



Williams Treaties First Nations, Canada and Ontario reach negotiated settlement agreement for *Alderville* Litigation

From: [Williams Treaties First Nations](#)

News release

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As we build a new future with First Nations, reconciliation requires that we acknowledge the wrongs of the past and work collaboratively with Indigenous people to take the necessary steps to respectfully resolve them.

Today, the Government of Canada, the Province of Ontario and the seven Williams Treaties First Nations, announced that the Federal Court has granted a discontinuance of the *Alderville* litigation as a result of the parties reaching a negotiated settlement agreement that resolves the litigation.

The *Alderville* litigation was filed by the seven Williams Treaties First Nations in 1992 and went to trial in 2012. The *Alderville* litigation deals with a longstanding dispute about the making, terms, interpretation and implementation of the 1923 Williams Treaties.

Terms of the negotiated settlement include:

- Financial compensation of \$1.11 billion (\$666 million by Canada and \$444 million by Ontario).
- An entitlement for each First Nation to add up to 11,000 acres of land to their reserve land base subject to Canada's Additions to Reserve/Reserve Creation policy. The First Nations are responsible for acquiring these lands.
- Recognition of the First Nations' continuing treaty harvesting rights and a commitment to continue to work together to implement these rights.
- A commitment by Canada and Ontario to provide an oral and written statement of apology to the Williams Treaties First Nations.

Achieved through partnership and dialogue, the settlement advances reconciliation and resolves outstanding issues in a way that respects the rights and interests of the seven Williams Treaties First Nations and all Canadians.

A formal celebration of the settlement agreement and the delivery of an apology by the federal and provincial Crowns is currently being planned.

Quotes

“After years of litigation and repeated attempts at negotiations, I am extremely proud that the negotiations team has successfully resolved our longstanding battle for constitutionally protected hunting and fishing rights. Our ancestors have fought since 1923 to exercise our rights freely and without encumbrance and finally we have been able to secure this for our people and for future generations. It is a success for the Williams Treaties First Nations, but also for all Ontarians and Canadians who will see a new way forward in Crown-Indigenous relations.”

Chief Kelly LaRocca, Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation, Portfolio Chief, Williams Treaties First Nations

“I have been a part of the trial and negotiations for more than a decade. We have come full circle. My Grandfather, Norman Marsden was one of the signatories on the Williams Treaties and it is gratifying for me to be able to sign my name to this settlement as current Chief of Alderville First Nation because it represents how far we have come. This settlement will benefit the Williams Treaty First Nations today and for our future generations.”

Chief James Robert Marsden, Alderville First Nation

“Beausoleil First Nation acknowledges and honours our ancestors who endured the hardships created by the misinterpretation of the 1923 Williams Treaty. Finally 95 years later, today we celebrate the conclusion of this chapter and work towards reconciliation and a new beginning for our community. We extend our full-hearted appreciation and acknowledgement to Peter Hutchins and all associates at Hutchins Legal Inc. for their advocacy throughout our litigation. We are extremely proud that our own Karry Sandy, negotiator, was a part of this negotiation team and also recognize Ceyda Turan, counsel, and Mel Jacobs, co-negotiator, for achieving their mandate and in bringing this settlement home for the Anishinabek of Beausoleil First Nation. Miigwetch.”

Chief Guy Monague, Beausoleil First Nation

“On this historic day, we acknowledge the hard work of our ancestors, our elders, our leaders and knowledge keepers in their determination to have our collective Treaty rights recognized and affirmed. We are on a path of reconciliation,

healing and Treaty implementation for Curve Lake members and for our future generations. Miigwetch to those who have made this Settlement possible.”

Chief Phyllis Williams, Curve Lake First Nation

“We are happy to resolve this outstanding injustice that affected our ancestors tremendously and impacted the future generations of our people. We want to recognize and honour our past leadership who began this journey to bring forth justice and reconciliation. The resolution of the Williams Treaty will benefit our future generations to come and contribute to restore the loss of our culture and independence. I would like to say miigwetch to our Chiefs and Councillors, negotiating team and lawyers who worked with our First Nations and brought us to the settlement of the Williams Treaty. I'm grateful that our children do not have to take on the burden of resolving this claim. Miigwetch to the Creator Lord for allowing me to be a part of this historical resolution.”

Chief Donna Big Canoe, Georgina Island First Nation

“It is with honour and pride to our ancestors and our people today that we have settled the Williams Treaties claim for our Seven Generations to come.”

Chief Laurie Carr, Hiawatha First Nation

“Rama First Nation joins with Williams Treaties leadership in celebrating the conclusion of the work our ancestors began so long ago, the resolution of this long-standing claim. The restoration of harvesting rights throughout our territories is a part of our cultural identity that these treaties compromised. G'chi miigwech to the Williams Treaties members who contributed to this effort and to the leadership, past and present, who continued to press for the resolution of this claim. This historic settlement paves the way for a better future in our communities for many generations to come.”

Chief Rodney Noganosh, Rama First Nation

“Working together in partnership to resolve and address the wrongs of the past is critical to resetting our relationship with Indigenous peoples. This settlement agreement is a demonstration of our government’s commitment to move forward to renew our relationship and advance reconciliation between Canada, Ontario and the Williams Treaties First Nations and is an example of what we can achieve when we uphold the honour of the Crown and treat Indigenous peoples with respect and support strong, healthy and sustainable Indigenous Nations that are full partners.”

The Honourable Carolyn Bennett, M.D., P.C., M.P.
Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations

“This agreement avoids further costly litigation and will help create opportunities within the Williams Treaties First Nations and surrounding communities.”

The Honourable Greg Rickford, M.P.P.
Minister of Indigenous Affairs for Ontario

“This negotiated settlement supports strong and enduring relationships and means we can focus on ensuring the long-term sustainability of Ontario’s natural resources for future generations.”

The Honourable Jeff Yurek, M.P.P.
Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry for Ontario

Quick facts

- The seven Williams Treaties First Nations are: Alderville First Nation, Beausoleil First Nation, Chippewas of Georgina Island, Chippewas of Rama, Curve Lake First Nation, Hiawatha First Nation and Mississaugas of Scugog Island.
- Since March 2017, the parties have been working together towards a negotiated resolution of the *Alderville* litigation.
- Under the settlement, the First Nations can use the funds to buy land on a willing-seller/willing-buyer basis and apply to Canada to have the land added to their reserve land base.

Associated links

- [Williams Treaties First Nations](#)

- [Additions to Reserve](#)

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