

Wulustuk Times

Wulustuk - Indigenous name for St John River

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TABLE OF CONTENTS - APRIL 2015

DOE: 1/3 OF ENERGY COULD COME FROM THE WIND BY 2050

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS DEFENDS REJECTION OF SASKATCHEWAN AIRSTRIP

SHAMATTAWA SUICIDES SHAKE NORTHERN MANITOBA RESERVE

WHEN CANADA USED HUNGER TO CLEAR THE WEST

DEATH, CAPITALISM AND WABANAKI-ISM

MALISEET EASTER

DAN'S CORNER: GOVERNMENTS' ""DUTY TO CONSULT""?

DEAN'S DEN: Our Laws

Wulustuk Times:

Each month we gather and publish the latest, most current and relevant native information for our readers. Proceeding with this concept, we feel that a well informed person is better able to see, relate with, and assess a situation more accurately when equipped with the right tools. Our aim is to provide you with the precise tools and the best information possible.

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DOE: 1/3 OF ENERGY COULD COME FROM THE WIND BY 2050

A new report by the U.S. Department of Energy estimates that 35 percent of the nation's electricity could be supplied by wind power by 2050. But in order to get there, the industry needs more tools and new strategies.

Right now wind energy supplies just under 5 percent of the nation's electricity. Colorado is one of just nine states that have more than 12 percent of annual electricity generation coming from the alternative energy.

The new report, "Wind Vision: A New Era For Wind Power in the United States," contains a roadmap with suggestions for increasing the affordability and use of wind. In particular, it highlights the importance of consistent government policies, referencing expirations of federal incentives like the federal production tax credit, which it said has "created a boom-bust cycle for wind power."

The report is an update of a similar study conducted in 2008. The Washington Post points out that the study does not take into account the explosive growth of another renewable energy: solar.

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS DEFENDS REJECTION OF SASKATCHEWAN AIRSTRIP

Minister Bernard Valcourt asserts in Parliament the federal government is not responsible

By CBC News

A Saskatchewan First Nation's plea for an airstrip was raised in Parliament on Thursday, but Minister of Aboriginal Affairs Bernard Valcourt maintained it's not federal jurisdiction.

Niki Ashton, the NDP Aboriginal Affairs critic, pressed Valcourt on the issue - which was exposed in a CBC News story on Wednesday - that without an airstrip, people living in Southend, Sask. must rely on a ground ambulance 220 kilometres away in the town of La Ronge, Sask.

"It's a five-hour round trip on a gravel road. People's lives are at risk," Ashton said. "Will the minister stop making excuses, come to the table, and fund this life-saving airstrip?"

Minister Bernard Valcourt responded that the airstrip in question is under provincial jurisdiction.

Jurisdiction fight continues

Earlier this year, the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation applied for \$6 million in funding from Aboriginal Affairs to build an airstrip for its community 600 kilometres northeast of

Saskatoon.

Since the community of Southend is carved into an island of rock, the only suitable land for a 1,000-metre runway is located off-reserve. Aboriginal Affairs rejected the Southend application, citing the off-reserve location of the project and its other capital priorities of schools and water treatment.

Meanwhile, the Saskatchewan government told CBC News that it won't pitch in money either. Transportation spokesperson Doug Wakabayashi said that the First Nation should find a compromise with the federal government.

Valcourt's office later clarified that the minister was referring to both the First Nation's application to build a new airstrip off-reserve, and the potential to upgrade a private off-reserve fishing lodge airstrip that was shut down in November after the owner died. However, that airstrip was too short for an air ambulance.

Minister argues Southend has adequate service

In Parliament, Valcourt also suggested that Southend is receiving air support.

"The First Nation in question receives, currently, medical emergency evacuation by helicopter or planes," Valcourt said.

In fact, helicopters are rarely used for medical evacuations in Southend. Charter helicopters in that region are not fitted with medical equipment. They fly slower and cost more than fixed wing planes.

The STARS helicopter based in Saskatoon usually stays within 200 kilometres of the city and rarely flies north of Prince Albert.

STARS spokesman Cam Heke told CBC News that while flying to Southend isn't outside the realm of possibility, it would present challenges.

"We would be taking into consideration that we won't be available to respond within that higher population base around the major cities," Heke said.

Meanwhile, Mamawetan Churchill River Health Region has a contract with a charter airline, Transwest Air, to respond to emergencies in Southend. However, the company is constrained by the lack of airstrip.

Transwest can land Twin Otters on the frozen ice or float planes on water, but only during certain times of the year and under constraints such as good weather and daylight hours.

So, if you were lucky and you had your emergency before noon, then you could probably get out in time in the winter," Mo Johnston, the nurse-in-charge in Southend, told CBC News.

Head nurse calls for airstrip in Southend

Johnston worked in the Northwest Territories for 24 years before taking over the post in Southend last year.

"The situation here, at the moment, is more or less the way it was when I first started in the territories in the early '90s," Johnston said.

These days, the Northwest Territories government contracts a private company that is required to have the capability and aircraft to land in every community in the territory. It can land a fully-equipped King Air ambulance, staffed with advanced care paramedics and critical care nurses, in 25 of 27 government-owned airports.

In comparison, the chartered plane that lands on ice or water in Southend is staffed with a basic to intermediate paramedic.

"Even by northern standards, the services [in Southend] fall short here because of the lack of the air strip," Johnston said. "They don't have access to the healthcare people in the south do, or even people further north do who have an airstrip."

SHAMATTAWA SUICIDES SHAKE NORTHERN MANITOBA RESERVE

Drugs, solvents, alcohol and despair are major problems, community members agree

By: CBC News

The northern Manitoba reserve of Shamattawa is mourning the deaths of four young people in the past six weeks, with concern growing after four more suicide attempts since last Thursday.

"We are at the stage where we can't wait until the next victim," said Grand Chief David Harper of Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak, which represents northern Manitoba First Nations.

He said more support services are needed in the isolated community of 1,000 people as soon as possible. An appeal has been sent to Health Canada to establish a crisis intervention team for Manitoba, similar to one in Ontario that goes into northern or isolated communities when suicides happen.

Two young Shamattawa men killed themselves in February and two young women took their own lives last week, one day apart.

"It's a big problem. We've had a lot of deaths," said Desray Scriver, 21, who knew all of the suicide victims. Dora Napoakesik, 19, was her cousin and April Thomas, 19, was a friend.

"It hits me really hard and it goes on for days. Sometimes I try not to think about it, but that makes it worse," she said.

Shamattawa First Nation Chief Jeff Napoakesik confirmed four other young people attempted suicide in the past few days.

"It causes a chain reaction," he said. "It's a despair our young people have here, and alcohol plays an influence to their thinking, so they make attempts to try and end their lives."

The chief said his community is devastated about the recent deaths and people are trying to help the families as best as they can.

Napoakesik said there are always counsellors in the community, but more have been brought in to help.

"A day without an attempt is a blessing to us," he said. "We are always on our guard."

Shamattawa is about 745 kilometres north of Winnipeg. It is accessible primarily by air, although there is an ice road in the winter.

'I buried my cousins'

Trina Miles said the two men who died were her cousins. They were 21 and 23 years old.

"In February, they passed a week apart," said Miles. "After burying one of my cousins, another cousin took his own life."

Miles, 21, a youth worker who is involved in suicide prevention, said suicide attempts spike at this time of year in Shamattawa because contraband is brought into the community on the winter road making drugs, alcohol and solvents available on the reserve that has been declared "dry."

Scriver said all teenagers do in Shamattawa is party. She said she got caught up in partying after losing her sister to suicide.

"I did it to block out everything. I did it to have fun," she said.

"But then I stopped having fun because I noticed that whoever I drank with was crying, sad, mad, getting beaten up."

Scriver has since moved to Winnipeg. She said she could not bear to watch what suicide is doing to her home community.

Miles said when she was a teenager, she had suicidal thoughts; isolation played a huge role in her negative feelings.

"I've been down that road, and I see a lot of these young people going down that road that leads to destruction and poverty, and there is no one there to be a light for them," she said.

Miles said her community needs help from the outside and more after-school activities are required to give young people something to do and offer them hope. Right now, her program runs three times a week and draws up to 50 kids.

Crisis control

Chief Harper said crisis intervention counsellors arrived in Shamattawa on Sunday and are working with the families, as well as identifying others who may be at risk.

"It's hard to be able to comprehend on what's really happening, but at the same time we have to put our minds together," he said.

He said there are 10 counsellors in Shamattawa from AWASIS and the Keewatin Tribal Council. Those workers have gone to the school and met with students and are holding workshops in the evening for community members.

A spokesperson for federal Health Minister Rona Ambrose told CBC News on Thursday that more support staff are in Shamattawa.?

"In response to the current situation, Health Canada has ensured a team is on the ground that has an additional mental health therapist as well as support for Child and Family Services' delivery of workers for crisis support in schools," the spokesperson wrote in an email.

Long-term support sought

It's not the first time Shamattawa has faced this type of situation. In 2002, the local chief declared a state of emergency after three people took their own lives within a nine-day span.

The community's addictions problems also made national headlines in 1986 and 1992.

Harper said Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak will send counsellors and ministers to the religious community for longer term support.

"They go into the community and help for weeks at a time, not just days, not until the funeral is done," he said.

Health Canada says it has invested \$1.3 million in Shamattawa this year alone for "support care and mental health." The federal department runs a nursing station where four nurses are on staff.

Federal Aboriginal Affairs Minister Bernard Valcourt refused to comment on the Shamattawa situation when reporters asked him about it Thursday in Ottawa.

NDP aboriginal affairs critic Niki Ashton called on the federal government to provide more help to the community on a long-term basis.

"The problem is that the federal government has been largely negligent across the board when it comes to sustained funding for recreation and for opportunities for young people in northern communities," said Ashton, who is the MP for Churchill in northern Manitoba.

WHEN CANADA USED HUNGER TO CLEAR THE WEST

JAMES DASCHUK

Contributed to The Globe and Mail

Twenty years ago, Saskatoon scholar Laurie Barron cautioned that stories of sexual and physical abuse at Indian residential schools should be taken with a grain of salt; he thought they were just too horrific to be believed in their entirety. But national leader Phil Fontaine's public admission of his abuse, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal People and the haunting testimony presented recently to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada have brought the horrors of the residential school system to the forefront of our consciousness. We are often shocked, but we really shouldn't be surprised.

Nor should we be surprised by the revelations in Dr. Ian Mosby's article about the medical experimentation on malnourished aboriginal people in northern Canada and in residential schools. Rather than feed the hungry among its wards (even adult "Registered Indians" were not full citizens until 1960), government-employed physicians used pangs of hunger to further their research into malnutrition, in a plot reminiscent of the Tuskegee experiment on African-Americans with syphilis, whose conditions were monitored rather than treated.

Researching my own book forced me to reconsider many of my long-held beliefs about Canadian history. A professor of mine at Trent University once explained that Canadian expansion into the West was much less violent than that of the United States', because in that country, "the person with the fastest horse got the most land." By contrast, in the Dominion's march west, the land was prepared for settlement by government officials before the flood of immigrants.

What we didn't know at the time was that a key aspect of preparing the land was the subjugation and forced removal of indigenous communities from their traditional territories, essentially clearing the plains of aboriginal people to make way for railway construction and settlement. Despite guarantees of food aid in times of famine in Treaty No. 6, Canadian officials used food, or rather denied food, as a means to ethnically cleanse a vast region from Regina to the Alberta border as the Canadian Pacific Railway took shape.

For years, government officials withheld food from aboriginal people until they moved to their appointed reserves, forcing them to trade freedom for rations. Once on reserves, food placed in ration houses was withheld for so long that much of it rotted while the people it was intended to feed fell into a decades-long cycle of malnutrition, suppressed immunity

and sickness from tuberculosis and other diseases. Thousands died.

Sir John A. Macdonald, acting as both prime minister and minister of Indian affairs during the darkest days of the famine, even boasted that the indigenous population was kept on the "verge of actual starvation," in an attempt to deflect criticism that he was squandering public funds.

Within a generation, aboriginal bison hunters went from being the "tallest in the world," due to the quality of their nutrition, to a population so sick, they were believed to be racially more susceptible to disease. With this belief that aboriginal people were inherently unwell, their marginalization from mainstream Canada was, in a sense, complete.

For more than a century, Canadians have been accustomed to reports of terrible housing conditions on reserves, unsafe drinking water, dismal educational outcomes and, at least in Western Canada, prison populations disproportionately stacked with aboriginal inmates. Aboriginal leaders and young people such as those who embraced the Idle No More movement have been calling for Canadians to fundamentally acknowledge the injustices and atrocities of the past and fix the problems that keep indigenous Canadians from living the same quality of life as their non-aboriginal neighbours.

As the skeletons in our collective closet are exposed to the light, through the work of Dr. Mosby and others, perhaps we will come to understand the uncomfortable truths that modern Canada is founded upon - ethnic cleansing and genocide - and push our leaders and ourselves to make a nation we can be proud to call home.

Dr. James Daschuk is the author of *Clearing the Plains: Disease, Politics of Starvation and the Loss of Aboriginal Life*, an assistant professor in the faculty of kinesiology and health studies at the University of Regina and a researcher with the Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Research Unit.

DEATH, CAPITALISM AND WABANAKI-ISM

Having recently been looking after the estate of a deceased family member, I am acutely aware of the amount of paper work required as the result of this person's death. First of all there is the sheet of paper signed by the funeral home, the Death Certificate, which is the official evidence by the funeral home that the person is dead. Insurance companies, banks, employers, Government (Canada Revenue Agency), post offices, etc. will want to see this piece of paper. Then there is the legal "Last Will and Testament" prepared by a lawyer for the person while they were alive. These two documents are just the beginning.

All of these institutions and the survivors will want to get a copy of the Will to determine who the executor or executors of the estate are so they can tackle them about inheritance (assets, cash, certificates), and also debts and obligations. If there isn't a will or executors, then the statutory vultures will quickly gather around the deceased's estate.

The wording of a Will is important, and if it is old and out of date, and the people named in it as beneficiaries and/or executors are no longer living, or the items mentioned in it have changed or disappeared, then beware of more legal problems. Of course a lawyer can fix these problems via "probate" for an exorbitant fee, and meantime the government will apply taxes that would not have been applicable had all the paperwork been up to date. It's all about money, about what material things the person owned and owed. Our governing system in this country is based on laws that generate wealth and power for the government which administers them on behalf of the Crown. They look for every opportunity to get some pickings, no matter how slim, from estates.

Before Europeans came to this continent and brought their capitalist system, the inhabitants of the country had a system based on different laws and values than imposed by capitalism. In the "relations", that is the writings of the early missionaries they felt that the people they found dwelling here were without laws or religion. This is only because they had nothing but their own culture to compare to these "savages." However, consider what Father Pierre Biard wrote in 1611 about The Wills, Funeral Rites, and Burials of the Savages and their Religion.

"I have nearly forgotten the most beautiful part of all; it is that they bury with the dead man all that he owns, such as his bag, his arrows, his skins and all his other articles and baggage, even his dogs if they have not been eaten. Moreover, the survivors add to these a number of other such offerings, as tokens of friendship. Judge from this whether these good people are not far removed from this cursed avarice which we see among us; who, to become possessed of the riches of the dead, desire and seek eagerly for the loss and departure of the living."

So, even Father Biard over four hundred years ago recognized the beauty of the system of the Wabanaki people, which put little value on material wealth to the extent that all belongings of the deceased person were buried with him, even his dogs. Moreover the survivors of the deceased, rather than fighting over their inheritance, instead offered even more articles of theirs to be buried with the deceased person. The Wabanaki people were so self-sufficient in making everything they needed, when needed, that they did not covet the material goods of others. Their wealth was always surrounding them in the forests and streams. Even the Sakum (Chief) had no more material possessions than any of his people. Besides that, they shared everything, and had a wigwam in the village where the shared items were kept for all to access and use. It isn't that way today. Just as back in those times the European colonists had difficulty understanding how these people could live this way, seemingly without law and order, so too today we have the same mind set. We are so caught up in the "trees" of the controlling legal and capitalist system that we can't see the "forest" that constrains us.

For more insight into the burial and funeral rites of the Wabanaki of long ago, including their Tabagie (feast & celebration) read Father Biard's relations about The Wills, Funeral Rites, and Burials of the Savages and their Religion in The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents, Volume III, Acadia 1611-1616

... all my relations, Nugee-kadoonkut

MALISEET EASTER

The Maliseet learned about the major Christian holidays soon after the missionaries arrived. Easter customs followed the old French customs, some that are continued to this day. Usually many of the Maliseet were still in the bush at their solitary winter camps. They had received a calendar of Christian days that should be recognized to take with them to their winter camps. The Easter or the Lent season feast days were usually recognized by the individual families or extended families in the bush. If any Maliseet were in a village like Meductic, they would attend the village church along with any French, such as fur traders, who were living close by.

Ash Wednesday comes at the coldest and stormiest time of winter. The hunters and trappers were working hard in the frigid conditions and needed food to refuel their lost energy in the cold outdoor activities. Their custom was to only fast for breakfast on this Holy Day that they called Tukw-un-ho-dine, "Ashes put on you time." The head-man of each camp performed the ceremony and then pursued their regular hunting returning home hungry and cold hoping for a hot meal.

Palm Sunday, Stakw-nok, "fir boughs." Fir boughs substituted for palms and were readily available. The hunting families could make a small procession around and in their wigwams. The St. Francis used cedar, Sedia, that was more abundant where they lived near the St. Lawrence River. In the villages the people processed around the inside of their church. The snow conditions were not conducive for walking outside.

I was not told of anything denoting Maundy Thursday for those in the bush.

Good Friday was remembered in two ways. The first was Chib-yawtke-as-kisos "the sun makes the sign of the cross." The people, especially the young people, were encouraged to look at the sun when the hunters went out on the trail. The sun would swirl around until it made the sign of the cross. It usually took less than a minute to see the cross. In the early 1900s all the Woodstock Reserve young people could be seen staring at the sun. Good Friday was also known as Zam-hoo-dine, "Whipping time." Each boy went out to the woods and cut seven switches, took them home and gave them to their father who tied them together. The father then whipped their sons with the switches that he had cut. They took the beatings without a murmur showing their manliness. They bared their back so the scarlet red welts criss-crossing their back could be seen. The figure "7" was a mystical number. According to tradition the seventh son had special powers and was a doctor. One could fight a bad medoulin with seven needles. The Maliseet incorporated the magic of "seven" to insure that absolution would be granted for the boy's sins and that they would go to heaven..

Easter, Aw=pi-chi-pek, when the leaves begin to grow." There usually was snow on the ground and most hunters were still in the bush, the creeks and streams were free of ice. Their water was freezing at night, but thawing during day and rushing to lakes or the St. John River. On Easter, before sunrise, all natural running water was holy water having special healing powers if one bathed in it. Mothers took a sick child to a frozen stream and dipped their sick baby into it, I presumed that one could fill a pail of brook water, take it home and warm it before bathing the child in it but the belief was that only the cold water

had healing powers.. The Maliseet believed that the water in the streams was only holy before sunrise for the three day span from Good Friday to Easter. These were customs from Medieval times that the missionaries taught the Indians. The Maliseet adapted some of the beliefs into their own traditions.

DAN'S CORNER: GOVERNMENTS' "DUTY TO CONSULT"?

I am writing regarding comments made by Brian Gallant on his government training more civil servants on the "duty to consult".

I think what this Gallant fellow is referring to when speaking about the duty to consult is Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982. Section 35 states that Canadian governments have a duty to consult and accommodate Indian Peoples.

Going hand-in-hand with the Constitution Act is the U.N.D.R.I.P. which states under Article 19 that States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with Indigenous Peoples in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislation or administrative measures that may affect them.

As with all things with politicians he has sinister, ulterior and self-serving motives.

There are only certain words contained within the Constitution Act and the U.N.D.R.I.P. that Brian Gallant would like the public to focus on to the exclusion of some equally important words. Words such as accommodate, good faith, free, prior and informed consent.

The legal obligations that Gallant speaks of include, in addition to the duty to consult, the legal obligation to obtain from Indigenous Peoples their free, prior, and informed consent.

To me CONSENT means our legal obligation to VETO if need be.

An article quotes Jake Stewart, the P.C. Energy Critic, as saying that the determination on when to consult First Nations rests with the white government. This is false and misleading.

Such a determination, instead, rests with the ones who are most directly affected, the First Nations.

The First Nation elected leadership should not agree to allow such a determination to be made by our white oppressors.

Jake Stewart states that this determination is based on an assessment of the "degree of infringement on traditional rights". This is your typical white politician thinking. Meaning ignoring and blaming the victim.

This kind of "determination" is a little like saying that the white Jake Stewart government

will act on a rape crime only after assessing the "degree of infringement" on the rape victim's rights.

All My Relations,

Dan Ennis

DEAN'S DEN: Our Laws

Known to us as Turtle Island

Configured by Creator

In teachings and tradition

The truth facilitator,

The precept and protector

Of our treasured Mother Earth

Passed to Seventh Generation

Before death - and, after birth,

Yet now, finds us embattled

To hold ancestral lands

That "time and tide" have ravished

That have gone through many hands,

During era, age, and lifetimes

We have alleged, confirmed, and pleaded

That no part was ever given up

Relinquished, waived, or ceded,

At best - our understanding

Some sort of verbal pact

Yet now, we are so - governed
By the terms found in an Act,
No covenant or contract
No treaty we'd endorsed
Where the sun set on our heritage
And our Rivers still have coursed,
Some lines on faded paper
Countenanced - perforce
When we didn't really comprehend
The translation that was sourced,
So now, we must demand our rights
To deposit and resource
There seems no other option
No means, resort, recourse,
Done to save our legacy
Not regretted nor remorse
The time has come for action
'Our laws ' ... will be enforced!
D.C. Butterfield
So Much Snow
Up on the rooftop
Shoveling snow
It sure as shingles
Ain't "Ho Ho Ho!"

Cold raw wind
Whistles round my ears
Heart-fail and falling
My two biggest fears,
If all goes well
And Creator be willing
No more blizzards
Nor deep-down chilling,
So much snow
It don't seem fair
Every joint aches
And I'm gasping for air,
Leaning on the shovel
My energy spent
Slipped on some ice
And ... off I went!
D.C. Butterfield