



St. Regis Mohawk Tribe

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NEWS RELEASE

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Tribe Lobbies for Dedicated Trust Fund to Decontaminate Grasse River *Environmental Protection Agency Honors SRMT Request*

Akwesasne, NY - The United States Environmental Protection Agency announced approval of the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe's request to establish a perpetual, dedicated trust fund to monitor and maintain the cleanup of the Grasse River. On September 29, 2014 the EPA and ALCOA announced an agreement on the establishment of a perpetual fund in the amount of at least \$13.3 million. The financial assurance for the operational fund is expected to generate sufficient income to fund any necessary operation, maintenance and monitoring of the cleanup, even if ALCOA leaves the area or files bankruptcy.

In April of 2013, the EPA issued a Record of Decision for the cleanup of the Grasse River, choosing excavation and removal of contaminated riverbank and sediment areas and capping of deeper, downstream areas. "Concerning the Record of Decision, we agreed with the excavation and removal decision, but disagreed that the capping remedy would be fully protective of human health and the environment," stated Chief Ron LaFrance. The Tribe's Environment Division, led by Ken Jock, requested a permanent contingency fund to ensure comprehensive, sustainable success of the cleanup. "Ken's team consults with the EPA concerning water quality throughout all stages of the remediation."

"It's imperative we see a permanent and reliable cleanup of the Grasse River and a return to the day when our rivers provide our community with fishable and swimmable water," stated Ken Jock.

"Our success in establishing this fund, which will protect and be available to future generations, is an important milestone in our goal of a clean environment." The Tribe works with the State and the EPA to develop and utilize the most advanced monitoring technology to manage restoration of the water quality and fish in the waterways.

The contingency fund will also serve as a promise to the masters and apprentices in Akwesasne who are involved in the cultural restoration project relating to the successful recovery in the Natural Resource Damage case in 2013.

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The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Council is the duly elected and federally recognized government of the Saint Regis Mohawk People.

Helping Build A Better Tomorrow

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