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Tsi Nahóten Karihwanákere No'nenk News Release

MCK updates on meeting with experts regarding Montreal's plan to dump raw sewage into river

For immediate release

(Kahnawake – 3, Kentenhkó:wa/November 2015) The Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke (MCK) wishes to inform the community on the results of a meeting between the MCK, Environment Canada and an independent panel of experts charged with the task of drafting a report that analyzes the risks associated with the City of Montreal's plan to dump billions of liters of untreated waste into the St. Lawrence River while repairs are done on its sewage system.

"This issue is a top priority," said Chief Clinton Phillips, who is responsible for environment matters on behalf of the MCK. "We are putting every effort to making sure that everything that needs to happen in order to protect the river will be done. There is the huge potential for negative impacts on fisheries and other Aboriginal rights and matters."

"The meeting was about ninety (90) minutes in length, so we were able to bring attention to our concerns, including the fact that Quebec and Canada failed to consult the Mohawks of Kahnawà:ke regarding this issue" he continued. "At every opportunity we reminded the panel that there is an absolute need for our rights and interests to be considered and respected. It was very disturbing that the panel of experts was not provided with any information pertaining to Aboriginal rights and interests to the St. Lawrence River prior to our request for a meeting."

The independent panel of experts has completed its report and has presented it to the federal Environment Minister Leona Aglukaaq. The report is expected to contain a review of the proposed project and its inherent risks. Canada has yet to provide the MCK or the City of Montreal with a copy of the report.

"We will do our own analysis on the report as soon as we can get our hands on a copy," concluded Chief Phillips. "As soon as that happens we'll request an immediate follow-up meeting with Environment Canada and we'll advise the community of our position and next steps."

Chief Phillips, along with Chief Christine Zachary-Deom and several experts from the MCK's environment and legal departments participated in the meeting.

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