



Saugeen First Nation #29

Tuesday November 22, 2022

Aanii Saugeen First Nation Members:

I am writing on behalf of Council to provide an update to you, as Saugeen First Nation members, about what is currently occurring to the Anishinaabe cultural site at 6 South Rankin Street in Southampton.

As many of you know, there is an important Anishinaabe cultural site (also recognized as a registered archaeological site) at the mouth of the Saugeen River. Since 2009, our First Nation has actively worked to protect that site after municipal work affected the area. Many of you were involved in ceremonies, protection actions, and archaeological work done there in 2010. That archeological work removed over 100,000 cultural objects from a trench beside the property at 6 South Rankin Street. Some of those materials were part of the *River Mouth Speaks* exhibit at the South Bruce Museum in Southampton, sharing the rich history of Anishinaabe use of that area for thousands of years.

In the last two weeks, Council has been actively responding to a current concern about the site. The current owner of the property at 6 South Rankin Street started demolition work on November 10, without proper permits archaeological protections in place. The Saugeen Ojibway Nation's archaeology manager (Rob Martin) immediately coordinated with the Town to ensure a stop work order was issued to immediately stop the demolition work. Since then, we as Chief and Council have been taking steps to ensure immediate protection of the site. This included steps last Friday (November 18) to remove removing the heavy demolition equipment which drove over some of the confirmed areas with high density of archaeological artefacts, potentially compacting those fragile materials and creating damage under the soil surface. I would like to thank the knowledge keepers who came on short notice, to ensure this work was done in a culturally respectful way.

We as Chief and Council are now pursuing all avenues with the Town, the Ontario Ministry, and the owner to ensure the short-term protection of the site (to deal with the incomplete demolition), and to ensure there are longer term plans so that the site is permanently protected.

If you have any questions about what is happening, please contact Chief Conrad Ritchie.

Respectfully,

Ogimaa Chi-Nimkii
Chief Conrad Ritchie

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