



The Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe Of Michigan

PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

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The Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan has acquired 902 acres of land including just over one mile of lake frontage on Tawas Lake in East Tawas, MI. The acquisition was finalized on Friday, August 25, 2017 granting ownership of hundreds of acres of land back to the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan.

This purchase is culturally significant as it reclaims lands that were once part of ceded and treaty territories. Acquiring this land strengthens our connection to a lifeway that sustained our people for thousands of years. The ability to hunt, gather and honor our ancestral teachings strengthens that relationship we have to the land, our past and our future. In this process members today and for future generations will retain and maintain indigenous knowledge and rights.

Tribal Chief Frank Cloutier stated, "This is an incredible opportunity for us to regain possession of a portion of our aboriginal lands. We will begin the work to re-establish our presence by developing cultural and traditional programming that will enhance our Tribal community and its people. This is an incredible opportunity for the Tribe to share its rich culture and traditional values while providing a place to reconnect with Mother Earth".

As direct descendants of those who have always been here it is our responsibility and right to stay connected to this land and its beautiful resources. Access to this land will open up many doors of learning at many levels from a practical to spiritual perspective. It will help us connect the past to the present. It will nudge us into action because the place will spark blood memories, if we listen to it, and take action.

Bonnie Ekdahl, Tribal Elder and former Director of The Ziibiwing Center of Anishinabe Culture & Lifeways explains, "The Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan are the people who can step outside their doors onto the earth and say, "My people have always been here. I walk where my ancestors walked 1000 years ago." We knew the forests, lakes and rivers, we knew where, when and how to gather the foods and medicines to live. It is okay to allow ourselves to step outside usual routines and look at creation. What is the season, what are the animals and birds doing at this time of year? They can still teach us if we listen and observe. Access to this land will give us the freedom to reconnect with the seasonal calendar without fear of judgment and interruption. The people can learn and reconnect to the memories that still live within them."

For more information, contact Erik Rodriguez, Interim Public Relations Director, at (989) 775-4076 or erodriguez@sagchip.org.

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