

NYS LAND CLAIM TIMELINE

1750s

Ancestors of the Mohawks of Akwesasne traveled along the waterways and occupied the area now known as Akwesasne, the "land where the partridge drums."



All a Treaty held at the City of New York with the Nations or Tribes of Indians denominating themselves the Seven Nations of Canada. Abraham Ogden Commissioner Appointed under the Authority of the United States to hold the Treaty, Ononawis alias Good Stream, Tonawagon alias Thomas Williams two Chiefs of the Ononawagas, Attiawarongwan alias Colonel Lewis Cook a Chief of the St. Regis Indians and William Bray Deputie authorized to represent these seven Nations or Tribes of Indians at the Treaty and Wm Bray serving also as

May 31, 1796

The U.S. and the Seven Nations of Canada entered a treaty reserving specified lands for the St. Regis Indians.

1816 - 1845

New York State moved to purchase lands from the St. Regis Mohawks in a series of seven transactions without Federal consent. This violated the federal Non-Intercourse Act, which prohibits the purchase of lands from Indians without federal approval.



1954

The St. Regis Mohawk Tribe (SRMT) files a claim against the State of New York for compensation for the loss of Barnhart Island.

Four years later, SRMT's claim is rejected by the N.Y. Court of Appeals.



September 30, 1982

The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne (MCA) files two suits in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of New York. The suits sought determination of title to lands and the loss of Barnhart and Croil Islands.

October 11, 1986

SRMT, the Mohawk Nation Council of Chiefs (MNCC), and MCA agree to form a tri-council and pursue a unified land claim against the State of New York.



1991

Judge McCurn consolidates the suits brought by SRMT and MNCC with the MCA claims so that the three cases proceed as one unified case and set of claims.

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September 2004

The Tri-Council negotiates a settlement agreement that includes four settlement areas, \$30 million + \$70 million over 35 years, transfer of islands, low cost power, and free tuition.



November 27, 2004

SRMT & MCA hold successful referendums to ratify the settlement agreement.

2005

MNCC reaches a consensus in support of signing the settlement agreement. The Governor of N.Y. and a representative from N.Y. Power Authority (NYPA) sign the settlement agreement.



March 31, 2005

U.S. Supreme Court rules in Sherrill v. Oneida Indian Nation of N.Y. that the Oneida could not assert immunity from local property taxes on re-purchased parcels. USSC creates a new legal rule under which Indian tribes cannot sue to re-establish sovereign authority over lands.

June 28, 2005

The Second Circuit decides Cayuga Indian Nation of N.Y. v. Pataki by extending the legal rule in Sherrill. It ruled that, due to the disruptive nature of the Cayuga's land claim to non-Indian people in the area, the Cayuga could not maintain a land claim.



July 26, 2005

Franklin County & St. Lawrence County withdraw from the settlement agreement, citing the decisions in Oneida & Cayuga cases.

November 2006

After facing criticism for the Mohawk claim, NYS then pulls support for the settlement and files for the claim to be dismissed by rule of laches and that any remedy would be too disruptive to the current non-Indian residents.

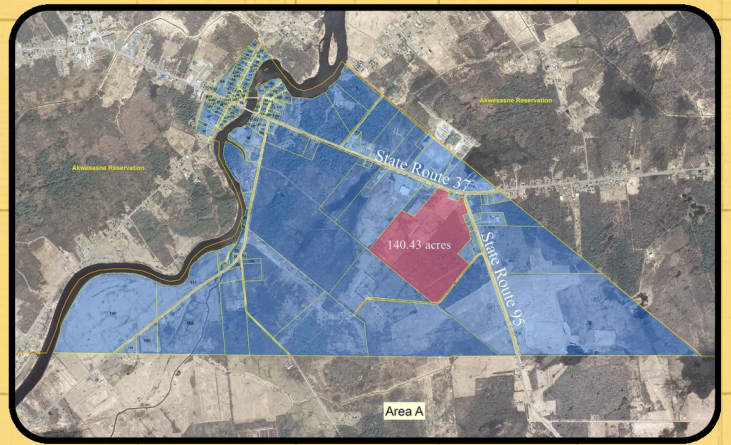


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July - November 2013

July: Judge Kahn dismisses all claims except the "Hogansburg Triangle."

November: NYS & NYPA propose a revised settlement.



May 28, 2014

SRMT, NYS, and St. Lawrence County sign a memorandum of understanding providing a framework for settlement based on the 2005 settlement. SRMT started negotiations with Franklin County and NYS over reacquiring land in Ft. Covington, but those stalled.

2016

Negotiations with Franklin County resumed after a long stalemate. Franklin County concedes to a major expansion of the land acquisition in Area B, to approximately 7,261 acres in size.



March - May 2022

March: In a summary judgment ruling issued by U.S. District Judge Lawrence Kahn, the court ruled that New York State's purchase of reservation lands in the 1800s violated the federal Non-Intercourse Act.

May: The Court orders all parties to either mediate while negotiating and provide a settlement agreement or get into court.



2023

Mediation sessions and settlement negotiations take place, with all major issues between the parties being resolved. A bill is introduced to the legislature that would authorize the Governor to enter into settlement of the land claim.

January 2024

Parties continue negotiations and attempt to resolve outstanding issues.



Agreement

November 2024

The 2024 Settlement Agreement is finalized, with little differences or changes from the 2004 Settlement Agreement approved by membership.

