



SOUTH NATION
CONSERVATION
DE LA NATION SUD



38 rue Victoria Street, Finch, ON K0C 1K0 Tel: 613-984-2948 Fax: 613-984-2872 Toll Free: 1-877-984-2948 www.nation.on.ca

Fish and Wildlife Committee

Meeting Agenda

Date: June 7th, 2022

Time: 3:00 p.m.

Location: Watershed Room, SNC Office

Address: 38 Victoria Street, Finch, ON K0C 1K0



Fish and Wildlife Committee

Meeting Agenda

June 7th, 2022 at 3:00 p.m.

1. Chair's Remarks
2. Approval of Fish and Wildlife Committee Agenda (Supplemental Agenda)
3. Declaration of Conflict of Interest
4. SNC Fish and Wildlife Project Update – PowerPoint Presentation: Staff
5. Approval of the Fish and Wildlife Committee meeting minutes of March 3rd, 2022 3-7
6. New Business:
 - a. Update: Ducks Unlimited Canada Partnership: Brent 8-9
 - b. Update: OPG Regional Biodiversity Program: Michelle 10-11
 - c. Request for Approval: OFAH Summer Student Work Plan: Michelle 12-13
 - d. Update: 2022 Monitoring: Naomi 14-15
 - e. Update: The Healing Place: Ronda 16-27
7. Supplemental Agenda (if any)
8. Correspondence (if any)
9. Roundtable Discussions
 - a. Community Engagement Activities
 - b. Watershed Monitoring Report
10. Date of Next Meeting:
 - September 6th, 2022, at 3:00 p.m., location to be confirmed
11. Adjournment

Ronda Boutz,
Team Lead, Special Projects.



FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, March 3rd, 2022, 3:00 p.m. – Meeting 01/22

By Electronic Participation



- Present:**
- Frederick Schueler, Committee Chair
 - Malcolm Clark, Russell Fish and Game Club
 - Alvin Cluff-Clyburne, Russell Fish and Game Club
 - Doug Culver, Naturalist and Recreational Angler
 - Stéphane Dubuc, Trapper
 - Aleta Karstad, Fragile Inheritance Natural History
 - Shawn Landriault, Public Citizen
 - Kirk Myelde, Public Citizen
 - Bill Smirle, SNC Board of Directors, Past Chair, ex-officio
 - Larry Smith, South Nation Archery Supply
 - Doug Thompson, Public Citizen
- Regrets:**
- Bruce Clarke, Ottawa Fly Fishers
 - Cyril Holmes, Grenville Fish and Game Club
 - Joffre Cote, Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Fish and Wildlife (non-voting)
 - Susan Gallinger, Public Citizen (non-voting)
 - George Darouze, SNC Board of Directors, Chair, ex-officio
 - Pierre Leroux, SNC Board of Directors, Vice Chair, ex-officio
- Absent:**
- Abraham Francis, Mohawks of Akwesasne
- Staff:**
- Ronda Boutz, Team Lead, Special Projects
 - Michelle Cavanagh, Team Lead, Stewardship
 - Brent Harbers, Watershed Biologist
 - Naomi Langlois-Anderson, Senior Fish and Wildlife Technician
 - Ryan Robson, Resource Technician



CHAIR'S REMARKS

Fred Schueler, Committee Chair, called the Fish and Wildlife Committee meeting of March 3rd, 2022 to order at 3:01 p.m.

APPROVAL OF FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMITTEE AGENDA

RESOLUTION NO. FW-001/22

Moved by: Shawn Landriault

Seconded by: Stéphane Dubuc

RESOLVED THAT:

The Members approve the Fish and Wildlife Committee meeting agenda of March 3rd, 2022 as submitted.

CARRIED

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Conflict of Interest.

SNC FISH AND WILDLIFE PROJECT UPDATE – POWERPOINT PRESENTATION

Staff presented fish and wildlife project and program updates.

Doug Culver joined the meeting at 3:15 p.m.

Alvin Cluff-Clyburne joined the meeting at 3:30 p.m.

APPROVAL OF THE FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 30TH, 2021

RESOLUTION NO. FW-002/22

Moved by: Stéphane Dubuc

Seconded by: Kirk Myelde

RESOLVED THAT:

The Members approve the Fish and Wildlife Committee virtual meeting minutes of November 30th, 2021 as submitted.

CARRIED



NEW BUSINESS

UPDATE: 2022 COMMITTEE CHAIR AND MEMBERSHIP

RESOLUTION NO. FW-003/22

Moved by: Alvin Cluff-Clyburne
Seconded by: Malcolm Clark

RESOLVED THAT:

The Fish and Wildlife Committee receive and file the 2022 Committee Chair and Membership report.

CARRIED

UPDATE: 2022 STEWARDSHIP WORK PLAN

RESOLUTION NO. FW-004/22

Moved by: Larry Smith
Seconded by: Alvin Cluff-Clyburne

RESOLVED THAT:

The Fish and Wildlife Committee receive and file the 2022 Stewardship Work Plan update; and

FURTHER THAT:

The Fish and Wildlife Committee provide comments for consideration on the 2023 Stewardship Workplan deliverables.

CARRIED

UPDATE: GRASSLAND STEWARDSHIP INITIATIVE PARTNERSHIP

RESOLUTION NO. FW-005/22

Moved by: Doug Culver
Seconded by: Alvin Cluff-Clyburne

RESOLVED THAT:

The Fish and Wildlife Committee receive and file the Update: Grassland Stewardship Initiative Partnership report.

CARRIED



UPDATE: OPG REGIONAL BIODIVERSITY PROGRAM

RESOLUTION NO. FW-006/22

Moved by: Shawn Landriault

Seconded by: Stéphane Dubuc

RESOLVED THAT:

The Fish and Wildlife Committee receive and file the OPG Regional Biodiversity Program update.

CARRIED

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

A. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Stéphane Dubuc

- Informed the Committee that the Glengarry Trappers Council is promoting International Beaver Day on April 7th, 2022; and requested additional promotion by SNC if possible
- Mentioned the St. Albert Knights of Columbus were hosting an Easter Egg hunt in the village of St. Albert, they would welcome a contribution of SNC promotional items for the children if available.

Bill Smirle

- Advised the Committee of his presentation to North Dundas every six weeks to keep them informed
- Thanked and complimented staff of the new councillor information package provided to him for this meeting with North Dundas' new councillor.
 - Fred Schueler recommended sending the same information package to North Grenville's new councillor if not done so already.

B. WATERSHED MONITORING REPORT

Fred Schueler reminded Committee members to submit their Watershed Monitoring reports by email.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- June 7th, 2022 Fish and Wildlife Meeting at 3:00 p.m., location to be confirmed.



SOUTH NATION
CONSERVATION
DE LA NATION SUD



ADJOURNMENT

RESOLUTION NO. FW-07/22

Moved by: Doug Thompson

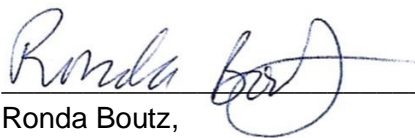
RESOLVED THAT:

The Fish and Wildlife Committee meeting of
March 3rd, 2022 be adjourned at 4:25 p.m.

CARRIED

Fred Schueler,
Committee Chair.

/rb



Ronda Boutz,
Team Lead, Special Projects.



To: Fish and Wildlife Committee
From: Brent Harbers, Watershed Biologist
Date: May 31, 2022
Subject: Update: Ducks Unlimited Canada Partnership

RECOMMENDATION:

The Fish and Wildlife Committee receive and file the Ducks Unlimited Canada Partnership update.

DISCUSSION:

SNC has partnered with DUC to complete wetland restoration projects within our jurisdiction, totaling approximately 225 acres over 3 years. The restoration projects will occur on SNC-owned properties, other public lands, and in partnership with private landowners. Projects are being prioritized in areas where there are known challenges around flood attenuation, or where there is evidence the site was previously wetland.

SNC Property

Two projects are in progress on SNC properties. The work involves some excavation and placement of fixed elevation spillways to create open water wetland areas. The restoration sites are in a failed spruce plantation and an old beaver pond. Depths will be around 50cm to 80cm for at least 50% of each pond area, and shallow banks will allow good access for wildlife. The design includes several small, shallow ponds around the perimeter of the larger pond to create amphibian breeding habitat.

Public Lands

The United Counties of Prescott and Russell are hoping to restore water levels and mitigate flooding of infrastructure in key wetlands within Larose Forest. The projects will involve excavating ponds of varying sizes and depths to create storage and open water wetlands. Some ponds will be suitable for amphibian breeding habitat while others will be permanent. Designs will require hydrology review to ensure that there is no impact from the projects on nearby infrastructure (roads/trails) or plantation forests.

Private Property

At the outset of the partnership, a press release was produced which generated a lot of interest from private landowners to create wetland habitat on their properties. SNC is working with 6 landowners to design and create small wetland projects that are between 1 and 5 acres in size. One of the projects is being designed for Chorus Frogs since they have been documented on the property. The size, shape and depths of the projects vary depending on site conditions.



SOUTH NATION
CONSERVATION
DE LA NATION SUD



FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/ADHERENCE TO SNC POLICY:

Compliance with Budget:

This partnership project is included in the 2022 SNC Budget under Resource Management: Projects, Habitat Restoration, pages 24-25.

SNC Policy Adherence:

All expenditures for the projects will adhere to SNC's Purchasing Policy, and all work undertaken to complete the projects will adhere to SNC's Health and Safety Policies and Procedures.

Brent Harbers

Brent Harbers,
Watershed Biologist.



To: Fish and Wildlife Committee
From: Michelle Cavanagh, Team Lead, Stewardship
Date: May 31, 2022
Subject: Update: OPG Regional Biodiversity Program

RECOMMENDATION:

The Fish and Wildlife Committee receive and file the OPG Regional Biodiversity Program update.

DISCUSSION:

SNC was successful in applying for funding from Ontario Power Generation through their Regional Biodiversity Funding Program for a combined Lakes/Rivers and Woodlands project. The funding awarded is \$200,000 divided over 3 years. 2022 is year three of the three-year project.

The Lakes/Rivers component of the project consists of shoreline stabilization and instream habitat creation along a stream which flows through J. Henry Tweed Conservation Area. This is a continuation of similar work completed on the property in 2019. The overall objective is to increase riparian and instream biodiversity, which will improve the ecological features and functions in the Conservation Area.

Activities in-progress for 2022 include:

- Finalizing the designs for the shoreline stabilization sites based on feedback from the engineering and stewardship teams
- Site preparation for shoreline stabilization work
- Procurement of materials and completion of shoreline stabilization work
- Re-planting all disturbed areas with native trees and shrubs
- Project communications plan
- Permanent signage describing the project

The Woodlands component of the project consists of invasive species control on SNC's Gamble and Garlandside Road properties. Using drone-acquired low-level aerial photography, 20 m radius circle plots will be set in locations of highest concentration of Ash mortality and advanced Glossy Buckthorn populations. Glossy buckthorn will be felled and removed from the plot and stumps will be treated with a systemic herbicide. Native trees and shrubs will be planted within each treated area.



Activities in-progress for 2022 include:

- Final site selection and plot layout
- Glossy Buckthorn removal within plots
- Removal of infected Ash trees within plots
- Removal of some hazard trees
- Re-planting plots with native trees and shrubs
- Project communications plan

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/ADHERENCE TO SNC POLICY:

Compliance with Budget:

This project is included in the 2022 Budget under Resource Management: Projects: Habitat Restoration, pages 24-25.

SNC Policy Adherence:

All expenditures will adhere to SNC's Purchasing Policy, including seeking three quotes and required authorizations according to purchasing limits. All work undertaken to complete the projects will adhere to SNC's Health and Safety Policies and Procedures.

Michelle Cavanagh,
Team Lead, Stewardship.



To: Fish and Wildlife Committee
From: Michelle Cavanagh, Team Lead, Stewardship
Date: May 30, 2022
Subject: Request for Approval: OFAH Summer Student Work Plan

RECOMMENDATION:

The Fish and Wildlife Committee approve the OFAH Summer Student Work Plan.

DISCUSSION:

SNC has partnered with the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH) since 2007 to support a yearly summer student at SNC. The OFAH student typically has tasks assigned by OFAH that include education and outreach, distributing information, and keeping a log of Invasive Alien Species encountered. The remainder of their time is spent assisting with SNC programs and projects, with a focus on invasive species.

A brief work plan has been prepared which outlines this year's tasks for the OFAH student. There is flexibility in the work plan and new tasks may be added as the summer progresses depending on priorities and identification of new issues.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/ADHERENCE TO SNC POLICY:

Compliance with Budget: OFAH pays the student's salary (minimum wage) for 10 weeks. SNC pays any top-ups and extensions, as needed. Funding for student positions is included in the 2022 Budget, under Corporate and Community Services, Corporate Services, Administration, pages 76-77.

SNC Policy Adherence: Students adhere to SNC's Personnel Policy and Health and Safety Policy and Procedures. Any activities related to the SNC Forest adhere to the SNC Forest Policy.

Michelle Cavanagh,
Team Lead, Stewardship

Attachment: OFAH Student 2022 Work Plan



2022 OFAH Student Work Plan

Major Tasks Related to Invasive Alien Species (IAS)

*Subject to change depending on Public Health restrictions due to the ongoing pandemic.

Education and Outreach:

- Attend fairs and events to circulate flyers and pamphlets on IAS management
- Provide information and educational materials to:
 - Local bait shops and fishing/outdoors
 - Local plant nurseries
- Contact and participate in fishing tournaments held throughout the jurisdiction
- Contact local horticultural societies to offer IAS presentations
- Attend the SNC Youth Fishing Camps to provide presentations on IAS

Data Management:

- Review past SNC spreadsheets, IAS collection methods, and consolidate SNC IAS files
- Add invasive species control projects to Survey 123 app for restoration projects
- Enter IAS monitoring data into EDDMapS Ontario and SNC property files

Monitoring and Removal:

- Re-visit past IAS control sites to report on effectiveness of control methods and suggest follow-up work
- Complete IAS monitoring at newly acquired properties for inclusion in the Baseline Documentation Reports
- Identify high priority infestation locations by species/location/size/feasibility
- Assist SNC staff with buckthorn and phragmites removal projects as needed



To: Fish and Wildlife Committee
From: Naomi Langlois-Anderson, Sr. Fish & Wildlife Technician
Date: May 31, 2022
Subject: Update: 2022 Monitoring

RECOMMENDATION:

The Fish and Wildlife Committee receive and file the 2022 Monitoring update.

DISCUSSION:

Each year, a wide variety of environmental projects are undertaken which require the collection, analysis and reporting of scientific data. This work begins in the spring once the majority of the snow on the landscape has melted and the watercourses are ice-free.

Monitoring activities vary annually depending on the previous year's projects and the funding received for new or ongoing programs and projects.

The following are the various field activities currently planned for 2022.

Biological Community Sampling

Municipal drain classification work is planned for July and typically involves backpack electrofishing. A total of 6 municipal drains will be sampled and the information will be provided to Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

Benthic invertebrate sampling occurs annually in the Fall using nets to collect invertebrates by kicking up the substrate. The samples are sent to a consultant for processing and identification. Approximately 35 sites will be sampled and the data will support the Ottawa Baseline Monitoring Program, the State of the Nation report and the Middle South Nation River Subwatershed Report Card.

Water Quality Sampling

The Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Network (PWQMN) is a long-standing partnership program with the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP). Typically running from April to November, water samples are collected monthly from 14 stations within the watershed and sent to the MECP lab for a detailed analysis.



Through a special levy from the City of Ottawa, SNC completes water quality sampling at 12 locations within the City. Water samples are collected monthly during ice free conditions and delivered to the City of Ottawa lab for analysis. Sampling began in May and will continue until November.

The Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network (PGMN) is another partnership program with the MECP. SNC conducts water quality sampling at 17 monitoring wells throughout the jurisdiction. This sampling is completed annually in the Fall.

Invasive Alien Species

Monitoring of invasive species on SNC properties provides important information for our property inventories and management plans. The data are also valuable when assessing past and future control efforts. All newly acquired properties will be surveyed for invasive species, especially invasive plants.

Restoration Projects

A key component of restoration projects involves post-construction monitoring to assess the effectiveness of the project design and to facilitate adaptive management. Survival assessments of past plantings will be completed along with any other performance metrics defined in the project plans.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/ADHERENCE TO SNC POLICY:

Compliance with Budget:

All activities are included in the 2022 SNC Budget under Resource Management, Water Response Programs, pages 14-15; Partner Programs, Water, pages 18-19; and Projects, Habitat Restoration, pages 24-25.

SNC Policy Adherence:

Field work adheres to the SNC Health and Safety Policy.

For: _____
Naomi Langlois-Anderson,
Sr. Fish & Wildlife Technician.



To: Fish and Wildlife Committee
From: Ronda Boutz, Team Lead, Special Projects
Date: May 31, 2022
Subject: Update: The Healing Place

RECOMMENDATION:

The Fish and Wildlife Committee receives and files The Healing Place update.

DISCUSSION:

The Healing Place is a community green space located on the traditional territories of the Algonquin and Mohawk Nations in the Township of Edwardsburgh Cardinal. It was created in the fall of 2020 through a Reconciliation and Climate Change Planting collaborative partnership event. A working group of partners (South Nation Conservation (SNC), Mohawk Council of Akwesasne Department of Environment, Plenty Canada, Forests Ontario, and Ontario Power Generation) continues to meet to further develop site.

Achievements to date include:

- Official opening and establishment of the site in September 2020, where over 100 culturally significant trees and shrubs were planted.
- Site logo has been developed.
- Signage has been installed at the entrance to The Healing Place, graphic design completed for signage to inform visitors on the site layout (Medicine Wheel), 13 Grandmother Moons, 7 Grandfather Teachings, and culturally significant trees planted throughout the site. Sign production and installation pending funding.
- The story of The Healing Place has been captured in a communications piece, see attached, which shares the seed of the idea, to the realization of the site.
- Local settler and First Nation history has been researched and documented, plans for future online resources are under development as resources allow.
- Creation of Children's Butterfly Garden during the "Remembering the Children" event hosted in October 2021. The Garden commemorates the discoveries of unmarked graves on residential school properties across Turtle Island and provides a place for healing amongst Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples.
- A Three Sisters Garden is being planted in June 2022 in partnership with local schools. This Garden celebrates Indigenous cultural foods and food sovereignty and serves as a teaching site to share traditional knowledge. The "Three Sisters" comes from First Nations legend, corn, beans and squash are inseparable sisters that were given to the People by the "Great Spirit."

An event is being planned for fall 2022, it will include harvesting of the late varieties planted



in the Three Sisters Garden. Once details are final, they will be shared with the Committee.

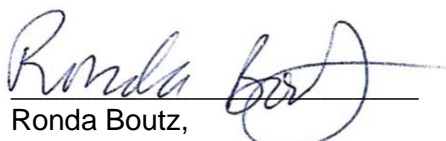
In addition to SNC support, funding for activities to date has been provided by Ontario Power Generation, Forests Ontario (grants from Enbridge Gas and TD Bank), and the Jane Goodall Foundation. The Working Group partners also provide in-kind resources and staffing support for events.

Committee members are encouraged to visit the site at 8040 Shanly Road (County Road 22), Shanly, ON; site is just north of the Shanly Road and Ventor Road intersection. As an SNC property, this site is open to the public.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/ADHERENCE TO SNC POLICY:

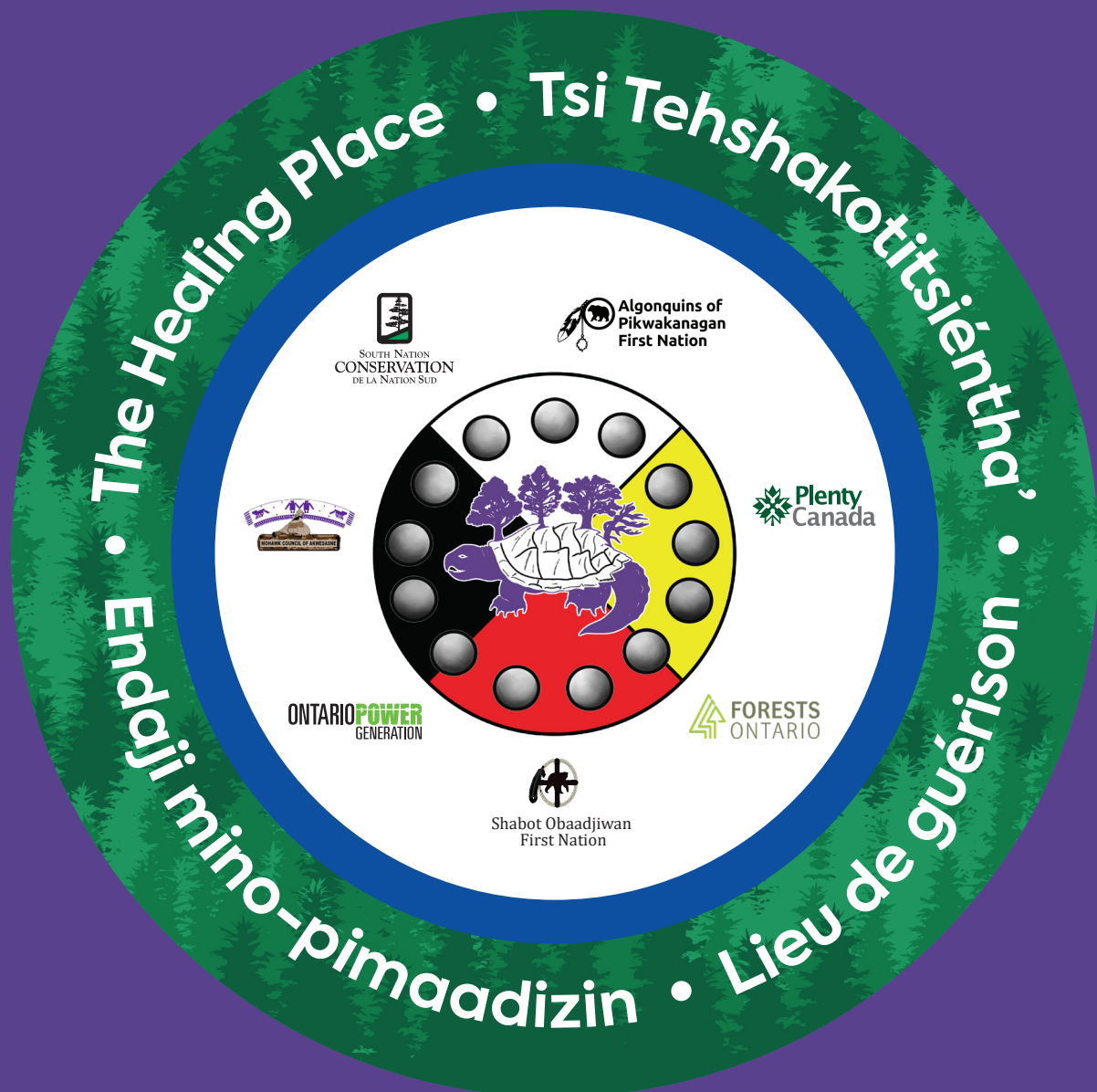
Compliance with Budget: The Healing Place project is included in the 2022 Budget under Resource Management: Projects: Habitat Restoration. Note, the Budget does not include additional grants received from the Jane Goodall Institute, Ontario Power Generation, and Forests Ontario for 2022 activities.

SNC Policy Adherence: All purchases related to the project adheres to the SNC Purchasing Policy.



Ronda Boutz,
Team Lead, Special Projects.

Attachments: Reconciliation and Climate Change Planting



Reconciliation and Climate Change Planting

Reconciliation and Climate Change Planting

The Healing Place • Tsi Tehshakotitsiéntha' • Endaji mino-pimaadizin • Lieu de guérison



The Healing Place is a community green space located on the traditional territories of the Algonquin and Mohawk Nations in eastern Ontario. It was created in the fall of 2020 through a Reconciliation and Climate Change Planting event planned through collaborative partnership.

The project partners have committed to continued maintenance and expansion of the site, as well as to the creation of a Healing Place network across the province and country in order to meaningfully engage Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities in a restorative process, creating physical places of healing while at the same time cultivating safe, ethical spaces.

More than a planting site or event, The Healing Place represents an important step forward in the journey towards reconciliation.

The Seed: Background

The seed for this project was first planted at the 2019 Assembly of First Nation's Climate Change Summit in Whitehorse, Yukon, when Eli Enns (Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation; Cofounder, CEO, and President of the IISAAK OLAM Foundation) and Curtis Scurr (Mohawk of the Bay of Quinte; Associate Director of the Assembly of First Nation's Environment Sector) approached Larry McDermott (Algonquin from Shabot Obaadjiwan First Nation; Executive Director of



Plenty Canada), pictured top left, with the idea of offsetting event participants' travel-related carbon emissions through tree planting. Larry in turn presented the idea to Chris Craig (member of Algonquins of Pikwakanagan; Senior Forestry Technician at South Nation Conservation), pictured middle left, and together they brought the idea to South Nation Conservation and the Eastern Ontario First Nation Working Group.



From there, the partnership grew, and the Reconciliation and Climate Change Planting Working Group was formed to advance the project; they committed to meeting on a regular basis to build their relationships with each other and plan the planting event.



The name of the site, The Healing Place, was born from a comment made by Abraham Francis (Mohawk from Akwesasne; Environmental Services Manager for the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne), pictured bottom left, regarding how forests are seen as safe and healing places by many, especially so by Indigenous peoples. Additionally, the name speaks to both the medicinal applications and traditional uses of the species planted there. The name also reflects the opportunity and necessity to build relationships and heal some of the pain that systemic oppression and violence towards Indigenous peoples has caused throughout Canada's history.

The Roots: Governance



From the start, the intent of this project was more than simply planning a planting event; rather, it was – and still is – about creating and maintaining a space of healing. As such, following a few initial meetings, project partners recognized the need to invest in a governance structure that accommodates Indigenous and non-Indigenous ways of transferring knowledge, tradition, and ceremony.

The Working Group dedicated several meetings to discuss governance structure and negotiate how two different First Nation ways could be incorporated. Following these discussions, the group adopted components of both traditional Algonquin and Haudenosaunee ways of governance, which have always been practiced out of respect for each other and all creation (and have become second nature to South Nation Conservation).

The overall success and impact of The Healing Place was contingent upon a strong root system – a governance structure founded upon ethical space, two-eyed seeing, and the concept that all voices are equal and important. The following methodology guided all project activities:

- **Begin each meeting with a traditional opening.**
Ceremony is a major part of all First Nations gatherings; conducting a prayer, smudging, or both is a way for all to become united in the same space, mind, heart, and spirit.
- **Pass the feather.**
This allows all the opportunity to speak and be part of a circle as equals.
- **Use the Two Row Wampum Belt, One Bowl One Spoon Wampum Belt, the Friendship Belt, and the 1764 Royal Proclamation Belt as a guide.**
There is a need to identify that the group is non-political, and to create ethical space where all can be comfortable not to worry about retribution of words spoken during group gatherings.
- **Flexible governance.**
Ensure various voices are heard and skill sets are used efficiently. Accommodate needs of both oral Indigenous and western written knowledge transfer systems.
- **Group consensus.**
All share a common end goal, and each member has equal opportunity to participate in discussion and decision making.
- **End each meeting with a traditional closing.**
This allows us to collectively express our gratitude for the opportunity to share our responsibilities for the continuation of all life and learn from each other.

Despite needing to convene virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Working Group was able to meet regularly without sacrificing traditional ceremony elements.

The Trunk: Partnership



The Healing Place is a unique project in many senses. It is the first local project of its kind where so many different partners and perspectives have been unified around a collective impact.

This project brought partners from Indigenous, non-Indigenous, and different First Nations backgrounds together, building upon the positive beliefs and stories that each group shares and facilitating both Indigenous-to-non-Indigenous and Indigenous-to-Indigenous knowledge transfer.



Also unique, the establishment of The Healing Place relied upon equal parts relationship building and project management, with heavy focus placed upon creating trust between partners. The partnership formed through The Healing Place is an ongoing entity, and is made up of:

- Algonquins of Pikwakanagan
- Mohawks of Akwesasne
- Shabot Obaadjiwan First Nation
- Assembly of First Nations
- Plenty Canada
- South Nation Conservation
- Forests Ontario
- Ontario Power Generation

Though each partner contributed unique resources and insight to the group, all worked together collaboratively to support the development of the governance structure, explore how reconciliation and two-eyed seeing could guide event planning, work to incorporate Indigenous teachings directly into the planting site plan, and discuss how The Healing Place could continue to engage community members, support the sharing of stories, and act as an educational resource long after planting.



“*When we put trees in the ground, we create more than just a physical forest that we see. We create an environment in which the mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual are all cultivated – they are all honoured, they are all part of that experience. When we do something like that together, we bond and become stronger in our relationships.*

At one level, this planting event is a small gesture; at another level, it's hugely important. It brings a number of partners into the process, it allows us to tell our stories as we see them, and it gives us an opportunity to learn from each other and to help others learn about what's really important. To me, that is reconciliation.”

Larry McDermott

The Branches: The Site and Event

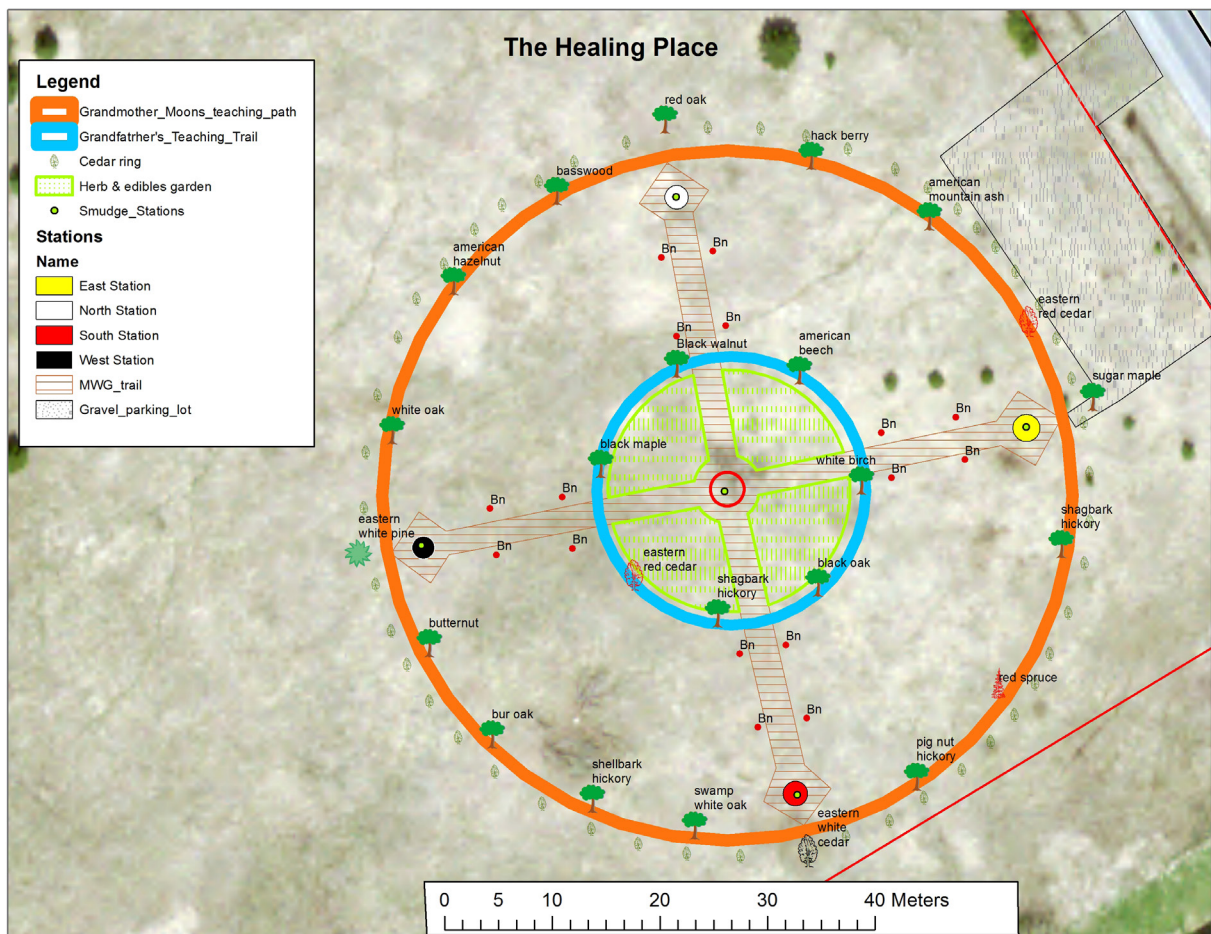


The Healing Place, planted on September 23, 2020 (National Tree Day), stands on the traditional territories of the Algonquin and Mohawk Nations in Shanly, Ontario. The 89-acre site, located on South Nation Conservation property, is home to several grassland Species at Risk, including the Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and locally significant Gorgon Checkerspot butterfly.

Indigenous knowledge was interwoven into every aspect of The Healing Place, including species selection, site design, and graphic representation. In total, over 250 culturally significant trees, shrubs, and other species were planted according to a design by Chris Craig based on the medicine wheel and other cultural considerations.

Like the circle of life, the medicine wheel has no beginning and no end. The four pillars of life (mental, spiritual, emotional, and physical connections) and cardinal directions are represented in the wheel's spokes. Each colour of the wheel (white, yellow, red, and black) reflect the four elements all life depends upon: fire, earth, air, and water. Plant species and their locations were selected intentionally based upon cultural considerations.

- The east, where we enter and leave the circle, is also the entrance and exit to the site. Each direction is marked by a culturally significant tree: Red Oak in the north, Sugar Maple in the east, White Cedar in the south, and White Pine in the west.
- Medicinal herbs and berries such as strawberries, raspberries, red currant, white currant, gooseberries, and black berries were planted in the centre of the site.
- Seven trees were planted in the interior of the wheel and 13 along the exterior of the wheel to represent the seven Grandfather teachings and the 13 moons, respectively.
- An outside ring of Eastern White Cedars enclose the site, providing a quiet, safe place for self-healing.
- The land-based culture of Indigenous people intrinsically incorporates the presence of endangered tree species, such as the Butternut, and keystone tree species, such as the Sugar Maple, that ultimately promote biodiversity.



Twenty-five community and First Nations partners gathered to help plant The Healing Place. The planting event commenced with a traditional opening ceremony featuring a drum circle, smudging, offering of tobacco, and the Words Before All Else. The majority of the event was live streamed on Facebook for those unable to attend. It should be noted that interest in participating in this event was extremely high, but attendance had to be limited due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Funding from Assembly of First Nations, TD Bank Group, Enbridge Gas, and Ontario Power Generation was integral in supporting the establishment of The Healing Place. The site was donated through the Ecological Gift Program by John Gruntke with the intention to preserve ecological integrity.

The Forest: Vision for the Future

Truly, The Healing Place is more than a planting site or green space. It's about acknowledging and celebrating the connection between land and Indigenous culture. It's about stimulating difficult but important conversations. It's about beginning to restore land, health, language, and relationships. It's about working together to co-create an alternative future.

Our vision is simple: A network of Healing Places across the country where community members from both Indigenous and non-Indigenous backgrounds can come together and participate in the healing process of reconciliation, so that we may all learn how to move forward together. We will work towards this vision by continuing to maintain, expand, and identify opportunities for education on this site, while also carrying the idea to other communities.

Planting can support reconciliation only when it meaningfully engages all involved in a participatory manner. As such, it is each of our responsibilities to work together. As a group, we have made a long-term commitment to The Healing Place and the continual learning that comes with it; we have made a commitment to the concept of feeding the bundle and polishing the belt. We recognize that this is not a project with an end date, but rather an eternal lesson with its own heartbeat.

Join Us On Our Journey

To learn more and get involved with The Healing Place, please contact:
healingplaceinfo@plentycanada.com

“

This is a story that we tell; this is going to be a healing story that has many lessons, has many teachings for future generations. We're not just the descendants of our ancestors, we are future ancestors as Indigenous peoples, as people of this land.

Abraham Francis





The Healing Place • Tsi Tehshakotitsiéntha' • Endaji mino-pimaadizin • Lieu de guérison