

## REVIEW OF DRAFT TEXT FOR TOWNSHIP OF RIDEAU LAKES

### ***A. Location of Township of Rideau Lakes***

The Township of Rideau Lakes is located within the County of Leeds and Grenville. It includes the former townships of South Elmsley, South Burgess, Bastard, and North and South Crosby.

The township encompasses many large lakes of the Rideau system including: Otter Lake, Bass Lake, Lower Rideau Lake, Big Rideau Lake, Westport Sand Lake, Crosby Lake, Newboro Lake, Sand Lake, Upper and Lower Beverley Lakes, Mud Lake, Troy Lake, Whitefish Lake, and parts of Opinicon and Wolfe Lakes. The upper Rideau Lake is the summit of the Rideau system dividing the waters that flows to the Ottawa River from the waters that flow to Lake Ontario.

The Township of Rideau Lakes includes several towns and villages including: Newboro, Chaffeys Lock, Elgin, Delta, Jones Falls, Morton, Forfar, Westport, Portland, Crosby, Harlem, Chantry, and Lombardy. Smiths Falls lies just outside of the township boundary. Highway 15 runs through the middle of the Township from Smiths Falls to Morton.

*See map*

The geomorphology of the Rideau Lakes is dominated by the Frontenac Arch (aka Frontenac Axis), a narrow neck of Precambrian rock that joins the Algonquin Highlands feature of the Canadian Shield to the Adirondack Mountains south of the St. Lawrence River. The Frontenac Arch is a significant wildlife corridor hosting a variety of flora and fauna. It is a unique and important biological and cultural feature designated as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, and thus is appropriately referenced in the Township's text.<sup>1</sup>

### ***B. Comment on the draft submitted by the Township of Rideau Lakes***

#### **B.1 Text Submitted by township of Rideau Lakes**

The draft was submitted in two versions.

Version 1:

Archaeological evidence shows that Indigenous peoples have continuously lived in the Rideau Lakes area for over 9,000 years – since the last ice age melted. Artifacts have been found around all of the lakes in this area.

People of two different language groups lived here - the Algonquians and the Iroquoians. The Algonquians are the longest known inhabitants in these lands, and still reside here today. Traditionally they lived throughout the Frontenac Arch and beyond, in small

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<sup>1</sup> The location and importance of the Frontenac Arch is well summarized in:  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frontenac\\_Arch\\_Biosphere\\_Reserve](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frontenac_Arch_Biosphere_Reserve)

family groups by hunting, fishing & gathering in the forests and lakes. About 1,000 years ago, Iroquoian speaking peoples arrived. They preferred rich farmland, to the east & west of the Frontenac Arch, and lived in large villages of longhouses surrounded by palisades.

#### Version 2:

Archaeological evidence shows that Indigenous peoples have continuously lived in the Rideau Lakes area for at least 9,000 years. Artifacts have been found around all of the lakes in this area.

People of two different language groups lived here. The Anishinaabe, who spoke Algonquian languages, lived throughout the Frontenac Arch and beyond, in small family groups by hunting, fishing & gathering in the forests and lakes. Iroquoian speaking groups preferred the farmland to the east & west of the Frontenac Arch, and lived in large villages of longhouses.

Two source references were cited in the township's draft:

Archaeological Historical Symposium: October 2-3, 1982, Rideau Ferry, Ontario

Archaeological Historical Symposium (1982 : Rideau Ferry, Ont.)

<https://archive.org/details/archaeologicalhi0000arch/page/n5/mode/2up>

Paleo-Indian and Archaic Occupations of the Rideau Lakes. G.D. Watson, 1990.

Ontario Archeology, 50th Issue. (Journal published by the Ontario Archeology Society) <https://ontarioarchaeology.org/resources/publications-2/ontarioarchaeology/ontario-archaeology-1990-1999/ontario-archaeology-0a050-1990/>

#### B.2. Length of Occupation in Versions 1 and 2

The first paragraph for both versions correctly identifies the length of occupation. Version 2 is preference to Version 1 as it avoids explaining the passage of time between the melting of the ice cap, the retreat of the Champlain Sea, and the availability of open land that allowed for occupation of the area.

#### Recommendation for Draft – Paragraph 1

Thus I would retain the 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph of version 2 with the addition of the word “Indigenous” to qualify artifacts:

Archaeological evidence shows that Indigenous peoples have continuously lived in the Rideau Lakes area for at least 9,000 years. **Indigenous** artifacts have been found around all of the lakes in this area.

### B.3. identity of Indigenous Peoples in Versions 1 and 2

The second paragraph of both versions is problematic. Based on the source articles cited with these drafts, the text refers to both Algonquian and Iroquoian occupancy. This is likely due to the source documents' concentration on palaeo and archaic era occupation without addressing occupation during the later Woodland Period (3000 to 1000 BP) or the more significant evidence of the early contact and historic eras. The archaeological evidence from the early eras (palaeo, archaic and woodland) clearly indicated Indigenous occupation of the area; however, it is difficult to clearly identify and definitively delineate the geographical regions occupied by the predecessors of historic Algonquian or Iroquoian-speakers.

At the time of first contact in the early 1600s, the people who dominated the area were Algonquins. The St. Lawrence Iroquoians (aka Laurentian Iroquoians) who Cartier had met a century earlier in 1535-36 were no longer extant along the St. Lawrence or adjacent territory.<sup>2</sup>

The written historical record identifies the people as Algonquin; while the Haudenosaunee (Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca) occupied land along the St. Lawrence River and . in Iroquoia in what is now New York State.

British colonial authorities made peace with the Algonquins in 1760. Significantly, they recognized Algonquin use and occupation of the Ottawa Valley as described in over 65 petitions from Algonquin leaders dating from 1772 to 1897. The acknowledged territory included what is now the Township of Rideau Lakes.

In an 1830 petition, the famous Algonquin, Chief Pierre Louis Constant Pynency (Pinesi), described his family hunting grounds as lying south of the Ottawa River to the height of the Rideau.<sup>3</sup> His description would place his family territory in the heart of what is now the Township of Rideau Lakes.

Within a decade, Algonquin Chief Peter Shawanipinessi, who was known in the area since the early 1800s, petitioned for a secure tract of land in Bedford Township, adjacent to the present-day Township of Rideau Lakes. Shawanipinessi's family and followers had used the land around the upper Rideau system and towards the Mississippi River for generations.

Numerous Algonquin families celebrated religious events at churches in Westport and Newboro throughout the 1800s and early 1900s. Descendants of these and other Algonquin families continue to live in the area today.

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<sup>2</sup> For a good summary of the scholarly debate regarding the identity and territorial occupation of these early Iroquoians see [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St.\\_Lawrence\\_Iroquoians](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Lawrence_Iroquoians)

<sup>3</sup> P. L. Constant Pynency to Sir George Kempt, Administrator of Government to Lower Canada, February 19, 1830. LAC RG 8 Vol. 269 pp 235-236 Reel C-2857

### Recommendation for Draft – Paragraph 2

The Anishinaabe, who were known historically as Algonquins, lived throughout the Frontenac Arch and beyond in the Ottawa Valley. They lived in small family groups, hunting, fishing, and gathering in the forests and lakes of the region and practicing rudimentary horticulture. Their territory was acknowledged by colonial authorities and many of their descendants continue to live in the area.

### C. Additional sources

Two examples of summaries published by other local groups:

Ken W. Watson, “Indigenous Use of the Rideau Waterway”

Rideau Trail Association, “History of the Trail Area”

The 1830 Pinesi Petition:

1830-02-19 Pynency Petition

1830-02-19 Transcript Pynency Petition (English Translation)

A good overview of Algonquin history and culture

Kirby Whiteduck, Algonquin Traditional Culture

Map of Township of Rideau Lakes