

Oct. 2, 2018

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF STRONG PARTNERSHIP

OPG and the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne Commemorate anniversary of final settlement

Cornwall – Ontario Power Generation (OPG) and the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne (MCA) today acknowledged the 10th anniversary of the signing of the final settlement agreement between the two parties on Oct. 2, 2008.

“It is important to acknowledge this important milestone as we celebrate 10 years of a settlement agreement between Ontario Power Generation and the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne. This successful partnership is proof that consultation is an important first step, and creates opportunity and prosperity for the people of Ontario,” said Hon. Greg Rickford, Minister of Energy, Northern Development and Mines, Minister of Indigenous Affairs Ontario.

“Our company has been engaged in respectful dialogue with the Akwesasne community for many years and I want to recognize the excellent working relationship we have enjoyed in recent years with the Mohawks of Akwesasne,” said Mike Martelli, President of Renewable Generation for OPG. “Since first signing the agreement, we’ve worked together on various projects including the ‘Kaniatares – Long River’ mural created by Mohawk artist “Sowatise” John B. Thomas. This mural now hangs proudly in our Visitor Centre for members of the public to enjoy.”

“Today we celebrate a milestone in our relationship with OPG, over the last 10 years we have continued to build upon our partnership and relationship as good neighbours and as friends,” said Mohawk Council of Akwesasne’s Grand Chief Abram Benedict. “Our community and Council takes great pride in the relationship we have with OPG and we look forward to many more years of positive outcomes.”

Before the construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway and Power Project, no proper consultation occurred between the Mohawks of Akwesasne and OPG’s predecessor company, resulting in loss of reserve land, resources and quality of life for the Akwesasne community. The final settlement agreement was drafted and finalized in 2008 after more than 15 years of negotiation between the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne, OPG and other members of the community. As part of the signing, OPG issued a public apology for the effects of the St. Lawrence Seaway and Power Project and both groups created the “Partnership between OPG and MCA” (POM) to foster new opportunities out of this relationship.

OPG generates safe, clean, reliable, low-cost power for Ontario. More than 99 per cent of this power is free of smog and greenhouse gas emissions. OPG’s power is priced 40 per cent lower than other generators, which helps moderate customer bills.

QUICK FACTS

- The traditional territory of the Mohawks of Akwesasne was significantly impacted by the St. Lawrence Seaway and Power Project, including the flooding of eight islands belonging to the Mohawks of Akwesasne. Their way of life and ability to exercise certain aboriginal and treaty rights were also impacted.
- The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne and Ontario Power Generation (OPG) signed a Final Settlement Agreement that acknowledges the impacts for the Mohawks of Akwesasne for impacts associated with the construction, operation and maintenance of OPG's R.H Saunders Generating Station and its related facilities on Oct. 2, 2008.
- Over the course of six weeks in the fall of 2016, Mohawk artist "Sowatise" John B. Thomas created "Kaniatares – Long River". The mural, 21-feet long and painted over three separate canvasses, represents a typical day in a Mohawk village on the St. Lawrence River in the 1700s. The artwork is on display in the St. Lawrence Power Development Visitor Centre's auditorium for the thousands who use the room annually. The centre is also home to exhibits on Akwesasne history, culture and artifacts.
- In memory of Thomas, who passed away in March 2018, the main auditorium of the St. Lawrence Power Development Visitor Centre will be renamed the "Sowatise John B. Thomas Memorial Auditorium" with an official dedication on Oct. 2, 2018.
- The R.H. Saunders Generating Station has 16 units with a capacity of 1,045 megawatts, enough to power about one million homes or 5 per cent of the province's annual demand. The station is staffed by over 80 people from the Cornwall area.
- The year 2018 marks 60 years of clean, renewable generation for R.H. Saunders Generating Station. Over 700 members of the public toured the station in June and a formal ceremony with New York Power Authority was held in August.

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