



# Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe

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Chief Lorraine M. White  
Chief Barbara A. Lazore  
Sub-Chief Ronald LaFrance, Jr.  
Sub-Chief Donald D. Thompson, Sr.  
Sub-Chief Stacy A. Adams

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Letter to the Editor

We read with great interest the March 20 article titled “Dawson Says Track Casino Not A Problem.”

We would like to start by saying that we have a lot of respect for Jim Dawson. As Brasher’s town supervisor, he conducts himself in a professional manner. Our relationship with him has been positive over the years.

However, we are concerned with the media reports to turn the proposed racetrack in Brasher into a casino. Last year, we were approached by Northway Island Associates to move the Akwesasne Mohawk Casino to the Brasher Racetrack site. We unequivocally turned down the request.

The Akwesasne Mohawk Casino is becoming a major economic driver, not only for our community, but for the region as a whole. It is helping the Tribe to become the region’s largest employer. It has allowed us to increase the level of services offered to our Tribal members. It is serving as a catalyst for the Tribe to undertake other economic development initiatives.

Equally as important are the regional benefits that are occurring. These include the hundreds of jobs that go to our neighboring communities and the millions of dollars in goods and services that are purchased from St. Lawrence County vendors. This is in addition to one million dollars plus that St. Lawrence County receives from New York State as part of our revenue sharing agreement with the state.

Your readers should be aware that if Mr. Dawson and Northway Island Associates are successful in bringing slot machines to their proposed casino, it would violate our gaming compact with the state that gives us an exclusivity zone for slot machines, that zone includes St. Lawrence County.

The violation would lead to an end of the revenue sharing provision that is in our gaming compact and we would no longer be obligated to pay the state revenue sharing from our slot machines. And St. Lawrence County would lose its share of what the state receives.

412 State Route 37  
Akwesasne, New York 13655  
Phone: 518-358-2272  
Fax: 518-358-3203

We believe your readers should be aware of the consequences of the path that Mr. Dawson is proposing.

Furthermore, we are extremely skeptical of the casino proposal being discussed for Brasher Falls. VLTs at racetracks were established to economically help bail out the harness horse racing industry in the state which is in an extended period of decline. So it doesn't make much economic sense to be building new harness tracks in this time and age.

We wish Mr. Dawson and Northway Island Associates the best of luck in building a Car Racetrack. However, we urge your readers though to be extremely cautious in evaluating any gaming related proposals that accompany it. It may be more pie in the sky than reality.

St. Regis Mohawk Tribal Council