



Sierra Club

BINATIONAL GREAT LAKES COMMITTEE



February 12, 1993

Executive Committee
Board of Directors
Great Lakes United

Dear Friends,

I am submitting this request to Great Lakes United on behalf of the Great Lakes Indian/Environmentalist working group of the Sierra Club's Binational Great Lakes Committee. As you know, this committee, as well as the Sierra Club Great Lakes Program and most of the Sierra Club Chapters falling within the Great Lakes Basin, are members of GLU.

The Great Lakes Indian/Environmentalist working group is an initiative of my committee. The participants of this working group include representatives of several indigenous tribes and organizations around the basin. By design, it has an Indian majority and is driven by the consensus of the group.

One of the goals of the working group is to increase the awareness and understanding within the Great Lakes environmental community of issues facing indigenous communities. We feel Native rights issues and the relationship of environmental concerns with Native perspectives are important to include in our work. The result of greater understanding will be an increase in our effectiveness as we call on our governments to do their jobs.

We have identified major gatherings of the environmental community in the Great Lakes basin as targets for our educational strategy. The GLU Annual meeting is one of these.

I have discussed this with several board members, have listened to their concerns and suggestions, and, given that much of the program planning is in near final form, have a number of possibilities to suggest:

- * Since this is an initiative coming from ongoing work of a member organization, it could be dealt with as a task force. This would not give us as wide an audience as we would like, but would provide the opportunity to review GLU policy and previous resolutions on issues relevant to Native Americans and First Nations.

It would also provide opportunity for discussion and debate on whatever resolutions were proposed. Possible initial resolutions could include 1) setting up an ongoing Indigenous Task Force, 2) using the GLU network to provide educational information to GLU members, and 3) provide support to the Native member of the Board.

- * We could offer an educational program or workshop on indigenous issues to the participants of the GLU Annual meeting. A couple of hours during Friday afternoon or evening has been suggested. This could be approached from the perspective of creating opportunity for exposure to the concepts and discussion of the relationships of those concepts to environmental goals.

This would provide the opportunity to anyone interested in learning about Native issues, but might avoid confrontations with GLU members having strong feelings about hunting and fishing rights.

- * We could offer a much less structured, more visual and experientially oriented multi-media event. This could include small discussion groups, informational displays, video showings, etc. This could be presented either as a separate offering, or as an ongoing opportunity concurrent with the reception. This format would provide more exposure but less indepth coverage of issues. Since many non-native environmentalists have little actual knowledge about Native Rights, this might be an ideal, non-threatening introduction.
- * We could offer a workshop separate from the GLU annual meeting, but open to participants. Again, a likely time seems to be Friday afternoon or evening. This option does not appeal to me, since it might imply that GLU does not care to address these issues.

I'm sure there are many other possibilities I haven't thought of, working either in tandem or outside the GLU event. Please let me know your thoughts.

Sincerely,

SUE

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To The Environment

the hurts along the way will be received in the end. Such is the belief of the true Ojibway.

We believe that the animal people are our brothers and they honor us as such, for each of these brothers gives us something special which he alone possesses. We honor him for this and give his spirit the thanksgiving which is carried on the wind to the ears of Gitich Manitou. Thus the Ojibway sustain life. Our life and the life of our Animal Brother is one. We give back to the earth life, and thus the circle is complete." Words of the Grandmother, Night Flying Woman, An Ojibway Narrator.

BROKER

of GLIFWC

- RED CLIFF
- ST. CROIX
- MILLE LACS
- LAC COURTE
- OREILLES
- KEWEENAW BAY
- LAC VIEUX DESERT

Off-Reservation Treaty Rights Of The Ojibway

During the 1800's the United States entered into many treaties with sovereign Indian nations. Through a series of treaties, numerous Chippewa Bands ceded what is now northern Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota to the U.S. Government.

In these treaties the Chippewa sold the land to the United States, but kept for themselves and future generations, the right to hunt, fish and gather on those lands. These lands are now known as the ceded territories, now known as reservations.

The Chippewa reserved rights to fish, the Great Lakes and inland waters, to hunt game and trap, barkweavers and to gather plants such as wild rice. All of these are traditional sources of food.

Chippewa off-reservation treaty rights have been affirmed in many court cases, including an 18-pg long case in Wisconsin known as the *Voyt Case*.

Tribal off-reservation treaty harvests are strictly monitored by biologists and regulated through tribal, state and federal conservation wardens and biologists. Crutons are brought into tribal court.

Available information resources on the Chippewa and treaty rights include:

- Various publications
- Videos relating to treaty issues & Speaker Bureau
- Informational display booth



For further information contact:

Public Information Division, GLIFWC
P.O. Box 9, Odenah, WI 54861
Or phone: (715) 682-6619.

Directions In Chippewa Off-Reservation Resource Management



Great Lakes Indian Fish & Wildlife Commission

Original art by Ben Longenecker, Jr.

Chippewa Relationship

A keen sense of the interdependence of people, animal and plant life reach deep into the tradition and lifestyle of the Ojibway people. That relationship, which differs from the European concept of man as dominant over all other species, is reflected in the excerpt following: "We believe in all circles of life. We believe that all returns to its source; that both good and bad return to the place where they began. We believe that if we start a dead after the fallness of time it will return to us, the source of the journey. If care is not used when the circle is begun, then

IGNATIA

Member Tribes

- BAD RIVER
- BAY MILLS
- MOLE LAKE
- BOIS FORTÉ
- FOND DU LAC
- GRAND PORTAGE
- LAC DU FLAMBEAU

Fishery Management



The preservation of a sound fishery in the ceded territory is one principle objective of the Commission. Along with their neighbors, Chippewa people value many fish, such as walleye, muskellunge, lake trout and whitefish. These fish are important both as a food source and as a part of Chippewa society and culture.

Commission biologists and technicians are involved in numerous aspects of fishery management, including:

- Assessment of numbers, reproduction, age and growth of fish populations.
- Implementation of one of the most intensively monitored fishing seasons in the world during spring spearing, a system which accounts for every fish harvested by tribal fishermen.
- Cooperation with biologists from state, federal and tribal management agencies in data sharing, fishery analysis and planning.
- Fishery enhancement through projects that assist tribal hatcheries with fish rearing and stocking.
- Harvest level recommendations.
- Participation in technical/policy-making committees.

Wildlife/ Wild Rice



Off-reservation treaty harvests include many wildlife and plant species. Therefore, the Commission provides professional biological staff to work in areas of treaty harvest, including deer, fur-bearers, waterfowl, and wild rice.

GLIFWC wildlife biologists are involved in many assessment and conservation projects, such as:

- Wetlands preservation and enhancement, through programs such as loosestrife control.
- Research on fisher, marten, bobcat and coyote in northern Wisconsin.
- Waterfowl population and migration surveys.
- Participation in the Mississippi Flyway Council Technical Section.
- Wild rice assessment and enhancement programs.
- Monitoring of treaty harvests of deer, small game, furbearers, waterfowl, and wild rice.
- Maintenance of on-reservation registration stations.
- Harvest level recommendations.
- Involvement in cooperative wildlife management projects with other agencies including the WDNR and U.S. Forest Service.

Great Lakes Indian Fish & Wildlife Commission

Preparing deer hide for tanning



Sharing at a traditional feast



Gathering Manomin (wild rice)



Harvesting Lake Superior trout



The Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission (GLIFWC) serves thirteen Chippewa Bands in Minnesota, Michigan and Wisconsin. The Commission was formed in 1984. The Board of Commissioners, with a representative from each member tribe, governs the Commission.

The purpose of the Commission is to assist member tribes in the implementation of the treaty rights. This involves several aspects of natural resource management, including the harvest regulation, habitat protection and enhancement, and enforcement. In order to provide the opportunity for harvest and to protect the resource, the Commission provides assistance to the member tribes through its divisions: Biological Services, Conservation Enforcement, Resource Planning, Policy Analysis, and Public Information.

Environmental Issues



The Chippewa Tribes recognize that fish and wildlife are affected not only by pressure from harvesters, such as sport interests and treaty harvesters, but also by environmental problems. In order to protect habitat for upcoming generations, the Commission is involved in several environmental projects, including:

- Testing fish for levels of mercury and other toxics.
- Serving the tribes as a watchdog on proposed mines, paper mills, oil drilling, FERC dams, and toxic waste dump sites.
- Networking with regional, national and international environmental protection organizations in order to share information and keep the member tribes informed.
- Addressing surface water issues through membership on a legislative committee.
- Participating in the Lake Superior Forums.
- Cooperating with other organizations and local governments in development of an environmental health laboratory in the region.

Law Enforcement



Tribal conservation laws govern each of the off-reservation seasons. The Commission's member tribes recognize the need for effective law enforcement to protect the natural resources. The Commission wardens are stationed throughout the ceded territory. All wardens are fully trained and certified. They participate in annual training that upgrades and maintains proficiency levels in all areas of conservation enforcement. Some Commission wardens are deputized by Wisconsin to enforce state conservation codes.

The Commission also assists member tribes in maintaining tribal courts. Violations of tribal off-reservation codes are cited into tribal courts.

