

Protect Water: Stop Certificate of Approval

By Danny Beaton, Turtle Clan, Mohawk Nation - www.dannybeaton.ca

It's almost hilarious to hear Tony Guergis remark, "There's no sense dwelling on the past." Our Ojibway women would never have had to open our peaceful protest camp if it wasn't for his poor and outrageous leadership of Simcoe County. Tony says, "It's time to move on because momentum was created by council's decision to shut down Site 41." In fact it was the Natives, farmers, and good citizens of Simcoe County who shut down Site 41, with not one iota of support from Tony Guergis. And it was Rob McCullough and Mark Aitken who supported and led the citizens of Simcoe County to believe Site 41 was safe and ideal. The councilors who made the decision that Site 41 was unsafe were inspired by the people and, I believe, Maude Barlow, the leader of the Council of Canadians and water delegate for the United Nations, who played a major role in this struggle. The councilors need to work with the people continually so there is real unity between citizens and the municipality to ensure a safe and protected environment for future generations.

This whole scenario should never have happened in a free and democratic country. The interests of the garbage, waste, or recycling industries or factories or plants being built on Class 1 farmland and the Alliston Aquifer will not bring peace, harmony, and respect back to Tiny Township or Simcoe County. Spending one quarter of a million dollars on a publicist is not the answer. Tony Guergis or anyone else who seeks to build factories or industries on the Alliston Aquifer, McDonald Creek, or the Wye River better think twice before they sign a contract because that contract will encounter farmers, Natives, and citizens for safe water, as we are loyal to Mother Earth's Blood, the Water, and we are seeking allies, and we are organizing ourselves to defend our children's future. Tony G. keeps talking about what is right for people and the environment, but he really has no connection to either—he certainly has proven so in the past year with Site 41 where he continually disrespected the protesters. If Tony were one of our Chiefs, he would have been dehorned by our women and lost his chiefhood for going against life and the people. As Mohawks, Ojibway, Wendat, Huron, Métis and Cree, we are concerned for the seven generations ahead, as we have been instructed by our ancestors and elders.

We can't just think of ourselves. As citizens of Tiny Township, the basic rule is the same for Native peoples: respect, respect for life

with real concern, so that life will continue. We need to organize ourselves so that our laws are enforced and officials are held accountable, so that there is action to uphold this basic common sense. This is what our elders are saying over and over until it sinks in. Law-abiding citizens must not be punished for upholding the law and defending the law against business or profit. Life comes first; water comes first; farmland comes first—that equals justice. Otherwise, we will not survive, and certainly our children will not survive, nor their children. Real leaders defend life. Real leaders support life and in no way jeopardize life. That is the way we were instructed by our ancestors. The first law of this land is respect: respect for all life and respect for the forces that give us life (earth, air, fire, water). Our elders keep saying this, and they must

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be respected, or we will never find harmony or justice in Canada.

Yes, we need to move forward with a clear, focused vision, a direction of environmental protection for the farmland and waters of Georgian Bay's Alliston Aquifer. We need good leaders who don't care for themselves, but who care for Mother Earth and her children. Tony says the land belongs to the county, but really how did the county get the land, and whose land was it in the first place? Can Tony take care of the land, and does Tony know how to take care of the land? These questions will probably be answered the same way Steve Ogden got his answer to the Mod Flow—incredible, unbelievable, phenomenal, all the hidden agendas, all the hidden interests that transpired. We need a federal investigation, in the same context that the OPP investigated Walkerton. Luckily, there are no deaths. The facts are this: land and waters at Site 41 and Tiny Township and its tributaries are Sacred to Natives, farmers, and citizens for safe water. We will continue to protect it, and we will continue to defend it with the NDP, the Council of Canadians, the Green Party of Canada, Preservation of Agricultural Lands Association, the Canadian Environmental Law Association, Eco Justice, etc. because this is not the place for garbage, waste, or a recycling industry or factory.

As a Mohawk environmentalist, I encourage all Native nations to be involved in this Sacred Struggle. Our online petition has over 8,000 signatures and comments, which range from outrage to perplexity over the proposal of a waste industry over the purest, cleanest water in the world. Please visit www.DannyBeaton.ca to sign the petition. Please support Mother Earth.

Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,
All My Relations
Danny Beaton



L to R: Arnold Thomas, Danny Beaton, Robert John Knapp. Photo by Gisela Denka