



IT IS SACRED

Algonquin Spiritual Elders invite you to join them with their special guests, the Cree Youth Walkers from the Journey of Nishiyuu on a massive sacred walk with Indigenous Nations, inter-faith groups, organizations & supportive Canadians - June 17, 2016 - to protect Canada's most Sacred Site in Ottawa.

May 27, 2016

'Kwey'! Greetings to our fellow brothers and sisters of every Nation and every faith;

Did you know that Canada has its very own ancient and crucial sacred site of waterfalls and islands right behind Parliament Hill? Akikodjiwan is the Algonquin name of our Sacred Site - the Chaudière Falls & islands; the area is also known as Asinabka.

As the Traditional Elders who represent customary and traditional leadership in the Algonquin Nation we request your support. Grandmothers and Elders are the knowledge and wisdom-keepers and it is our responsibility to protect the traditions of our sacred site since time immemorial.

June 17th, 2016 is one of those moments in history where we must all act together. We reach out to you and to all levels of government (Canadian and Indigenous) as the traditional spiritual voice committed to holding the sacred – *sacred - a place for our great-grand-children and yours.*

We ask for your support, your attendance, your prayers, your banners, flags and your act of listening and witnessing. **Please: on June 17th join us in large numbers for a ceremony and walk.**

The spirit of our Indigenous Nations is *in* that Sacred Site.

Article 12 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples states:
"Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, protect, and have access in privacy to their religious and cultural sites."

The Federal government travelled to the United Nations this year to publicly endorse the declaration and pledged to act accordingly. To proceed with the proposed and hasty development on the Sacred Site would be a direct violation of Article 12 and principles of reconciliation.

The Assembly of First Nations passed a motion on December 8, 2015 in support of the motion by Quebec and Labrador Chiefs to protect the Sacred Site. Leadership and traditional elders are requesting that it be protected. **There is unity amongst the traditional people *and* the leadership.** (see our website for the PDF)

The national identity and heritage of all Canadians is also within that Sacred Site. This sacred site is the reason Ottawa adopted the Algonquin name - '*meeting place*' and why Canada's Parliament was placed close to this site. Our Sacred Site was an inter-Nation meeting place for peoples from as far away as Labrador and Mexico. At this site, three rivers join in the sacred falls and surrounding islands to form a natural medicine wheel. The falls, shaped like a peace pipe with mist rising like smoke, was a place of peace and ceremony as was witnessed by Samuel de Champlain and described in his writings of 1613. Its beauty was second only to Niagara Falls. It is our most treasured praying place. The Sacred Site's highest duty is to keep us all safe and at peace. It is as much today a Sacred Site as it was for thousands of years.

We ask that it be formally recognized as a Sacred Site and be protected by all levels of governments from the current destruction and from future development. This is to be done by National Aboriginal Day, June 21, 2017. Until that day, all development activity is to be completely stopped. When it is declared sacred and protected, we will then all join once more, in joyful ceremony and reconciliation.

Our special guests, the Cree Youth Leaders of the Journey of Nishiyuu, trekked in snow shoes over three months from Whapmagoostui in Nunavik, Quebec to the Sacred Site in 2013 in prayer for all Nations. They were greeted by over 4,000 at their arrival in Ottawa. On June 17th the youth are returning to the Sacred Site to represent traditional youth. They will walk in front of us with Algonquin youth because we are saving the Sacred Site for all youth and their future grand-children: this is their Sacred meeting place.

Our Sacred Walk precedes the Summer Solstice Pow Wow in Ottawa (June 17-19) where thousands will be gathered in the city that weekend at Vincent Massey Park.

It will be a beautiful and colourful walk with all Nations and faiths joining in. Don't miss this prophetic and special moment as Grandmothers, Elders, Youth and the peaceful teachings of our prophecies join together on the Sacred Site. **It is history in the making.**

There are many sacred sites around the world and we honour them with you: from Uluru, Australia to the White Buffalo Calf Woman, USA to Stonehenge, England to the Prophet's Mosque, Saudi-Arabia and to the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. So sacred are these places that they are protected from development and destruction. A sacred site is not open for development or private ownership - precisely because *it is* sacred. Even a younger and historical site such as the Plains of Abraham in Quebec City is safe from development.

Canada's indigenous ancient Sacred Site is also worthy of protection.

The tragic death of Dudley George was over the protection of a sacred site at **Ipperwash**. The **Oka Crisis** was over the protection of a sacred site. This too is over a sacred site - one of massive international importance. Together, we can all right this wrong. Indigenous people endure many hardships : from the Indian Act to the loss of stolen lands. Where we draw the line is over sacred sites. *We are drawing that line - peacefully.*



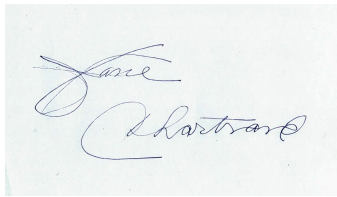
it IS Sacred

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This time, be with us, on the right side of history.

Together with peace and prayer leading the way, let us honour Canada's Sacred Site and see it protected after 200 years of industrial damage and forceful separation from its Indigenous People tasked with its protection. It is time. Time to act honourably... time for reconciliation.

Respectfully and in peace and friendship,
Meegwetch,



**Nokomis (Grandmother) Jane Chartrand
from the Ontario side of the Algonquin Nation**



**Elder Albert Dumont
from the Quebec side of the Algonquin Nation**

In balance, this letter is signed by a woman and a man from each side of the river. On June 17th, they will be joined by a group of Algonquin Grandmothers and Elders as well as traditional people from other Nations. Together, they will start the walk with a short ceremony on the Sacred Site involving youth and all those present.

*"Asinabka is a place where human beings go to better understand their duties and responsibilities to all other life around them. Where water spills, life begins! The fish, birds, animals and plantations are already aware of their sacred instructions. Only we, the human beings, have lost our way. This is why we must defend Asinabka, our most sacred site." - **Albert Dumont***

*"It is my responsibility as a native woman and traditional Grandmother to protect and preserve our Sacred Site for the next generation. I must uphold what our esteemed Elder, the late Grandfather William Commanda envisioned for the Sacred Site. As a wisdom-keeper he spoke of this vision in Canada and travelled all around the world where he visited other sacred sites and discussed this vision with the Dalai-Lama, Nelson Mandela and International Indigenous Grandmothers and Elders. The Sacred Site is meant to be protected. I will be walking with 4 generations of my family." - **Jane Chartrand***

* **Grandmother** and **Grandfather** signify Elder in the Algonquin Nation - it is a spiritual role that can be compared to religious roles



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HELP & LEARN

GOAL: 500 (to thousands!) walking in support

1. **ATTEND** the walk June 17th: **every person walking makes a difference**
2. **INVITE** your family (children welcome), friends & associates to join you
3. **INVITE** a group, club or association you are connected with to officially join in and bring along their banner and to RSVP as a group. There will be opportunities for groups before the walk for photos.
4. **RSVP** online (it helps us to track our #s for the walk & see how close we are to our goal)
5. **CIRCULATE** via email, FB, Twitter, flyers and news about the walk. Print posters and post.
6. **DONATIONS, HELP** look for: sponsors, volunteers, wheelchairs (*for elders for the day*), hosting, Aeroplan points, gas gift cards for elders from far away, Tim Horton gift cards or grocery gift cards (for meals), printing donations, cash donations for Sept. - Oct. awareness events, photographers, videographers, etc.

GOAL: Educate and raise awareness

1. **SPREAD AWARENESS:** VISIT: www.itIsSacred.ca Download PDF package - share the info

GOAL: Raise funds for the cause and the travel of special guests

1. **DONATE** Aeroplan points for the the Journey of Nishiyuu walkers from Whapmagoostui, Que.
2. **SPONSOR** Be recognized as a sponsor for the event OR sponsor the youth walkers

GOAL: HELP THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT DO THE RIGHT THING:

1. **CONTACT YOUR MP, MPP, City Councillor** + Minister Mélanie Joly - *Canadian Heritage* + Minister Carolyn Bennett - *Indigenous & Northern Affairs* + Catherine McKenna, the Environment Minister

FOR ALL OF THE ABOVE: CONTACT US ON FACEBOOK OR @ WEBSITE

WALK - FRIDAY, JUNE 17, 2016 @10:00 AM - Ceremony at Victoria Island

11:00 AM - Walk along Wellington Street & 12:00 to 12:30 PM at Parliament Hill



INFO SHEET - ABOUT ATTENDING THE SACRED WALK



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Thank you for joining us - we extend our gratitude and joy to all those taking the time to support the Sacred Site *Akikodjiwan - meegwetch - thank you - merci!*

Date and Time:

June 17th, 2016

10:00 AM - Spiritual Ceremony to kick off the walk @ Victoria Island on Sacred Site

11:00 AM - Sacred Walk begins from Victoria Island, down Wellington Street and to the grounds on Parliament Hill

12:00 PM - Speeches and closing prayer at Parliament Hill

12:30 PM - End of Sacred Walk

2:00 PM - Celebrations start at Vincent Massey Park for those who wish to extend their day and weekend in celebration of National Aboriginal History Month and the 20th anniversary of National Aboriginal Day (June 21). This annual event is held on the same day as the Sacred Walk and organized by other Indigenous groups. We invite everyone to join in these Indigenous celebrations for the Summer Solstice festival (www.ottawasummersolstice.ca).

What is taking place:

A massive Sacred Walk starting from Victoria Island, along Wellington Street to Parliament Hill followed by closing speeches and prayer.

Who: All ages - all people are invited (children are very much welcomed).

Algonquin Grandmothers and Elders are inviting every Nation to attend in their traditional regalia with their sacred objects and/or tobacco. All Inter-faith and other groups are invited to attend in their traditional wear (if applicable) or brightest colours to show all nations, races and faiths joining together in unity. Wear your country or Nation's colours - carry a flag or banner.

What to bring:

- * For your own needs: water, sunscreen, snacks, cameras, etc.
- * Flags of your nation & sacred objects
- * Prayers can be tied to strings and carried by your group (for example - ties of cloth with a few pinches of tobacco, or buddhist prayer ties, or any version of prayers that represent you or your group.)
- * Placards - posters with messages of support
- * Banners or posters representing your group to help see the diversity of those at the Sacred Walk (this is so important!)

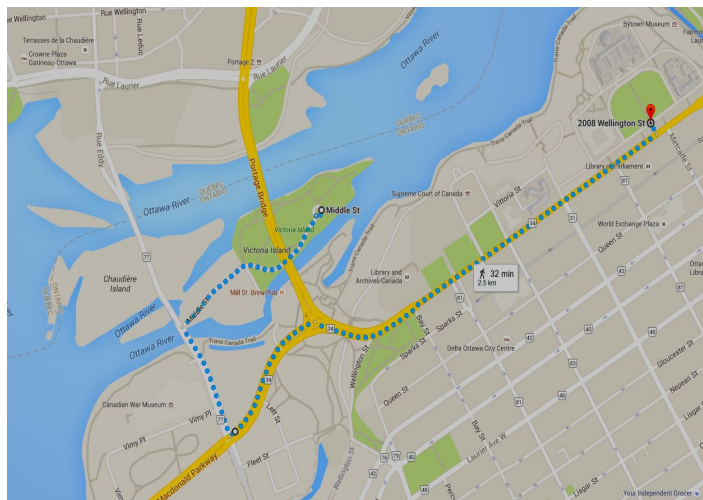
INFO SHEET - ABOUT ATTENDING THE SACRED WALK

How to make strings of tobacco ties (prayer ties)

- * If you are interested in making Indigenous prayer ties, they would be greatly appreciated as offerings at the end of the walk. The string of prayers can be extended in length like a long ribbon carried by those walking. They are tied to a long white cotton string and every few inches, small cloths holding a pinch of tobacco are tied to the string.
- * Example videos about making indigenous prayer ties:
 - A short version taught to children - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qwKhSj5UcAQ>
 - Another version for making smaller ties - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8YL2u3s13dc>



Map of the route:



Where to park:

There are pay parking lots in the area. The closest one to the island is at the War Museum. Or park close to our walking route. For ex:

- *War Museum* - 1 Vimy Place, K1A 0M8
- *World Exchange Plaza* - 45 O'Connor St, K1P 1A4 - (LPG cars not allowed)
- *Constitution Square* - 350 Albert St., K1R 7X7

**Note: There will be no parking on Victoria Island.

Do I have to register?

- * You don't have to register - anyone and everyone is welcomed on the walk. However, to help our organizing committee, we greatly appreciate if you RSVP on our (30 second) online form at: www.itIsSacred.ca/rsvp/
- * For groups of 10 or more an RSVP would be greatly appreciated. (Opportunities for official photos for groups.)

Who to contact for more info:

Please contact us on the website contact page with your inquiry or a phone number and we will respond within 24 hrs.

Volunteer, Donate, Sponsor:

Visit Website and download '*Ways to Help*' or contact us directly.

Walk with: ALGONQUIN ELDERS to protect Ottawa's Sacred Site

Friday June 17th, 2016



IT IS SACRED

Algonquin Spiritual Grandmothers & Elders invite you on a walk with Indigenous Nations, inter-faith groups, organizations & supportive Canadians - to protect our common heritage - the Algonquin Sacred Site, Akikodjiwan, at the Chaudière Falls & Islands behind Parliament.



Condos or a sacred forest & falls?

10:00 AM – Ceremony at Victoria Island
11:00 AM – Walk along Wellington Street
12:00 to 12:30 PM – Parliament Hill event

Instead of destruction, the sacred site would offer an entire island of public forest, beautiful free falls and an Indigenous space for peace and healing. (pictured left)

THE SACRED SITE WAS NEVER MEANT TO BE DESTROYED

It is meant to be a prominent international visitor attraction just like other sacred sites around the world (*Stonehenge, UK; Prophet's Mosque, Saudi Arabia; Uluru, Australia*).

Help us stop the massive development slated for September 2016. A proposed \$1.2 billion condo development threatens to cover over the Sacred Site. In 1613 Samuel de Champlain described, in his journals, sacred ceremonies at the site where Indigenous People had worshiped for thousands of years. After settlers, arrived industry polluted the site for 200+ years thereby preventing ceremonies. Since the 1950s, plans were drawn up for the site by officials to eventually become green space. Veering off course, the Harper government initiated the sale of the sacred site. By acting now, we could eventually enjoy a peaceful forest (*similar to Stanley Park in Vancouver*) and breathtaking views of the falls instead of allowing our common heritage to be sold off. This condo speculation and high rise towers are *not* as 'green' as a public forest on a sacred site - fit for the world stage and a focal point for a long-term tourist economy.

Walk with us, be on the right side of history.

**STOP THE MASSIVE CONDO DESTRUCTION - DECLARE THE SITE SACRED
PROTECT PUBLIC HERITAGE**

Article 12 of the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples states: "Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, protect, and have access in privacy to their religious and cultural sites." Canada pledged to respect this declaration in 2016.

JOIN US ON A SACRED WALK

Help protect Asinabka,
the most Sacred Site
in Ottawa.

JUNE 17, 2016

Starting at 10 a.m. at Victoria Island

Chaudière Falls, and its Islands—also known as Akikodjiwan-Kichizibi—is a Sacred Site for the Algonquin Nation. Algonquin Spiritual Elders invite you to join them with special guests, the Cree Youth Walkers from the Journey of Nishiyuu. Together with Indigenous Nations, inter-faith groups and supportive organizations and individuals from across the country, we will walk to protect this important site.

Show your support and register,

ITISSACRED.ca

Facebook bit.ly/itissacredfacebook

Twitter twitter.com/it_is_sacred

FRIDAY, JUNE 17

- 10 a.m.** Opening ceremony
- 11 a.m.** Sacred Walk begins on Victoria Island
- 12 p.m.** Speeches and closing prayer at Parliament Hill
- 12:30 p.m.** End of Sacred Walk
- 2 p.m.** Pow Wow at Vincent Massey Park for the Summer Solstice Festival - all weekend



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Protect our common heritage - the Algonquin Sacred Site, Akikodjiwan, at the Chaudière Falls & Islands behind Parliament.

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