux, Manager of the Cultural Heritage Division at Archaeological Services Inc., by email at aveilleux@asiheritage.ca or by phone 416-966-1069 ext. 255.



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1.0 Introduction

Canadian societal perceptions of Indigenous histories are changing and there is increased appetite to discuss and learn about Indigenous identity within Canada today. In order to move forward with reconciliation as a nation, we need to explore every opportunity to discuss Indigenous culture past and present. Supporting First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples' cultural revitalization and integrating Indigenous knowledge systems, oral histories, laws, protocols, and connections to the land into the reconciliation process are essential.

Reconciliation must become a way of life. It will take many years to repair damaged trust and relationships in Aboriginal communities and between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples. Reconciliation not only requires apologies, reparations, the relearning of Canada's national history, and public commemoration, but also needs real social, political, and economic change. Ongoing public education and dialogue are essential to reconciliation. Governments, churches, educational institutions, and Canadians from all walks of life are responsible for taking action on reconciliation in concrete ways, working collaboratively with Aboriginal peoples. Reconciliation begins with each and every one of us.

Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, p. 185

Archaeological Services Inc. (A.S.I.) was retained by the Chief Administrative Officers (C.A.O.s) of six of the local municipalities within Wellington County to assist in the development of Indigenous land acknowledgements for the municipalities. The six municipalities involved in the Land Acknowledgement Project include (Figure 1):

- Township of Centre Wellington
- Township of Guelph/Eramosa
- Township of Mapleton
- Town of Minto



- Township of Puslinch
- Township of Wellington North

A territorial or land acknowledgement involves making a statement acknowledging the presence of Indigenous peoples past and present and recognizing Indigenous traditional lands and treaties. The land acknowledgements will also identify the displacement and exclusion of Indigenous peoples from their traditional territories.

In addition to developing land acknowledgements for the municipalities, the Land Acknowledgement Project also included the development of a short information booklet about land acknowledgements and their importance that can be used by municipal staff (Appendix B).

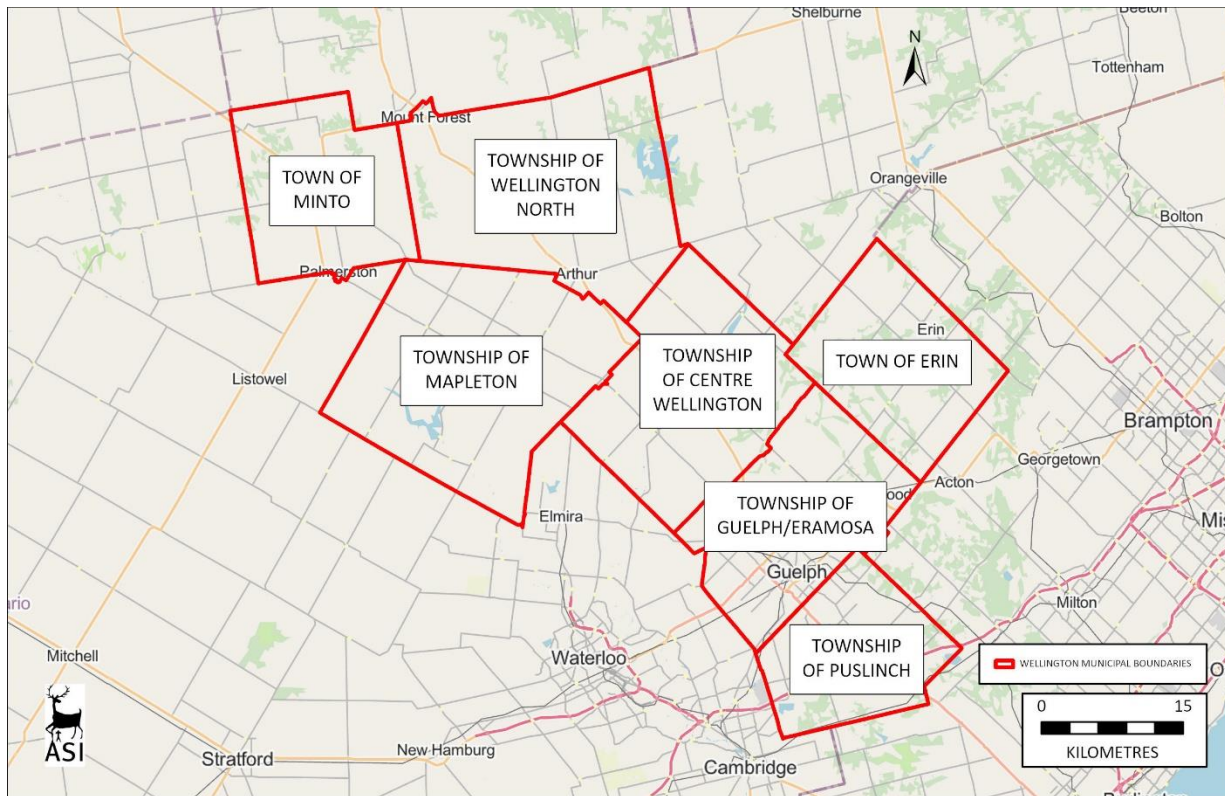


Figure 1: Municipalities within Wellington County.

2.0 Approach

2.1 Background Research and Municipal Consultation

As part of this project, A.S.I. worked with a working group made up of the municipal C.A.O.s which was led by Andy Goldie (former C.A.O. of the Township of Centre Wellington) in 2019, Derrick Thomson (former C.A.O. of the Town of Minto) between January and March, 2022, and Glenn Schwendinger (C.A.O. of the Township of Puslinch) for the remainder of the project. The working group provided A.S.I. with an understanding of any research and work done to date in the individual municipalities as it pertains to land acknowledgements. Documents shared by the working group were reviewed as part of the background research.

A.S.I. also conducted a critical review of land acknowledgements to get an understanding of both the best practices associated with creating and giving land acknowledgements, as well as the criticisms that have been raised regarding this practice. Information was gathered from opinion pieces by Indigenous and non-Indigenous individuals, from existing land acknowledgements, and through ongoing conversations with Indigenous nations. A summary of this review is included in Section 5.0.

A review of primary and secondary sources was also undertaken to get an understanding of the Indigenous history of the area as well as an understanding of the treaties covering the municipalities within Wellington County. Research was also conducted with the specific intent to try to identify specific examples of exclusion and displacement that could be recognized in a land acknowledgement. This included a review of select diaries of early settlers and/or surveyors, township histories, and early newspaper articles. Results of this research are summarized in Section 4.0.

It should be noted that information on specific encounters and interactions with Indigenous individuals or groups in the archival record is quite sparse and much



of it may be anecdotal or third hand accounts. In many communities in south-central Ontario, there were no or only transitory Indigenous inhabitants at the beginning of European settlement. Further archival research could lead to more information, although this would be quite time consuming. Additional information may emerge when this report is circulated to the municipalities and Indigenous nations. This document should therefore be treated as a living document that will be added to as new information becomes available.

2.2 Indigenous Engagement Program

Input from Indigenous nations is integral to the success of the Land Acknowledgement Project. A list of Indigenous nations that have established or potential Aboriginal or Treaty rights within Wellington County, or who have an established interest in the region, has been consolidated from several sources. Based on these criteria, ten nations were contacted about the project:

- Aamjiwnaang First Nation
- Beausoleil First Nation
- Chippewas of Georgina First Nation
- Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point
- Chippewas of Rama First Nation
- Haudenosaunee Confederacy Chiefs Council via Haudenosaunee Development Institute
- Métis Nation of Ontario
- Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation
- Saugeen Ojibway Nation
- Six Nations of the Grand River First Nation Elected Council

The approach and results of the Indigenous engagement program are described in Section 5.0 below.



3.0 Land Acknowledgements: A Critical Review

Land acknowledgements are a traditional Indigenous practice that have been used since time immemorial. They honour, respect, and recognize the Nations that live within a given territory. Land acknowledgements originating from settler-colonial institutions and governments, however, are more recent, having been around for almost a decade. They have increased in use following the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action. Land acknowledgements have also been the subject of much criticism from both Indigenous and non-Indigenous commentators. Some critics have pointed out that poorly conceived land acknowledgements can have the opposite effect of what they are intended to do. Instead of contributing towards the goal of truth and reconciliation they can be seen as just one more example of lip service being paid to centuries of oppression and injustice meted out to Indigenous peoples in Canada. Land acknowledgements are an opportunity for the larger society to state the wrongs of the past and contribute to a feeling of inclusivity and should not be the source of further alienation. As Anishinaabe author Lynn Gehl has pointed out, a land acknowledgement “should not be an attempt to appease non-Indigenous guilt” (Mascoe, 2018).

More importantly, a land acknowledgement should not be the culmination of a municipality’s attempt at reconciliation but a starting point (Deer, 2021). Once adopted, one should seek opportunities to improve the relationship between non-Indigenous and Indigenous members of the community as well as ways to reach out and support Indigenous communities. Finally, a land acknowledgement should not be static but fluid and open to revision.

It is important that, before the creation of a land acknowledgement, serious thought be given to the wrongs committed to Indigenous peoples in the past and how that has continued to the present. This can be done at a local level through historical research and interviewing Indigenous knowledge keepers to reveal specific examples of exclusion and displacement. This information should be included when it is available. For example, the Township of Lake of Bays land



acknowledgement, adopted in 2021, alludes to Indigenous people's legacy and respectful stewardship for the land, but does not refer to any specific group:

“We want to acknowledge that we are on lands traditionally occupied by Indigenous Peoples. Their legacy and respectful stewardship for this land continues to shape Lake of Bays today and we want to show our respect. Centuries after the first treaties were signed, they remain relevant today in guiding our decisions and actions.” (The Corporation of the Township of Lake of Bays, 2021).

This land acknowledgement could be enhanced with more specific information, especially since this information is available. It would be much more effective and truthful if this land acknowledgement recognized that the Lake of Bays area was used for centuries by the Bigwin family who, until the 1930s, travelled each spring from the narrows at Lake Couchiching to Lake of Bays until they were forcibly excluded and denied access to their traditional lands and ancestral burial grounds. It should also be noted that the land acknowledgement incorrectly refers to treaties being signed centuries before even though the Treaty dealing with this area was signed in 1923.

Dr. Hayden King, who helped develop the original land acknowledgement for Toronto Metropolitan University (previously Ryerson University) has become a staunch critic (King, 2019). He identifies the redundant use of certain terms as being problematic, with certain land acknowledgements using different terms to refer to the same group. For example, referring to both the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and Anishinaabe is redundant since the Mississaugas are Anishinaabe. Of even greater concern, he also points out that land acknowledgements are at times historically inaccurate and recognize and acknowledge the wrong nations.

The identification and acknowledgement of incorrect Indigenous groups can be seen with the City of Hamilton's land acknowledgement which refers to the Erie (Hamilton, 2021). The Erie was an Iroquoian-speaking confederacy of nations that lived on the south side of Lake Erie between present day Buffalo and Erie, Pennsylvania There is no evidence that they ever resided in Ontario. Western



University uses the term Chonnonton to refer to the Hatiwendaronk (Attiwandaron, or Neutral) in their land acknowledgements (*Land Acknowledgement - More Than Words*, n.d.). This is derived from an article on the Hatiwendaronk in the Canadian Encyclopedia written in 2015 by William C. Noble who believed, based on some undisclosed source, that Chonnonton was an endonym for the Hatiwendaronk (Noble, 2015). He believed this word translated as “people who tended deer” and that this was evidence that they had domesticated deer. This has been picked up on the internet and Wikipedia in particular. The term Chonnonton, however, has no validity as a Hatiwendaronk referent. The name appears only once; on Samuel de Champlain’s 1612 map and is certainly the Wendat word for the Seneca (see also Heidenreich, 1976, p. 82). Champlain later refers to the Seneca in his written account as Chouontouarouon. Unfortunately, it is not known what the Hatiwendaronk called themselves. The term Hatiwendaronk is Wendat and can be roughly translated as those who speak a slightly different language. The Hatiwendaronk referred to the Wendat by a similar name.

When referring to a particular Indigenous community in a land acknowledgement, it is important that the term used by the Nation or community should be used, rather than the moniker coined by the Europeans who encountered them. For example, the term Hatiwendaronk should be used instead of Neutral, Wendat instead of Huron when discussing the ancestors of the Huron Wendat in Ontario, and Haudenosaunee instead of Six Nations Iroquois. The term Iroquois in general is considered derogatory by some Haudenosaunee.

There are also examples of land acknowledgements that do not name Indigenous groups at all, such as the case with the Toronto Pride Land Acknowledgement which alludes to a “spiritual connection and relationship to mother earth” (Isador, 2019). One Indigenous critic responded to this lack of recognition by stating: “We’ve been getting erased for years and now that there is finally some acknowledgement, we’re being erased again.” It should be noted that the Toronto Pride Land Acknowledgement has since been amended.



Dr. King also points out that references to treaties between Nations are used out of context and often do not reflect the original intent of the agreement. As Dr. King states: "It really actually becomes harmful to the actually existing Indigenous nations that are still trying to negotiate and unravel their diplomatic relationships with each other." (Deer, 2021). Land acknowledgements should not exacerbate current tensions between existing nations.

Another criticism is that land acknowledgements are often recited by rote without giving thought to their meaning or whether it is even appropriate for the occasion. Bob Goulais, an Anishinaabe leader and traditional teacher states that a land acknowledgement should not be recited like the American Pledge of Allegiance and without thinking about the meaning and spirit behind the words. It is important that the land acknowledgement not simply be a laundry list read without meaning and sincerity. The person reading the land acknowledgement should fully understand what is being said. As stated by Shana Dion, Assistant Dean of First Nations, Métis and Inuit Students at the University of Alberta: "it resonates within yourself when you're saying it, so that it's not just words you're reading from a script, but that it comes more from the heart." (APTN InFocus, 2019; McLaughlin, 2020).

It is also important to ensure that the correct pronunciation is used. Dr. King points out that if you are not able to correctly pronounce the name of the Indigenous group, you should not do the land acknowledgement. This lack of care can have the opposite effect of making it seem that little thought has gone into the delivery of the land acknowledgement.

A land acknowledgement should originate with non-Indigenous members of a community since it is a statement of respect and an offer of reconciliation to Indigenous people. However, one must also keep in mind the Indigenous axiom "Nothing about us without us," which requires going to the relevant Indigenous community(s) with a draft land acknowledgement to solicit comment and input. When engaging Indigenous nations, one should seek input from recognized representatives or knowledge holders. Some Indigenous nations in southern Ontario have Knowledge Keepers who have been identified as contacts for



assisting with land acknowledgements. Several First Nation web sites provide land acknowledgement guidelines, probably reflecting the volume of requests from municipalities and organizations for this type of information. In an area such as Wellington County where there are overlapping treaty and traditional territories, one must reach out to multiple nations with rights and interests.

4.0 Indigenous History of Wellington County

4.1 Historical Summary

Southern Ontario has been occupied by human populations since the retreat of the Laurentide glacier approximately 13,000 years before present (B.P.) (Ferris, 2013). Populations would have been highly mobile, inhabiting a boreal parkland similar to the modern sub-arctic. At this time, the open boreal woodlands likely offered a rather limited selection of floral resources, hence subsistence would have been primarily oriented towards hunting and fishing. Archaeological data suggests that populations would gather near large bodies of water formed by the melting glaciers and would travel inland in pursuit of large game such as caribou, mammoth, and mastodon. Mammoth and mastodon bones have been found in several locations in the Township of Centre Wellington (Pat Mestern, personal communication). By approximately 10,000 B.P., the environment had progressively warmed (T. W. D. Edwards & Fritz, 1988) and populations now occupied less extensive territories as they were able to take advantage of a greater availability of resources (Ellis & Deller, 1990).

Between approximately 10,000-5500 B.P., the Great Lakes basins experienced low water levels, and many sites which would have been located on those former shorelines are now submerged. This period produces the earliest evidence of heavy wood working tools, an indication of greater investment of labour in felling trees for fuel, to build shelter, and watercraft production. These activities suggest prolonged seasonal residency at occupation sites. Polished stone and native copper implements were being produced by approximately 8000 B.P.; the latter was acquired from the north shore of Lake Superior, evidence of extensive exchange networks throughout the Great Lakes region. The earliest evidence for cemeteries dates to approximately 4500-3000 B.P. and



is indicative of increased social organization, investment of labour into social infrastructure, and the establishment of socially prescribed territories (Brown, 1995; Ellis et al., 1990, 2009).

Between 3000-2500 B.P., populations continued to practice residential mobility and to harvest seasonally available resources, including spawning fish. Exchange and interaction networks broaden at this time (Spence et al., 1990) and by approximately 2000 B.P., evidence exists for macroband camps focusing on the seasonal harvesting of resources (Spence et al., 1990). It is also during this period that maize was first introduced into southern Ontario, though it would have only supplemented people's diet (Birch & Williamson, 2013). Bands likely retreated to interior camps during the winter. It is generally understood that these populations were Algonquian-speakers during these millennia of settlement and land use.

The Princess Point complex (A.D. 500-1000) represents the first shift to horticulture in Ontario and is considered to be the precursor to the later Iroquoian-speaking populations in southern Ontario. Princess Point archaeological sites are characteristically located immediately adjacent to water, and most have been found within the paleosols of the lower reaches of the Grand River floodplain, with concentrations in the Kitchener-Waterloo and Brantford regions, such as the Grand Banks site near Cayuga (Crawford et al., 1998; Walker et al., 1997).

From approximately 1000 B.P. until approximately 300 B.P., lifeways became more similar to that described in early historical documents. By approximately A.D. 1000-1300, the communal site is replaced by the village focused on horticulture. Seasonal disintegration of the community for the exploitation of a wider territory and more varied resource base was still practised (Williamson, 1990). By the second quarter of the first millennium B.P., from approximately A.D. 1300-1450, this episodic community disintegration was no longer practised and populations now communally occupied sites throughout the year (Dodd et al., 1990). From the middle of the fifteenth century until the period of contact with European explorers (A.D. 1450-1649) this process continued with the coalescence of these small villages into larger communities (Birch & Williamson,



2013). Through this process, the socio-political organization of the First Nations, as described historically by the French and English explorers who first visited southern Ontario, was developed.

Samuel de Champlain in 1615 reported that a group of Iroquoian-speaking people situated between the Haudenosaunee and the Huron-Wendat were at peace and remained “la nation neutre”. In subsequent years, the French visited and traded among the Neutral Nation (Hatiwendaronk), but the first documented visit was not until 1626, when the Recollet missionary Joseph de la Roche Daillon recorded his visit to the villages of the Hatiwendaronk whose name in the Huron-Wendat language meant “those who speak a slightly different tongue” (the Neutral apparently referred to the Huron-Wendat by the same term). Like the Huron-Wendat, Petun, and Haudenosaunee, the Neutral people were settled village agriculturalists (Lennox & Fitzgerald, 1990).

Between 1647 and 1651, the Neutral were decimated by epidemics and ultimately dispersed by the Haudenosaunee¹. Many of the surviving members were adopted by the Haudenosaunee, most notably the Seneca Nation. The Haudenosaunee subsequently settled along strategic trade routes on the north shore of Lake Ontario for a brief period during the late seventeenth century. Compared to settlements of the Haudenosaunee, the “Iroquois du Nord” occupation of the landscape was less intensive. Only seven villages are identified by the early historic cartographers on the north shore, and they are documented as considerably smaller than those in New York State. The populations were agriculturalists, growing maize, pumpkins, and squash. These settlements also played the important alternate role of serving as stopovers and bases for Haudenosaunee travelling to the north shore for the annual beaver hunt (Konrad, 1974; von Bitter & Williamson, 2023).

¹ The Haudenosaunee are also known as the New York Iroquois or Five Nations Iroquois and after 1722 Six Nations Iroquois. They were a confederation of five distinct but related Iroquoian-speaking nations - the Seneca, Onondaga, Cayuga, Oneida, and Mohawk. Each lived in individual territories in what is now known as the Finger Lakes district of Upper New York. In 1722 the Tuscarora joined the confederacy.



Peace was achieved between the Haudenosaunee and the Anishinaabe Nations in August of 1701 when representatives of more than twenty Anishinaabe Nations assembled in Montreal to participate in peace negotiations (D. Johnston, 2004). During these negotiations, captives were exchanged and the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe agreed to live together in peace. Peace between these nations was confirmed again at council held at Lake Superior when the Haudenosaunee delivered a wampum belt to the Anishinaabe Nations. This agreement between the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe nations is referred to as the Dish with One Spoon (Jacobs and Lytwyn 2020).

In 1701 the Haudenosaunee entered into the Treaty of Fort Albany (Nanfan) with the British Crown where they agreed to place their beaver hunting grounds under the protection of the King of Britain and to reject the French from building forts on their lands, which included most of southcentral and southwestern Ontario, including Wellington County.

In the following years, the Haudenosaunee called upon the King to honour his Treaty and “tear down” the French Forts at Detroit, Niagara, and Fort Frontenac (Kingston) from their Beaver Hunting Grounds. The King did honour the terms of the 1701 Treaty. To confirm the King’s commitment to the Five Nations and to allow their castles (forts) in the Five Nations lands as protection against the French, an affirming agreement was entered into on September 14, 1726.

The protection of the Five Nations interests throughout their Beaver Hunting Grounds is affirmed in Article 15 of the Treaty of Utrecht between the British and the French, wherein the Five Nations specifically would not be molested between (Lakes) Ontario, Erie, and Huron.

In 1763, following the fall of Quebec, New France was transferred to British control at the Treaty of Paris. The British government began to pursue major land purchases to the north of Lake Ontario in the early nineteenth century. The Crown acknowledged the Mississaugas of the Credit as the owners of the lands between Georgian Bay and Lake Simcoe and entered into negotiations for additional tracts of land as the need arose to facilitate European settlement. Historical accounts suggest that the County continued to be used by the Mississaugas of the Credit following these cessions.



The eighteenth century saw the ethnogenesis in Ontario of the Métis, when Métis people began to identify as a separate group, rather than as extensions of their typically maternal First Nations and paternal European ancestry (Métis National Council, n.d.b). Living in both Euro-Canadian and Indigenous societies, the Métis acted as agents and subagents in the fur trade but also as surveyors and interpreters. Métis populations were predominantly located north and west of Lake Superior, however, communities were located throughout Ontario (Métis National Council, n.d.b; Stone & Chaput, 1978). During the early nineteenth century, many Métis families moved towards locales around southern Lake Huron and Georgian Bay, including Kincardine, Owen Sound, Penetanguishene, and Parry Sound (Métis National Council, n.d.a). By the mid-twentieth century, Indigenous communities, including the Métis, began to advance their rights within Ontario and across Canada, and in 1982, the Métis were federally recognized as one of the distinct Indigenous peoples in Canada. Recent decisions by the Supreme Court of Canada (*R. v. Powley*, 2003; *Daniels v. Canada (Indian Affairs and Northern Development)*, 2016) have reaffirmed that Métis people have full rights as one of the Indigenous people of Canada under subsection 91(24) of the Constitution Act, 1867.

4.2 Early Encounters in Wellington County

As recently recognized in the Council-endorsed heritage register in Puslinch Township, written and verbal accounts indicate that the Anishinaabe ancestors of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, who had long established camps in the area, interacted with the settlers in a friendly and cooperative manner. These accounts are found in excerpts from letters and diaries of early settlers. For example, Martin Cassin remembers as a young boy in the mid-nineteenth century that Indigenous people would camp in the area to hunt and would trade deer for bread. He would play with the Indigenous boys around their tents and in the forest. Similarly, Charles Callfas recalled trading with the First Nations, trading milk, bread and potatoes for venison (*Annals of Puslinch 1850-1950*, 1950). Accounts from the Winer family, who still reside in Puslinch today, include grateful assistance from the Indigenous group living at Morriston pond: “Arriving too late in the season to plant crops on land that had not been cleared,



they were shown how to scavenge for fruit and berries and were given game to sustain them through that first winter. With help from this group, they built their first home: a lean-to shelter made of trees and sod.”²

Similar accounts are provided from the historical Township of Guelph. For example, when discussing the diet of early settlers and his family in particular, David Kennedy wrote that early settlers rarely succeeded in capturing deer. His father, in fact, would never venture into the woods to hunt deer for fear of getting lost or being attacked by wolves or bears. Deer could be bought or traded from “the Indians that came up from the Credit in the fall of the year who would kill deer by the dozen” (Kennedy, 1903, p. 131).

It is understood that the Haudenosaunee also travelled to this area to hunt (personal communication, Peter Graham, 26 January 2023).

In the middle part of the County in the Township of Centre Wellington, A.D. Ferrier, one of the earliest settlers in Fergus, recorded the early history of Fergus in three lectures he gave at the Fergus Farmers’ and Mechanics’ Institute in 1864 and 1865. The lectures were subsequently published in 1866 and include a description of a Mississauga encampment on his lands:

... in the winter of 1841 or 1842 a large encampment of Indians was made in my woodland, and of course I went up to see them. They were very respectable people from the river Credit, and Wesleyan Methodists. We used to hear them in the evenings singing hymns, and they had testaments in their wigwams, and many of them could read. They were well behaved and honest, and the [women] made quantities of baskets and sold them in the village. (...) They had one long shaped wigwam, and two or three small round ones, and were quite pleased when lady visitors, especially, called upon them. I paid them a visit once with a lady visitor, and we sat and

² This information was provided by a member of the Winer family following a Puslinch Council meeting discussing the endorsement of the Puslinch Heritage Register.



cracked away as well as we could for some time. (...) They killed a great many deer, and stayed almost till spring. (Ferrier, 1923)

In the northern reaches of Wellington County, in the Township of Wellington North, there are well-known reports of the contributions of Ojibway Chief James Newash (Nawash) to the early surveyors of Wellington and Grey County, notably Charles Rankin. In his survey of the Garafraxa Road in 1837, Rankin took a northwestern course to avoid the swamps of Luther until he reached a river with high banks and rapid current in what is now Mount Forest. Rankin was told by Chief Nawash, who travelled from his village near Owen Sound, that the river was a branch of the 'Saugin' and the name was recorded by Rankin in his report. Rankin is said to have thought that the Chief provided him with most accurate information about the country and the rivers and streams within it (W. J. Edwards, 1979, p. 15; Wright, 1928, p. 91).

4.3 Treaties Signed within the Municipalities of Wellington County

It is important to recognize that long-standing land use practices by Indigenous communities, such as transportation routes, had an effect on the eventual settlement of the area by European communities. This also included the cessions of land in the county through six separate treaties. The land division which occurred in the area of the Township of Centre Wellington was strongly influenced by the Grand River and its tributaries. The Grand River dictated Indigenous transportation through the area and defined the Treaties lands in that area.

Wellington County is covered by several treaties related to the period of land cessions in Southern Ontario (Figure 2). These treaties describe the historical Nations with whom the Crown negotiated the transfer of land and in some cases the rights that are assured to these Nations within the lands.

The advent and significance of historical treaties are rooted in the Royal Proclamation of 1763, issued by King George III. The Proclamation affirmed that Indigenous people lived under the protection of the Crown and that they were



not to be “molested or disturbed in the Possession of such Parts of Our Dominions and Territories as, not having been ceded to, or purchased by Us, are reserved to them, or any of them, as their Hunting Grounds...”. This statement recognized the existence of Aboriginal rights and title to vast areas within North America. In particular, the Royal Proclamation identified the lands west of the Appalachian Mountains, not including Rupert’s Land in the north, as being Indigenous land and therefore subject to land acquisition agreements between the Crown and the affected nations. Between 1764 and 1815, the government acquired the lands of the shoreline of the upper St. Lawrence as well as the lower Great Lakes. While the earliest treaties were related to the use of land for military and defensive purposes, following the American Revolutionary War many treaties were for the purposes of settling the roughly 30,000 United Empire Loyalists who refused to accept American rule. After the War of 1812, the colonial administration of Upper Canada focused on greater settlement of the colony, and land purchases were then concerned with those lands beyond this first range of settlement (Hall, 2019; Surtees, 1984).

The Town of Minto is located within the lands covered by the Nanfan Treaty (1701), the Huron Tract Purchase/Treaty 29 (1827), and the Saugeen Tract Purchase/Treaty 45 ½ (1836).



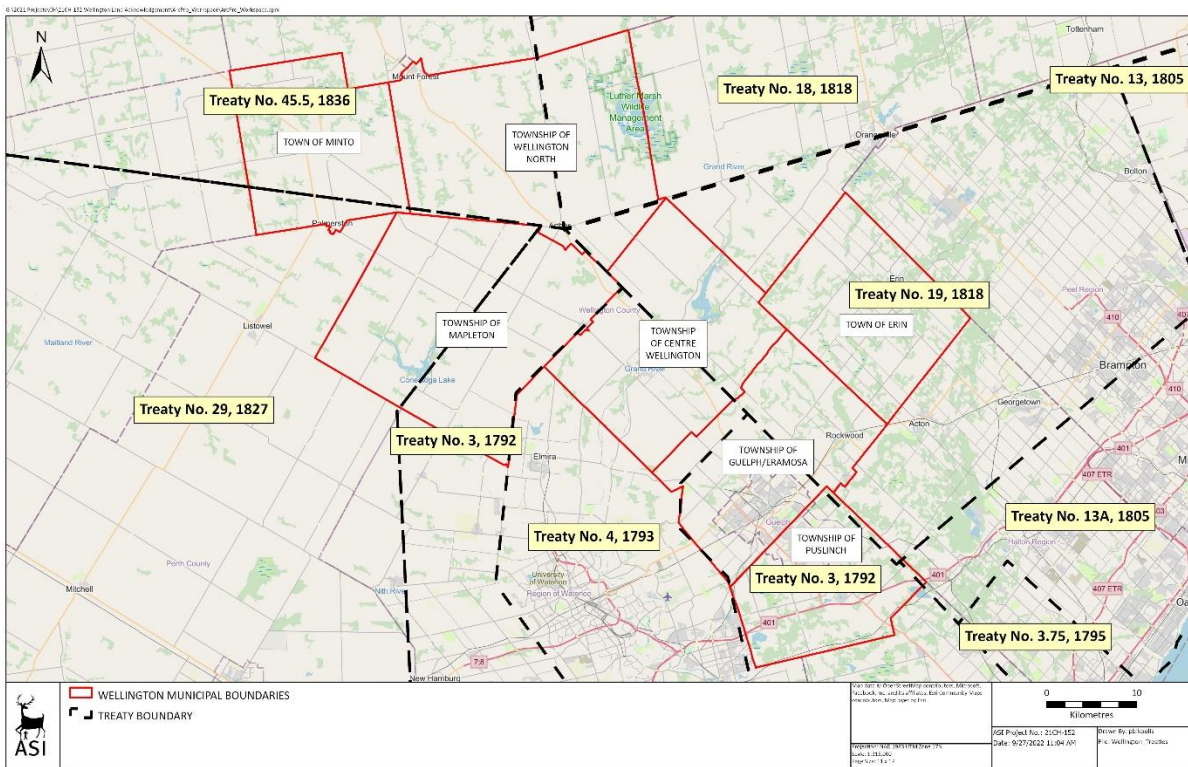


Figure 2: Treaties in Wellington County

4.3.1 Nanfan Treaty

In 1701 the Haudenosaunee entered into the Treaty of Fort Albany (Nanfan) with the British Crown where they agreed to place their beaver hunting grounds under the protection of the King of Britain and to reject the French from building forts on their lands, which included most of southcentral and southwestern Ontario, including Wellington County.

In the following years, the Haudenosaunee called upon the King to honour his Treaty and “tear down” the French Forts at Detroit, Niagara, and Fort Frontenac (Kingston) from their Beaver Hunting Grounds. The King did honour the terms of the 1701 Treaty. To confirm the King’s commitment to the Five Nations and to allow their castles (forts) in the Five Nations lands as protection against the French, an affirming agreement was entered into on September 14, 1726.

The protection of the Five Nations interests throughout their Beaver Hunting Grounds is affirmed in Article 15 of the Treaty of Utrecht between the British



and the French, wherein the Five Nations specifically would not be molested between (Lakes) Ontario, Erie, and Huron.

4.3.2 The Between the Lakes Purchase and the Haldimand Grant (1784)

Following the American Revolutionary War, the British Crown needed to find lands on which to settle United Empire Loyalists, including approximately 2,000 members of the Six Nations confederacy who had fought alongside British troops. Due to their service to the Crown during this war and the dispossession of Indigenous lands in New York State by American forces, the English Colonial government offered to protect Six Nations peoples and give them land within their boundaries of English territory in Upper Canada. On August 8, 1783, Lord North instructed the Governor of Quebec, Sir Frederick Haldimand, to set apart land for the Six Nations and ensure that they carried on their hunting and fur trading with the British. The Crown initially planned to provide lands for Loyalist settlers in Quebec and southeastern Ontario, including providing land in the Bay of Quinte for Six Nations settlement. This was not suitable for many of the members of Six Nations and a contingent of approximately 1,800 community members, led by Chief Joseph Brant, requested land north of Lake Erie along the Grand River. Brant felt that the location in the Bay of Quinte was too isolated and that his followers could be better served by being closer to the Six Nations communities that chose to remain in the United States in western New York (Surtees, 1984).

Recognizing that under the terms of the Royal Proclamation the land needed to be purchased prior to settlement, Colonel John Butler was sent to negotiate with the Mississaugas of the Credit for lands east of Lake Ontario and north of Lake Erie. On May 22, 1784, the Mississaugas of the Credit agreed to cede approximately 3,000,000 acres of land containing all or part of Brant, Elgin, Middlesex, Oxford, and Wellington Counties as well as the Regions of Haldimand-Norfolk, Halton, Hamilton-Wentworth, Niagara, and Waterloo. In exchange for these lands, the Mississaugas received £1180.74 worth of trade



goods. Of the 3,000,000 acres, approximately 950,000 acres were set aside for the settlement of Six Nations people (Surtees, 1984).

On October 25, 1784, Haldimand signed a proclamation that allotted land six miles (10 km) on either side of the Grand River from its mouth at Lake Erie to its headwaters near Dundalk, Ontario. This land was to be used solely by the people of Six Nations, who were also granted the right to sell or lease the land within this territory providing the Crown was first offered to purchase the land (Filice, 2018; Surtees, 1984). Under the terms of the Haldimand Proclamation, Six Nations people were authorized to “Settle upon the Banks of the River” and were allotted “for that Purpose six miles [10 km] deep from each Side of [its] beginning at Lake Erie, & extending in the Proportion to [its] Head.” (Filice, 2016; C. E. Johnston, 1964) (Figure 3).





Figure 3: The Haldimand Tract, as defined by the 1784 Haldimand Proclamation (Six Nations of the Grand River, 2019).

4.3.3 Renegotiation of Treaty 3 and the Simcoe Patent/Treaty 4 (1793)

Due to uncertainties with the description of the lands in the original surrender, Treaty 3 was renegotiated on December 7, 1792 to clarify what was ceded. This largely revolved around the northern boundary of the Treaty area and in particular the area set aside for Six Nations settlement along the Haldimand Tract. The signees of the treaty on the side of the British included Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe, John Butler, Robert Kerr, Peter Russell, John McGill, and Davie William Smith. The signees of the treaty on the side of the Mississauga included Chiefs Wabakyne, Wabanip, Kautabus, Wabaniship, and Mottotow (Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs, 2016b; Surtees, 1984).

As part of the 1792 renegotiation of Treaty 3, the Crown also redefined the boundaries of the Haldimand Tract. Upon review of the Haldimand Proclamation, politician and Indian Department official Sir John Johnson noted an error involving the location of the northern boundary of the tract. Haldimand had mistakenly assumed in 1784 that the headwaters of the Grand River resided within the area negotiated under Treaty 3. However, the northern reach of the Haldimand Tract was within lands that were not negotiated until 1818 under Treaties 18 and 19 (Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs, 2016b; Filice, 2018; Surtees, 1984). In order to clarify the boundaries of the tract, the Crown appointed surveyor Augustus Jones to complete a survey of the Haldimand Tract in 1791. In so doing, Jones redefined the borders of the Six Nations' land parcel. This included defining the northern limit of the Haldimand Tract as Jones Base line near the Town of Fergus in the Township of Centre Wellington (Figure 4). In addition, Jones established straight-lined boundaries, rather than sinuous boundaries following every curve in the river, which can still be seen in today's municipal boundaries. Six Nations and Joseph Brant were not in agreement with this new definition and petitioned the government for control over the tract. This eventually led to the 1793 Simcoe Patent which defined the rules of land ownership and leasing within the revised 30,000 acres of land provided to Six Nations. This 1793 patent did not address those lands



northeast of the Jones Base line and continues to be a source of dispute between Six Nations and the Crown.

The difference between the original land grant of the Haldimand Proclamation and the Simcoe Patent was significant. Not only did the new territory remove the upper 275,000 acres of the tract north of Jones Baseline, Jones' redefinition of the boundaries along the portions of the Haldimand Tract within the Treaty 3 lands did not consistently provide 6 miles on either side of the Grand River. Six Nations of the Grand River contend that they were not involved in the renegotiation of this land and therefore the redefined territory is not consistent with the terms of the original land grant. In particular, it is the view of Six Nations of the Grand River that it was the responsibility of the Crown to provide the land that was agreed to in the Haldimand Proclamation (Six Nations of the Grand River, 2019).

Following the establishment of the Haldimand Tract, Six Nations of the Grand River began to negotiate leases within the Haldimand Tract as a means of generating income for the community. In 1796, the Six Nations agreed to share 302,907 acres of land in North and South Dumfries, Waterloo, Woolwich, Pilkington, and Nichol townships. These transactions were made under the understanding that this would provide a continuous revenue stream for the Confederacy and that these represented long term leases rather than formal land sales (Six Nations of the Grand River, 2019). The Crown was responsible for administering these funds which Six Nations of the Grand River argue they never received. Many of the leases were confirmed by the Crown in 1834-5, although unauthorized sales and squatting by settlers remained a significant issue (C. E. Johnston, 1964; Lytwyn, 2005). In 1841, the Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Samuel P. Jarvis, informed the Six Nations of the Grand River that the only way to keep white intruders off their land would be for the Crown to manage these lands on behalf of the Nation, to be administered for their sole benefit. Under this plan, the Six Nations of the Grand River would retain lands that they actually occupied and a reserve of approximately 20,000 acres near the present-day city of Brantford. This transfer of land to the Crown was made by the Six Nations in January 1841 (C. E. Johnston, 1964; Lytwyn, 2005).



This history and those surrenders are still contested by the Confederacy and there are currently 29 specific land claims that have been filed by the Six Nations of the Grand River with the federal government in regard to lands within the Haldimand Tract (C. E. Johnston, 1964; Lytwyn, 2005; Six Nations of the Grand River, 2019). Six Nations of the Grand River Elected Council commenced litigation against Canada and Ontario in 1995 to challenge the validity of the land transactions, resources and revenue associated to the entire Haldimand Tract (personal communication, Peter Graham, 18 April 2023).



Figure 4: “Plan shewing the Lands granted to the Six Nation Indians, situated on each side of the Grand River, or Ouse, commencing on Lake Erie, containing about 674,910 Acres. Thos. Ridout Surveyor General, survey Gen. Office York 2nd February 1821.” (Library and Archives Canada, Mikan 4129506).

4.3.4 Nottawasaga Purchase/Treaty 18 (1818)

The last unceded portion of Simcoe County west of Lake Simcoe was formally obtained on October 17, 1818, when the “Lake Simcoe-Nottawasaga Purchase” was negotiated with the Chippewa nations. This purchase involved the acquisition of approximately 1.59 million acres (647,000 ha) of land to the west of Lake Simcoe.

The land subject to the purchase is described in the treaty as bounded by the District of London on the west, by Lake Huron on the north, by the Lake Simcoe purchase (Treaty #16, 1815) on the east, by the south shore of Kempenfelt Bay, the western shore of Lake Simcoe and Cook's Bay and the Holland River to the north-west angle of the Township of King to the south. In payment for these lands, the Crown agreed to pay the value of £1,200 currency in goods annually to the nations.

The signees of the treaty on the side of the British included J. Givens, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Alex McDonnell, John Claus, and William Claus on behalf of the Crown. The signees of the treaty on the side of the Chippewa included Musquakie [*Misquuckkey*], Kaqueticum, Muskigonce, and Manitonobe (Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs, 2016d; Surtees, 1984).

This treaty was meant to bring all lands between lakes Huron and Ontario under treaties, however several areas were left out and were not negotiated until the signing of the Williams Treaties. In October and November of 1923, the governments of Canada and Ontario, chaired by A.S. Williams, signed treaties with the various Chippewa and Mississauga nations for three large tracts of land in central Ontario and the northern shore of Lake Ontario which had never been included in previous treaties (Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs, 2013). The Williams Treaties First Nations are comprised of the Mississaugas of Alderville First Nation, Curve Lake First Nation, Hiawatha First Nation, Scugog Island First Nation and the Chippewas of Beausoleil First Nation, Georgina Island First Nation and Rama First Nation (Williams Treaties First Nations, 2017).



4.3.5 Ajetance Purchase/Treaty 19 (1818)

The Ajetance Purchase, or Treaty 19, included 648,000 acres of land occupying portions of present-day Halton and Peel Region as well as Dufferin and Wellington County. This area was the last large tract of land ceded by the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, following the settlement of the Head of Lake purchase (Treaty 14) in 1806, and is also surrounded by Treaty 3 (1784/1792), Treaty 13 (1788/1805) to the east, and Treaty 18 (1818) to the north (Government of Canada, 2016). By 1818, the Mississaugas were experiencing a rapid decline in population due to increased encroachment by settlers and declining resources, and the area to the north had just been ceded by Chippewa nations (Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, 2017).

On October 23, 1818, Deputy Superintendent William Claus met with Chief Ajetance and other delegates of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation to negotiate the sale of the land. The payment offered for this land consisted of “the yearly sum of 522 pounds ten shillings in goods annually”. By 1820, the Mississaugas of the Credit negotiated the sale of the remainder of their lands except for a 200-acre parcel near the mouth of the Credit River (Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs, 2016a; Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, 2017; Surtees, 1984).

The Ajetance Purchase is also significant due to its relationship to the Haldimand Tract. On October 25, 1784, the Governor of Quebec Sir Frederick Haldimand signed a proclamation that allotted land six miles (10 km) on either side of the Grand River to the Six Nations People for their assistance during the American revolutionary war (Filice, 2018; Surtees, 1984). Upon review of the Haldimand Proclamation, however, politician and Indian Department official Sir John Johnson noted an error involving the location of the northern boundary of the tract. Governor Haldimand had mistakenly assumed in 1784 that the headwaters of the Grand River resided within the area negotiated under Treaty #3. However, the headwaters of the Grand River extend to the present-day community of Dundalk, Ontario, in Grey County, which was not negotiated until 1818 under Treaty #18. Additionally, the northern reach of the Grand River



crosses through the northwestern corner of the Ajetance Purchase lands in Dufferin and Wellington County (Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs, 2016a; Filice, 2018; Surtees, 1984). Due to this inconsistency, the northern boundaries of the Haldimand Tract were redefined in 1793 under the Simcoe Patent to end at Jones Base Line in Fergus, Ontario – at the boundary of Treaty #3 and Treaty #19. This decision to end the Haldimand tract within Treaty #3 lands rather than continuing the tract up to the headwaters of the Grand River is still disputed by Six Nations of the Grand River and the community continues to contest the redefined territory with the Government of Canada (Filice, 2018).

4.3.6 Huron Tract Purchase/Treaty 29 (1827)

On October 16, 1818, John Askin met at Amherstburg with various Anishinaabe Chiefs who agreed to sell land south of Lake Huron. A provisional agreement was signed by the Chiefs of the Chenail Ecarte, St. Clair River, and Ausable River on March 30, 1819. The final agreement, Treaty #29, was not signed until 8 years later, on July 10, 1827.

The Huron Tract comprises 23,054 acres (9,330 ha.) of land south of Lake Huron up to the Nine Mile river and bordering, to the south and east, the land ceded in Treaties #7, 21, 6, and 3. It includes most of the drainage of the St. Clair River and the present communities of Stratford and Sarnia.

The Indigenous leaders retained land for the use of their communities below the St. Clair River rapids, at Sombra Township, at Kettle Point, and at the Ausable River. The signatory bands agreed on an annual payment of £1,100 to be distributed equally between the 460 persons inhabiting the tract in 1825.

The signees on the British side included Superintendent of Indian Affairs George Ironside, Captain Joseph de la Hay and Lieutenant William Taylor of the 70th regiment, Lieutenant H.D.C. Douglas, and M.P. Bailey.

The signees on the side of the Anishinaabeg included Wawanosh, Osawip, Shashawinibisie, Pukinince, Negig, Cheebican, Mukatuokijigo, Mshinikaibik,



Animikince, Peetawtick, Shawanipinissie, Saganash, Annotowin, Pinessiwagum, Shaiowkima, Chekateyan, Mokeetchewan, and Quaikeegon (Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs, 2016c; Surtees, 1984, pp. 80–85).

4.3.7 Saugeen Tract Purchase/Treaty 45 ½ (1836)

Anishinaabe Chiefs granted approximately 1.5 million acres of land in an effort to secure a land base on Manitoulin Island along the shores of Lake Huron and southern Georgian Bay to the Crown with the signing of the 1818 Lake Simcoe-Nottawasaga Treaty #18 and the 1836 “Saugeen Tract Agreement” Treaty #45 ½ (Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs, 2016f). The encroachment of Euro-Canadian settlement did not lessen and, in 1847, Queen Victoria issued a Royal Declaration in order to support the rights of the Saugeen Ojibway Nation. The Proclamation also established strict rules for the purchase and surrender of native lands in Canada. The Declaration confirmed that the Bruce Peninsula belonged to the Saugeen Ojibway Nation.

Additional acts were passed in 1850 and 1851 in order to protect lands from squatters and loggers but these documents did little to stem the tide of Euro-Canadian encroachment. The pressure from the settlers was increasing and the Crown was sympathetic to their cause. When the local Indian agent T.G. Anderson organised a council on August 2, 1854, he met strong resistance from the Ojibway Chiefs who were not willing to sell their land. Anderson was ready to force the surrender but the Chief Superintendent of Indian Affairs, L. Oliphant, set up a council in October 1854 to pursue the negotiations. Oliphant managed to convince the Chiefs to surrender the bulk of the Saugeen Peninsula. The Ojibway retained some reserves including Chief’s Point Saugeen Reserve (Owen Sound), Colpoy’s Bay Reserve (Big Bay), Cape Croker Reserve #27, the Fishing Islands in Lake Huron, Cape Hurd Islands, and three islands at the entrance of Colpoy’s Bay. In 1857, the Nawash Reserve on the west side of Owen Sound Bay was surrendered (Treaty #82) and in 1861 the Colpoy Bay Reserve was reduced (Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs, 2016e; Ministry of Indigenous Affairs, 2018; Surtees, 1984, pp. 102–105).



Treaty #72 was signed on October 13, 1854. The signees on the side of the Crown included the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs L. Oliphant, Missionary Peter Jacobs, James Ross, C. Rankin, and Crown Land Agent A. McNabb.

The signees on the side of the Ojibway included John Kaduhgekwun, Alex Madwayosh, John Manedswab, Jno. Thos. Wahbuhdick, Peter Jones, David Sawyer, John H. Beaty, Thomas Pabahmosh, John Madwashemind, John Johnston, John Aunjegahbowh, James Newash, Thomas Wahbuhdick, and Charles Keeshick.

Between 1885 and 1899, several islands were surrendered including the Fishing Islands and Cape Hurd Islands of Lake Huron. Griffith, Hay, and White Cloud Islands of Georgina Bay were also surrendered. In 1994, the Saugeen Ojibway Nation launched a land claim for part of their traditional territory, claiming breach of trust by the Crown in failing to meet its obligations to protect Aboriginal lands. The claim sought the return of lands still retained by the Crown and for financial compensation for other lands. In July 2021, the Ontario Superior Court of Justice agreed that the Crown failed to protect Aboriginal land from encroachment by settlers as they had agreed to in the 1836 Treaty (Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation, 2014; *Chippewas of Saugeen First Nation et al. V. The Attorney General of Canada et al.*, 2021; Saugeen Ojibway Nation, 2011).

5.0 Indigenous Engagement

Engagement with rights-bearing Indigenous nations as it relates to the Wellington County Municipalities Land Acknowledgement Project began in December 2021 with a circulation of a project notice by email to identified nations. The notice described the decision to undertake the project, its goals and timelines, and provided the contact information for the Working Group Chair. Additionally, the notice invited recipients to contact the Chair of the Working Group if they would like to discuss the project further or request a meeting. The Six Nations of the Grand River identified interest in being involved in discussions for the project.



The Chair of the Working Group circulated a project update on May 3, 2022, to inform the nations that a draft report with draft land acknowledgements had been produced. The draft report with draft land acknowledgements was circulated to the nations for review and comment. Additionally, the notice invited recipients to contact the Chair of the Working Group if they would like to discuss the project further or request a meeting.

Representatives of the Six Nations of the Grand River, the Mississauga of the Credit First Nation, and the Saugeen Ojibway Nation provided written comments on the report. ASI met with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation to discuss technical aspects of the report. Members of the Working Group and ASI met twice with representatives of the Six Nations of the Grand River to discuss their comments and concerns on the report. ASI worked with the community to address these concerns and have made revisions to relevant sections of the report.

The C.A.O.s of the municipalities involved in this project are committed to continued engagement with identified Indigenous nations with rights and interests in the project. The final report will be circulated to the nations as well as a notice of project completion.

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Appendix A: Land Acknowledgements

Town of Minto

The lands we know today as the Town of Minto have been home to Indigenous peoples since time immemorial. We acknowledge that we are on the treaty lands and traditional territory of the Anishinaabe and the Haudenosaunee.

With increasing encroachment by non-Indigenous settlers in the Town of Minto, the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee could not continue their traditional lifestyle and settled in their villages on Lake Huron and in the Grand River Valley. These nations uphold their Treaty Rights within our jurisdiction.

Today, the Town of Minto remains home to Indigenous peoples from across Turtle Island. We are grateful to have the opportunity to share and respect Mother Earth and are committed to building constructive and cooperative relationships with Indigenous nations.



Appendix B: Information Booklet

1.0 Objectives of this Document

The following document provides further information for municipal staff and partners to guide their practice and actions around Land Acknowledgements.

Land acknowledgements are a traditional Indigenous practice that have been used since time immemorial. They honour, respect, and recognize the Nations that live within a given territory. Land acknowledgements originating from settler-colonial institutions and governments, however, are more recent, having been around for almost a decade. They have increased in use following the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action. A territorial or land acknowledgement involves making a statement acknowledging the presence of Indigenous peoples past and present and recognizing Indigenous traditional lands and treaties. The land acknowledgements can also identify the displacement and exclusion of Indigenous peoples from their traditional territories. Land Acknowledgements are a small yet significant way to show respect and acknowledge the presence of Indigenous peoples past and present.

2.0 Best Practices

The following are some important points to consider when creating and giving land acknowledgements. More detailed information on these points is included in Section 3.0 of the report (Land Acknowledgements: A Critical Review).

- Needs to come from a non-Indigenous source, e.g., municipality
- Be inclusive, identify rights holders
- Avoid redundancy, e.g., Anishinaabe and Mississaugas
- Should be a simple sign of respect
- Recognize past injustice, e.g., Exclusion and dispossession
- Speak to the past, present, and the future



- Be historically accurate, based on factual information and further fact checked and verified.
- Use self-identifying names wherever possible, e.g., Haudenosaunee instead of Iroquois
- Correct pronunciation of names is important, practice correct pronunciation and use audio clip if necessary
- Use for significant events
- Avoid rote recital, give thought and meaning to the words
- Engage with Indigenous Nations on content

3.0 Indigenous Nations

The following provides a brief introduction to the Indigenous nations contacted as part of this project and/or recognized and acknowledged in the land acknowledgements.

3.1 Aamjiwnaang First Nation

The following history is provided on the Aamjiwnaang First Nation website (Plain, n.d.):

In the mid eighteenth century Aamjiwnaang territory covered a vast expanse of land on both sides of the waterway between Lakes Huron and Erie. Bounded by the Maitland River in the east and the Flint River in the west it contained some nine villages supporting a population of 15,000. Aamjiwnaang is an Ojibwa word denoting an important gathering place that had been used by First Nations for millennia. This gathering place was located at the foot of Lake Huron. The people who lived in this vibrant and prosperous band called Aamjiwnaang were members of the Anishinaabek First Nation. The French called us Saulteaux Ojibwe. The British and later the Americans called us Chippewa.

Beginning in the 1750's Aamjiwnaang's prosperity and population came under siege. We were allies first with the French and then the British.



Multiple wars took their toll on our young men. At the same time outbreaks of cholera and small pox further decimated the population. In 1827 our population was enumerated at 440 on the Ontario side of the border and 275 in Michigan. Aamjiwnaang's territory had also been reduced by several land cessation treaties to seven small reserves containing a total of approximately 25,000 acres. (Courtesy of David D. Plain)

In 1807 we signed the Treaty of Detroit ceding all of our territory in Michigan. The treaty created two reservations, one at Swan Creek just south of Algonac and one at the mouth of the Black River at Port Huron. In 1827 we signed Treaty 29 ceding the remainder of our lands in Ontario to the British Colonial Government. This treaty created four reserves, one along the southern boundary of St. Clair Township, one at Sarnia, and two on Lake Huron. One located at Kettle Point and the other at the mouth of the Au Sauble River. The name Aamjiwnaang would disappear from the written record and fall out of general use until recently when it was revived and adopted as the name of the reserve located at Sarnia.

During the decades between 1850 and 1950 the community of Sarnia began to encroach upon the north end of Aamjiwnaang. Through a series of treaties our lands were reduced from over 10,000 acres to approximately 3,100 acres. Today Aamjiwnaang remains a vibrant, prosperous community interacting on excellent terms with the communities that surround us. (Courtesy of David D. Plain)

3.2 Beausoleil First Nation

The following history is provided in the Christian Island Community Plan (*Ge'ni'zhaaying: The Direction We Will Go, Christian Island Community Plan 2018*, n.d., pp. 9–10):

Our ancestors of modern day Beausoleil First Nation currently living on Christian Island moved south from the area north of Lake Superior in 1683. While this group originally lived a nomadic existence in these



hunting areas (traveling as need and seasons dictated), the government was moving non-Native settlers into this area and moved to establish treaties with the First Nation in 1798 and 1815. The treaty of 1815 saw the transfer of 1,592,000 acres of land south of Georgian Bay, and a government splitting of the nation into three separate "bands" (who later became Beausoleil, Rama and Georgina). By 1828, other First Nations people had joined these bands, many of whom were Pottawatomi from the Upper Great Lakes area. These newcomers were accepted by the Ojibway nation, and their descendants still may be found as part of all three modern day First Nation communities. In 1830, the government established a post at present day Coldwater with the intent that the Ojibway nation would settle in this area, leaving the other lands free for settlement by immigrants to the area. The Band, under the leadership of Chief Aisance, settled at Coldwater Narrows, while Chief Yellowhead's group moved to the Lake Couchiching area on the northeast side of Lake Simcoe. The third group, led by Chief Snake, moved to Snake Island near the west end of Lake Simcoe. This move by the bands, orchestrated by the government, represented the first ever establishment of a "reserve" in Canada, and is commonly known as The Coldwater Experiment. Around the same time, a small group of Pottawatomi people from Moose Deer Point came to live on Christian Island. By 1836, the nomadic group of the Ojibway Nation had found this arrangement to be less than beneficial, and the area at Coldwater was "surrendered" in a treaty. By 1842 Chief Aisance's group had left Coldwater and settled on Beausoleil Island. The island proved to be unsuitable for cultivating, and the band suggested to the government that they move to Christian Island. this was finally carried out in 1856, after the Georgian Bay Treaty had ceded (given) these areas to the government. The Pottawatomi and the Ojibway Nations lived together on Christian Island until the time of the Robinson Huron Treaty when a small group of the Pottawatomi returned to Moose Deer Point at King Bay. In 1857, the Beausoleil Band invited the Ojibway of Colpoy's Bay to join them, and the offer was accepted, resulting in the loss of some 6,000 acres. Following these moves, our community at Christian Island



became permanent (Curriculum Resource: Beausoleil First Nation). It was then that the people of Christian Island began their livelihoods and built houses, cleared land, farmed, and fished. Some other industries that existed on our island during this time were logging and lumbering. Our people were also skilled crafts people. After the war, many of our people began leaving the island to work in local cities and towns. Our young people back then completed their studies and went on to work in Toronto and other cities but came home on vacation to be with family and friends.

3.3 Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation

The following history is provided on the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation website (Hoeg, n.d.):

Life on Georgina Island began in the early 1800's. The Department of Upper Canada wanted to separate the Indians from the white settlements, putting them on reservations was a way of accomplishing this.

After a nomadic way of life they found it difficult to stay in one area. In 1826, camp meetings were held by the Methodist missionaries who worked vigorously to convert Indians to Christianity. Schooling was encouraged and children were placed with mission families. They were trained to spread the Christian faith and were forbidden to practice their Native Teachings or to use their Native tongue. Boarding schools were to follow, taking children away from heart broken families.

In the late 1820s, the Indian Department of Upper Canada began to relocate the Lake Simcoe Indians. The Indians were blamed for destroying wildlife, so they were encouraged to farm.

Snake Island was the first island the Indians settled on in Lake Simcoe. With more pressure to farm, they moved to the larger and more isolated Georgina Island. Only a few remained on Snake Island. The population on



Georgina Island in 1876 was 131. They gradually changed their lifestyles. Making the island their home.

3.4 Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point

The following history is provided on the Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point website (*History & Culture*, n.d.):

Kettle Point is unceded territory located in southwestern Ontario along the south shore of Lake Huron. We are officially known as the Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point. Stony Point is known as Aazhoodena (we will provide more information as this website develops). Our land base consists of approximately 1,096 hectares that accommodates an on-reserve population of 2,108 persons.

Kettle Point is named for its unusual spherical rock formations that erode from the underlying shale beds along the shore of Lake Huron. These rock formations known as “kettles” are unique to only three locations within the entire world.

It is the uniqueness of this First Nation that makes the preservation of the Kettle Point lands a high priority, not only for its “kettles”, but for the first people’s of this community and for the future generations to come.

3.5 Chippewas of Rama First Nation

The following history is provided on the Chippewas Rama First Nation website:

Known as the Chippewas of Lake Simcoe and Huron, our people are part of the Chippewa Tri-Council, an alliance of three First Nation communities now known as the Chippewas of Beausoleil First Nation on Christian Island, the Chippewas of Georgina Island on Georgina Island, and the Chippewas of Rama First Nation. Under the leadership of our hereditary Chief, Chief Musquakie (Yellowhead) who served his community from 1818 to 1844, the Chippewa Tri-Council First Nations continue their alliance today. Well known for our hospitality, we shared our knowledge



and medicines with early settlers which enabled them to survive their first difficult years in a sometimes harsh land.

Around 1830, our community was moved to the Coldwater Narrows area by the Crown, part of an “experiment” which shaped “Indian Reserves”. We continued on as industrious people, building a road for commerce which is known today as Highway 12, establishing farms, mills, and markets for selling produce, fish and game to settlers and travellers. Forced to move again after our land was taken in what is now being termed an “illegal surrender”, we purchased land in Ramara Township in 1836 and made a new beginning for our people. The land was difficult to farm and, with the loss of our inherent right to fish and hunt with the disputed Williams Treaties in 1923, we pursued other entrepreneurial opportunities in the tourism market.

Mnjikaning Fish Weirs at current day, Atherley Narrows:

The Mnjikaning Fish Fence Circle was established in 1993 by community members and area residents for the purpose of protecting and promoting the weirs. In 1982, the government recognized the Mnjikaning Fish Weirs as a National Historical Site. In conjunction with Parks Canada and the Mnjikaning Fish Fence Circle, strategic plans are in development to protect and promote the weirs located in our territory. The fish fence at the Atherley Narrows, is located near Rama First Nation. It is a complex system of underwater fences which was used for harvesting fish.

In the Anishinaabeg telling of the creation of the world, each species of living things was given a purpose to fulfill. The fish were told to come together at certain times of the year and hold council. At these times, the people could more readily access them for food.

In spite of all the changes the Narrows has undergone over the centuries, the fish still hold to their role in creation and come together at Rama every spring and fall. Elders say that the historical role taken on by Rama



was important to the Chippewa Tri-Council communities. We kept the fence and made sure that the harvest garnered was distributed equally to the other communities involved. Rama, over the centuries, was more than a place for fishing. It was a traditional meeting place because of its unique geographical location with respect to the convergence of lakes and tributaries. The Deer Clan are traditional caregivers. Our community symbol is the Deer.

3.6 Hatiwendaronk (Neutral Nation)

Samuel de Champlain in 1615 reported that a group of Iroquoian-speaking people situated between the Haudenosaunee and the Huron-Wendat were at peace and remained “la nation neutre”. In subsequent years, the French visited and traded among the Neutral, but the first documented visit was not until 1626, when the Recollet missionary Joseph de la Roche Daillon recorded his visit to the villages of the Hatiwendaronk, whose name in the Huron-Wendat language meant “those who speak a slightly different tongue” (the Neutral apparently referred to the Huron-Wendat by the same term). Like the Huron-Wendat, Petun, and Haudenosaunee, the Neutral people were settled village agriculturalists. At the time of European contact, it is estimated that the Hatiwendaronk were a confederation of perhaps up to eight Nations located between the western end of Lake Ontario and the Niagara River with a population of around 30,000. Prior to contact the Hatiwendaronk territory was much more extensive, extending as far west as Chatham and northwest into Waterloo and Wellington Counties. Intensive and long-term warfare with the Anishinaabe Assistaranon (Fire Nation) who were situated around the western end of Lake Erie forced the Hatiwendaronk to concentrate east of the Grand River, some abandoning their ancestral lands in southwestern Ontario.

Between 1647 and 1650, the Hatiwendaronk were decimated by epidemics and ultimately dispersed and assimilated by the Haudenosaunee. While some remnant Hatiwendaronk joined the Wyandot and some settled with the Huron Wendat in Quebec, the majority were adopted by the Seneca.



3.7 Haudenosaunee Confederacy

The Haudenosaunee Confederacy Chiefs Council (H.C.C.C.) represents the traditional leadership of the Six Nations Confederacy (see also Six Nations Elected Council).

The Confederacy, made up of the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca (and later the Tuscarora) united the Nations and created a peaceful means of decision making. Through the Confederacy, each of the Nations of the Haudenosaunee are united by a common goal to live in harmony. Each Nation maintains its own council with chiefs chosen by a Clan Mother and deals with its own internal affairs but allows the Grand Council to deal with issues affecting the Nations within the Confederacy.

Within the county, the Haldimand Tract is located within parts of the Township of Centre Wellington and the Township of Guelph/Eramosa.

3.8 Métis Nation of Ontario

The eighteenth century saw the ethnogenesis in Ontario of the Métis, when Métis people began to identify as a separate group, rather than as extensions of their typically maternal First Nations and paternal European ancestry (Métis National Council, n.d.b). Living in both Euro-Canadian and Indigenous societies, the Métis acted as agents and subagents in the fur trade but also as surveyors and interpreters. Métis populations were predominantly located north and west of Lake Superior, however, communities were located throughout Ontario (Métis National Council, n.d.b; Stone & Chaput, 1978). During the early nineteenth century, many Métis families moved towards locales around southern Lake Huron and Georgian Bay, including Kincardine, Owen Sound, Penetanguishene, and Parry Sound (Métis National Council, n.d.a). By the mid-twentieth century, Indigenous communities, including the Métis, began to advance their rights within Ontario and across Canada, and in 1982, the Métis were federally recognized as one of the distinct Indigenous peoples in Canada. Recent decisions by the Supreme Court of Canada (*R. v. Powley*, 2003; *Daniels v. Canada (Indian Affairs and Northern Development)*, 2016) have reaffirmed that



Métis people have full rights as one of the Indigenous people of Canada under subsection 91(24) of the Constitution Act, 1867.

There are no historical Métis community in Wellington County.

3.9 Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation

The Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation (M.C.F.N.) are located adjacent to Six Nations of the Grand River in Haldimand County. The Anishinaabe ancestors of M.C.F.N. originated on the north shore of Lake Huron and settled in southern Ontario at the end of the seventeenth century. When the British began to settle Ontario following the defeat of the French in 1759, Anishinaabe communities occupied all southern Ontario. M.C.F.N.'s original reserve land and settlement was situated at the mouth of the Credit River in present day Mississauga. In the 1840s they decided to leave the Credit River settlement due to encroachment from white settlement.

In 1847 the Credit Mississaugas were made a land offer by the Six Nations Council to relocate at the Grand River. In 1847, 266 Mississaugas settled at New Credit, approximately 23 km southwest of Brantford.

M.C.F.N. treaty territory extends from the eastern limits of the City of Toronto north to Lake Simcoe and includes the Niagara Peninsula and most of the municipalities of Wellington County including the Township of Puslinch, the Township of Guelph/Eramosa, the Town of Erin, the Township of Centre Wellington, and part of the Township of Mapleton and the Township of Wellington North.

3.10 Saugeen Ojibway Nation

The Saugeen Ojibway Nation (S.O.N.) is made up of the Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation and the Chippewas of Saugeen First Nation.

Neyaashiinigiing (Cape Croker) is the current reserve land of Chippewas of Nawash and Saugeen First Nation's reserve lands are at Saugeen and Chief's point. Up until the early nineteenth century they occupied a settlement at Owen



Sound. S.O.N.'s Traditional Territory is bounded on the south by the Maitland River system from Goderich to past Arthur, on the west by the Canada/U.S.A. border in the middle of Lake Huron, on the north by a line along the midpoint of the channel between the Saugeen (Bruce) Peninsula and Manitoulin Island, and on the east by a line down the middle of Georgian Bay. The traditional territory covers over 2 million acres, encompassing what is now Bruce and Grey County, and parts of Simcoe, Dufferin, Wellington, and Huron County. In Wellington County, this includes the municipalities of the Town of Minto, the Township of Wellington North, and the Township of Mapleton.

3.11 Six Nations of the Grand River

Six Nations of the Grand River is the elected council of the Six Nations Confederacy as recognized under the Indian Act (see also H.C.C.C.). It is located in the Grand River Valley between Brantford and Caledonia. The Six Nations are a confederacy of Iroquoian-speaking nations that include the Mohawk, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida, Seneca and Tuscarora. In the early seventeenth century, the Haudenosaunee were at war with the Huron-Wendat, eventually leading to the dispersal and assimilation of the Huron-Wendat as well as other Ontario Iroquoian speaking nations such as the Hatiwendaronk (Neutral) and Petun. Between approximately 1660 and 1680 the Haudenosaunee established villages in southern Ontario at strategic locations including the mouth of the Humber and Rouge Rivers in the Toronto area and in the Hamilton area along the portage from Lake Ontario to the Grand River. These villages were abandoned in the 1680s, likely related to attacks by the French on Haudenosaunee villages in their homeland. In 1701 the Haudenosaunee entered into the Treaty of Fort Albany (Nanfan) with the British Crown where they deeded to the British their beaver hunting grounds, which included most of southcentral and southwestern Ontario.

In 1784, following the American War of Independence, Haudenosaunee loyal to the British were given land along the Grand River known as the Haldimand Tract. This land was purchased by the British from the Mississauga. The Haldimand



Tract originally extended north into the headwaters of the Grand River and therefore included a portion of Wellington County.

In 1841, Samuel P. Jarvis (Indian Superintendent) informed the Six Nations Iroquois that the only way to keep white intruders off their land would be for them to surrender it to the Crown, to be administered for their sole benefit. With this plan, the Six Nations Iroquois would retain lands that they occupied and a reserve of approximately 8,094 ha. The surrender of land was made by the Confederacy in January 1841 (Johnston 1964; Lytwyn 2005). Today, this history and those surrenders are still under review and there are numerous specific land claims that have been filed by the Six Nations of the Grand River with the federal government regarding lands within the Haldimand Tract (Johnston 1964; Lytwyn 2005).

Within the county, the Haldimand Tract is located within parts of the Township of Centre Wellington and the Township of Guelph/Eramosa.

4.0 Frequently Asked Questions

The following include questions that may be asked by municipal staff and partners concerning Land Acknowledgements. This section can be expanded as needed as additional questions are asked.

QUESTION:

What is the purpose of a land acknowledgement?

ANSWER:

A territorial or land acknowledgement involves making a statement acknowledging the presence of Indigenous peoples past and present and recognizing Indigenous traditional lands and treaties. The land acknowledgements can also identify the displacement and exclusion of Indigenous peoples from their traditional territories. Land Acknowledgements are a small yet significant way to show respect and acknowledge the presence of Indigenous peoples past and present.



QUESTION:

When should a land acknowledgement be given?

ANSWER:

A land acknowledgement should originate with non-Indigenous members of a community since it is a statement of respect and offer of reconciliation to Indigenous people. There are no set rules guiding when a land acknowledgement should be given, as long as the land acknowledgement is given in a meaningful way and not recited by rote. It is up to the municipality to determine how often, and for which occasion a land acknowledgement should be given.

QUESTION:

Who should be giving the land acknowledgement?

ANSWER:

The land acknowledgement should be given by the chair of the meeting or official presiding over the event.

QUESTION:

How do I make a land acknowledgement meaningful?

ANSWER:

When making the land acknowledgement it is important to instill meaning in the recitation. It should not be recited quickly by rote and Indigenous words such as the names of the nations should be pronounced correctly.

QUESTION:

What is the difference between traditional territory and treaty lands? What are Treaty Rights?

ANSWER:

Traditional territory is a designated area of land to which a recognized Indigenous nation has claimed or established traditional use or occupation. Treaty lands are an area defined by a treaty which is owned and managed by the



Indigenous nation that negotiated the treaty. Treaty Rights are specific rights that have been established in treaties entered into between Indigenous nations with the Crown.

QUESTION:

What is Turtle Island?

ANSWER:

Turtle Island is North America and refers to the Indigenous creation story where the earth was created on the back of a turtle.

5.0 Additional Resources

Land acknowledgement resources and guidelines from Indigenous nations and groups, for example:

- <http://mncfn.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/MCFN-Land-Acknowledgement-Guidelines-September-10-2020.pdf>
- https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/mainewabanakireach/pages/1311/attachments/original/1617062949/Land_Acknowledgment_Resources_2021.pdf?1617062949
- Statement of Respect for Three Fires Territory: Backgrounder for the University of Windsor's Land Acknowledgement. Prepared by Nin.Da.Waab.Jig, Walpole Island Heritage Centre (September 20, 2018)

Land acknowledgement guidelines and frameworks from other municipalities, for example:

- <https://muskoka.civicweb.net/filepro/documents/36869?preview=36890>

Various articles written on Land Acknowledgements, for example:

<https://www.aptnnews.ca/infocus/questioning-the-usefulness-of-land-acknowledgements/>



<https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/land-acknowledgments-what-s-wrong-with-them-1.6217931>

<https://www.vice.com/en/article/j5yxbd/indigenous-artists-tell-us-what-they-think-about-land-acknowledgements>

<https://www.cbc.ca/radio/unreserved/redrawing-the-lines-1.4973363/i-regret-it-hayden-king-on-writing-ryerson-university-s-territorial-acknowledgement-1.4973371>

<https://ottawacitizen.com/opinion/columnists/moscoe-heres-why-land-acknowledgements-are-both-meaningless-and-patronizing>

<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/article-if-youre-making-a-land-acknowledgment-make-sure-you-mean-it/>

