MATACHEWAN FIRST NATION TREATY LAND ENTITLEMENT NEWSLETTER ISSUE 4

Background

All three of the previous newsletters contained information on the background of Matachewan's Treaty Land Entitlement (TLE). We hope to have these past issues posted on our website, should you wish to review the detailed information. Briefly, MFN's claim was agreed to by Canada in August of 2011 and Ontario in July of 2012.

The claim is for 5.74 square miles of land to be added to the reserve and compensation for the loss of use of those lands since the signing of the treaty in 1906.

To date there have been three community engagement sessions and updates on the negotiations and three newsletters.

Land Selection

In the last newsletter (April 2014) a map indicating "candidate lands" was included. A version of this map is also available on our website at www.matachewanfirstnation.com as well as an updated map. The map identified lands that were selected in consultation with the membership and subsequently withdrawn from further development and identified as "Lands for Consideration", which were the blue hash marks. These lands comprised approximately 13 square miles which is seven square miles more than what has been agreed to in the claim. The process of narrowing that selection began in the last newsletter and the community engagement session held on June 7, 2014.

Through this session and comments by individuals during this time period the selection has been narrowed and the updated map has been included in this newsletter. It is important to note that MFN will be taking steps to protect some of these areas under other processes. For the most northern portion of Matachewan Lake – known locally as Head of the Lakes – protection will be sought through the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines policy on aboriginal cultural heritage sites. We have asked that

the lands immediately to the north of the reserve within the Conservation Reserve (light green shading) be converted to Conservation Reserve to prevent development. The remaining lands that have been excluded will be released for potential development. As with all public lands MFN will be consulted and accommodated where appropriate before any development occurs.

MFN is not obligated to select the lands that have been withdrawn. The reason for withdrawing these lands is so that a process of disentanglement can occur. While the TLE process is ongoing no mining claims can be staked and no forestry activity can occur, for example. Should MFN select other lands where there is tenure, the process will be far more complicated and may ultimately not be possible.

The lands that remain withdrawn still make up more than the 5.74 square miles agreed to under the claim and a further narrowing will be necessary with a view to coming to a final selection by this time next year.

Urban Reserve

An economic impact study that recommended Timmins as the best location for an urban reserve was completed. Subsequent to this a terms of reference for a selection committee comprised of negotiation team members was developed and has been agreed to by Chief and Council.

The selection committee will begin meeting in the Fall of 2014 to review the report and begin the work of finding suitable locations in the City of Timmins and may give further consideration to other municipalities as more information comes available. As stated in the previous newsletter, the cost of developing an urban reserve is significant and the committee will have to take into consideration location, supply - demand, service type, cost to capitalize, externalities - competition, fixed costs, opportunity costs, competitive advantages, etc. The urban reserve will not include residential lands, but will be used solely for economic development purposes. The selection committee will only be making recommendations which will ultimately be voted upon by the membership.

Loss of Use Compensation

Our consultants began working on land evaluation in the area this summer to assist with determining historical and present land values. This will assist us in our negotiations with Canada in determining loss of use compensation. The report should be ready this Fall and these negotiations are expected to begin at our next TLE negotiation meeting in December of 2014.

Feedback

The TLE negotiation team is comprised of the entire Chief and Council who may be contacted at the Band Office or via email. Shawn Batise, Executive Director of the Wabun Tribal Council is also a member of the negotiation team and may be contacted at 705-268-9066 or via email at sbatise@wabun.on.ca.

Your feedback and comments are welcome any time. The next community engagement session is being planned for early 2015. Please see our website for information on the next session.

