



Charter Toolkit

An Introduction to:

INDIGENOUS WATER GOVERNANCE IN THE GREAT LAKES

The Charter Declaration states:

This Declaration and the First Principles emerge from the collaborative work of people and communities around the lakes. Together we reflect many walks of life, histories and cultures. At the same time, a single purpose unites us: to transition to a mode of Great Lakes governance by which the waters and all living beings can flourish.

Read more at: <http://www.greatlakescommons.org/charter-declaration/>

We encourage all users of this Charter Toolkit to add their support to the Declaration and to review and enliven a growing set of First Principles. From Indigenous and other Great Lakes communities, these principles illustrate a set of best practices for water protection, self-determination, and greater engagement on water governance. We welcome your feedback and additions to these principles.

<http://www.greatlakescommons.org/first-principles/>

This Toolkit resource is an introduction to Indigenous water governance and starts with a collection of voices and examples on: territory, treaties, wampum belts, clan systems, worldviews, and giving thanks. Please respect and always give credit to the original sources of these examples. We have also added a learning more section at the end, but we want these topics and examples to be the start of a vital strategy for transforming the current state of Great Lakes governance.



GREATLAKESCOMMONS.ORG

GREAT LAKES COMMONS



TERRITORY

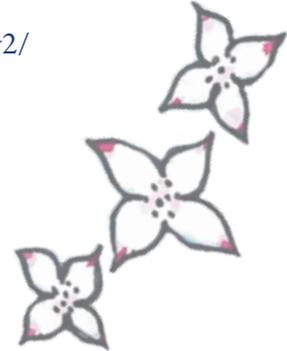
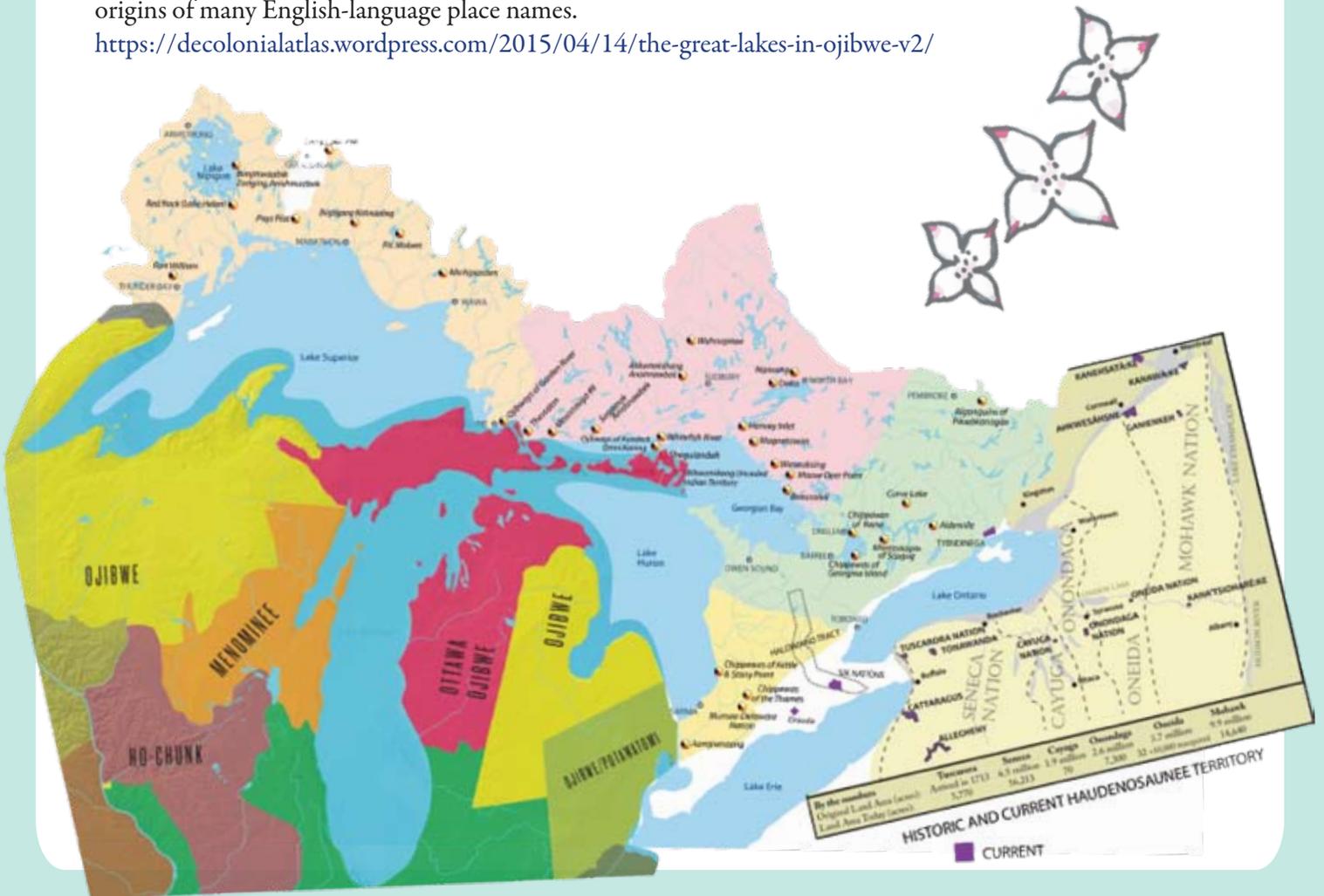
This map is 3 maps merged together since no common map of Indigenous nations in the Great Lakes has this much detail. The Anishinabek nation is often divided by the Canada/USA border but is seen on this map on the west, north, and south sides of the lakes. The Haudenosaunee territory is seen on the eastern and southern corners. If you would like to work on a beautiful and detailed map of Indigenous nations in the Great Lakes, please get in touch with us at info@greatlakescommons.org. View the original maps of this collage at: <https://theways.org/map>

<http://honorthetworow.org/learn-more/haudenosaunee-territory/>

<http://www.anishinabek.ca/about-us/>

Additionally, review this Decolonial Atlas map for another perspective and the origins of many English-language place names.

<https://decolonialatlas.wordpress.com/2015/04/14/the-great-lakes-in-ojibwe-v2/>





One of the ways Canada and the USA exclude Indigenous power for Great Lakes governance is to make and promote maps that erase the Anishinaabek and Haudenosaunee presence. These Indigenous nations (along with several others who migrated, were uprooted, or eliminated by Europeans) have been rooted here ever since the Great Lakes first appeared. Tracing this lineage to today, Indigenous peoples of the Great Lakes continue to express their inherent and treaty rights. Maps can also Indigenousize our perspective by illustrating native homelands. The map collage above is part of this process.

THINKING WITH MAPS

HISTORICAL PRIMER

By Shauna Johnson, University of British Columbia

In Canada and the United States, there is a long, dire history of colonization that has impacted indigenous peoples in many ways. While history books highlight famous white explorers and celebrated major events such as the discovery of ‘New Lands’, keep in mind that narratives told in the textbooks tell one side of the story; the story that the Europeans, as the all ‘superior humans’ chose to put in the history books (King, 2012).

When we talk about history, we talk about stories of the past. These stories have been organized into agreed upon events and interpretations that tell how “we” got from here to there. The problem with this is that those who held the most power chose the stories that were to become a part of history. History is a tool to tell stories about how they became powerful and how the powerful use that power to remain in power. So when it comes to the oral histories of indigenous peoples, many of the narratives were discounted, ignored, and erased from history by altering or not acknowledging the accounts of indigenous peoples (Smith, 2012) (King, 2012).

...

Conceptualization of space is only one tool that was used to create three basic entities on paper to help shape and redefine the indigenous perspective of space: The line, centre and the outside. The line was used to create boundaries, map territories, to survey land and create properties, and to mark the limit of colonial powers. The centre was always focused on the colonial power, with everything else being oriented in relation to it. Everything outside the limits of power was considered irrelevant or non-existent (Smith, 2012).





HISTORICAL PRIMER CONT'D

By Shauna Johnson, University of British Columbia

The concept of mapping has had a tremendous impact upon indigenous peoples for centuries. Since it was first developed, the indigenous ways of orienting themselves on their lands were redefined. As soon as lines were drawn on maps by European hands, indigenous place names, which are intricately connected with indigenous history, stories, and teachings, were replaced with English names, erasing indigenous presence from the lands. Traditional homelands were divided and classified into different geographic features, properties and imperial nations states, dividing and separating indigenous families. Languages and cultural teachings were lost as children were forced to attend residential schools and learn western ways of knowing.

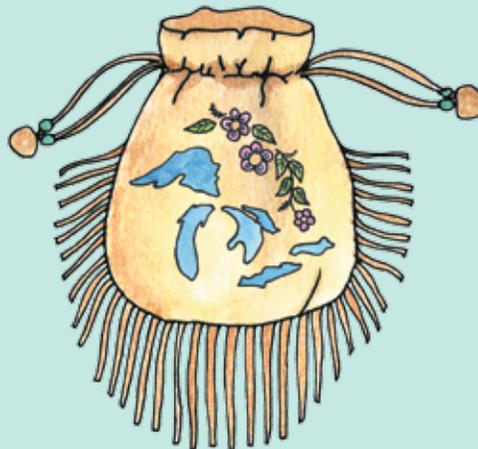
Source: <http://native-land.ca/ca/teachers-guide.html>

QUESTIONS

What do these maps reveal to you about the Great Lakes region?

How can these maps be used to transform Great Lakes water governance?

How can the Great Lakes Commons Map be used to share your story or data about the Great Lakes?





TREATIES

TREATIES MADE IN GOOD FAITH

By Sharon H. Venne

Let us review the Treaty in the context of rights for each side of the treaty-making. Most discussions fail to mention the treaty rights of non-indigenous people. This is a critical issue. In a treaty relationship, there are two sides and both have rights. Non-indigenous historians and other scholars fail to educate their own people on their rights under the treaties. If you stopped ten people to ask, "What are your treaty rights?" most of them would consider the question irrelevant. "Treaty, what's that?" Every non-indigenous person should know his or her treaty rights. The simple fact is that, without the treaty, no one other than Indigenous Peoples has the right to live in our land.

...

What are the treaty rights of non-indigenous people? The primary right is that non-indigenous people can live in our lands. Indigenous Peoples honour that right; they are not interfering with the treaty rights of non-Indigenous Peoples are not walking into the homes of non-indigenous people, opening their fridges, taking food out and eating it. If an Indigenous person did that, he or she could be charged under non-indigenous law with break-and-enter. The reverse, however, is not true. Non-indigenous people have no problem with hunting our animals, taking our fish and our birds.

...

When we were growing up, the stories of the horrible conditions in which Europeans lived were shocking to us²but they made the treaty understandable. The Treaty Commissioner had told us that this was why his people wanted to live in our lands. Our people pitied them and said, "Okay, they are living like that; no human being should be allowed to live like that. They can live in our land. They can use some of our resources, some of the water, some of the wood, some of the ground, so that they can live." Sharing our resources, a treaty right of non-indigenous peoples, has led to the colonizing government assuming control over all the resources above and below the surface. This is a treaty violation. One of the main treaty rights of the non-indigenous person is to respect the land. This is not being done. Our lands are being destroyed by the non-indigenous people. Our animals, our birds, our fish, and all living things are disappearing. The ones that are left behind are suffering. This rich land is being destroyed. This is a violation of the treaty by the non-indigenous people. The non-indigenous people are forgetting to have respect for the land and all its relationships.

Source: <https://ejournals.library.ualberta.ca/index.php/crcl/article/view/10809/8364>



ANATOMY OF A FIRST NATIONS TREATY

By Hayden King

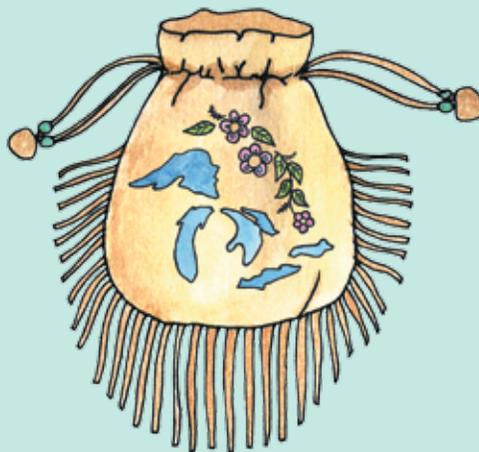
Before Canada was a country, treaties dominated the landscape. Between Anishinaabeg and Haudenosaunee, or Nêhiyaw and Dakota, or Muskego and Inuit, formal arrangements to share the land and undertake peaceful relations were common. We have stories of the very first treaties — treaties with the land itself (with the bear, the deer, the waters and so on) — that stretch back thousands of years. When settlers eventually arrived in this part of the world, they were greeted by treaty-makers.

Read the full article and watch a related video at:

http://tvo.org/article/current-affairs/shared-values/anatomy-of-a-first-nations-treaty?utm_source=facebook&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=theagenda

Canada and the USA are not nations. When one nation invades another nation or makes treaty with another nation they do not become one nation. They become colonies, settler states, or treaty partners. Turtle Island (North America) has always been home for many pre-European nations. Erasing this history and the ongoing resistance for Indigenous self-determination dishonors not only the treaties, but moral behaviour.

Use this Native Land map to locate which territories and treaties exist around your part of the Great Lakes: www.native-land.ca





TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT

By Chelsea Vowel

I believe territorial acknowledgments can have numerous purposes, and in fact can be repurposed, so merely examining the stated intentions of these invocations is insufficient. What may start out as radical push-back against the denial of Indigenous priority and continued presence, may end up repurposed as “box-ticking” inclusion without commitment to any sort of real change. In fact, I believe this is the inevitable progression, a situation of familiarity breeding contempt (or at least apathy).

...

I think we need to start imagining a constellation of relationships that must be entered into beyond territorial acknowledgments. Great, that’s awesome you know you’re on (for example) Treaty 6 territory. That’s great you acknowledge that perhaps the Indigenous view of that treaty, that the land was not surrendered, is correct. Perhaps you understand the tension of your presence as illegitimate, but don’t know how to deal with it beyond naming it. Maybe now it is time to start learning about your obligations as a guest in this territory. What are the Indigenous protocols involved in being a guest, what are your responsibilities? What responsibilities do your hosts have towards you, and are you making space for those responsibilities to be exercised? To what extent are your events benefiting your hosts?

Read the full post: <http://apihtawikosisan.com/2016/09/beyond-territorial-acknowledgments/>

QUESTIONS

Do you know what treaty territory you live in?

Do you think about your treaty responsibilities and if so, what are they and how are you demonstrate this responsibility?

How do treaties impact your self-determination and national-identity and how do they impact your ideas about land and water ownership?

How can honoring treaties help transform Great Lakes governance?





WAMPUM BELTS

DISH WITH ONE SPOON

(An excerpt by the Well Living House Counsel of Grandparents)



Historically, treaties designed by Indigenous peoples in North America were created as mutually beneficial agreements between one another. The 'Dish with One Spoon' was one of the most common of these inter-nation treaties. It was designed to create peaceful hunting conditions for nations in close proximity to each other.

Described as 'one-dish alliances,' these treaties identified a specific area of territory to be held in common. Just as family members ate from 'one dish,' so too would nations eat from one common hunting ground. Through one-dish alliances, two nations agreed to share the same hunting territory without conflicts over land and its resources. Wampum belts were crafted and these belts were symbols of these agreements.

The concept of 'Dish with One Spoon' is still relevant in contemporary culture with all the nations across Turtle Island; First Nations continue to use a 'one-dish protocol' and request permission from their First Nations neighbors to hunt, fish and trap on their lands. The protocol also allows food and medicines to be harvested, and grants the right to travel across the lands.

Source: <http://muskratmagazine.com/toronto-aka-tkaronto-passes-new-city-council-protocol/>

THE KASWENTHA (TWO ROW WAMPUM)

Haudenosaunee exchanged wampum belts with Europeans to recognize treaty agreements. The Two Row Wampum records the agreement made in 1613 in upstate New York between the Haudenosaunee and the Dutch government. This belt represents the first peace treaty between the Haudenosaunee and Europeans in which the two sides agreed to respect each other's cultures and to never interfere in each other's affairs.

The two parallel lines of purple beads represent the two parties to the agreement — one for a Haudenosaunee canoe and the other for a European ship — traveling, side by side. Each boat contains the owner's culture, traditions, laws, language and ways of life. The white parallel lines illustrate that the two would travel in peace and friendship without interference.

Today, the Haudenosaunee consider the wampum belts symbols of principles established by treaties.

Source: <http://nmai.si.edu/sites/1/files/pdf/education/HaudenosauneeGuide.pdf>

More on the Two Row Wampum: <http://www.akwesasne.ca/node/118> and <http://www.ganienkeh.net/2row.html>





CLAN SYSTEMS

HAUDENOSAUNEE CLAN SYSTEM

The Iroquois [Haudenosaunee] Confederacy is composed of six nations. Each nation has clans. A person's clan is the same as their mother's clan. The members of each clan are all related to each other through their mothers. This is called a matrilineal system. Each clan is represented by a different animal. Traditionally a person would not marry someone within the same clan.

All of the Six Nations have members from the Bear, Wolf, and Turtle clan while some nations also have members from some or all of the remaining 6 clans. Clans are headed by clan mothers. Their duties include: choosing the chiefs, reminding the chiefs of their duties, giving clan names to children, distributing the goods of those who have died, and meeting obligations to medicine societies. They can remove a chief from office when necessary. The clan system flourishes today among those who follow the traditional system, but most Iroquois of all faiths identify themselves as members of a particular clan. In the traditional government, chiefs are responsible to help those in their clans. The clan mothers appoint the chiefs and evaluate their dedication to those who are yet to come, up to the seventh generation. As a mark of their identity today many Iroquois wear, display in their homes, or use as part of their signature, their clan animal symbol.

Source: <http://i36466.wixsite.com/learninglonghouse/clans>

THE OJIBWE CLAN SYSTEM

Source: <http://ojibweresources.weebly.com/the-clan-system.html>

QUESTIONS

What types of water ethics and protocols can be learned from the Dish With One Spoon and Two Row wampums?

How does knowing more about clan systems affect your understanding of Indigenous social structure and political governance?

What can honoring wampum belts and recognizing clan systems offer Great Lakes protection strategies and decision making organizations?





WORLD VIEWS

Derived from David Begay, Dine' Hataalii Association

MODERN EURO-AMERICAN PERSPECTIVE

INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVE

Separation of humans and nature

Inseparable organic interconnection between humanity and nature forms organic whole

View of the universe as mechanical to be controlled and manipulated by humans

View of universe as living system of interrelationships with humanity as an integral part of the whole

Primarily linear thinking

Primarily cyclical thinking

Planet resources are considered never-ending and commercially exploitable. Resources become economic to be extracted for material gain

Ecological planetary responsibility through kinship and caretaking. Reciprocal responsibility, accommodation, and no exploitation

View of self as independent with right to manipulate nature

View of self as interdependent with earth and universe, no right to manipulate nature

Technologically and economically-oriented society based on self-interest

Spiritually-oriented society based on community interest

Political and economic logic and values guide social decisions

Holistic, spiritual values can advance human growth and development to the furthest extent

Library as repository of knowledge

Nature and elders as repositories of knowledge

Value of objectivity research – subjectivity devalued

Value of participatory research – objectivity and subjectivity valued

Emphasis on the rights of the individual

Emphasis on collaboration and the rights of all beings

Reductionistic

Consciously aware of parts as they relate to the whole dynamic system



Source: <https://studylib.net/doc/5486168/david-begay---5.30.12--powerpoint->



CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS AND THE DOCTRINE OF DISCOVERY 5 THINGS TO KNOW

by Bob Joseph

The Doctrine of Discovery was used by European monarchies, beginning in the mid-fifteenth century, as a means of legitimizing the colonization of lands outside of Europe. It was issued in 1493, the year after Christopher Columbus arrived on the shores of what is now known as North America. The Doctrine of Discovery continues to impact Indigenous Peoples throughout the world.

1. The intent of the Doctrine

The Doctrine of Discovery provided a framework for Christian explorers, in the name of their sovereign, to lay claim to territories uninhabited by Christians. If the lands were vacant, then they could be defined as “discovered” and sovereignty claimed.

2. Within the framework of the Doctrine, Indigenous Peoples in the Americas were considered non-human

The prevailing theory of the time was that Indigenous Peoples, because they were non-Christians, were not human and therefore the land was empty or terra nullius. When Christopher Columbus arrived in 1492, it is estimated that the Americas were actually occupied by 100 million Indigenous Peoples - which is about one fifth of the human race at that time - who had been living their traditional lives on the land since time immemorial. But, because they were not Christians the land was deemed terra nullius.

Read about the other 3 at the source:

<http://www.ictinc.ca/blog/christopher-columbus-and-the-doctrine-of-discovery-5-things-to-know>

Video about the Doctrine of Discovery:

<http://www.digitalwampum.org/doctrine-of-discovery>

QUESTIONS

What experiences or examples do you have that illustrate parts of the Euro-American and Indigenous worldviews?

Which specific worldviews are currently promoted in Great Lakes governance and which ones are largely ignored?

What kinds of worldviews made the Doctrine of Discovery possible in 1493 and why do you think it still exists as a legal truth in Canada and the USA?



GIVING THANKS TO KIN

THE HONORABLE HARVEST

by Robin Wall Kimmerer

If we understand the Earth as just a collection of objects, then apples and the land that offers them fall outside our circle of moral consideration. We tell ourselves that we can use them however we please, because their lives don't matter. But in a worldview that understands them as persons, their lives matter very much. Recognition of personhood does not mean that we don't consume, but that we are accountable for the lives that we take. When we speak of the living world as kin, we also are called to act in new ways, so that when we take those lives, we must do it in such a way that brings honor to the life that is taken and honor to the ones receiving it.

The canon of indigenous principles that govern the exchange of life for life is known as the Honorable Harvest. They are "rules" of sorts that govern our taking, so that the world is as rich for the seventh generation as it is for us.

The Honorable Harvest, a practice both ancient and urgent, applies to every exchange between people and the Earth. Its protocol is not written down, but if it were, it would look something like this:

- Ask permission of the ones whose lives you seek. Abide by the answer.
- Never take the first. Never take the last.
- Harvest in a way that minimizes harm.
- Take only what you need and leave some for others.
- Use everything that you take.
- Take only that which is given to you.
- Share it, as the Earth has shared with you.
- Be grateful.
- Reciprocate the gift.
- Sustain the ones who sustain you, and the Earth will last forever.

Though we live in a world made of gifts, we find ourselves harnessed to institutions and an economy that relentlessly ask, "What more can we take from the Earth?" In order for balance to occur, we cannot keep taking without replenishing. Don't we need to ask, "What can we give?"

Read the full article:

<http://www.yesmagazine.org/issues/good-health/the-honorable-harvest-lessons-from-an-indigenous-tradition-of-giving-thanks-20151126>



THANKSGIVING ADDRESS

Part of the Original Instructions given to human beings by the creator included the Ohenton Kariwatehkwen, or “the words before all else”. These words are the Thanksgiving Address in which every part of the natural world is thanked : thanking in turn the People, the Earth Mother, the Waters, the Fish, the Plants, the Food Plants, the Medicine Plants, the Animals, the Trees, the Birds, the Four Winds, the Thunders, the Sun, the Moon, the Stars, the Wisdom Keepers, the Creator, and anything we may have missed. The life sustaining forces are acknowledged.

In giving thanks and becoming aware of the aspects of nature and ourselves, we can see our connection to nature and begin to understand that what we do in one part of the Web of Life, we do to ourselves. So the Thanksgiving Address can teach conservation, mutual respect, acceptance of diversity and reinforce historical wisdom.

The Address is meant to be recited daily. It is the central prayer and invocation of the Haudenosaunee used to open and close every social and religious meeting and recited as a sunrise prayer. In fact, we are responsible as individuals to right conduct as Caretakers and one of our individual responsibilities includes giving thanks. To reinforce this idea, it’s been said that if a particular part of creation is not addressed and we fail to give thanks, then this part of creation will disappear so it is an ongoing responsibility to give thanks, to conserve what sustains us.

More on the Thanksgiving Address:

<https://theroamingnaturalist.com/2013/11/25/haudenosaunee-thanksgiving-address/>

QUESTIONS

Are there any Great Lakes policies that value giving thanks and being respectful to water and if so, which ones?

How can being more grateful and reciprocal affect not only individuals, but society at large?

What are some other ways we can privately or publicly honor our give/take relationship with water?

How could your above examples of water thanks and respect be better integrated into Great Lakes protection by Canada, the USA, and surrounding provinces, states, and municipalities?





LEARN MORE

Haudenosaunee Guide for Educators

<http://nmai.si.edu/sites/1/files/pdf/education/HaudenosauneeGuide.pdf>

Colonialism for Dummies (a story about chickens to help explain Canadian history)

<http://nmai.si.edu/sites/1/files/pdf/education/HaudenosauneeGuide.pdf>

The Value of Water and the Meaning of Water Law for the Native Americans Known as the Haudenosaunee

<http://nmai.si.edu/sites/1/files/pdf/education/HaudenosauneeGuide.pdf>

Free, Prior and Informed Consent -- a fact sheet

http://www.amnesty.ca/sites/amnesty/files/fpic_factsheet_nov_2013.pdf

Anishinaabe Nibi Inaakonigewin Report -- Reflecting the Water Laws Research Gathering conducted with Anishinaabe Elders

http://create-h2o.ca/pages/annual_conference/presentations/2014/ANI_Gathering_Report_-_June24.pdf

Keepers of the Water: Exploring Anishinaabe and Métis Women's Knowledge of Water and Participation in Water Governance in Kenora, Ontario By Natasha J. Szach

https://www.umanitoba.ca/institutes/natural_resources/Left-Hand%20Column/theses/Masters%20Thesis%20Penneys-Szach%202013.pdf

Tribal and First Nations Great Lakes Water Accord, 2004:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/54ade7ebe4b07588aa079c94/t/54ea4fa3e4b06d2d72224dc0/1424641955323/Tribal-and-First-Nations-Great-Lakes-Water-Accord.pdf>

Water Declaration of the Anishinaabek, Mushkegowuk and Onkwehonwe in Ontario, 2008, 2010

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/54ade7ebe4b07588aa079c94/t/54ea50c2e4b0feaa4772eaaf/1424642242464/COO-water-declaration-revised-march-2010.pdf>

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