



Grand Council Treaty #3

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Original Treaty #3 Documents to Return to Treaty #3 Territory for 150th Celebrations

As part of the 150th anniversary celebrations of the signing of Treaty #3, Grand Council Treaty #3 is proud to announce the arrival of an original community copy along with all three adhesions to the Treaty #3 Territory. After a long series of discussions with Library and Archives Canada and with assistance from the Ministry of Indigenous Affairs Ontario, a travelling agreement was reached to see the documents travel from the National Archives to various locations in the Treaty #3 Territory.

The community copy originated with one of the signatories of Treaty #3, hereditary Chief Paabamasagaa of Naotkamegwaning First Nation. The treaty was cared for by his family until 1977 when it was placed with the National Archives of Canada (now Library and Archives Canada) for safekeeping. In 1978, the treaty was placed on long-term loan at the Lake of the Woods Museum until 2017 when it was returned to Library and Archives Canada for a conservation assessment. The three adhesions travelling with the original community document include the Shebandowan Adhesion, the Lac Seul Adhesion and the Adhesion by Halfbreeds of Rainy River and Lake. This is the first time that both the Treaty document and all three adhesions are displayed together in the Treaty #3 Territory.

Grand Council Treaty #3 has planned four events, in recognition of its 4 Directional Governance Model that will feature the Treaty and its adhesions. In the East, the Dryden Museum hosted the documents on June 20. In the South, the Seven Generations Educational Institute will host the documents on July 20. In the West, Sagkeeng First Nation will host the documents on August 23. In the North, the Seven Generations Education Institute will host an event on September 6.

“To have the Treaty document and the adhesions in the Territory is incredibly important to understanding who we are as Anishinaabe on this 150th anniversary of the treaty signing,” said Ogichidaa Francis Kavanaugh. “The Treaty is sacred to us, as it was sanctioned in ceremony by Creator and the spirits. It is my hope that a more permanent home for these documents can be found in the Treaty #3 Territory so that we may be able to educate our treaty partners about this sacred relationship for years to come.”

“The 150th anniversary of Treaty #3 is a landmark occasion, not just for the signatories of Treaty 3, but for the province as a whole. It goes without saying that First Nations within Treaty #3 territory greatly contribute to the cultural fabric of Ontario,” said Greg Rickford, Ontario’s Minister of Indigenous Affairs. “The significance and relevance of these documents remains meaningful after a century and a half, and they form the foundation for ongoing partnerships between the Treaty #3 communities, the government, and the people of Ontario.”

"It has been an honour and a pleasure to work with the staff of Grand Council Treaty #3 in the development of the exhibit that will accompany the Treaty documents as they travel throughout the territory. Credit goes to the members of The Muse Indigenous Advisory Committee, whose excitement about and commitment to this project has been unparalleled. What an privilege it is to, once again, host the Treaty documents at the Lake of the Woods Museum," said Lori Nelson, Director of The Muse.

Grand Council Treaty #3 wishes to acknowledge the work of Library and Archives Canada for their diligence and facilitating the visit by the Treaty document. Having Treaty #3 travel to its home region will allow members of the community to have access to this important living entity. This visit is the result of a fruitful ongoing collaboration between Grand Council Treaty #3 and LAC.

Grand Council Treaty #3 plans to invite its Treaty partners to additional celebrations at the location of the Treaty signing at the Northwest Angle on September 27, 2023. These celebrations will be in the leadup to the Grand Council National Assembly on October 3 which will see the selection of a new Ogichidaa for a 4 year term.

For greater certainty, Grand Council Treaty #3 maintains that the Halfbreed Adhesion included those families that were “living amongst the Indians as Indians” who were brought into Couchiching First Nation. These families remain status Indian band members of Couchiching First Nation and remain an integral part of the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3 to this day.

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