

RE-OCCUPYING THE ARCHIPELAGO:

The Potential of Unified Governance in the Thousand Islands Region
through Application of the Haudenosaunee Great Law of Peace

by Alshima Mohammed

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AUTHOR'S DEDICATION

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis.

This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the potential indigenization of governance in the Thousand Islands region through integration of Haudenosaunee political philosophy to better inform methods by which local governing bodies make decisions pertaining to development of the region. By considering forms of governance that are in and of themselves Indigenous to the region, problems pertaining to overdevelopment, racial equity, and conservation may be addressed. The development of a comprehensive framework for the sustainable management and development of Canada's Thousand Islands region may be used to promote coexistence and reciprocity amongst all stakeholders in the area. Through a historical analysis of the site, regional treaties, and Indigenous philosophy, new methods of interaction that contrast hierarchical systems of governance arise as alternatives. The application of the structure of the traditional grand council of the Haudenosaunee, offers a method by which consensus can be achieved by large groups of individuals, prioritizing ideas that benefit the broader community, the land, and generations to come.

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I am thankful.

I give thanks to the Creator for the world and its beauty

I give thanks to the land and water for their sustenance.

I give thanks to my mothers and fathers for their care and support.

I give thanks to my teachers for their advice and wisdom.

I give thanks to those who looked after the land in generations past

I give thanks to Righteousness for its virtue and commitment.

I give thanks to Power for its strength and stability.

And finally,

I give thanks to Peace for its relief and security.

Truely,

I am thankful.

DEDICATION

To the children who never returned from school.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

vii	LIST OF FIGURES	92	CHAPTER 5 THE PRESENT SITUATION: REGIONAL CONSERVATION, ECONOMICS, AND ACCESS TO THE LAND Shared Responsibility Regional Conservation Efforts Access to Nature Tourism and Economic Stimulation Access to Housing Visual Documentation
1	CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION Thesis Structure Literature Review	146	CHAPTER 6 APPLICATION OF THE GREAT LAW OF PEACE IN REGIONAL GOVERNANCE Ontario Provincial Policy Statement Indigenous Leadership and Federal Conservation Residents and Regional Conservation Regional Governance and Speculative Buyers Agriculture and Tourism Industries
26	CHAPTER 2 AN INTRODUCTION TO THE HISTORICAL ACTORS WITH PRESENCE IN THE ST LAWRENCE RIVER VALLEY. Wendat Haudenosaunee Mississauga French English	182	CHAPTER 7 CONSIDERING HEIRARCHICAL SYSTEMS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR REGIONAL ACTORS IN RESPONSIBLE GOVERNANCE Regional Governance at a National Scale Community Impact on Regional Governance Potential Economics and Social Impacts through Collaboration The Potential for Collaboration Between Indigenous Leadership and Municipal Governing Bodies Final Remarks
40	CHAPTER 3 THE POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY OF THE PEACEMAKER AND LAND MANAGEMENT PHILOSOPHIES The Grand Council The Grand Council's Procedures and Protocols The Peacemaker and his Great Law The Great Law of Peace and its Principles The Dish with One Spoon Covenant Haudenosaunee Land Practices Contrasting Land Philosophies	198	BIBLIOGRAPHY
66	CHAPTER 4 LAND TRANSFER AND OWNERSHIP WITH A FOCUS ON TREATIES AND CEDED LANDS Boundaries Wampum Belt and Historical Record Keeping Historical Conflicts The Beaver Wars The War of 1812 Treaties of the St. Lawrence River Valley		

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1

- xii **FIGURE 1 | INDIANA ISLAND**
(Photograph by author)
- 3 **FIGURE 2 | WATERFRONT MANSIONS FACING THE ISLANDS**
(Photograph by author)
- 5 **FIGURE 3 | CALF ON WOLFE ISLAND FARM**
(Photograph by author)
- 9 **FIGURE 4 | EXAMPLE OF CORPORATE ALLYSHIP**
(Photograph by author)
- 9 **FIGURE 5 | WOLFE ISLAND WELCOME SIGN**
(Photograph by author)

CHAPTER 2

- 26 **FIGURE 6 | REMINANTS OF FORT FRONTENAC**
(Photograph by Author)
- 29 **FIGURE 7 | HURON-WENDAT BAND COUNCIL IN CEREMONIAL DRESS AT WENDAKE**
(Conseil de la Nation Huronne-Wendat Archives, 1895)
- 31 **FIGURE 8 | CHIEFS OF THE SIX NATIONS AT BRANTFORD**
(Library and Archives Canada, 1871)
- 33 **FIGURE 9 | MICHİ SAAGIIG NISHNAABE (MISSISSAUGA OJIBWE) MEN GATHERING WILD RICE**
(Library and Archives Canada, 1921)
- 35 **FIGURE 10 | COMPTE FRONTENAC AND RENE-ROBERT CAVELIER DE LA SALLE MEET IROQUOIAN AT FORT FRONTENAC**
(Cataraqui Archeological Research Foundation, 1673)
- 37 **FIGURE 11 | ENGAGEMENT IN THE THOUSAND ISLANDS**
(Library and Archives Canada, 1840)

CHAPTER 3

- 40 **FIGURE 12 | HAUDENOSAUNEE LANDS**
(Map by author)
Geological Society of America, *Geological Map of North America* (United States Geological Society, 2005) Geospatial File.
John Wesley Powell, Map of Linguistic Stocks of American Indians (Smithsonian Institution, 1890) Map
EliW, *Hodinohso:ni Land*, (ESRI ArcGIS, 2021) Shapefile
- 43 **FIGURE 13 | THE ORIGINAL FIVE NATIONS OF THE HAUDENOSAUNEE CONFEDERACY**
(diagram by author)
GSA, *Geological Map of North America*, 2005.
EliW, *Hodinohso:ni Land*, 2021
National Museum of the American Indian, *Haudenosaunee Guide for Educators* (Smithsonian Institution, 2009).
- 46 **FIGURE 14 | THE GRAND COUNCIL**
(Diagram by author)
- 55 **FIGURE 15 | GREAT LAW OF PEACE**
(Diagram by author)
- 57 **FIGURE 16 | THE SEVENTH GENERATION PRINCIPLE**
(Diagram by author)
- 59 **FIGURE 17 | THE TRADITIONAL LANDS OF IROQUOIAN AND ANISHNAABEG NATIONS**
(Map by Author)
GSA, *Geological Map of North America*, 2005.
Powell, *Map of Linguistic Stocks of American Indians*, 1890.

CHAPTER 4

- 66** **FIGURE 18** | HISTORIC TREATIES OF CANADA
(Map by author)
GSA, *Geological Map of North America*, 2005.
Indigenous Services Canada, *Historic Treaties* (Government of Canada, 2022) Map.
- 69** **FIGURE 19** | CEDED LANDS OF NORTH AMERICA
(Map by author)
Charles O' Paullin, "Indian Cessions 1750-1890" in *Atlas of the Historical Geography of the United States*, (Washington: Carnegie Institution of Washington and American Geographical Society of New York, 1932), 235.
GSA, *Geological Map of North America*, 2005.
- 70** **FIGURE 20** | A CENTURY OF CESSIONS
(Diagram by author)
Paullin, "Indian Cessions 1750-1890," 235.
GSA, *Geological Map of North America*, 2005.
- 75** **FIGURE 21** | HIAWATHA BELT SYMBOLOGY
(Diagram by author)
NMAI, *Haudenosaunee Guide for Educators*, 7
- 78** **FIGURE 22** | SETTLEMENT LANDS OF IROQUOIAN LANGUAGE SPEAKING GROUPS
(Map by author)
Jennifer Birch, "Relations de pouvoir et de production au sein des communautés ancestrales Wendat" *Palethnologie* 8 (2016): 36.
GSA, *Geological Map of North America*, 2005.
EliW, *Hodinohso:ni Land*, 2021.
- 79** **FIGURE 23** | THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE ST. LAWRENCE IROQUOIS
(Diagram by author)
Birch, "Relations de Pouvoir" 36.
GSA, *Geological Map of North America*, 2005.
EliW, *Hodinohso:ni Land*, 2021.
- 81** **FIGURE 24** | TRIBAL LANDS 1768
(Map by author)
Miklos Pinther, "Indian Villages and Tribal Distribution Circa 1768" in *Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History* (University of Oklahoma Press, 1987) Map.
GSA, *Geological Map of North America*, 2005.
- 83** **FIGURE 25** | CATHCART TOWER ON CEDER ISLAND
(Photograph by author)
- 87** **FIGURE 26** | MAP OF THE CRAWFORD PURCHASE
(Library and Archives Canada, 1798)

CHAPTER 5

- 92** **FIGURE 27** | BOAT MOORED ON WOLFE ISLAND SHORELINE
(Photograph by author)
- 95** **FIGURE 28** | THOUSAND ISLANDS NATIONAL PARK TRAIL
(Photograph by author)
- 97** **FIGURE 29** | THOUSAND ISLANDS NATIONAL PARK TRAIL MEETS WATER'S
EDGE
(Photograph by author)
- 99** **FIGURE 30** | WOLFE ISLAND COMMUNAL CANNAL DOCK
(Photograph by author)
- 106** **FIGURE 31** | HOTEL WOLFE ISLAND
(Photograph by author)
- 108** **FIGURE 32** | KINGSTON WATERFRONT HOTELS
(Diagram by author)
- 110** **FIGURE 33** | VIEW OF THE PRINCE GEORGE HOTEL AND FOUR POINTS BY
SHERATON FROM THE WATER
(Image by author)
- 111** **FIGURE 34** | HOLIDAY INN FACING 'KINGSTON 1000 ISLANDS CRUISES DOCK
(Image by author)
- 112** **FIGURE 35** | KINGSTON WATERFRONT MARINA AND 1000 ISLANDS CRUISE
DOCKS
(Photograph by author)
- 114** **FIGURE 36** | WOLFE ISLAND FERRY
(Photograph by author)
- 115** **FIGURE 37** | WOLFE ISLAND FERRY DOCK SCHEDULE AT DAWSON'S POINT
(Photograph by author)
- 116** **FIGURE 38** | CONSTRUCTION WOLFE ISLAND FERRY DOCK IN KINGSTON
(Photograph by author)
- 117** **FIGURE 39** | CONSTRUCTION SIGNAGE AT MARYSVILLE FERRY DOCK ON
WOLFE ISLAND
(Photograph by author)
- 118** **FIGURE 40** | HOWE ISLAND FERRY DOCK IN KINGSTON
(Photograph by author)
- 119** **FIGURE 41** | WOLFE ISLAND FERRY DOCK AT DAWSON'S POINT
(Photograph by author)
- 120** **FIGURE 42** | CANOES ON PUBLIC BOAT LAUNCH IN KINGSTON
(Photograph by author)
- 121** **FIGURE 43** | AHOY BOAT RENTALS IN KINGSTON
(Photograph by author)
- 122** **FIGURE 44** | WOLFE ISLAND BOAT CLUB
(Photograph by author)
- 123** **FIGURE 45** | SPEED BOAT
(Photograph by author)
- 124** **FIGURE 46** | DECK BOAT
(Photograph by author)
- 125** **FIGURE 47** | SAILBOAT
(Photograph by author)
- 126** **FIGURE 48** | AGRICULTURAL LAND ON WOLFE ISLAND
(Photograph by author)
- 127** **FIGURE 49** | WOLFE ISLAND LIVESTOCK
(Photograph by author)
- 128** **FIGURE 50** | WOLFE ISLAND AGRICULTURAL LAND WITH WINDTURBINES IN
BACKGROUND
(Photograph by author)
- 129** **FIGURE 51** | HORSE GRAZING ON WOLFE ISLAND FARM
(Photograph by author)
- 130** **FIGURE 52** | WOLFE ISLAND FARM WITH GRAIN SILOS IN VIEW
(Photograph by author)
- 131** **FIGURE 53** | TYPICAL WOLFE ISLAND RESIDENCES IN MARYSVILLE
(Photograph by author)
- 132** **FIGURE 54** | TYPICAL RESIDENCE OUTSIDE OF MARYSVILLE
(Photograph by author)
- 133** **FIGURE 55** | WOLFE ISLAND HOME IN MARYSVILLE NEXT TO MARINA
(Photograph by author)

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- 134** **FIGURE 56** | VIEW OF HOWE ISLAND HOMES FROM GRASS CREEK PARK IN KINGSTON
(Photograph by author)
- 135** **FIGURE 57** | WOLFE ISLAND HOMES FROM THE WATER
(Photograph by author)
- 136** **FIGURE 58** | TYPICAL SMALL SCALE THOUSAND ISLANDS COTTAGES
(Image by author)
- 137** **FIGURE 59** | THOUSAND ISLANDS COTTAGE
(Photograph by author)
- 138** **FIGURE 60** | NAPOLEONS HAT COTTAGE
(Photograph by author)
- 139** **FIGURE 61** | VICTORIAN COTTAGE
(Photograph by author)
- 140** **FIGURE 62** | WATERFRONT MANSION UNDER CONSTRUCTION
(Photograph by author)
- 141** **FIGURE 63** | EXAMPLE OF WATERFRONT MANSION FACING THE ISLANDS FROM THE MAINLAND
(Photograph by author)
- 142** **FIGURE 64** | WATERFRONT MANSION WITH INTEGRATED BOAT HOUSE
(Photograph by author)
- 143** **FIGURE 65** | WATERFRONT MANSION CLOSE UP
(Photograph by author)

CHAPTER 6

- 146** **FIGURE 66** | THOUSAND ISLANDS NATIONAL PARK TRAIL MEETS ST. LAWRENCE RIVER
(Photograph by author)
- 150** **FIGURE 67** | THE STATE OF WHOLENESS
(Diagram by author)
- 151** **FIGURE 68** | THE STATE OF GOOD RELATIONSHIPS
(Diagram by author)

- 152** **FIGURE 69** | PAIRINGS OF THE GRAND COUNCIL
(Diagram by author)
- 153** **FIGURE 70** | PAIRINGS OF REGIONAL ACTORS
(Diagram by author)
- 154** **FIGURE 71** | BECOMING OF ONE MIND
(Diagram by author)
- 174** **FIGURE 72** | MANIDOO OGITIGAN PATH
(Photograph by author)
- 175** **FIGURE 73** | MOTHER OF AUTHOR IN MANIDOO OGITIGAN “SPIRIT GARDEN” BY TERENCE RADFORD
(Photograph by author)
- 176** **FIGURE 74** | MANIDOO OGITIGAN “SPIRIT GARDEN” PLAN (NTS)
(Diagrammatic plan by author)
Terence Raford, *Alderville First Nation Commemorative Art Piece, Kingston*, (Trophic Design, 2021) Landscape Art.

CHAPTER 7

- 182** **FIGURE 75** | CENTRAL AREA OF MANIDOO OGITIGAN “SPIRIT GARDEN”
(Photograph by author)
- 192** **FIGURE 76** | MANIDOO OGITIGAN “SPIRIT GARDEN” PLAN CLOSE UP (NTS)
(Diagram by author)
Terence Raford, *Alderville First Nation Commemorative Art Piece*, 2021.
- 193** **FIGURE 77** | MANIDOO OGITIGAN “SPIRIT GARDEN” PLAN WITH OVERLAY OF REGIONAL ACTORS
(Diagram by author)
Terence Raford, *Alderville First Nation Commemorative Art Piece*, 2021



FIGURE 1 | INDIANA ISLAND



1 This thesis aims to create an overall framework for the sustainable stewardship and development of Canada's Thousand Islands Region by creating a path for coexistence and reciprocity among all of its actors moving forward. Specifically, as a thesis focus, it seeks to integrate elements of local Haudenosaunee tradition such as the Great Law, and other Indigenous land philosophies in order to aid and reform the current local, regional, and even international approach to conservation, future development and inhabitation. In this way, long outstanding and broad issues of exclusion, right to the land, and ecological preservation may be addressed in a respectful and gentle manner to both the land and its inhabitants, and informing the way people live, build, and cultivate on the site.

With its emphasis on the Indigenous role in building community purpose, this work proposes a conceptual re-occupation of the Thousand Islands to inform a more collective vision of future development, and create a framework for interaction between the different actors in the Thousand Islands, much as the original Peacemaker brought agreement and unity of purpose to disparate nations. A land trust is already modestly and quasi informally in the works in the Region, and with a minor unrealized purpose. An Indigenous presence, as a group the most long standing actors in the Region's history, may assist in expanding the trust and bridging the gaps between all of the region's actors.

This thesis begins with the selection of a site, an archipelago that offers a multitude of ideas and challenges to be explored. As land is procured and purchased, the expectations and ideals of the owners often result in each island becoming its own microcosm of expression. Resulting in a variety of architectural typologies and use of each island or lot, (upon larger islands). In the Region today, the largest islands, Howe and Wolfe house residential and agricultural communities, while the smaller islands mainly house seasonal cottages, and docks or boathouses. It is apparent that the cottaging and tourism industries have resulted in the islands becoming increasingly busy and oversaturated with yacht clubs and other amenities to cater to affluent crowds. Access to the land is becoming increasingly limited predominantly to the continuation of a centuries' privilege for settler society. Increased urban development threatens an already fragile island and shoreline ecosystem which has been prone to flooding in recent years, as development has hardened the river valley and its banks. Countering this tendency, there has been a push toward implementing more environmentally sustainable land practices in hopes of preserving the land and watershed.

The Thousand Islands is an archipelago in the St Lawrence River at the point where the river leaves the Great Lakes and becomes its own waterway, a place which also straddles the national border between Canada and the United States of America. One

FIGURE 2 | WATERFRONT MANSIONS FACING THE ISLANDS



of the earliest places settled by Europeans in Canada, it has a significant historical and present day culture of farming, recreation, conservation and celebration. Its vibrant active culture often overshadows a deeper past of conflict; initially between its First Nations, later on between the First Nations and the waves of European colonizers, French, English and Dutch, and finally between the settler nations. From treaties between nations with unclear terms, to pressured land transfers, to questionable land claims, it is apparent that the Islands at present, and seen from the viewpoint of its first peoples, are in a state of occupation by layers of settler societies, a several hundreds year old situation typical of the Americas as a whole. In recent years, the political and economic discourse pressing back against that untrammled settler occupation, surrounding “the right to the land” in North America has resulted in considerations of returning the land to the first peoples who have resided upon it since “time immemorial”, in their words. The Thousand Islands themselves, despite a complete assimilation by European and later American colonizing cultures, still boast a rich local Indigenous First Nations history. Currently, that Indigenous presence is minimal with limited visibility. Early European traders, and then settlers, confronted the St. Lawrence Iroquoians along the St. Lawrence River. Historically the Islands have been home, over their longer and much earlier history, to different nations such as the Haudenosaunee, and Mississauga, all long before European contact of the Basques, French, and English. At present the nations of Canada and the United States of America lay claim to the Islands.

Agriculture has traditionally been and remains a major economic driver in the region, not only on the islands but in the St. Lawrence River valley as a whole. The preservation and protection of the natural landscape has been a primary concern for both long term settler residents as well as short-term visiting tourists for over a century. This motivation stems from the intersection of farming and nature, combined with an expanding cottage and marina based tourism industry in the islands. Conservation authorities, both international and local, have a longstanding aim to keep the landscape in a pristine and curated condition for shared use

FIGURE 3 | CALF ON WOLFE ISLAND FARM



by all. Cottagers, that have built idyllic island and coastline getaways, desire a beautiful natural view along with peace, quiet, and privacy. These semi-permanent residents have always had easy access to public park land and waterways, by both road and boat. Unfortunately, the high costs of upkeep and maintenance of these private cottage islands of old wealth has resulted in the oldest of these cottages falling into disrepair, or being sold for substantial profit to newer wealth. The larger islands, Wolfe and Howe, house old historical agricultural communities intermixed with the more affluent cottager and retired residents whose focus is more on desiring waterfront properties. Regular ferry services connect both islands to the mainland and are considered to be a part of the Ontario Provincial Highway Network.

Along the St. Lawrence and its shore and island riverbanks an interesting mix of lots can be seen, some house mansions and boathouses, while others house old barns and farmhouses. The tourism and hospitality industry helps stimulate the local farming economy. Local hotels, bed and breakfasts, and cottages quickly book up in the summer months. Tourists book boat tours of the picturesque landscape, either on larger cruises, or on a more intimate scale by renting canoes and kayaks. Opportunities to tour farms and interact with livestock or pick produce are also available. Several islands are owned by the Thousand Islands National Park and are accessible to the public, housing campsites. In order to preserve the landscape's natural charms, the minimum setbacks in place make it nearly impossible to build new structures on the smaller islands. Waterfront properties along the shore have strict building requirements as well.

Despite this initial conservative impulse to preserve a status quo and restrict development, in recent years such new building restrictions are becoming selectively more lax, and profitable condo developments are being proposed and approved, often replacing agricultural properties. In a larger more broadly based urbanizing transformation, speeding up over the post WW2 decades, more and more of the shoreline has been eaten up by suburban developments and mansions. Some landowners, especially those with generational presence and uncertainty of future prospects for their island or shoreline, faced with encroachment of expanding urban transformation, and are beginning to donate their land to the Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust; an

organization that partners with local conservation authorities, and promising that their lands will be preserved and taken care of *forever*. At first glance, the land trust appears to act as a redundant conservation effort at work on the site. This inspired more research into ideas related to land stewardship, the commons, and the philosophical history of land.

At present, several agencies actively govern the landscape at varying scales of dominion, ranging from small grassroots initiatives to branches of federal government. Actors such as *Parks Canada*, *The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne* are at work as well as municipalities such as the *Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands*, and the *City of Gananoque*. Both of which have regional authority offering zoning bylaws and overseeing construction within the islands and along the shoreline. In some cases, large waterfront developments which contradict zoning regulations are constructed for profit. Conflicting ideals for the future of the Thousand Islands region has resulted in several community organizations to form in decades past. These include the *Thousand Islands Area Residents Association*, which aims to keep a watchful eye on development in hopes of maintaining the regions charms. The *1000 Islands International Tourism Council* works to promote tourism to the region, *The Thousand Islands National Park* and *Thousand islands Watershed Land Trust* both of which act as conservational authorities, and finally the *Lansdowne Agricultural Society* works to connect farmers to the community at large. Each organization has its goals and objectives, which may negatively impact the goals and objectives of others.

In recent years there has been a push to acknowledge earlier nations that inhabited Turtle Island, as North America is known to its First Nations. The Indigenous people of the Thousand Islands Region have a long history of presence stretching thousands of years into the past. Land acknowledgments are being given today in social and cultural institutions like museums, universities and centres for the performing arts, before formal addresses and public events. Historical narratives that have been suppressed by a colonizing Eurocentric historiography are coming to the forefront. There is a strong push to re-examine the relationships between Indigenous nations and councils and the bodies that govern the lands today. The discourse surrounding the treatment of Indigenous people in the past has been a pressing issue at the national level over the past decade. Since 2007,

Parks Canada has sought to build a relationship with the *Mohawk Council of Akwesasne*, a community whose land is dissected by the Canadian-American border as well as the Canadian provinces of Ontario and Quebec. *The Thousand Islands National Park Management Plan* released in May 2022, identifies the several goals and milestones that seek to strengthen the relationship between the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne and the National Park. This plan and its objectives are extremely well intentioned, however, the goals identified are quite vague.

The alignment of governing bodies with key social justice causes can often be a means of gaining political power regionally. In the case of large corporations, this alignment can be a means of increasing the customer base. In recent years *Indigenous Allyship* has turned into one of these causes. Institutions are beginning to instate policies that seek to rectify the injustices that occurred historically in ways that do little to patch generational wounds. In many cases there is good intent behind these policies, however incorporating land acknowledgments in presentations or in email signatures does little to solve the real problems that plague Indigenous communities today. Problems such as, the over representation of Indigenous people in the prison system, experiencing homelessness, or in missing persons database; as well as access to clean land and water free of harmful pollutants, or services such as running water or electricity, that many Canadians take for granted. Many of these problems may be better understood and addressed by giving Indigenous people along with local residents a seat at the table in informing policies at both the national and regional levels.

Governing bodies and other agencies may be better informed by analyzing the history of land ownership and active actors in the region, as well as the political foundations of the Indigenous societies that once governed the land. In many ways looking back can be seen as a beneficial means of informing the way the actors in the region could address problems moving forward. The

FIGURE 4 | EXAMPLE OF CORPORATE ALLYSHIP

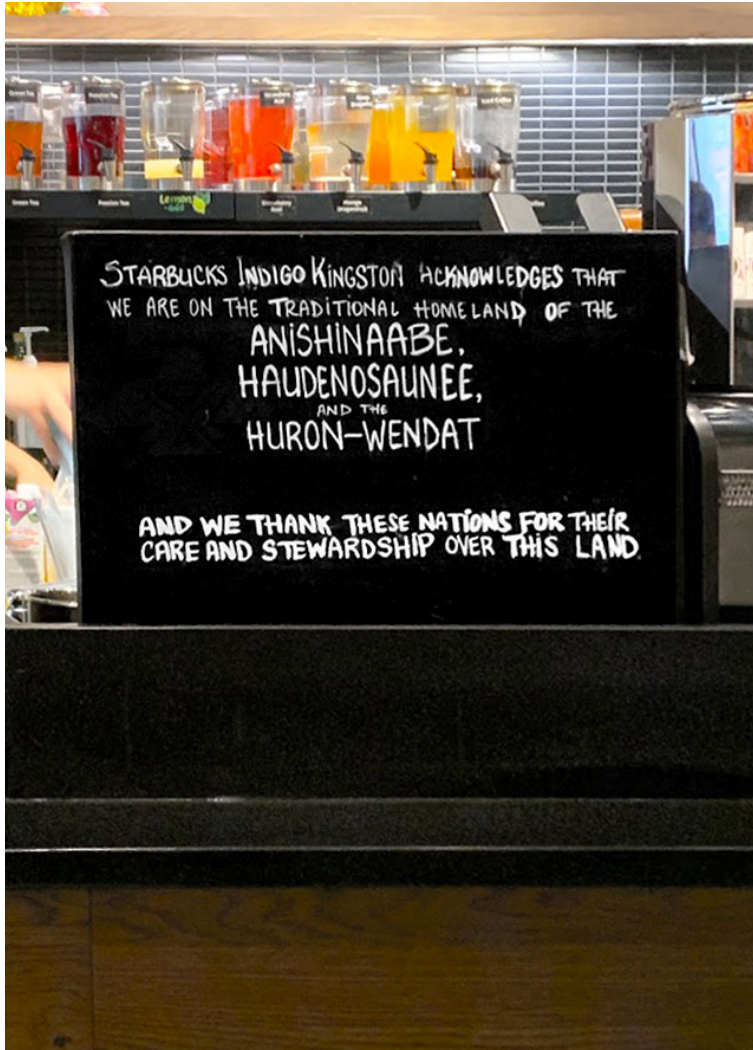


FIGURE 5 | WOLFE ISLAND WELCOME SIGN



relationship between historical actors and the landscape has changed over the centuries. This thesis considers how aspects of the Great Law of Peace can inform the means by which local actors develop the land, and inform the relationships between actors in the region. By considering forms of governance that are themselves Indigenous to the region, new methods for evaluation of future plans and solutions may be found for common problems. The Grand Council of the Haudenosaunee, as outlined in the constitution of the Peacemaker, offers a method by which large groups of people may come together and reach consensus on a given problem. Historically used between the nations of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, these methods may be applied to the governing actors in the region today. Which offers an alternative to the present state of governance that is resulting in dis-unity.

Ideas and frameworks found in diverse civilizations surrounding land ownership, stewardship, and segmentation are by no means universally agreed upon. The moral and ethical philosophies and ideologies that govern the way people view land and their broader collective and individual responsibilities to it, also differ greatly between nations, which has historically affected the relationships between them. Many early treaties between the Indigenous nations and the two or three long term settler nations of the Thousand Islands Region, the French, the British, and the later Americans, are all primarily based on European concepts of the privatization and commodification of land, despite a parallel and accompanying legal framework of a shared collective use, stewardship, and responsibility which serves to mitigate the strong primary privatizing impulse. This is a common pattern throughout the United States and Canada, and has had a heavy hand in the way land has been segmented, occupied, and cared for in the Islands today.

As Indigenous presence shrank over the centuries of contact, the traditional knowledge of the earlier pre-European nations became less accessible. More specifically, the potentially useful philosophies of the Great Law of Peace disappeared from the land discourse. The pre-settlement Haudenosaunee figure of the Peacemaker who, before European contact, brought the Great Law to feuding Indigenous nations in the St. Lawrence Region and the traditional lands of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, disappeared into Indigenous lore and myth, a story not accessible and useful to the colonial institutions of the 19th and 20th centuries. This

message of the Great Law of Peace, with a deep history in the local landscape, and which managed to bring together feuding nations, has the potential, in the early 21st century, to aid in informing modern land and development choices and policy in the region today. Each of the major actors in the Islands today has significant presence and will heavily influence the future of the landscape. Although the tension between these actors may not have the same severity of warring tribes or nations, each desires to develop the Islands in conflicting ways, and such conflicts need resolution.

Returning to the thesis description, this thesis considers a reconsideration of the future development of the Thousand Islands Indigenous and inform a more collective vision of that future development. It seeks to create a framework for interaction between the shifting actors in the Thousand Islands, much as the original Peacemaker brought agreement and unity of purpose to disparate pre-European Indigenous nations. This thesis is divided into two major parts; the first of which considers the history and philosophy of the land, and the second of which considers the present state of affairs and application of Indigenous philosophy.

THESIS STRUCTURE

This thesis begins with an overview of important sources and research materials pertaining to the history of the site, including archival maps and treaty documentation. It considers two broad lenses; one of western scholarship, and the growing wealth of Indigenous academic material. Sources relating to land philosophy and stewardship were important to analysing the relationships between current governing actors. Mapping became another key interest as a means of understanding historical perceptions of land and documenting land transfer. Examining materials relating to divergent thought surrounding political and philosophical aspects of property and conservation aided in understanding differing conceptions of treaties and covenants between nations. This section also considers materials relating to development, such as conservation management plans and regional zoning bylaws.

The text goes on to introduce the historical inhabitation of the Thousand Islands, outlining the national actors which have a history in the region; the Wendat, Six Nations Haudnesaunee, Mississauga, French, and English. The chapter essentially familiarizes the reader with each national actor and gives a broad introduction to the impacts of each nation's occupation.

The following chapter, *The Political Philosophy of the Peacemaker and Land Management Philosophies* further details the political and legal structures of the Haudnesaunee confederacy. The chapter introduces the legendary figure of the Peacemaker, and the original constitution brought forth to the Haudnesaunee. It introduces aspects of a legal system, referred to as the Great Law of Peace. The chapter introduces the traditional Grand Council's structure, and the three foundation principles of the Great Law of Peace; peace, power and righteousness. The chapter continues to discuss the dish with one spoon covenant, and its use in fortifying relationships between nations. This segment of the text continues to compare elements of Haudnesaunee land practices and philosophies with traditionally European models.

Land Transfer and Ownership with a focus on Treaties and Ceded Lands introduces the historical treaties of North America with a special focus on the treaties of the St. Lawrence River Valley; the Crawford Purchase and the Treaty of Fort Stanwix. The chapter showcases maps of the historical treaties of Canada, and land cessions of North America. It also introduces philosophical ideas pertaining to boundaries, treaties, and covenants between nations. Contrast in ideas of what constitutes land ownership and what exactly is traded or agreed upon in the case of treaties and covenants between nations is also examined. The chapter details the historical conflicts that took place on the land of the Thousand Islands and the relationship between said conflicts and the treaties which followed.

The Present Situation: Regional Conservation, Economics, and Access to the Land, details the present state of land use and management in the Islands. The chapter discusses conservation and its relationship to access and stewardship. It continues to consider the importance of mutual responsibility in conjunction with access. Continuing to discuss the prominence of the tourism industry, access to housing and the economic conditions of the site. The chapter concludes with a photographic study which documents the present state of the land. Photographs documenting the hospitality and agricultural industries, transportation, land use, and vernacular architecture are included to provide the reader a thorough visual presentation of the Thousand Islands at present.

Application of the Great Law of Peace in Regional Governance documents the major actors in governance in the Thousand Islands region at varying scales, and their goals and ambitions for the site. The chapter analyses the relationships between eight major actors by pairing them in a similar manner to the pairings of the grand council. This section considers the overlapping interests of different governing actors, and the relationships between them. The chapter considers the overlap in objectives between certain actors, and conflict between others.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A CURSORY LOOK AT PREHISTORY AND INDIGENOUS SETTLER RELATIONS

This project began with research into the historical context of the site through two lenses, one of the European settlers, the other of the Indigenous nations that preceded them. The distinct formation of the landscape lent itself to human interest and fascination for millennia. The Islands, are a flooded condition of a prehistoric mountain range, carved out by receding glaciers of the last ice age. The unique landscape is referred to as the *Garden of the Great Spirit*, or *Manituana* in the Indigenous creation story. The story has been preserved orally, passed on generationally. A rendition can be found in Wu Ming's text *Manituana*.¹ Several academic papers on the topic of archaeology provided information on the early inhabitation of the region by Indigenous people. *Prehistory of the St. Lawrence River Headwaters Region*² by Timothy J Abel and David N Fuerst, *Precontact Iroquoian Occupation of Southern Ontario*³ by Gary Warrick, and *Relations of Power and Production in Ancestral Wendat Communities*⁴ by Jennifer Birch, each provided information relating to the historical migration and occupation of the lands pre-settler contact. The text *History of Leeds and Grenville*⁵ by Thad W.H. Leavitt offers an in-depth settler history of the county and the Thousand Islands. The text offers portraits and biographies of early settlers to the region, descriptions of the formation of each township, and institutions built between 1749 and 1879. The text glorified prominent men and the institutions they established with rare comments of Indigenous inhabitants with negative connotations. *A Fair Country*⁶ by John Ralston Saul considered Indigenous and settler allyship in the development of Canada as a nation offering an alternative to the historical texts that so often dismiss the involvement and influence of Indigenous leadership in the formation of this nation. A master's thesis titled *Carleton Island 1778-1783: Imperial Outpost during the American Revolutionary War*⁷ by Sarah Kathrine Gibson showed examples of heavy interaction between natives and settlers to the Thousand Islands on Carleton Island the site of Fort Haldimand.

MAPPING

Initial archival searches relating to the Thousand Islands Region in the National Archive at Library and Archives Canada as well as the Library of Congress database found largely scenic imagery and *maps*. The earliest maps of the region came from the expeditions of early French explorers. Mapping became a key area of interest for this thesis as maps display an accurate depiction of the way in which land is perceived by those who produce them. Historical maps and atlases from a variety of scales depict the relationship between the land and the people who live upon it. Jean Deshayes hydrological map⁸ depicts the longitudinal and latitudinal coordinates of the St. Lawrence River through triangulation of astronomical bodies. Deshayes precision and accuracy resulted in a detailed map that functioned as the basis for military and commercial maps reprinted into the 18th century. The French monarchy used these highly detailed maps as the basis for segmenting and granting parcels of land to their French subjects in the colonies. Maps which depicted the presence of Indigenous nations, villages, as well as the trading posts that acted as points of commercial connection between the nations, were important to the early commercial success of the region. In contrast, maps have also been used as a means of division. Several archival maps depict the boundaries of treaties and cessions across North America, a hot point of contention at present. The detailed mapping and precise measure of land segmentation and parcels is included as reference to the treaties signed between Indigenous leaders and settlers can be found in the archival databases previously mentioned.

Government organizations such as the predecessors to The United States' *Department of the Interior*, and Government of Canada's *Department of Indigenous and Northern Affairs* both produced hundreds of maps detailing the state of Indigenous people across the continent. The *Bureau of American Ethnology* was formed for express purpose of transferring the information and records relating to Indigenous people from the Department of the Interior to the Smithsonian Institution. This organization then produced an annual anthropological report pertaining to the study of Indigenous people and culture.⁹ Maps published in such reports depict populations of different indigenous tribes, ceded and unceded territories, linguistic routes, etc. The department of Indigenous and Northern Affairs in Canada has also produced similar maps.¹⁰

The base maps for this thesis were produced through resources which compiled analytical data as a means of grounding the concepts of the thesis to the site. Presently, open data can be found through the Government of Canada's *Open Government Portal*, through which online interactive mapping tools can be found as well as static archival maps, and geospatial data sets. Public geospatial files such as the *Geologic Map of North America*¹¹ provided relevant geological and hydrological data aiding in the production of a base map. The shapefiles which depicted all significant geological details of the region, allowed for the development of several maps throughout the thesis. Geospatial files from ESRI's online databases, the *Open Government Portal* (Canada), the *New York State Department of State* were all examined. These databases compiled both historical and contemporary data used in the production of maps throughout the thesis.

In his text *The Agency of Mapping: Speculation, Critique and Invention*, James Corner discusses the concept of mapping as a creative practice rather than a process of accumulating data. Corner differentiates between the concept of mapping and retracing redundancies. He discusses the historical use of maps as analytical surveys used as bases for plotting or procuring power, the maps becoming idealized strategies. He states "Map devices, such as frame, scale, orientation, projection, indexing and naming, reveal artificial geographies that remain unavailable to human eyes. Maps present only one version of the earth's surface, an eidetic fiction constructed from factual observation."¹² He continues to argue the efficacy of reapplying this concept to use mapping as process for reinvention, and a creative means of understanding spatial and cultural values. With its potential to aid in the development of critical arguments "to embed it within the dominant practices of a rational culture, and ultimately to turn those practices towards more productive and collective ends"¹³. It is through mapping that found data and prior research can be analysed as a means of addressing concepts relating to Indigenous history, treaties, land use, and conservation.

POLITICS, PROPERTY AND PHILOSOPHY

Two major texts were referenced in understanding the Great Law of Peace and the governmental structure of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy wholistically. *The Constitution of the Five Nations*,¹⁴ was written in 1916 by archaeologist and historian Arthur C. Parker, who translates historical manuscripts of the Haudenosaunee constitution into English becoming a foundational academic resource for English speakers on the governmental system of the Haudenosaunee. The text includes a translation of the Constitution, the legend of the peacemaker, and other records of the Haudenosaunee. Parker's text offers a more cursory overview of the text, acting to document a primary source. The second major text *Kayanerenkó:wa: The Great Law of Peace*¹⁵, authored by Kayanesenh Paul Williams, thoroughly documents and breaks down each principle and concept addressed by the Great Law as well as important aspects of traditional Haudenosaunee culture and philosophy. The constitution of the Haudenosaunee is subjected to a thorough analysis in this texts, which provides a detailed commentary. By an author who has extensive experience in Indigenous leadership and counsel spanning several decades, bringing a wealth of insight to the subject matter. A master's thesis, titled *International Law/ The Great Law of Peace*¹⁶ by Beverley Jacobs aided in understanding the Great Law as a legal system and its contrast to European legal systems.

Gregory Cajete's *Native Science: Natural Laws of Interdependence*¹⁷, explores Indigenous sciences and philosophical knowledge, considering science to be a form of experiential philosophy. Contrary to western science, Cajete's text relies heavily on perception of the natural world over empirical measure. Human sensorial experiences are the bases upon which biological, ecological, and phenomenological paradigms are described. Ideas of relating to traditional ecological knowledge, sustainability, and stewardship in this thesis were used in contrasting humanistic natural law common in the political philosophies of western philosophers.

Texts such as Locke's *Second Treatise of Government*¹⁸, Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan*¹⁹, and Rousseau's texts *Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality among Men*²⁰ and *On the Social Contract*²¹ all aided in cementing the origins of property and governance from the perspective of European colonials and settlers, informing the foundations of regional governance. A more contemporary text *The Book of Trespass: Crossing the Lines that Divide Us*²² by Nick Hayes documents the author's journey trespassing on private properties across the English countryside. The author breaks down ideas relating to the nature of access, boundaries, and property rights, considering the philosophical routes of property in Europe from notable philosophers such as Locke, Rousseau, and Hobbes. Illustrations throughout Hayes' text offer readers a glimpse of the lands shut away and walled off to the general public. The text considers the role of private property as a barrier to access. Showing examples of large swaths of land in the ownership of private corporations or British nobility. This text was formative in considering the use and role of conservation as a means of providing access, and the legitimacy of one of the newest governing actors in the Islands, the Land Trusts, which at a cursory view appear to be redundant conservational initiatives.

CONSERVATION

William Cronon's *The Trouble with Wilderness*²³ is an article which examines conservation and its utility in American culture. The text considers the notion of wilderness and the historical perception of wilderness shifting from an inhospitable, dirty, and uncivilized landscape, to a romantic and pure getaway from city grime. Cronon goes on to describe the curation and care required to maintain these idyllic landscapes. Further describing how national parks act as a beacon for a natural way of life for privileged city folk offering an *experience* for those who have lost touch with their landscapes in overbuilt urban centers. The parks act as a service for those living in the city with the resources to take time off from their lives to escape, with little service to others such as people who live in the countryside working the land for their livelihood, or lower income

urbanites. In another article *Bounding the Land*²⁴, Cronon explores the history of the New England Landscape challenging the perception that the Indigenous nations which occupied the eastern United States had done little to curate and conserve the lands. A landscape which seemed untouched outside of Indigenous settlements to European settlers, had been curated and maintained in subtle ways which honoured the natural landscape. Subtle stewardship of land between villages, and across hunting territories was evident. Both texts considered the means by which ecological landscapes are transformed and maintained by humans in an ongoing stewardship of the land. Each of Cronon's texts examine the conservation of the North American Landscape, one by the settler nation of the United States, and the other by the Indigenous inhabitants of New England. Each text considers mechanisms of conservation which often go unnoticed. The unrecognized Indigenous stewardship of the lands across North America beyond the limits of villages, resulted in early land acquisitions and cessions by the American colonials.

Parks Canada produced a series of seven short publications as part of a collection titled *Island Insights* in 1976 as informational material on the Thousand Islands National Park. These publications described the historical, geological, and ecological nature of the Thousand Islands. The fourth publication by Susan W. Smith was titled *A History of Recreation in the 1000 Islands*²⁵ described transportation, hotels, resorts, and camps found in the region. The fifth, *The Thousand Islands 1650-1850 A Study in Exploration, Settlement, and Development*²⁶ by Brian S Osborne offered an introductory history of European settlement of the land of the St. Lawrence River Valley including the islands. The seventh publication, *Conflicts and Social Notes, 1000 Islands: The War of 1812-1814, The Patriot War, 1837-1838*²⁷, by George F.G. Stanley offered a look at historical battles fought on the site. Each text provided a comprehensive summary of the historical context of the lands included in the park, and the surrounding landscape.

NATIONAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNANCE

At a national scale, the reports *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future*²⁸, and *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action*²⁹ authored by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 2015, offered some insight on the concerns, problems, and recommendations in addressing the historical and contemporary issues that impact Indigenous people in Canada. Both reports assisted in framing the authors approach to addressing a thesis which was heavily impacted by Indigenous governance and philosophy.

The Thousand Islands Area Residents Association produced four reports in 1977 detailing the demographics, cultural, economic, and ecological conditions of the Canadian portion of the Thousand Islands. The first offered an introduction to the organization and its intentions to give residents a voice in the development of the region³⁰, the subsequent reports outlined the economic, demographic and ecological context of the site³¹. The reports were intended to inform regional policy moving forward. A more contemporary publication, the *Thousand Islands National Park Management Plan*³² released in May of 2022 provided information related to the future of conservation efforts in the Islands and the intentions of federal policy makers in the region. Zoning bylaws are in effect which guide the limits of developing land in the Islands and along the shorelines by municipalities such as the Township of Gananoque^{33,34} and the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands³⁵.

INDIGENOUS ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIP

The *Conference on Iroquois Research* is an annual conference that seeks to bring together interdisciplinary scholars and researchers to examine the history and traditions of the Six Nations and their influence on the land of New York State and Ontario. The first conference in 1945 aimed at attracting new researchers to a field to further study and research historical, sociopolitical,

and cultural aspects of Haudenosaunee tradition. Since then, the conference has grown and a wealth of published material has made it to the cannon of Indigenous academic scholarship, including *Iroquoia*, a multidisciplinary peer reviewed journal. The conference is attended by native and non-native researchers, acting as a collaborative space for respected elders, artists, and scientists to deepen their understanding of Haudnesaunee thought and tradition, finding new points of research to further explore. The conference is hosted by different Haudnesaunee communities to further strengthen the relationship between and within nations.

The *Algonquin Conference* functions similarly. The first conference was held in Ottawa in 1964 and has been proceeded by an annual forum hosted by different Canadian and American Universities to present scholarly research related to Algonquin culture and history. The proceedings of the first conference were published in 1967 by the national Museum of Canada. Each year the conference publishes the papers presented. Each conference and subsequent published material offer a wealth of knowledge pertaining to Indigenous academic scholarship. These multidisciplinary journals offered endless sources to better understand Indigenous history and cultural practices to better inform the writing of this thesis.

In their paper *Haudenosaunee Environmental Protection Process (HEPP)*³⁶, Brenda. E. LaFrance and James E. Costello further break down the three major principles of the Great Law of Peace; peace, power, and righteousness, into subcategories to assess the health of different actors within an environmental system, referred to as their state of wholeness. The paper continues to assess the relationships between actors through a similar deconstruction of the principles of the Great Law; referred to as the state of relationships. This paper was published as a chapter in the book *Preserving Tradition and Understanding the Past: Papers from the Conference on Iroquois Research* published in 2012.

The text, *A Dish with One Spoon: The Shared Hunting Grounds Agreement in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Valley*³⁷, by Victor P. Lytwin aided in grounding the philosophical concept of the Dish With One Spoon covenant to the site. The paper was presented at the 28th Algonquin Conference in 1997 and explores the historical Dish With One Spoon covenants between the

Haudnesaunee Confederacy and several Anishinaabeg nations including the Algonquin, Ojibwa and Sioux. The paper describes the repeated attempts to keep peace between nations in the St. Lawrence River Valley and Great Lakes basin, and methods of early record keeping and treaties, including the 1701 Great Peace of Montreal. The 2020 paper *Naagan ge bezhig emkwaan: A Dish with One Spoon Reconsidered*³⁸ by Dean M. Jacobs and Victor P. Lytwyn gave aid to understanding the Anishinaabeg perspective of the Dish with One Spoon covenant.

In his 2019 paper, *Indigenous Rights, Collective Responsibilities, and Relationship to Land in Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe "Dish With One Spoon" Territory*³⁹, Allen Brett Campeau considers the impact of the Dish With One Spoon Principle through analysis of the state of relationships between Indigenous Nations, the Crown, and the land. The paper considers the impact of this principle on shared resources, by framing responsibilities and obligations as the key to functional cohesion between groups, as opposed to a focus on individual rights. *Recognizing "Reciprocal Relations" to Restore Community Access to Land and Water*⁴⁰ was published in 2019 in the International Journal of the Commons. The paper explores four case studies of communities where direct access to the land and water improved the overall wellness of the environment. This counters the common misconception that conservation and preservation of the land and waterways is negatively impacted by public access. The paper explores four communities internationally in which access paired with a direct responsibility for care and stewardship resulted in improvements of biodiversity and ecological conditions. Both papers reflect the importance of shared stewardship and responsibility as a necessary part of access to the land.

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FIGURE 6 | REMINANTS OF FORT FRONTENAC



2 AN INTRODUCTION TO THE HISTORICAL ACTORS WITH PRESENCE IN THE ST LAWRENCE RIVER VALLEY

There are a number of actors at work in the region today with differing and sometimes conflicting agendas. The St. Lawrence Iroquoians are believed to have been the earliest inhabitants of the St. Lawrence River Valley. Historically, they occupied the lands around the St. Lawrence River and the northern shores of Lake Ontario. This group had many similarities to other Iroquoian nations such as the Wendat and Haudenosaunee, and were later absorbed into such nations. Today there are no St. Lawrence Iroquoians remaining. This section presents an introduction to the nations which have had a historically significant impact to the region and its native inhabitants.

WENDAT

Although the Wendat did not have a presence in the Thousand Islands, they did interact with the early St. Lawrence Iroquoians and later confronted the Haudnesaunee and Anishinaabe, engaging in conflicts and treaties relevant to ideas discussed in this thesis.¹ Today, Wendat presence can be found in several locations such as the southern shore of Midland Bay in Ontario, near the source of the St. Lawrence River at Wendake near Quebec City, and south of the international border in Kansas and Oklahoma. The Wendat share similar Iroquoian linguistic roots, building, and agricultural practices to the Haudenosaunee of the Six Nations.² Despite these similarities, the Wendat and Six Nations Haudenosaunee have a strong and lengthy adversarial history of conflict. These continuous wars resulted in historical and geographic displacement and forced migration. Throughout the 17th century, after contact with Europeans, the Wendat remained close allies with the French to the east and south, and Anishnabeg First Nations to the west.

Early confrontation between nations that resided in North America were not only physical but philosophical as well. Kandiaronk a great chief of the Wendat Confederacy was a key player in early diplomatic debate and heavily confronted Haudenosaunee thinkers as well as early French Jesuits in debates about who offered the best quality of life. Chief Kandiaronk and other Indigenous thinkers' critiques of European theology and social structures, published in the 17th century Jesuit Relations, and in the writings of the 17th century French diplomat to the First Nations, Baron de Lahontan's *Supplement for the Voyages and Dialogues with the savage Adario* (thought to be Kandiaronk). These sparked significant interest abroad in Europe among the intelligentsia of the Enlightenment and they had a major impact on the Enlightenment social and political discourse surrounding human nature, property and the origins of morality in thinkers like Rousseau and Voltaire. As a diplomat, Kandiaronk was a key figure in the Great Peace of Montreal a treaty between First Nations and European powers that was signed in 1701. He died soon after.³

FIGURE 7 | HURON-WENDAT BAND COUNCIL IN CEREMONIAL DRESS AT WENDAKE



(Conseil de la Nation Huronne-Wendat Archives, 1895)

HAUDENOSAUNEE

The Haudenosaunee, also referred to as the Six Nations by European settlers, is an Indigenous Iroquoian language speaking group that historically came together before European contact to form a confederacy of five distinct nations. These nations, with a long history of conflict came together through the Great Law of the Peacemaker mentioned earlier.⁴ This confederacy was a powerful presence in the Thousand Islands region and beyond to the west. With its consolidated peace, it formed a complex governmental system. The original five nations of the confederacy were the Mohawk (*Kanien'keh:ka*), Oneida (*Onayotekaono*), Onondaga (*Onundagaono*), Cayuga (*Guyohkohnyoh*), and Seneca (*Onondowahgah*). The sixth nation, the Tuscarora (*Skaruhreh*) joined the alliance of the Five Nations in 1722, and since the Confederacy has been referred to as the Six Nations.⁵ The traditional lands of the Haudenosaunee existed south of the St. Lawrence River and Lake Ontario, however there was regular migration to the north to access coveted hunting grounds leading to regular confrontation with their neighbours, the Wendat, and Anishinaabeg nations. For the Haudenosaunee, the Thousand Islands were a regular migration route. At present the two closest Indigenous territories to the Islands belong to the *Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte* and the *Mohawks of Akwesasne*.⁶ Aspects of the political and philosophical systems of the Haudnesaunee will be discussed in more detail in a later chapter.

FIGURE 8 | CHIEFS OF THE SIX NATIONS AT BRANTFORD



(Library and Archives Canada, 1871)

MISSISSAUGA

The Mississauga are an Anishnaabeg Nation whose pre-contact homeland was along the Mississagi River on the north shore of Lake Ontario. They and other Anishnaabeg peoples moved south into southern Ontario at which point they regularly hunted, fished and harvested from the lands of the Thousand Islands. Toward the end of the 17th century Iroquoian nations such as the Haudnesaunee and Wendat were virtually non-existent in the region, and the Thousand Islands as well as land along the northern shores of the St. Lawrence River and Lake Ontario were almost exclusively occupied by the Mississauga.⁷ These territories were eventually purchased from them by European powers, making way for the newly arriving settler nations and their allies. In later history, the predecessor to today's Department of Indigenous and Northern Affairs held many of the Thousand Islands in a trust for the Mississaugas of Alnwick⁸ (now referred to as the Alderville First Nation).⁹ Those lands were sold and made their way into private settler hands throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. Today, despite the land transfers, six Mississauga nations can be found in Ontario; the *Alderville First Nation*, the *Curve Lake First Nation*, the *Hiawatha First Nation*, the *Mississauga First Nation*, the *Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation*, and the *Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation*.¹⁰

FIGURE 9 | MICHİ SAAGIIG NISHNAABE (MISSISSAUGA OJIBWE) MEN GATHERING WILD RICE



(Library and Archives Canada, 1921)

FRENCH

One of the earliest European settlers of the Thousand Islands were the French, venturing upstream on the St. Lawrence River from earlier settlements. With the French, as well as a commercial boom in resource exploitation, came a fascination with documenting the Indigenous landscape and its people. The diaries of French explorers such as Samuel de Champlain describe the region and its picturesque beauty. Early visual depictions of the Thousand Islands region come to us from Jean Dehayes, who conducted a hydrological survey in 1685 by request of King Louis XIV of France.¹¹ At the spiritual forefront of many of these first settlers were Jesuit missionaries, living amongst the Indigenous nations and systematically documenting their anthropological findings. Over time, the missionaries began to learn local languages and engaged in scholarly debate with their Indigenous adversaries and allies. Fort Frontenac was established by Comte de Frontenac and René-Robert Cavalier in Cataraqui (*Ka'tarohkwi*), what is now called Kingston, in 1670 near a Haudenosaunee village, and mainly functioned as a fur trading post.¹² 1758 marked the fall of this great commercial site and two new forts were erected downstream, one near present day Maitland and another on Isle Royale (now Chimney Island). In 1760 both forts fell to the British who were moving up from the lands south of the Great Lakes. Small settlements had accompanied the French forts but, with their fall, French occupation of the region ended. After this point the French regularly allied with the Wendat and Anishinaabeg nations against the British and the Haudenosaunee for competition for the region's resources, especially the lucrative beaver trade. Today Kingston is a bilingual city, and much of the east end is named for early French explorers. The ruins of the foundations of Fort Frontenac remain and is considered an important historical landmark for the region.¹³

FIGURE 10 | COMPTE FRONTENAC AND RENE-ROBERT CAVALIER DE LA SALLE MEET IROQUOINIANS AT FORT FRONTENAC



(Cataqui Archeological Research Foundation, 1673)

ENGLISH

With constant warfare over the regional trade, and the regional collapse of the French militarily, the St. Lawrence Valley had become relatively empty of European settlers between 1760 and 1778 when Fort Carleton, later referred to as Fort Haldimand, was built on Carleton Island by a fleet of British soldiers traveling upstream from newly conquered Montreal. The island had been home to Mississauga hunters and fishers at the time. Fort Haldimand was an important trading post and military base to the expanding English, becoming a significant symbol of British occupation, and allowing for import of British goods.¹⁴ A successful revolution to the south resulted in loss of the American states, and in turn further expansion of trade in the region. Up to 1778, during the American revolutionary war south of the river, heavy traffic to the Island saw British, Irish, German settlers, free and enslaved Africans, United Empire Loyalists escaping the new American state, as well as Mississauga and Haudenosaunee hunters and tradesmen. The multicultural island became one of the most populous areas in the region. Along with budding community on Carleton Island, settler society had predominantly developed along the banks of the St. Lawrence River. During this time, most of the islands still remained populated by Indigenous hunters and fishers.¹⁵

Unlike the French, a significant culture of agricultural expansion in the St. Lawrence Valley came with English occupation. The population along the northern shoreline consisted primarily of Loyalists from the former British colonies of the American east coast. The 19th century which followed, saw a major impact to the physical state of the land, as the new settlers cleared large swaths for agricultural settlements.¹⁶ The shores of the St. Lawrence became home to farming communities, while the islands became a place of relaxation and respite for the upper classes, slowly displacing the Indigenous travelers and hunters over time. The 20th century saw the creation of the Thousand Islands National Park, and since then several conservation efforts have been put forth in hopes of preserving and protecting the natural environment.¹⁷

FIGURE 11 | ENGAGEMENT IN THE THOUSAND ISLANDS



(Library and Archives Canada, 1840)

ENDNOTES

- 1 Timothy J. Abel and David N. Fuerst, "Prehistory of the St. Lawrence River Headwaters Region, *Archaeology of Eastern North America* no. 27 (1999): 6. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40914426>.
- 2 John Steckley, "St. Lawrence Iroquoians among the Wendat: Linguistic Evidence," *Ontario Archaeology* 96 (2016): 24. https://ontarioarchaeology.org/wp-content/uploads/oa096-03_Steckley.pdf.
- 3 David Graeber and David Wengrow, *The Dawn of Everything: A New History of Humanity* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2021), 48-60.
- 4 National Museum of the American Indian, *Haudenosaunee Guide for Educators* (Washington: NMAI, 2009), 2. <https://americanindian.si.edu/nk360/resources/Haudenosaunee-Guide-for-Educators>.
- 5 Ibid, 1.
- 6 Government of Canada, "First Nations Profile Interactive Map," accessed March 22, 2023, <https://geo.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/cipn-fnpim/index-eng.html>.
- 7 Gary Warrick and Ronald F. Williamson, "After the Haudenosaunee: The Mississauga Occupation of the North Shore of Lake Ontario" in *History and Archaeology of the Iroquois du Nord*, ed. Robert von Bitter and Ronald F. Williamson, (Ottawa: Canadian Museum of History and University of Ottawa Press, 2023): 263-284.
- 8 Pierre DuPrey, *Ah, Wilderness!* (Montreal: K2 Impressions, 2004), 16.
- 9 Alderville First Nation, "History," accessed March 22, 2023, <https://alderville.ca/alderville-first-nation/history/>.
- 10 Native Land Digital, "Mississauga," accessed March 22, 2023, <https://native-land.ca/maps/territories/mississauga>.
- 11 Jean DesHayes, *De la Grande Rivière de Canada Appellée par les Européens de St. Laurens*, 1715.
- 12 Brian S Osborne, *The Thousand Islands, 1650-1850: A study in Explorations, Settlement, and Development*, 21.
- 13 Canada's Historic Places, "Fort Frontenac National Historic Site of Canada," accessed March 22, 2023, <https://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=12130>.
- 14 Gibson, "Carleton Island," 1.
- 15 Brian S Osborne, *The Thousand Islands, 1650-1850: A study in Explorations, Settlement, and Development*, 41.
- 16 Ibid, 32-35.
- 17 Pierre DuPrey, *Ah, Wilderness!*, 16.

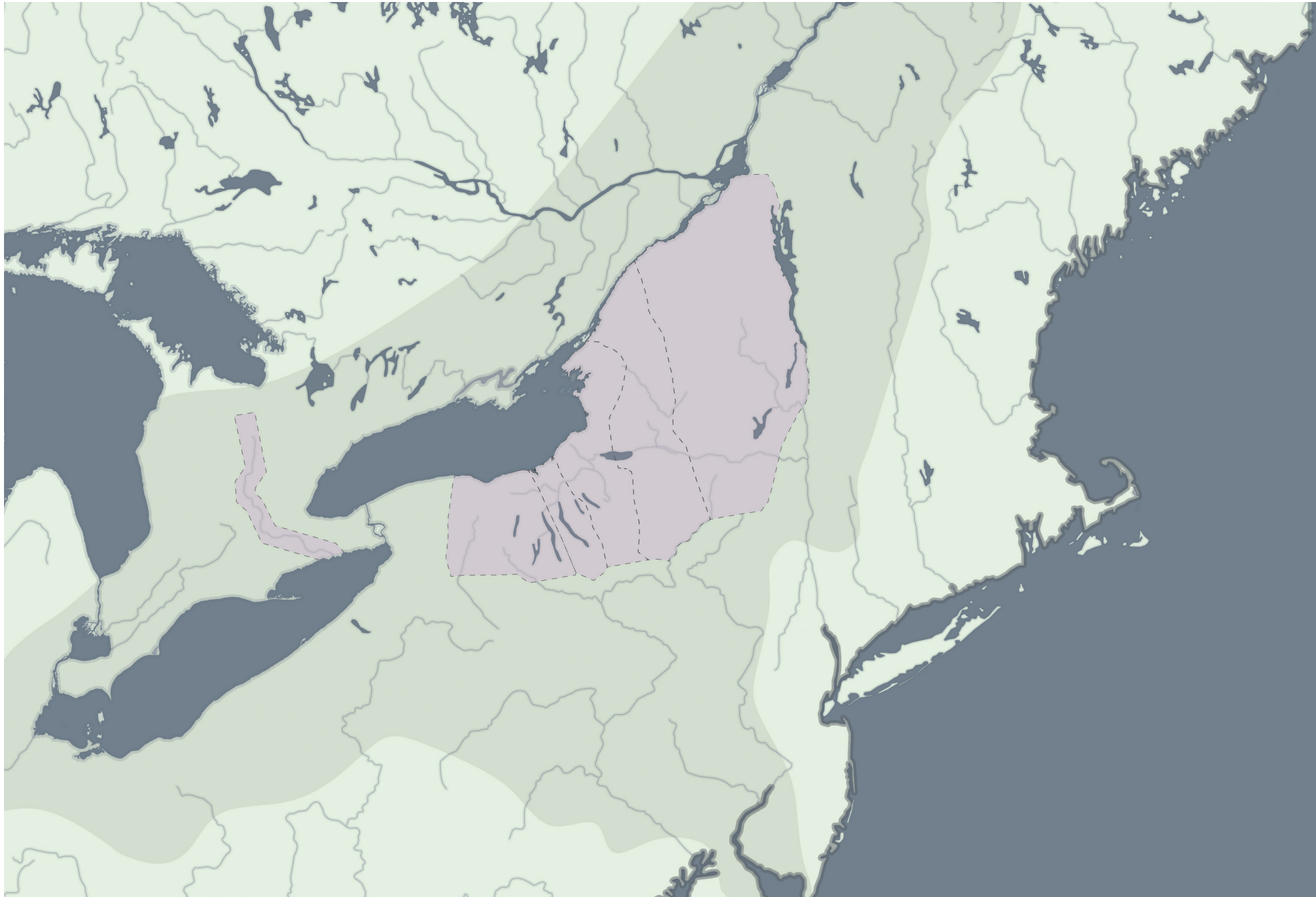


FIGURE 12 | HAUDENOSAUNEE LANDS

LEGEND

- LANDS OF THE HAUDENOSAUNEE CONFEDERACY
- IROQUOIAN LANGUAGE SPEAKING GROUPS

The traditional lands of the Haudnesaunee Confederacy can be found south of the St. Lawrence River and eastern portion of Lake Ontario. The Haldimand Tract, which is depicted here north of Lake Erie and east of Lake Huron became Haudnesaunee Territory after the American Revolutionary War. This land was considered to be Wendat Territory prior to 1610, and Mississauga Territory in the interim.

DATA SOURCES

GSA, *Geological Map of North America*, 2005.

Powell, *Map of linguistic stocks of American Indians*, 1890.

EliW, *Hodinohso:ni Land*, 2021.

1 : 5 000 000

0 50 100 200 km



3

THE POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY OF THE PEACEMAKER AND LAND MANAGEMENT PHILOSOPHIES

This chapter includes research into relevant Indigenous political and land philosophies of the Six Nations Haudnesaunee. It introduces the Peacemaker as an iconic political figure and examines elements of the Haudnesaunee constitution. The Great Law of Peace and its basic principles are identified. These principles will be further analysed in a later chapter.

THE GRAND COUNCIL

Following a long journey from the northern shores of Lake Ontario, and through the Mohawk River, the Peacemakers arrival at Onondaga Lake was met by a large gathering of fifty leaders, each from a clan of the Five Nations. The original five nations of the Haudenosaunee confederacy are as follows; the Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida, and Mohawk. Each share linguistic roots, building practices and neighbouring traditional territories (Figure 13).

The speech which followed the Peacemaker's arrival is referred to as the Constitution of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, traditionally memorized and recited orally. The speech was later translated and documented into English, and outlines the organization of the confederacy, a framework which is believed to have been divinely inspired by the Creator and gifted to the Peacemaker. It was through this constitution that historical feuds ended, leading to unity in the region. The constitution begins:

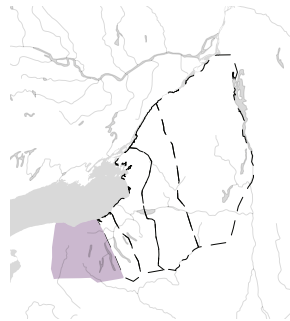
FIGURE 13 | THE ORIGINAL FIVE NATIONS OF THE HAUDENOSAUNEE CONFEDERACY



SENECA

SEN-I-KA

PEOPLE OF THE GREAT HILL



CAYUGA

KA-YOO-GA

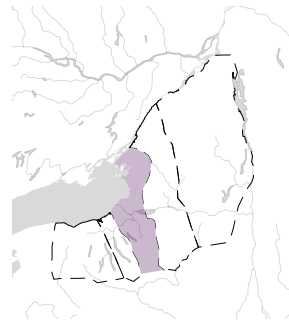
PEOPLE OF THE GREAT SWAMP



ONONDAGA

ON-NEN-DA-GA

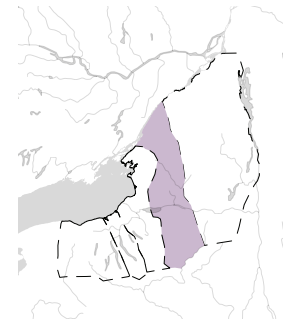
PEOPLE OF THE HILLS



ONEIDA

O-NY-DA

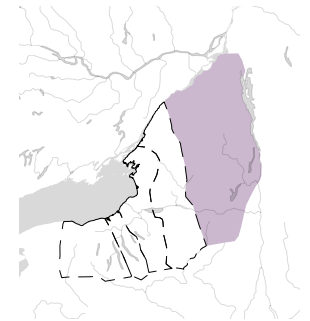
PEOPLE OF THE STANDING STONE



MOHAWK

MO-HAWK

PEOPLE OF THE FLINT



DATA SOURCES

GSA, *Geological Map of North America*, 2005

EliW, *Hodinoḥso:ni Land*, 2021

NMAI, *Haudenosaunee Guide for Educators*, 2009.

I am Dekanawidah and with the Five Nations' Confederate Lords I plant the Tree of Great Peace. I plant it in your territory, Adodarhoh, and the Onondaga Nation, in the territory of you who are Firekeepers.

I name the tree the Tree of the Great Long Leaves. Under the shade of this Tree of the Great Peace we spread the soft white feathery down of the globe thistle as seats for you, Adodarhoh, and your cousin Lords.

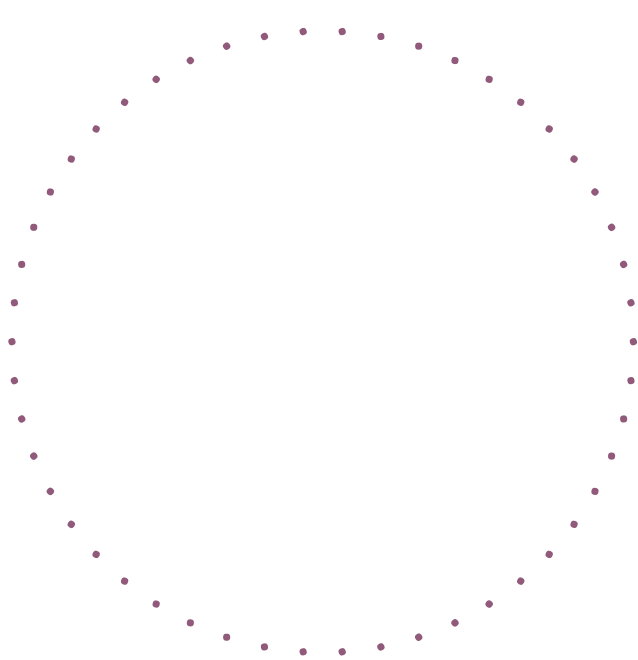
We place you upon those seats, spread soft with the feathery down of the globe thistle, there beneath the shade of the spreading branches of the Tree of Peace. There shall you sit and watch the Council Fire of the Confederacy of the Five Nations, and all the affairs of the Five Nations shall be transacted at this place before you, Adodarhoh, and your cousin Lords, by the Confederate Lords of the Five Nations. Roots have spread out from the Tree of the Great Peace, one to the north, one to the east, one to the south and one to the west. The name of these roots is The Great White Roots and their nature is Peace and Strength.

If any man or any nation outside the Five Nations shall obey the laws of the Great Peace and make known their disposition to the Lords of the Confederacy, they may trace the Roots to the Tree and if their minds are clean and they are obedient and promise to obey the wishes of the Confederate Council, they shall be welcomed to take shelter beneath the Tree of the Long Leaves.

We place at the top of the Tree of the Long Leaves an Eagle who is able to see afar. If he sees in the distance any evil approaching or any danger threatening, he will at once warn the people of the Confederacy.¹

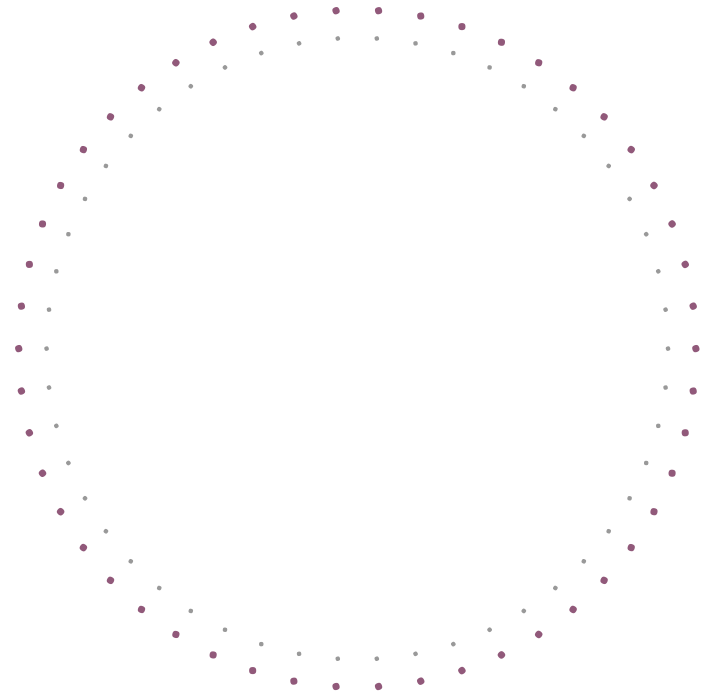
This constitution continues to outline the responsibilities of each nation, offering a procedure through which disagreements or concerns may be handled in a dignified manner.² The Five Nations are further segmented into clans, each of which appoints a Hodiyanehso, a leader and representative to advocate for their clan at council. These clans are matrilineal in nature, meaning each child is born to the clan of their mother. A careful selection process sees that each Hodiyanehso is fit to lead prioritizing key traits such as strong mindedness, courage, patience, tolerance, honesty, compassion, and responsibility.³ The Hodiyanehso keep one another in line, however the ultimate authority in choice of Hodiyanehso is the clan mother, who may relieve them of their position or elect another. Behind each Hodiyanehso is a clan mother's careful consideration, behind each clan mother are the women of the clan, and behind them the children and future progeny. Often the decisions of the clan mothers are influenced by the advice of the aunties, the women of the village act as advisors, and furthermore the aunties will often ask the children for their insight. The culture of collective decision making exists not only between clans but within clans. The decisions go beyond the present members of the clan including those yet to be born.

FIGURE 14 | THE GRAND COUNCIL



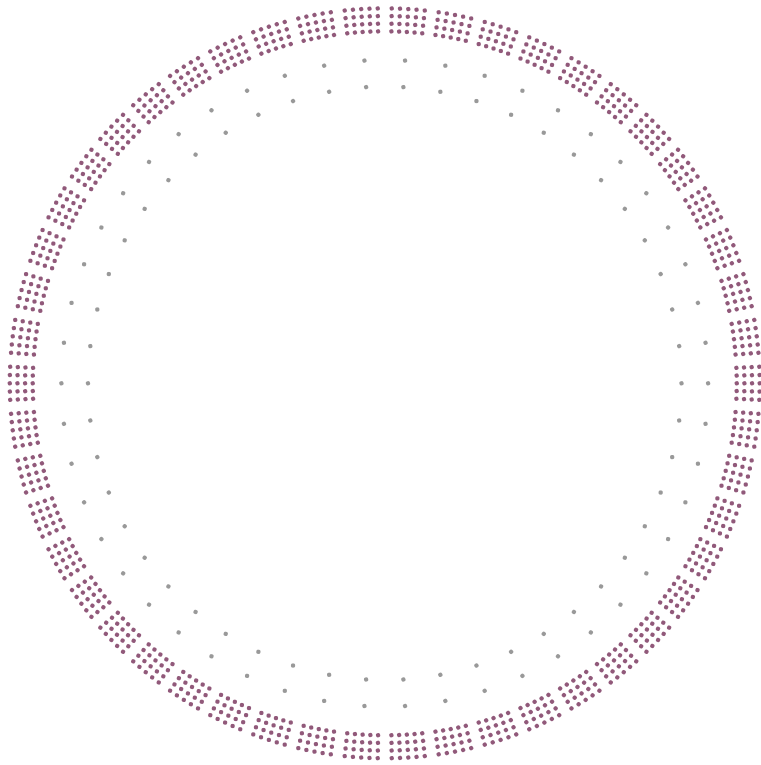
CHEIFS

The Grand Council is a collection of fifty elected Hodiyanehso, each representing a clan of the Haudenosaunee.



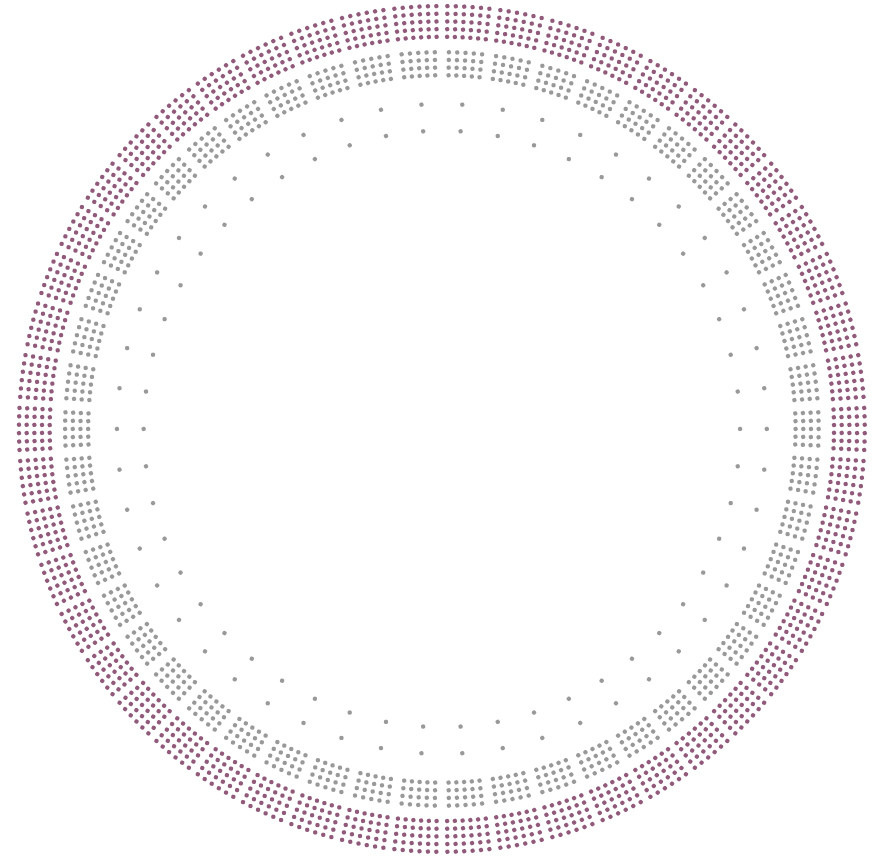
CLAN MOTHERS

The clan mothers are in charge of the careful selection of each representative of the council.



AUNTIES

The clan mothers often look to the other women of the village for guidance on the selection of the Hodiyanehso, as well as insights pertaining to local governance.



CHILDREN

The children of the village are also consulted. Each Hodiyanehso considers the needs and concerns of an entire clan. Those present, and seven generations to come.

THE GRAND COUNCIL'S PROCEDURES AND PROTOCOLS

This section outlines the intended protocol for the meetings of the Grand Council. All fifty Hodiyanehso are meant to gather and discuss any issues of importance that may have arisen within or between any of the clans. It is through the constitution that a formal governmental system was established. The council had no set schedule but instead as issues arose meetings took place. Typically, concerns were brought forth within a clan and should the concern be of enough significance it was brought to the Onondaga Hodiyanehso to evaluate. The Onondaga Nation are the *Keepers of the Central Fire*⁴, in charge of hosting the council.. If the Onondaga Hodiyanehso considered the concern to be of importance they would send 'runners' to deliver the message of a council meeting. importance they would send 'runners' to deliver the message of a council meeting.

Once all fifty members were present, the meetings began with the Thanksgiving Opening by one of the Onondaga Hodiyanehso, a customary address of gratitude as a reminder to those present. The structure of the council may be broken down into five separate sub-councils in a way and deliberating separately, finally coming together in consensus. The concern would first be presented to the 'Elder Brothers,' the Mohawk and the Seneca. Each deliberating amongst themselves to reach consensus within their individual nation. Each nation would present with a chosen speaker, this designated individual spoke on behalf of the nation during the meeting. Once consensus was reached, the Mohawk speaker and the Seneca speaker discussed the issue again until they reached consensus. Once consensus is achieved between the Elder Brothers, both speakers relayed their decision on the matter to the Younger Brothers, the Oneida and Cayuga Hodiyanehso. This side would again reach consensus before relaying first the Elder Brothers' statement then respectfully including their concerns about the other sides' consensus, ensuring that each nation fully understood the arguments made. Once both sides, the Mohawk,

Seneca, Oneida, and Cayuga Hodiyanehso have reached consensus, the Onondaga speaker would bring forth any concerns they may have had regarding the consensus achieved.⁵

At present the grand council continues to meet, however there is a struggle to fill each position. With regards to the procedure of the Grand Council, Kayaneshenh Paul Williams states, “a confederacy born out of a desire to create unity of mind maintains a deep aversion to disagreement. An individual who is alone in his disagreement with a decision, and who cannot persuade the rest of the chiefs to change their minds, would be ashamed to be the reason for the council’s inability to decide— even where his position reflects the views of his clan family. The Peacemaker instructed the chiefs to strive towards agreement in all things.”⁶ The selection of one appointed speaker per nation, and the obligation to receive consensus before addressing other nations creates an atmosphere of formality and decorum by which consensus of a council of fifty individuals can be achieved. It renders personal attacks nonexistent and encourages the social expectation that each Hodiyanehso conduct himself in a dignified manner.⁷

THE PEACEMAKER AND HIS GREAT LAW

Kayanerenkowa or the Great Law of Peace was brought to the Five Nations by *Dekanawidah*, the Peacemaker. This legendary historical figure was a major keystone to the Indigenous heritage of the lands of present day Eastern Ontario and Upper New York State. As mentioned previously, the Great Law functioned as an overarching governmental system that brought order and cohesion. Although the Haudenosaunee were a people whose linguistic roots and cultural practices were similar, bloodshed regularly divided them. During this great time of unrest, the tensions did not only exist between nations but both between and within clans of the nations, and furthermore within families. Dekanawidah was born on the northern shore of Lake Ontario (*Sganyadaiyo*, *the beautiful and great lake*)⁸ by the Bay of Quinte near what is now the Tyendenega Mohawk Territory; the closest present day Indigenous territory to the Thousand Islands. He is considered by the Haudenosaunee to be a great historical Prophet divinely inspired by the Creator to bring “good tidings of peace and power.”⁹ The Peacemaker is believed to have been born into the Onondaga nation and later adopted into the Mohawk Nation,¹⁰ although historical accounts differ, some attributed him to Wendat lineage.¹¹ As the story is told, he journeyed across Lake Ontario and down the Mohawk River in a canoe made of stone. Through his divine message, and a series of miracles, the five warring nations were brought together on the shores of Onondaga Lake through three foundational principles, translated as righteousness, power, and peace. From this encounter, each nation submitted to the Great Law and the Haudenosaunee became unified as a political and social confederacy.¹² It was through a long journey, during which, the Peacemaker confronted the chiefs of nations, and individuals which lived on the periphery of society, eventually guiding them toward his message.

Like many others during this time of strife, the Peacemaker’s mother and grandmother had sought to live in isolation away from the violence of men. His mother fell pregnant, and soon after, his grandmother (initially critical of her daughter’s

surprise pregnancy), saw a dream in which she was told that her daughter had been appointed to carry a son by the Creator. It was through this dream that the Peacemaker's Grandmother was inspired with his name Dekanawidah. She was informed that he would age quickly, and they would be witness to his miracles. The grandmother, initially displeased with her daughter's pregnancy, sought forgiveness from her restoring balance to a relationship which had become despondent.¹³ As the Peacemaker grew his mother and grandmother opted to move to the nearest village, where he began to act as a mediator between the other young men. The elders of the village took notice and invited him to see them. The Peacemaker asked for a feast to be prepared, during which he brought forth his great message, the message of the Great Law of Peace. Following this gathering, the Peacemaker set course to spread his message beyond his small village.¹⁴

His journey is one of a series of miracles. The first of which was his vessel, a canoe which he fashioned out of stone was intended to be a sign to the people of the truth of his message. The Peacemaker's journey included several confrontational interactions along his journey. A majority of those who heard his message reacted adversely. As people become accustomed to their ways of governance, it becomes increasingly difficult to attempt major change. It was through witness of the Peacemaker's miracles, or lengthy debate that each Haudnesaunee Village the Peacemaker ventured to eventually accepted his message. The Peacemaker's journey was long and treacherous. The first people the Peacemaker came across were a man and his family. They greeted one another and the man introduced himself as Thoihwayei. Explaining that he and his family had fled their village due to the state of violence in their home. They were astonished by the Peacemakers canoe. He told them to return to their village and inform their chiefs of news of a Good Message soon to come. They did as they were told, and the Peacemaker continued on his journey.¹⁵

The Peacemaker's next confrontation was that of a cannibal who lived away from the people. The Peacemaker climbed atop the hut in which the cannibal lived and peered inside. The cannibal was preparing his food when he noticed his own human face staring back at him in the contents of his pot. It was then that he decided that he would no longer murder his fellow humans and consume their flesh. He left the hut and buried the contents of his pot. The Peacemaker followed the man and confronted him atop a hill. They greeted one another. The cannibal introduced himself as Hiawatha, and told the Peacemaker of what had just come to pass. The Peacemaker told the cannibal to return to his village, and inform the people of a messenger, soon to arrive.¹⁶

Before reaching the village, the Peacemaker came across the lodgings of Tsikonsaseh, a woman who fed and hosted men who were out at war. In some versions of the narrative she would provide for them in attempts to influence them for the sake of peace, advising them to leave their weapons, and bloodshed¹⁷. In other versions of the narrative, her provision came as an encouragement to the warriors to continue their violence.¹⁸ The Peacemaker advised her to discontinue her provision to the warriors as she was in a sense sustaining them and aiding in their violent missions. He asked her to join him instead in spreading his message, becoming a leader of his league.¹⁹

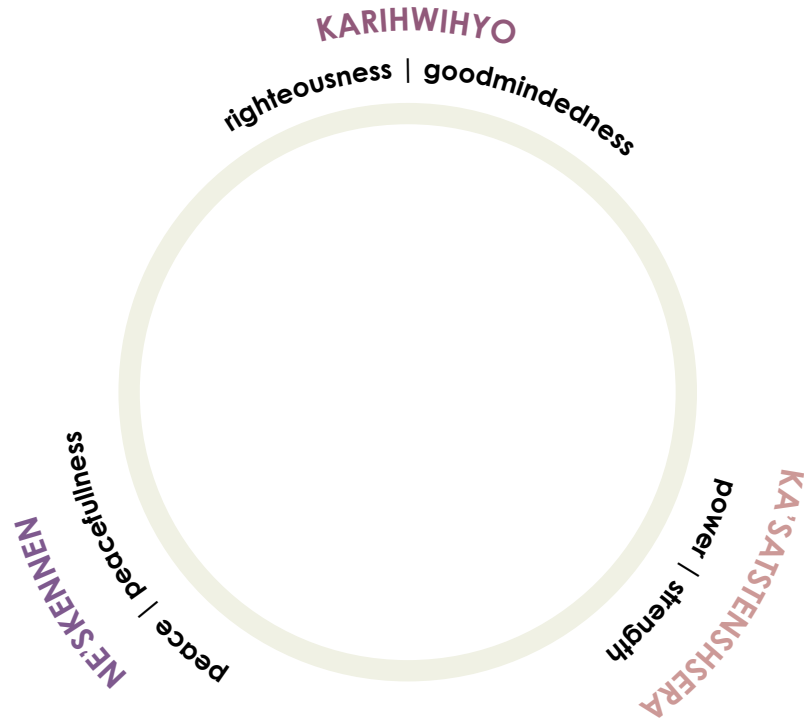
These early interactions along the Peacemaker's path, outside of formal villages became integral to the success of the Great Law's propagation as a governmental structure. Each village the Peacemaker visited tested him thoroughly. The Peacemaker's eloquent speeches brought forth debate from the village chiefs and other authority figures, testing the Peacemaker and his political philosophy. The people tested the Peacemaker physically as well. In one such case, he was instructed to climb a tree which overlooked a rushing river. As people watched, an axe was taken to the tree, and one by one, segments of the tree fell and became submerged, so to did the Peacemaker. He appeared to have vanished but was spotted the following morning on the outskirts of town nursing a fire.²⁰ The Peacemaker continued to relay the Good Message, informing the people to expect certain signs as affirmations to the sincerity of his word. Slowly but surely the Peacemaker managed to join the forces of four nations; the Mohawk, Seneca, Cayuga, and Oneida²¹ before confronting a Great Witch with what appeared to be snakes for hair and contorted fingers.²² The chiefs of the four allied nations, along with Tsikonsaseh and notably Hiawatha aided the witch, detangling his serpentine hair and before their eyes he morphed back into the form of a regular human.²³ The Peacemaker appointed him Todadaho. The keeper of the central fire. His job, to remember the children and generations to come. The allied nations all gathered, at Onondaga Lake where they received the Peacemaker's famous thanksgiving address and the Onondaga accepted the *Good Message of Peace and Power*.²⁴

THE GREAT LAW OF PEACE AND ITS PRINCIPLES

The three intrinsically universal ideals of righteousness, power, and peace, allowed for a democratic structure to be established and upheld despite the historical bloodshed between nations. The first principle, *Karihwiho*, is generally translated into English as *righteousness*, but it may be more accurately translated as *good word* or *good way*. In its native tongue, the term heavily implies a moral legalistic code; a correct, right, and just way of living on the earth.²⁵ , *Karihwiho* is based on the acknowledgement that all people must respect one another as though they are one, across nations.²⁶ The second principle *Ka'satstenshsera*, is often translated as *power*, but again, some aspects are lost in translation. The word implies the power of righteousness, or the power of peace, and its ability to aid in achieving the nations collective goals of righteousness (i.e. a divine law of sorts) or peace between nations.²⁷ This principle is based upon the unified power of the nations, as though they have consolidated into one stronger, magnified force, reaching an ultimate goal together. This aspect of the Great Law relies heavily on implying a form of kinship between nations to achieve such a goal. In a way, a larger familial structure or implication

FIGURE 15 | THE GREAT LAW OF PEACE

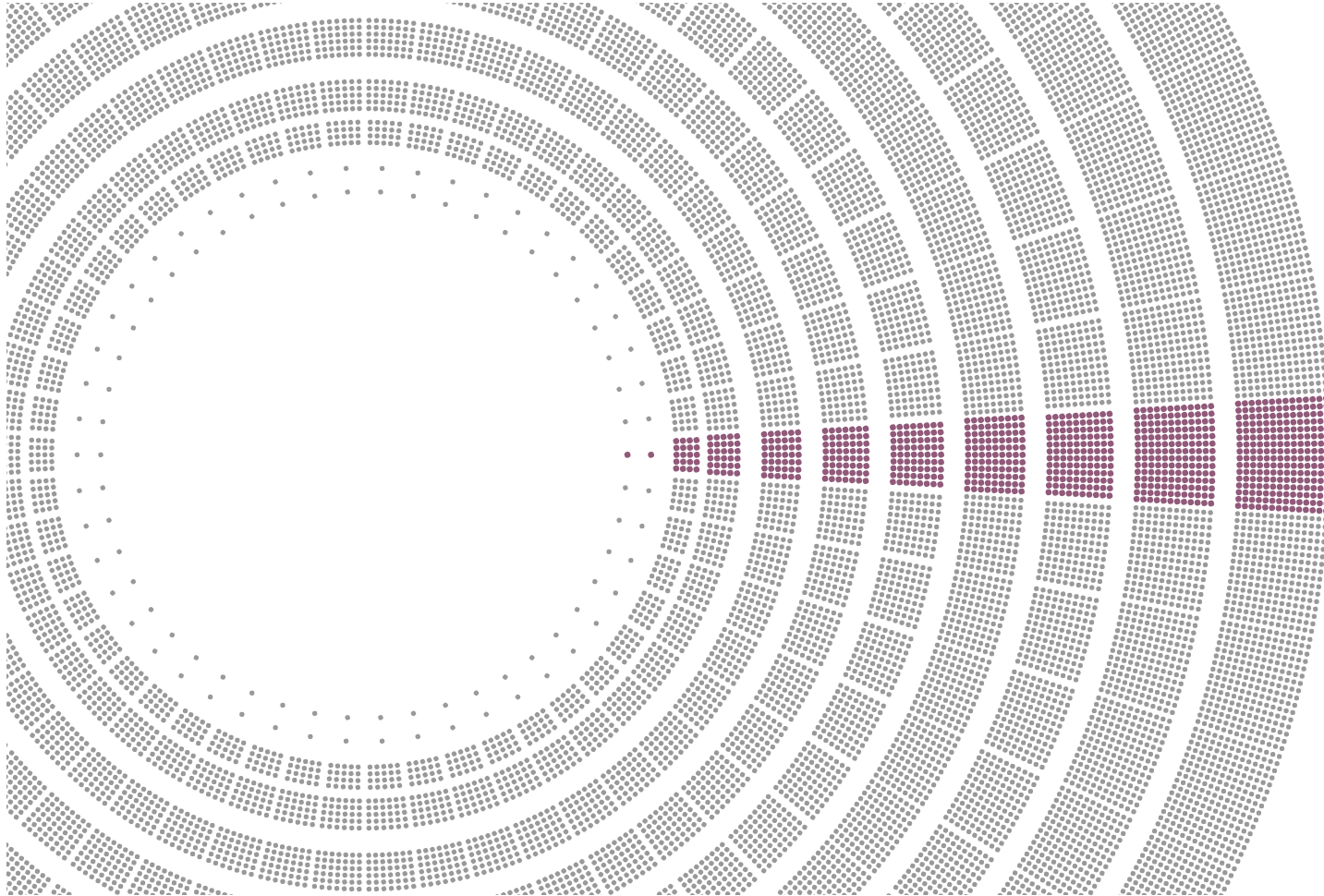
These three principles were the key to maintaining healthy relationships both within and between the nations of the Haudenosaunee.



of kinship was established through this principle.²⁸ The final principle, *Ne'skennen* translated as peace is the most accurate of the three, implying "...peace, tranquility or rest."²⁹ It may also imply wellness and sanity within an individual person. This principle aims to bring a stop to the historical bloodshed and violence that existed between the nations. It commanded an end to the scalping, murder and generational feuds that existed, allowing for free and safe movement between villages.³⁰

The Seventh Generation philosophy is another important aspect of the Great Law of Peace. Through the Great Law, any decision made by the leadership must consider the effects on the next seven generations. This philosophy favours a sustainable framework that considers real consequences of all decisions made. In his text *The Great Law of Peace*, Kayaneshenh Paul Williams states "Even the oldest and most productive among us can know and see only our great-grandchildren, four generations...to consider unto the seventh generation is really to say that our thoughts must go beyond our physical capacity to see; they must go downstream and around the bend in the river."³¹

FIGURE 16 | THE SEVENTH GENERATION PRINCIPLE



The *Seventh Generation Principle* considers the importance of considering the generational effects of decisions made by the council. Behind each Hodiyanehso is an entire clan, and their future descendants.

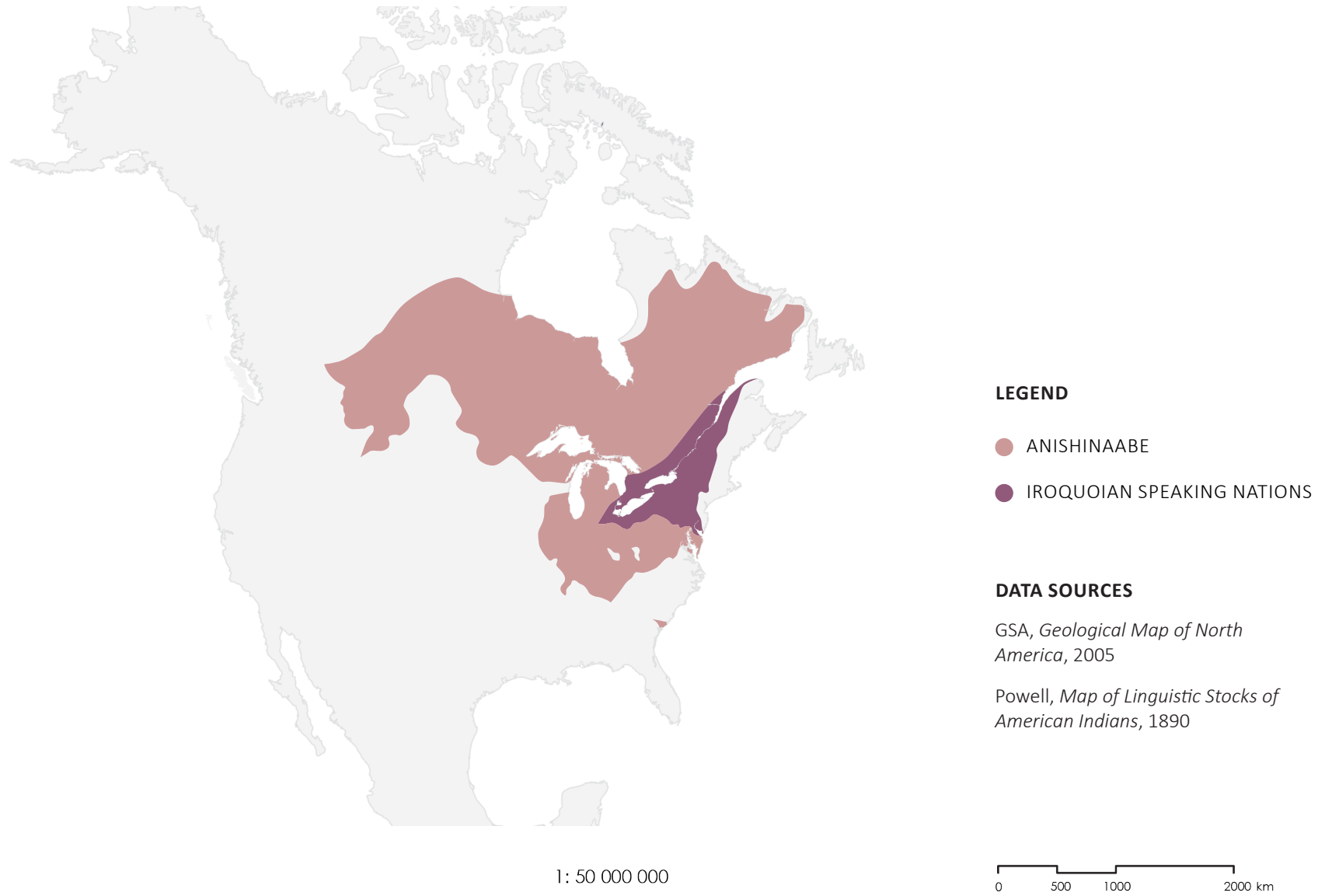
THE DISH WITH ONE SPOON COVENANT

In an address to the Five Nations, the Peacemaker announced:

“Promise to have only one dish among us; in it will be beaver tail and no knife will be there... which means that we will all have equal share of the game roaming about in the hunting grounds and fields, and then everything will become peaceful among all of the people; and there will be no knife near our dish, which means that if a knife were there, someone might presently get cut, causing bloodshed, and this is troublesome, should it happen thus, and for this reason there should be no knife near our dish.”³²

The symbolism of the *Dish with One Spoon* in reference to communal and shared land between nations effectively brought together bordering nations. This principle reflects a treaty or covenant between nations and emphasizes the importance of security and shared responsibility upon the shared lands of the Haudnesaunee. This later expanded and the Dish with One Spoon principle lent itself to becoming the foundation for Haudenosaunee-Anishnaabe relations in the St. Lawrence Valley and the Great Lakes region. This expanded to include the Wendat and other nations who were included in the Great Peace of Montreal in 1701. These nations came together in hopes that transgressions would be forgiven, and they would be able to move forward peacefully, to eat together, safely, and united. Negotiations between Indigenous nations often included formal speeches and symbolic gifts between tribes. Gifting acted as a social covenant between tribes and nations. The Haudenosaunee would gift food, tobacco, and most importantly Wampum Belts whose beaded designs encoded messages of peace and unity. The St. Lawrence River Valley eventually became a place where both the Haudenosaunee, Wendat, Anishinaabeg and other nations could hunt and trade amicably.

FIGURE 17 | THE TRADITIONAL LANDS OF THE IROQUOIAN AND ANISHNAABEG NATIONS



HAUDENOSAUNEE LAND PRACTICES

The imagery that is often associated with early Indigenous inhabitation of North America is one of a savage race with significantly limited sociocultural structures and land practices, living in primitive huts, surrounded by untouched and wild ecosystems. Belying this cliched and outdated view, however, Eastern North America, like most of the Americas, was occupied by many Indigenous towns and villages. The Haudenosaunee would often build their communities in naturally occurring meadows, sometimes clearings would be made by way of burning to expand the towns or agricultural fields, but only when necessary. Hunting was used to maintain balanced animal populations and certain trees and plants were cultivated together systematically.³³ In his book *The Great Law of Peace*, Kayaneshenh Paul Williams explains; “The cultivation of crops transformed the way of life of the peoples of the northeast of Turtle Island. Corn, beans, and squash became known as the Three Sisters, “our life supporters.” Fields around the villages and towns of the Haudenosaunee might stretch for a mile or two in all directions.”³⁴ Typically, Haudenosaunee villages would have distinct planting regimes that differed from the thickets or forests surrounding them. A few miles of farmland would form a buffer between the village and the thicket or forest on the periphery, which itself was managed and cared for by the inhabitants of the village. Travel between settlements was made possible through a system of paths and trails, as well as naturally occurring rivers and streams. It is evident that the Haudenosaunee were more than just a society of unsophisticated hunter-gatherers that lived off of an untamed virgin wilderness, but instead an advanced society of interconnected nations with knowledgeable agricultural and land practices for harvesting other resources. The Haudenosaunee saw themselves as a part of the overall fabric of the ecosystem, responsible for taking care of it and maintaining balance,³⁵ rather than lords that subjected nature to their will. Their land philosophies can be seen as a more wholistic form of stewardship than what has been traditionally practiced by Europeans in Europe and as settlers to the Americas. Perhaps, the caricature of primitive Indigenous society has been propagated to

avoid understanding an alternative to European agriculture and to maintain the status quo of over exploitative land practices in what would become today a commodity based corporate capitalist system with its efforts to ensure the highest possible capital investment and profit.

CONTRASTING LAND PHILOSOPHIES

The settler agricultural crop model, or “package” that developed in post-European (British) Ontario had a different triad than the three sisters. Wheat, oats and peas, which were long staples of Eurasian agriculture, and dominated Ontario settler agriculture from the first settlements supporting early trading posts in the region.³⁶ All three crops had been historical staples of British and Eurasian agriculture, and found their way to the Americas with European colonization. The importance of economic success and focus on supply to meet global demand is what drove settlers in the St. Lawrence River watershed region to prioritize these three crops, both for their own initial consumption and later for international export as a commodity. Focus on acreage of land cleared and counts of sales in bushel per year were the priority of many a 19th century Ontarian farmer and the Ministry of Agriculture, established in the 20th century.

Conversely, the mutually supportive triad of corn, beans, and squash prioritized by the Haudenosaunee did not consider the exploitation of land or economic success of an agricultural commodity, but rather prioritized a mutual system where each plant benefits from its sister crop. When planted, the three sisters grow together horizontally and vertically. The result is a meeting of the complex diverse nutrient needs of those planting them. Grown together, improving the health of the soil beneath them, the three species thrive better growing together than they do apart.³⁷ When planted in the spring, the first of the three crops to begin sprouting is the corn. The beans soon follow, developing a long system of roots beneath the ground. While the corn stalks grow, the beans poke through the top soil and begin to intertwine with the corn stalks and the

leaves begin to grow. The youngest sister is the squash. They take the longest to grow, long vines along the ground shaded by the bean leaves and the squash begin to grow, the soil remains moist and the squash thrives. By the end of the summer the three are ready to harvest. The beans increase the soil's nitrogen content creating a better environment for the sister plants, and improve the soil's quality overall.³⁸

The monocultured fields in settler landscapes were, and are today more profitable and more easily managed on a mass scale, meeting high market demands. The commodified crops leave the soil depleted. Each plant of the three sisters strategically takes up a different space, even beneath the ground. The success of the three sisters gave way for abundance in Haudenosaunee agriculture without drastically altering the landscape, treating the land with patience, benefiting both the land and the people who live on it.

Ironically, corn, along with beans and squash, are today grown separated in different fields. The crops have been adopted wholesale into the commodity-based capital-intensive systems of settler agriculture. Corn in particular has had global success as a calorific and nutritionally dense food for both humans and livestock. Sadly, modern farming practices have allowed for corn to deplete soil nutrients and massive influxes of artificial fertilizers are required.

In his text *Native Science*, Gregory Cajete critiques western land philosophy through an Indigenous lens. He states, "In the Western view land is lifeless, a commodity to be bought or sold, an economic resource, an inert landscape to be shaped to the need and will of those who own it... Although many Westerners declare they love their land, their feeling for the mythic and spiritual qualities of the land have become subsumed by the modern conditioning of land as commodity."³⁹ Cajete continues to identify that enlightened European settlers identify some portions of land as being sacred, and those sacred landscapes are then purposed into national parks in order to be conserved. The Indigenous mindset considers all land as sacred and ecologically significant, not only small swatches that are set aside for leisure, and respite. To cognitively reframe

the colonial mindset, is to understand all the natural world as interconnected, and that stripping some land of its sacred title, allows for all land to potentially be exploited and polluted. With the influx of British commercially based ideals and expansive immigration, the lands of Turtle Island were changed and manipulated for the profit of newer migrants. Although the dichotomy of viewing land through either a capitalistic or conservational framework is fundamental and rudimentary, at its base view, the exclusivity related to ownership of land is thoroughly ingrained in Eurasian culture and given a powerful moral and social voice in English philosophy.

Thomas Hobbes, in his 1651 political-philosophical work *Leviathan*, viewed property as a man-made construct benefiting people for the better "...designed to lift us out of our 'state of nature', which was one of conflict and precarity"⁴⁰ He referred to the lives of humans to be "'solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short'"⁴¹ without it. John Locke, writing twenty-five years later, saw property as a natural right and the protection of one's property to be synonymous with the protection of oneself.⁴² Locke's liberal philosophy considered the human's natural right to self preservation, sustenance, liberty, and by extension property. Locke's social and political philosophy considered humans to have a divine and natural right to the land, a commons from which natural resources may be harvested, seeing nature as an infinite resource that may be of benefit to all of humanity. This ideal considers that humans have equal right to benefit from the earth's prosperity. Locke considered labour to be the method by which elements of the commons may become private property. To Locke, the importance of liberty and autonomy meant that each man had a right to their body, and by extension, a right to ownership of any sustenance that may be produced by way of one's labour. This meant that land once cultivated and curated became private property.⁴³ These ideals surrounding the importance of privacy and ownership had major influence on Enlightenment European philosophy, it was considered profound and his thinking formed a foundation for the American Revolution in 1776.

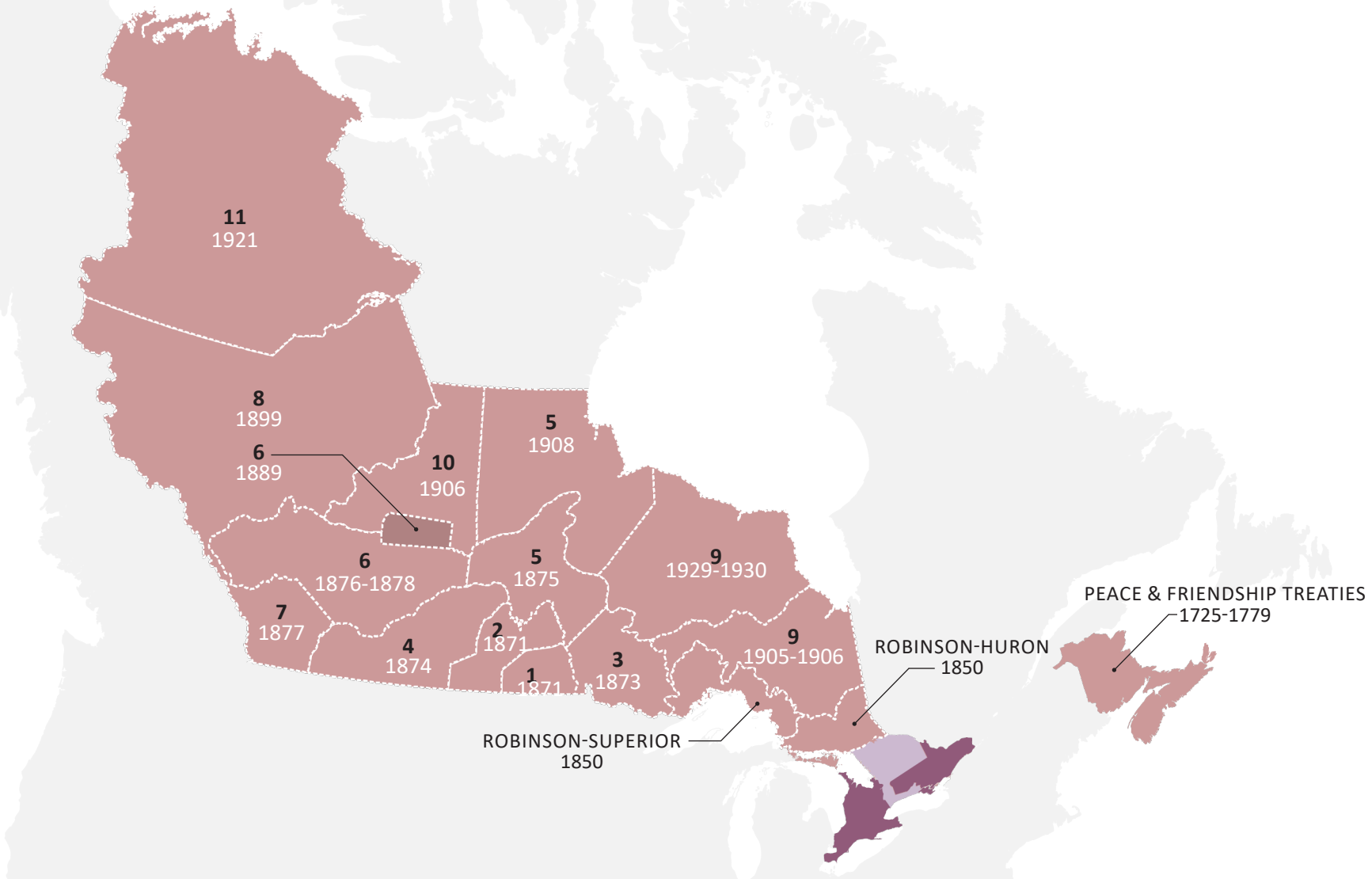
ENDNOTES

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- 2 Jacobs, "International Law," 23.
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- 4 NMAI, *Haudenosaunee Guide for Educators*, 1.
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- 6 Williams, *The Great Law of Peace*, 158.
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- 17 Williams, *The Great Law of Peace*, 189
- 18 Ibid, 190.
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 Gibson, "Concerning the League", 15.
- 21 Ibid, 33.
- 22 Ibid, 28.
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- 24 Ibid, 38.
- 25 Williams, *The Great Law of Peace*, 231.
- 26 Ibid, 225.
- 27 Ibid, 231.
- 28 Ibid, 226.
- 29 Ibid, 227.
- 30 Ibid.
- 31 Ibid, 379.
- 32 Gibson, "Concerning the League," 57.
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- 34 Ibid.
- 35 Ibid, 43.
- 36 Osborne, "The Thousand Islands: A Study in Explorations, Settlement, and Development," 45.
- 37 Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*, (Minneapolis: Milkweed Editions, 2015) 27.
- 38 Ibid, 30.
- 39 Gregory Cajete, *Native Science*, 283
- 40 Nick Hayes, *Book of Trespass*, 58.
- 41 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 159.

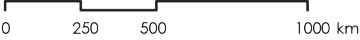
42 Nick Hayes, *Book of Trespass*, 43

43 Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, 295.

FIGURE 18 | HISTORIC TREATIES OF CANADA



1: 25 000 000



LEGEND

- UPPER CANADA TREATIES
- WILLIAMS TREATIES

DATA SOURCES

GSA, *Geological Map of North America*, 2005.

Indigenous Services Canada, *Historic Treaties* (Government of Canada, 2022) Shapefile. <https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/f281b150-0645-48e4-9c30-01f55f93f78e>.

4

LAND TRANSFER AND OWNERSHIP WITH A FOCUS ON TREATIES AND CEDED LANDS

With a review of Locke's political philosophy in the previous chapter, the large differences between Indigenous and settler nations in regards to the philosophies of land ownership, and rights to the access of land can be seen. The concept of boundaries, mapping of land ownership, and historical record keeping are further examined in this chapter. Information pertaining to the historical warfare that took place in the region, and historical treaty making across North America is presented. The chapter concludes with a look at the treaties of the St. Lawrence River Valley; the Crawford Purchase and Treaty of Fort Stanwix.

Fundamental differences in philosophy and practice, after review and new judgement, have resulted in the acknowledgment of unjust transactions between the European powers and the early Indigenous nations of the Thousand Islands region. This is the case across much of North America, or Turtle Island, as it is often referred to by Indigenous inhabitants. In some cases, representatives of settler and Indigenous communities agreed to the terms and conditions of treaties, and in others, large swaths of land were taken without the consultation of existing inhabitants, such as those in modern day Texas and Louisiana.¹ In Canada, formal treaties between Indigenous nations and the Crown began as early as 1701. Treaties were not limited to exclusive land rights and use, but military alliances and trade agreements were often formed as well.² Early American settlers would ask for formal boundaries of land occupied by first nations where they found large villages. Any land outside of those hard boundaries was considered free land for the settler nation to occupy. The lands on the periphery of the spaces Indigenous people resided upon were called ceded lands. In many cases the Indigenous people living upon the ceded land, away from larger villages, would not be consulted at all, and in some cases entire tribes were excluded from negotiations of land they traditionally occupied as hunting grounds.³ This is particularly concerning in the case of nations that migrated seasonally, where in some cases entire villages of people would live in a state of mobility.⁴ It can be said that in European culture, and as outlined in the writings of philosophers like Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the shift between nomadic lifestyle to one of settled agriculture is viewed as an example of civility and progress, and as such, to Europeans, mobile people were seen as primitive. In Europe this discriminatory view of migrating nations was expressed in the prejudiced attitude to the Roma people throughout Eurasia. This prejudice expanded to include Indigenous nations across the Atlantic Ocean, and later, global migrants from all colonial countries including slaves.⁵

FIGURE 19 | CEDED LANDS OF NORTH AMERICA

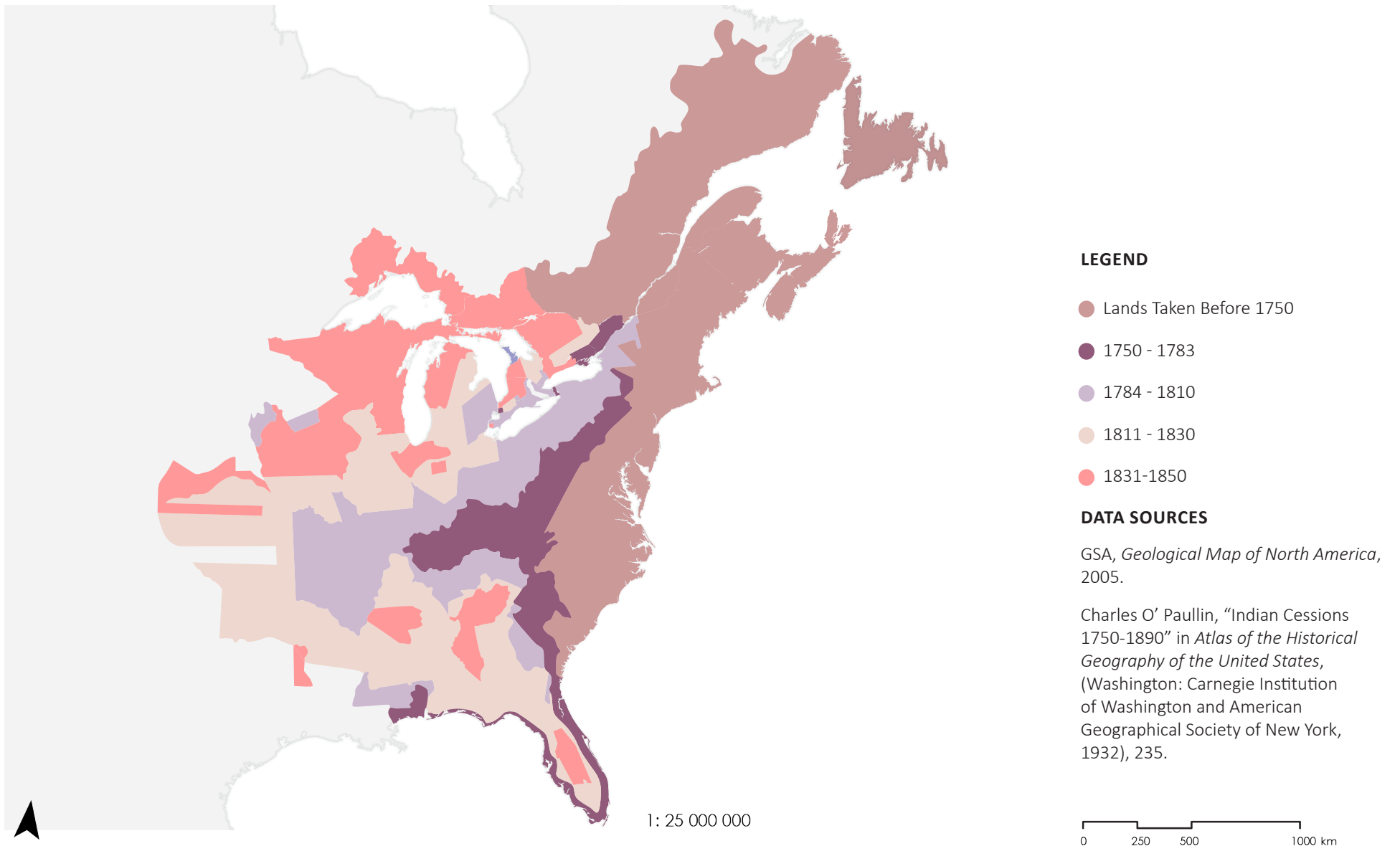
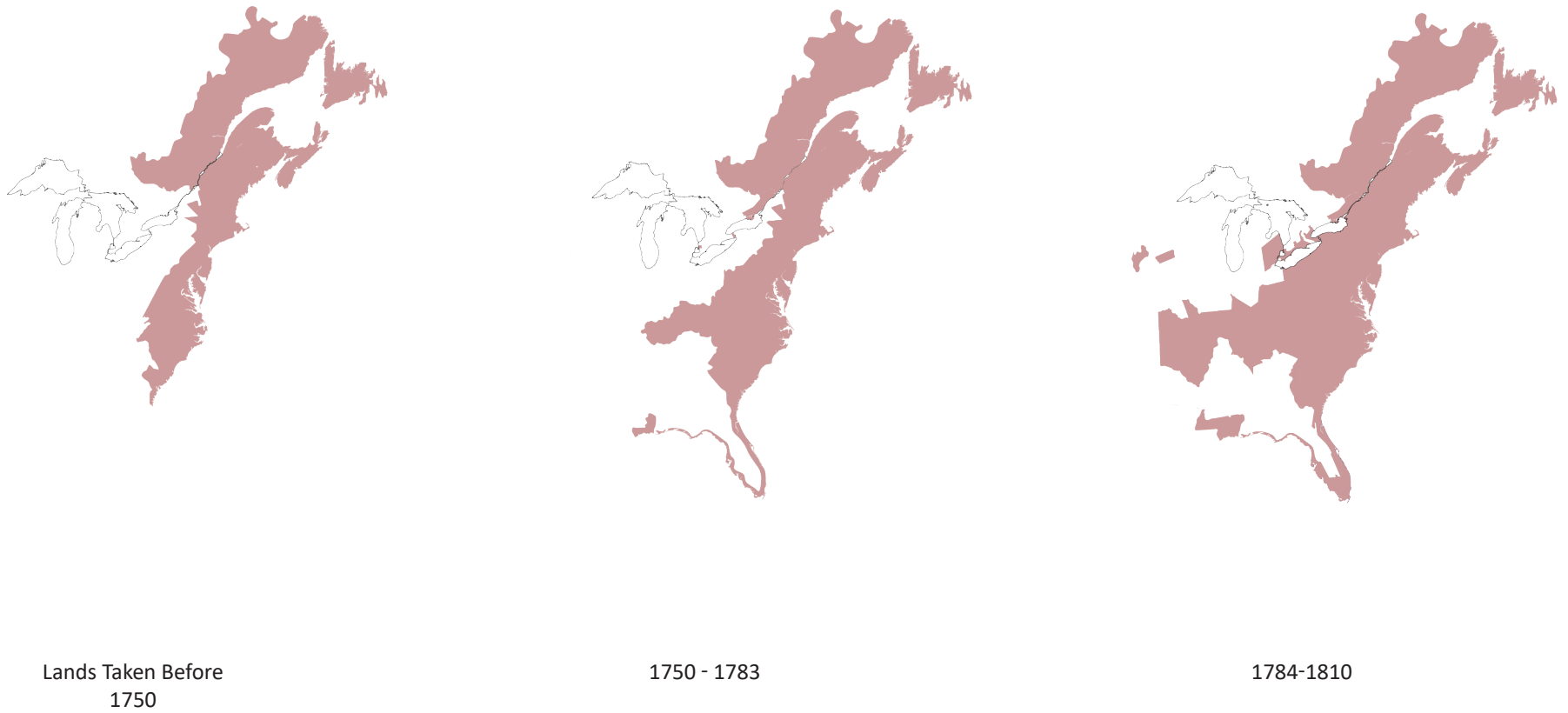
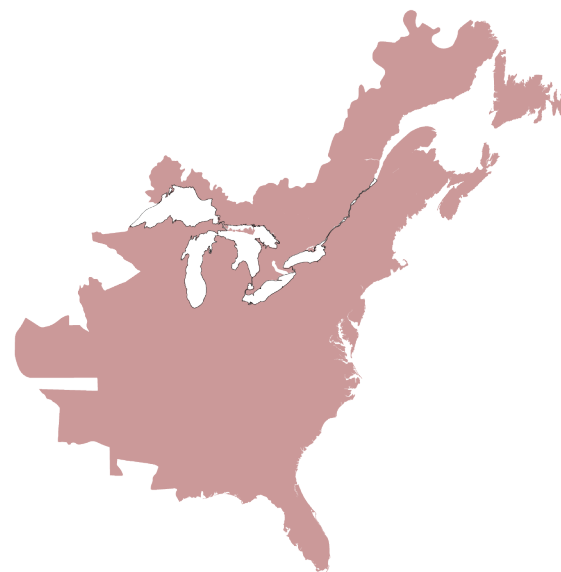


FIGURE 20 | A CENTURY OF CESSIONS





1811-1830



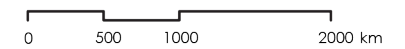
1831-1850

DATA SOURCES

Pullin, "Indian Cessions 1750-1890," 235.

GSA, *Geological Map of North America*, 2005.

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BOUNDARIES

The lines of boundaries that are drawn on maps can reflect how liberal or oppressive the regimes that drew them may be. Harsh straight lines often reflect the oppressive nature of the colonial powers that once imposed them. Visible and protected boundaries are “designed by-and for- political animals.”⁶ Borders of nations that have been colonized by the colonial powers of Europe throughout North Africa and the Middle East, are often straight with right angles, whereas the boundaries within Europe itself are much more irregular. The dichotomy reflects the competitive political race and imposing force of European colonialism outside of Europe. In contrast, the world is naturally segmented through geological ecological boundaries such as geological escarpments, mountains, forests, wetlands, lakes, and rivers.⁷ Maps with irregular borders are the direct result of boundaries that are in congruence with the movement of people on the land. Free navigation is often restricted by the physical barriers that exist within nature. In respecting those physical barriers and boundaries that the landscape has produced, a more respectful relationship can be facilitated between the landscape and the people living upon it.

Across North America, the maps that visually depict the borders of states and provinces are often very regular. The occupation of Turtle Island has resulted in the landscape becoming segmented into nations, then states, then counties, and even further into individual lots. These lots may be further segmented and when there seems to be little or nothing left to

divide, towers are built and segmented even further into units for dwelling or commerce. The maps that depicted the same landscape in the days of early European exploration and documentation, reflect a different relationship between people and the land. Some early maps showcase natural features of the landscapes and others attempt to visually depict the areas that different Indigenous nations used. It is apparent through these maps that the people used the physical boundaries of the natural world as natural delineations, reflecting a more respectful relationship between Indigenous people and the land they occupied and, in some cases, still occupy.

At Akwesasne, the Mohawk community exists in and along the St. Lawrence River. Their community was naturally physically segmented by the river, but it was not socially segmented. The river is a part of the landscape they occupy and has been essential in navigation. The Mohawk community lives on Cornwall Island and shores of the St. Lawrence River. The settler borders that were imposed on the inhabitants have caused difficulty in navigation and has segmented a community. The Akwesaslanos live where Ontario, Quebec, and New York State converge. Two settler nations and their imposed boundaries have interfered and segmented families, limiting their access to one another. Often individuals require three sets of documents to move within their community, an American passport, a Canadian passport, and identification that proves their Indigenous identity. The social divisions and legalistic barriers to connection in Akwesasne impose a rift and interfere

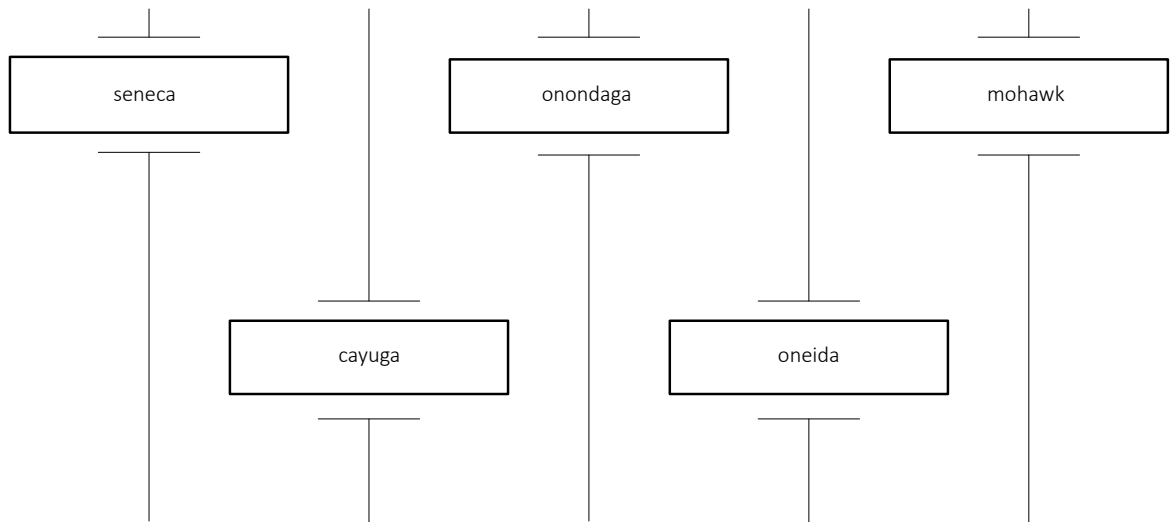
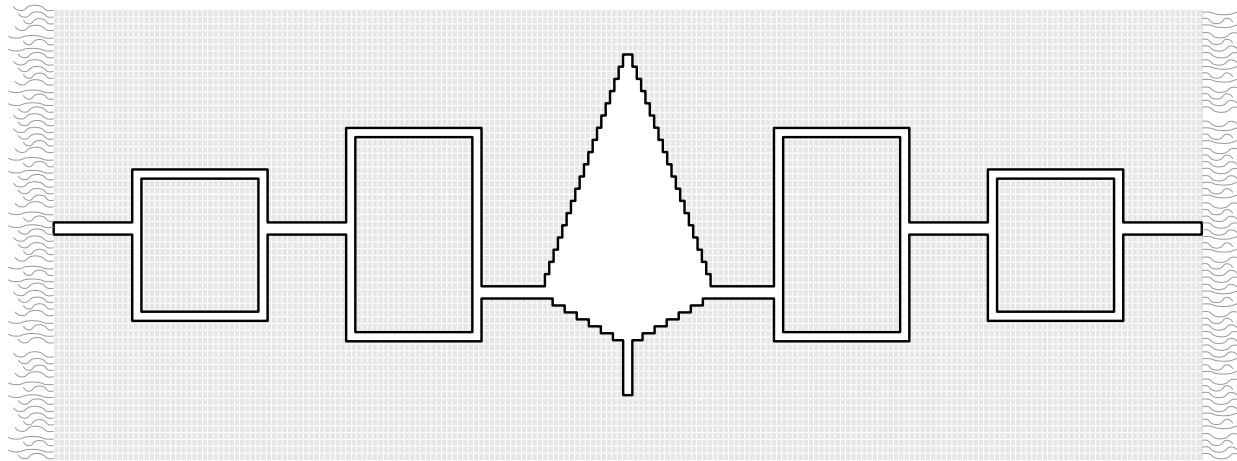
WAMPUM BELTS AND HISTORICAL RECORD KEEPING

with the cultural and national identities of the Akwesaslano.⁸

Eurocentric philosophies of record keeping prioritize text above all else as the fundamental means of record keeping. It is important however to understand that textual evidence is not and has not been the sole method of documentation and preservation of records throughout human history. The Indigenous people of Turtle Island have long held oral, visual, and tactical traditions that have been used to preserve records and cultural identity generationally. Prioritizing textual records above all else is a method of marginalizing narratives of entire nations. In academia, textual papers reference other textual papers in perpetuity, and intellectual pursuits fall short in understanding the histories on both a local and global scale, and it can be seen as a cause for miscommunication and a sense of inadequacy between Indigenous and settler nations.

Wampum belts are traditionally used by the Haudenosaunee as a symbolic record of treaties between nations. The Wampum (white shell beads) are woven together to reflect the terms of the agreement between nations brought forth by the treaty. The first treaty between the Haudenosaunee and a settler nation took place in 1613. Symbolized by the two-row wampum, the Dutch Government and the Haudenosaunee agreed to peacefully respect one another's customs and unique ways, to live and let live without mettlesome interference. Two rows of dyed purple beads represent two ships sailing parallel, and the white lines are representative of peace.⁹ These symbolic representations of covenants between nations serve as a

FIGURE 21 | HIAWATHA BELT SYMBOLOGY



DATA SOURCES

NMAI, Haudenosaunee Guide for Educators, 7.

HISTORICAL CONFLICTS

visual record. These visual records are accompanied by oral records memorized and preserved by members of the nation generationally.

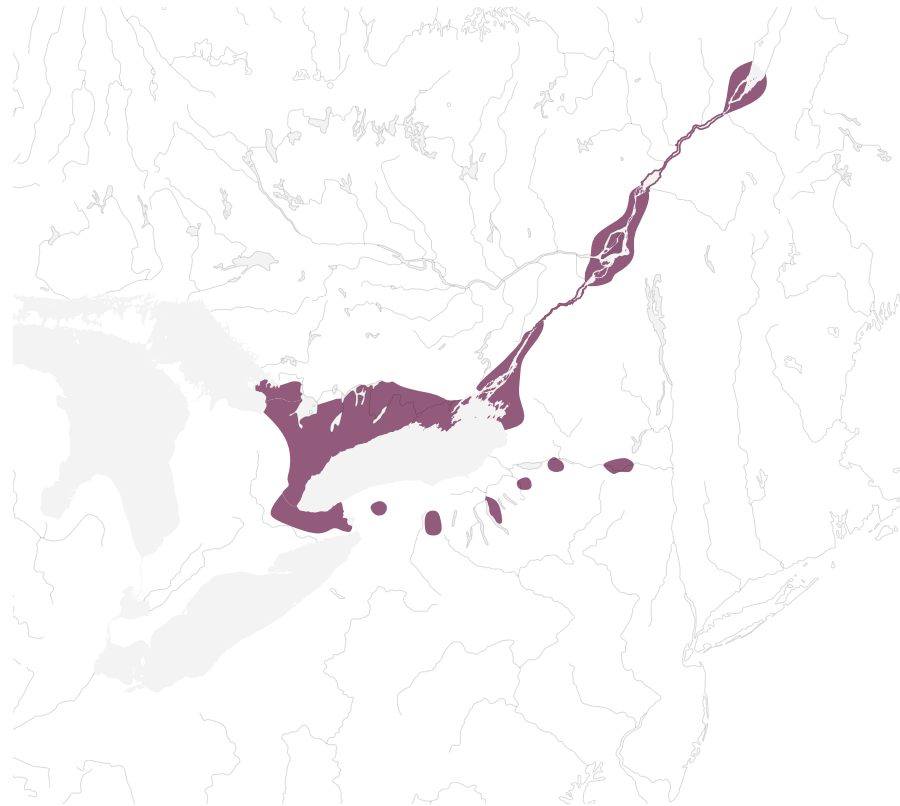
Traditionally, the Thousand Islands are referred to as Manitwana, the *Garden of the Great Spirit*, by local Indigenous groups. Manitou, often referred to as the Great Spirit is a creator and life force amongst Omàmìwininimowin (Algonquin) speakers. The creation story passed down orally depicts feuding tribes along the shores of the St. Lawrence River, one to the north, and one to the south. Manitou, in hopes of bringing peace to the warring nations blessed them with a garden of great abundance equidistant from the shores. He invited them to enjoy the great garden on the condition that they put their corrupt ways behind them. The neutral ground was used by both nations; they hunted, harvested, and intermixed. Children were born to both nations and spoke a language that married the two. Unfortunately, the peace did not last, and feuds erupted once more. Manitou returned to collect the garden in a large blanket, but upon his ascension, the cloth tore. The garden broke into thousands of pieces, which became rooted in the river, each piece becoming an island, leaving an expansive archipelago.¹⁰

Historically, the first people to inhabit the St. Lawrence River Valley was a group often referred to as the 'St. Lawrence Iroquois' or 'Laurentien Iroquois' in the literature. Evidence of early inhabitation goes back almost 4000 years¹¹. This Indigenous group had a distinct culture from neighbouring Iroquoian speaking nations such as the Wendat to the west and nations of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy to the south. They inhabited the region until 1575 AD¹². The St. Lawrence Iroquoians seem to have disappeared around this time. The nation is believed to have been "absorbed" by neighbouring nations such as the Mohawk or Wendat, other Iroquoian speaking groups.^{13 14} Archeological artifacts like those found in the St. Lawrence

River Valley, have been found in other sites in the traditional territories of the Wendat farther west.

Although Manitou is not considered to be a canonical figure in any Iroquoian nation the creation story of the Garden of the Great Spirit is often referred to as an “Iroquois Legend” As mentioned previously, the Mississauga migrated eastward from their ancestral lands by the Mississagi River, toward the northern shores of Lake Ontario at the end of the 17th century. This sparked tensions between the Anishinaabeg and the Haudenosaunee Nations and as eluded to in the regions creation story, war erupted between them. The allegorical war and bloodshed between tribes on either riverbank rings true, as the Mississauga (allied with the Wendat and other Anishinaabeg nations) were at war with the Haudenosaunee confederacy. The Mississauga became the dominant tribe to the north of the St. Lawrence River toward the end of the 17th century. Although they did not push the Haudenosaunee out entirely, the Five Nations began to rely more on their lands south of the river.¹⁵ The creation story of the Thousand Islands holds allegorical significance to the historical incidents that took place between

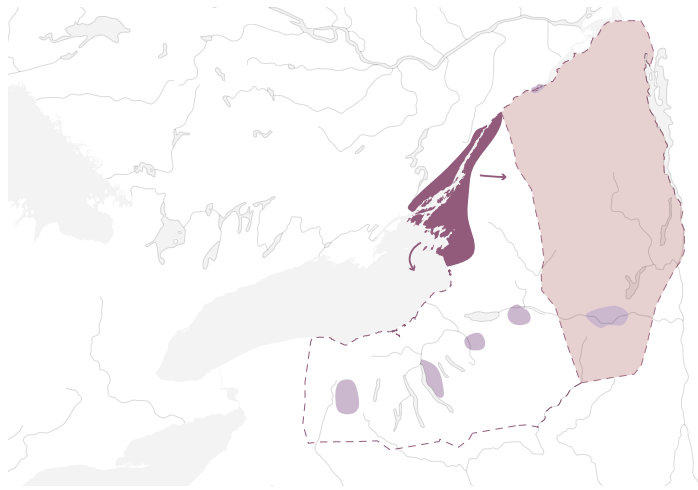
FIGURE 22 | SETTLEMENT LANDS OF IROQUOIAN LANGUAGE SPEAKING GROUPS



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0 125 250 500 km

FIGURE 23 | THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE ST. LAWRENCE IROQUOIS



LEGEND

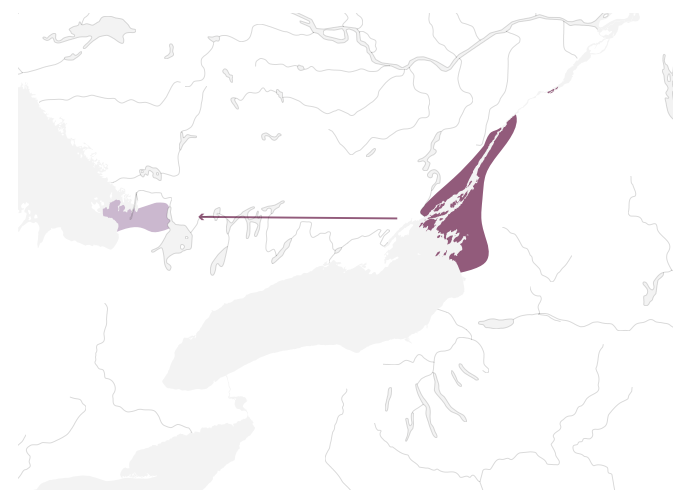
- “St. Lawrence Iroquoian” Settlement
- Other Haudnesaunee Settlements
- Lands of the Haudnesaunee Confederacy

DATA SOURCES

Birch, “Relations de pouvoir et de production, 36.

GSA, *Geological Map of North America*, 2005

EliW, Hodinohso:ni Land, 2021

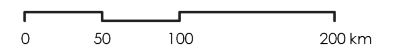


LEGEND

- “St. Lawrence Iroquoian” Settlement
- Wendat Territory



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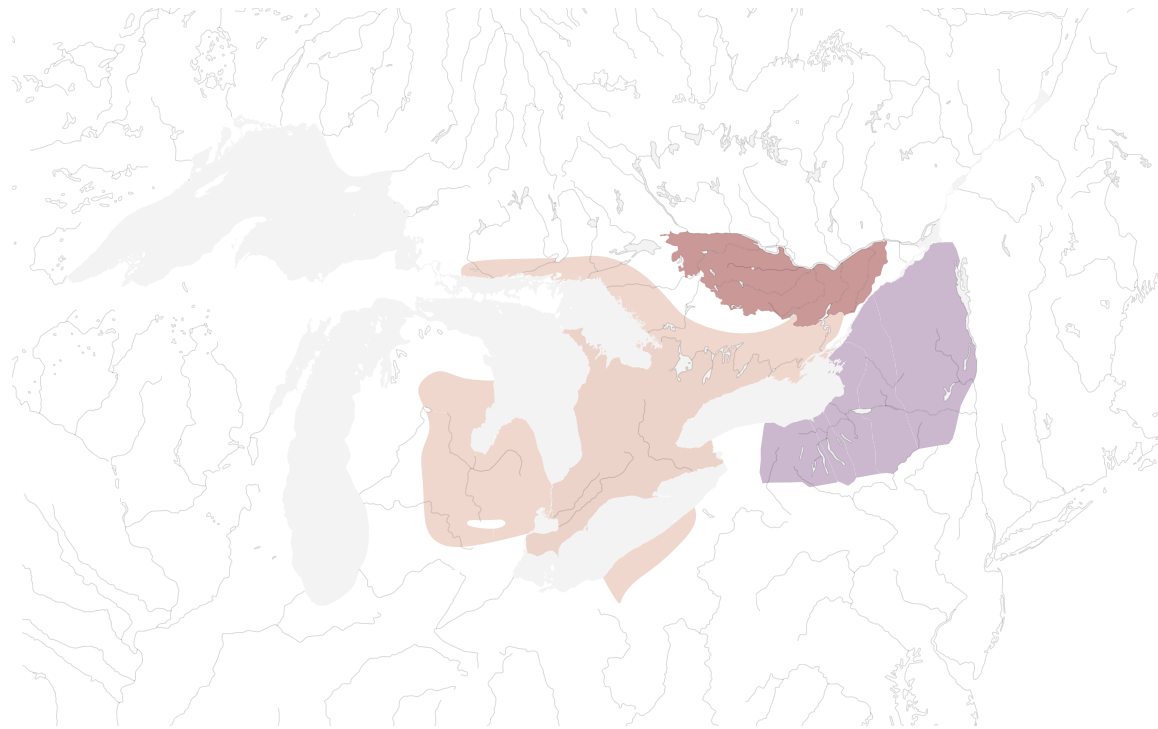


THE BEAVER WARS

the early nations of Turtle Island and foreshadows feuds to come. This culture of conflict is seemingly imbedded into the landscape, and continued to plague the settler nations that came to occupy the Islands later.

As the demand for fur increased both locally and abroad in Europe, tensions rose between the Haudenosaunee of the then Five Nations, and the French allied Wendat and Anishnabeg nations. Although this conflict had its origins in the late 16th century, these wars spanned a majority of the 17th century and are referred to as the Beaver Wars. Having gained the territory north of Lake Ontario, with the dispersal of the Wendat and their Algonquin and other Iroquoian nations, by 1651 the Haudenosaunee began to rely on the resources to the north of the Great Lakes basin. Regular trade with the Dutch and English colonials south of the river had given them access to firearms and other European tools and materials, ultimately giving them the upper hand against their adversaries. As beaver populations dwindled south of the St. Lawrence River, the nations of the Haudenosaunee confederacy began to rely on their hunting grounds to the north. Regular trade with the Dutch and English colonies south of the river allowed the Haudenosaunee nations access to firearms, tools, and other materials from Europe. The lands north of the river and Great Lakes was key to commercial success as the demand for fur and other resources found north of the the Great Lakes increased. These lands were essentially a war zone. After decades of conflict treaties were conducted, once in 1624, and again in 1645. Attempts to maintain peace between the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee have been orally documented.¹⁶ Early European settlers witness to these early oral treaties documented them in writing.¹⁷ Typically the treaties were not upheld any longer than a year. By 1666, the French had reached an agreement with the Haudenosaunee which allowed the Wendat and Algonquins, who had moved to the northern shore of Lake Huron and west, to take their furs to Quebec annually.¹⁸ This lasted until the 1680s when conflicts resumed. For the most part, the wars and raids finally ended with the Great Peace of Montreal in 1701. Representatives of over 30 nations attended and

FIGURE 24 | TRIBAL LANDS 1768



DATA SOURCES

Miklos Pinther, "Indian Villages and Tribal Distribution Circa 1768" in *Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History*, Map (Normon: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987)

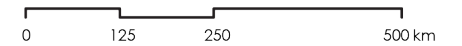
GSA, *Geological Map of North America*, 2005

LEGEND

- Haudenosaunee
- Mississauga
- Algonquin



1: 10 000 000



THE WAR OF 1812

agreed to peace and shared access to the lands of the St. Lawrence River Valley with reference to the imagery of the Dish with One Spoon, allowing for each nation to move through and hunt freely in St. Lawrence Valley without fear of attack.

The St. Lawrence River Valley and more specifically the Islands became an important battle ground during the war of 1812 due to its strategic location. Decisions made in Washington and London resulted in apprehension amongst the people that had settled on either side of the river. The river bordering the settler lands of the United States and British North America, was an integral route for supplies and as a result, controlling the river became advantageous. The river broke into a battlefield and to this day a majority of the larger Canadian Islands were renamed for notable personnel in the British army. It was during this time that several islands fell to the Americans.¹⁹

The British Crown strategically fortified the shores and constructed Fort Henry at the confluence of the St. Lawrence and Cataraqui Rivers. A few decades earlier four Martello towers were constructed to strategically guard the mouth of the Cataraqui River as it gave direct access to the Rideau River and the capital city of Ottawa. Cathcart Tower was built on Ceder Island slightly west of the mouth of the Cataraqui River, and Murney Tower was built to the east. At the mouth of the river

FIGURE 25 | CATHCART TOWER ON CEDER ISLAND



TREATIES OF THE ST. LAWRENCE RIVER VALLEY

sit two more towers, Fort Fredrick and Shoal tower. The Thousand Islands were a significant battleground and the Martello towers are strong reminders of the region's military past.

The lands of the St. Lawrence River Valley have been occupied by many nations over the last two millenia. The lands had already been occupied by the Wendat, Haudenosaunee, and Mississauga Nations before eventually becoming Canadian and American soil. The historical transfer of land from the Indigenous nations to the latter settler nations was brought about by the American War of Independence. South of the river, many inhabitants of the former British colonies desired to breakaway from mother Britannia, resulting a Revolutionary War. Between 1775 and 1783 the Thirteen Colonies battled against the British Empire on Native Land. Its close in 1783 saw new treaties between the Crown and the newly born United States of America, as well as mass displacement of thousands of Loyalists to the British Crown from the colonies, along with two thousand Mohawk allies. All were in need of a new home north of the new river border. Following the Revolutionary

THE CRAWFORD PURCHASE

War in October of 1784, two treaties determined the *rightful* ownership of the lands along the St. Lawrence River Valley: The Crawford Purchase, and the Treaty of Fort Stanwix.

The Crawford Purchase transferred the land use and ownership rights between the Crown and the Indigenous inhabitants north of the St. Lawrence River. The large swath of land included the Thousand Islands and reached as far west as the Bay of Quinte. Following the American Revolution against the British Crown, many people of British ancestry loyal to the Crown, and their Indigenous allies who fought bravely in line with them, needed a place to live. Many of who's ancestral land was now considered a part of the American Republic. The Crown offered safe passage to Britain to start a new life there, as well as land to settle in what is now called Canada. The lands of the Crawford Purchase were primarily occupied

by the Mississauga during the 1700's but the territories were also regularly used as a hunting and fishing ground by the Haudenosaunee during this time as well. A treaty made between the New Republic and the Crown upon the end of the Revolution failed to include any reference to the ancestral lands of Indigenous inhabitants. The Indigenous allies to the Crown were angry, with good reason. The Governor of Canada, Fredrick Haldimand, announced that Indigenous allies to the Crown would be compensated with land on British soil, if they feared that return to their ancestral land was unsafe due to their alliance with the Crown. Following the revolution some 1800 people who fought behind Chief Thayendanegea (Joseph Brant), and 200 people who fought behind Chief Deserontyon (John Deseronto) were promised a safe haven, and Haldimand intended to purchase the land in around the Bay of Quinte from Indigenous occupants to house them. Chief Deserontyon thought the lands of the Bay of Quinte were sufficient for him and his people and agreed to Haldimand's suggestion, however Chief Thayendanegea decided that the lands surrounding the Grand River would be a better location for his people. It was decided that the lands around the Bay of Quinte and a larger swath eastward would be purchased to allow for the inhabitation of the Chief Deserontyon and his people as well as many more Loyalists to the Crown, who had wanted to settle west of Montreal.²⁰

In August of 1783 the Mississauga Chiefs were first addressed, and two months later Captain William Redford Crawford managed to round up several Chiefs from amongst the Mississauga, a few Onondaga Chiefs, and one by the name of Chief Mynass who lived by the Lake of Two Mountains (which exists between the Ottawa and St. Lawrence Rivers near Montreal). From that day in October of 1783 there are no lasting records of the actual agreement that took place between Crawford and this collection of Chiefs. Instead, the only record documents that can be examined are a collection of letters. One letter from Crawford written on the 9th of October 1783 on Carleton Island, illustrates the terms of the deal addressed to

Sir John Johnson, who had been the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs. In another letter written on the 25th of March 1791 Johnson states that he had never received the deed for the Crawford Purchase and that it had supposedly remained in the possession of Crawford. Although Chief Mynass had not lived locally he had apparently been in possession of the lands between present day Gananoque and Brockville, between the St. Lawrence and Ottawa Rivers, supposedly acquiring them from a Frenchman²¹. Again, no deed of such a purchase was provided. Crawford had been unable to bring representation from several leaders who occupied the western portion of the purchase by the Bay of Quinte. They were unjustly excluded but compensated in a similar fashion to the Chiefs that had been in attendance.²²

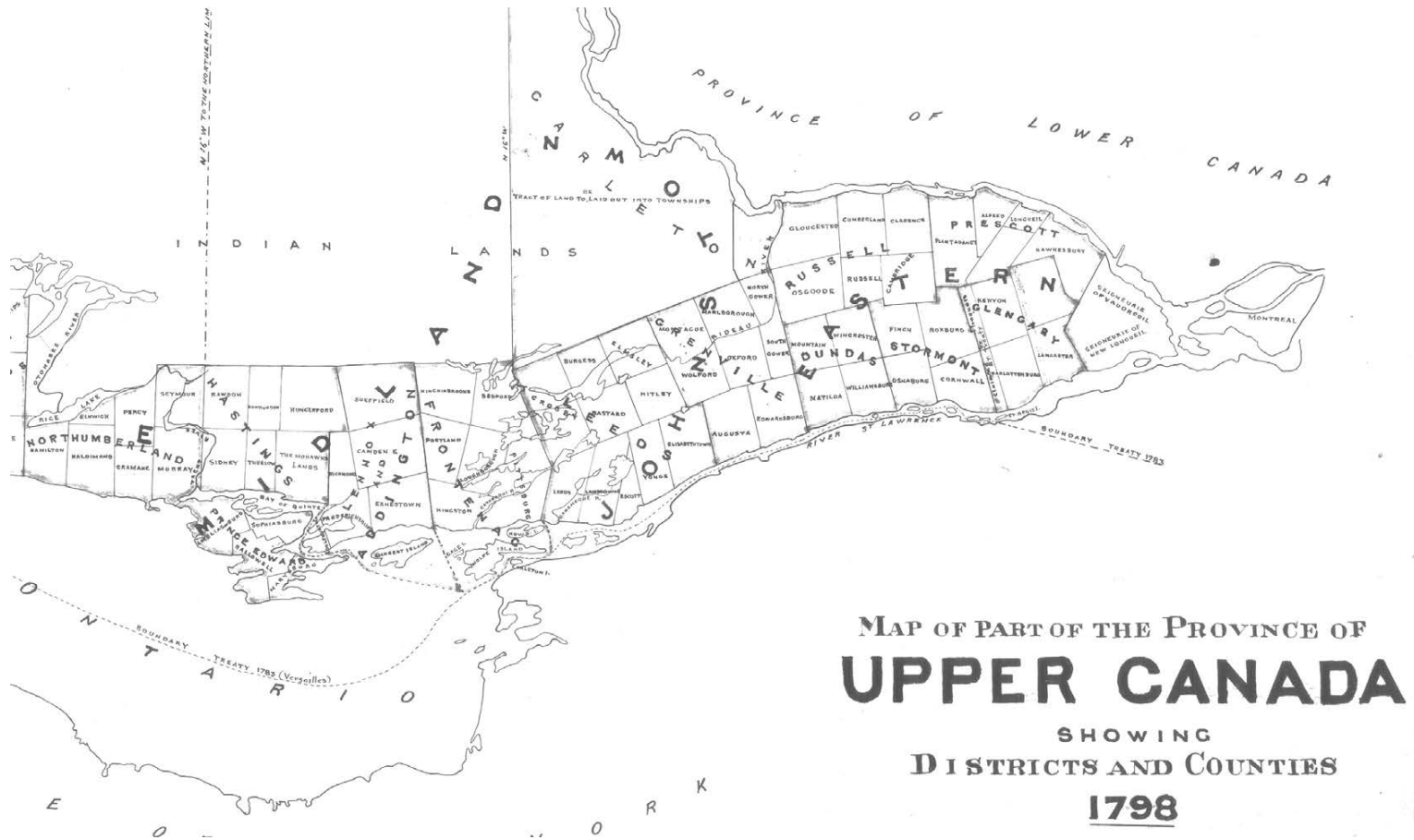
Supposedly, “the persons in attendance have provided only sketchy accounts of the agreements.”²³ The transaction that took place in October of 1783 according to Crawford is as follows:

“...the lands from Toniata or Onagrara River [which runs through modern day Brockville] to a river in the Bay of Quinte within eight leagues of the bottom of the said Bay including all the Islands, extending from the lake back as far as a man can travel in a day.”²⁴

The final measurement was taken to mean the entire peninsula at the Bay of Quinte²⁵. Most of the land was given in exchange for guns, ammunition in the form of gunpowder and balls, enough red cloth to make twelve coats, and finally twelve laced hats. For Mynass’s land, an agreement to clothe his family with a new set of clothes annually so long as he lived was included. This was upheld even after he passed away shortly following the agreement. Two Wampum belts were gifted as well, and it is noted by Crawford that the Mississaugas were “very pleased that the white men were coming to live amongst them”.²⁶

The Crawford Purchase is a treaty of unclear terms. This lack of clarity and confusion is apparent in the preserved

FIGURE 26 | MAP OF THE CRAWFORD PURCHASE



(Library and Archives Canada, 1798)

letters between Canadian officials. An official government document referring to it as “sketchy”, and the lack of an official deed challenge the legitimacy of the contract. As discussed previously in this thesis, the overall understanding of what constitutes land ownership is very different between Indigenous and settler nations. The idea of land treaties between nations is understood to reflect a shared responsibility and right to the land by the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabeg peoples. The terms of this treaty could have been understood by the chiefs present to be similar to the Dish with One Spoon covenant, instead of a treaty that barred access to entire nations. This is almost proven by Crawford’s mention that the Mississaugas were excited to live *amongst* their white neighbours, not that they were excited to be *displaced* by them. The exchange of

THE TREATY OF FORT STANWIX

clothing is symbolic amongst the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabeg, the ammunition and clothing may have been seen as a neighbourly gift on behalf of one nation to others so that they may live amongst each other on the same land peacefully.

Of the Six Nations two had allied with the Americans during their revolution: the Oneidas and Tuscaroras. The other four nations had allied with the Crown. The 1784 Treaty of Fort Stanwix is an example of undue punishment. As the lands were procured from the Mississauga north of the St. Lawrence River for the settlement of the Loyalists and Chief Deserontyon’s community, the Haudenosaunee nations south of the river were forced into signing a treaty that stripped entire nations of their ancestral lands. It was decided that the four British allied nations were to be punished and stripped of their lands. On the 12th of October 1783, the Americans sent three representatives backed by 100 armed men to claim the lands of western New York from the four nations that they considered to have transgressed, claiming that the other two nations would be protected. In attendance were Oliver Wolcott, Richard Butler, and Arthur Lee. Two Haudenosaunee Chiefs, Mohawk Chief Oseraghete

(Aaron Hill) and Seneca Chief Kaiiontwa'kon (Cornplanter) were present as a part of the treaty council. 613 members of the Haudenosaunee nations were present. Although they were outnumbered, the Americans present were there to enforce and conquer. With little choice and a refusal to negotiate the Haudenosaunee were forced to agree to the terms brought forth by the Americans, "To have peace, they would have to recognize that the U.S. had a legitimate claim to sovereignty over Indian lands, return all prisoners of war and agree to land cessions."²⁷ Six Haudenosaunee men were kidnapped and held hostage as a part of the negotiations. On the 22nd of October 1784 the treaty was drawn up and enforced. Few trade goods were given in exchange for the lands and protection by a new nation, the United States of America, to whom the Oneida and Tuscarora Nations were also forced to cede their lands to soon after. The Treaty of Fort Stanwix was opposed by the Six Nations and through perseverance a sliver of land that had once belonged to the Seneca Nation was given back after a decade of protest.²⁸ Although there remains an official document for the Treaty at Fort Stanwix (unlike the Crawford Purchase), there was an even greater injustice that took place. Within one month the vast lands in the St. Lawrence River Valley were stripped from the people who occupied them, making way for centuries of enforced legal and social systems oppressing entire nations that had settled long before them.

This treaty made way for ten townships, directly opposing the towns established on the northern shore. These towns had been divided into lots and sold to potential settlers unlike the northern shoreline which was given byway of grants for those who served in the British army. Capitalists were able to procure entire townships, others were divided into smaller lots to be sold to those of lesser means.²⁹ Settlers on the Canadian shorelines did not come from notably wealthy families or royals, instead they comprised of those with little to their names. The agricultural industry continued to grow and became the predominant economic driver of the region during this time. The settlers cleared acres of land harvesting lumber and developing their towns. In place of the trees; roads, homes, churches, and schools were built, surrounded by monocultured wheat fields.³⁰ The methods by which the land was cleared segmented and developed differed drastically from the Indigenous land practices prevalent amongst earlier Indigenous inhabitants.

ENDNOTES

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FIGURE 27 | BOAT MOORED ON WOLFE ISLAND SHORELINE



5 THE PRESENT SITUATION: REGIONAL CONSERVATION, ECONOMICS, AND ACCESS TO THE LAND

This chapter examines the present state of land use in the Thousand Islands and access to the land. It identifies conservation, agriculture, and the hospitality and tourism industries as major drivers of the region today. The history of conservation and land trusts is presented and local initiatives are identified. The hospitality and tourism industries and their impacts to the economic success of the region are also considered. The chapter concludes with visual documentation of the region.

As a result of urbanization, the desire to protect and preserve the natural landscape has become increasingly important. The industrialization of cities has put a heavy burden on urban environments and the land that surround them. Many view land as a commodity to be bought, sold, and utilized for human benefit. Overconsumption of water and other natural resources that the land provides, has put pressure on the natural environment to produce more. Through limiting human access and providing the necessary attention and care, certain landscapes are able to thrive.

By its nature, conservation is a mechanism of exclusion with a long history of serving those of affluent standing. The idea of requiring a reset from the city, and its industrial life, is reserved for those who can afford to take a break and recharge in the wild. Predominantly, the working class of industrial cities, have had minimal access to green space or natural features. For those living on and working the land outside of city limits, spending time in nature is a way of life as opposed to a curated, manicured experience. In his essay *The Trouble with Wilderness*, William Cronon examines ideas of wilderness, conservation, and the relationship between socio-economic status and cultural ideas surrounding nature. He states, "For many Americans wilderness stands as the last remaining place where civilization, that all too human disease, has not fully infected the earth. It is an island in the polluted sea of urban-industrial modernity, the one place we can turn for escape from our own"¹. Cronon continues to argue that curated conservation land is not a true representation of wilderness, instead he considers them manipulated segments of nature that satisfy the city dweller's itch for a simpler way of life, living on the land. In the United States, the development of national parks runs parallel with the forced migration of Indigenous people onto reserves. As tribes and nations were corralled onto parcels of land, the areas around them were ceded to the United States of America, making way for the new nation to grow and thrive. The most scenic of landscapes becoming designated parkland to be conserved.² In reality these patches of virgin wilderness had been managed and manipulated by the Indigenous people that had previously occupied them.

FIGURE 28 | THOUSAND ISLANDS NATIONAL PARK TRAIL



SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

The innate relationship between humans and the land they inhabit is reciprocal. In their paper *Recognizing Reciprocal Relations to Restore Community Access to Land and Water*, Sibyl Diver et al. highlight the importance of reframing human-nature relationships from one of benefit to one of intrinsic mutual responsibility.³ By reframing perception of land, access does not necessarily lead to depleting the environment, instead access is the driver for environmental care. The paper highlights many cases of community access to land directly benefiting the natural environment through group initiatives.⁴ In Ha'ena Hawaii, the local fishing communities have had a positive impact on fish populations. A sort of familial care is given to parcels of land, the ocean, and the fish themselves, highlighting the rights and responsibilities of the community. The fishers, often specific families, do their best not to overfish, returning a segment of their catch back to the ocean. Families who fish are responsible for sharing some of their yield with the broader community and even the sharks. The power to make decisions about the land comes along with the responsibility for care. Local authorities are given some level of governance, the methods by which people may fish, and the species that may be harvested are determined by them on some level, but they work in tandem with the local fishers, as not to infringe upon their rights. In this case, fish populations are plentiful, managed sustainably and ethically through a shared responsibility.⁵

In another example, a community in Appalachia helped revitalize the watershed and bring life back to their heavily polluted environment. The coal mines and older infrastructure had resulted in acidic runoff and human sewage to pollute the local streams. Several groups worked together to cleanup the streams. As the volunteers worked to purify the orange water, life began to repopulate the streams, and the community felt encouraged by their efforts. More people joined in restoring the land. The residents of the watershed had an increase in water quality, and as a result the rates of disease and illness due

FIGURE 29 | THOUSAND ISLANDS NATIONAL PARK TRAIL MEETS WATER'S EDGE



to the pollution decreased as well.⁶ Community momentum increased as residents saw change happening before their eyes. Coupled with education and responsibility, access became the mechanism by which the land flourished. It can be argued that education and instilling a sense of responsibility in all those who are granted access is the key to ensuring spaces are cared for through human access.

REGIONAL CONSERVATION EFFORTS

Conservation efforts in the Thousand Islands began in the early 1800s when many of the islands were held in a trust for the Mississaugas of Alnwick. Most of which were sold to individuals later that century, predominantly English colonials who propagated a recreation and resort culture that persists today and is one of the major economic drivers of the Thousand Islands region⁷. Into the 1900's more and more of the islands continued to fall into private hands, and several locals urged regional policy makers to reserve several islands to conserve and keep vacant as a communal park space. In 1904 a plot of land by the waterfront was donated to be used for park land, the federal government donated 9 islands as well and through this effort the Thousand Islands National Park was born.⁸ In the past century, over 100 islands and islets have been added to the National Park as far east as Brockville.⁹ This park land was "...the first Canadian national park east of the Rocky Mountains,"¹⁰ offering hiking trails and campsites both on the islands as well as the shores that overlook them.

In the past few decades more and more land designated as ecologically significant has been added to the National Park. In the 1980s park governance began to concentrate more on protecting the native flora and fauna, both in and out of the water.¹¹ Bird species such as the Henslow's sparrow, black tern, red shouldered hawk, least bittern, and the short-eared

FIGURE 30 | WOLFE ISLAND COMMUNAL CANNAL DOCK



owl, each of whose populations are dwindling, regularly migrate through the Islands.¹² In the early 2000s the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), bounded and designated the Frontenac Arch Biosphere, which includes the Thousand Islands and surrounding area, as a World Biosphere Reserve¹³. Most recently the Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust¹⁴, a local initiative, has been propagated as a means of further protecting the national landscape into the future.

The history of land trusts in Europe goes back to ancient Rome, 'the commons,' whose care had been entrusted to specific people by heads of state, allowed for countrysides or forests outside of city limits to be tended to. Modern land trusts in 19th century Britain worked to help mitigate industrialization and overdevelopment of the island nation.¹⁵ The Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust has been working to preserve the natural landscape in the watershed region, along with a sister organization on the American side of the border. The trust aims "to permanently protect land in the Thousand Islands Watershed region through acquisition or conservation agreements, and to achieve good land management through stewardship agreements and education."¹⁶ Over 1 000 acres are in care of the land trust, and up to 5000 acres have been conserved by purchase and easements, and donation. However, this number includes area given to partner organizations such as the Thousand Islands National Park, Ontario Nature, Charleston Lake Provincial Park, and the Nature Conservancy of Canada. The trust suggests that around 90% of the wetlands in the watershed region have been lost in the last 200 years, leading to significant flooding in the islands.¹⁷ The land that has been deemed ecologically fragile has become virtually inaccessible to the public to better preserve the lands natural character and keep the native flora and fauna safe, leaving room for any species of concern to thrive. In the Thousand Islands, flora from the Appalachia, Atlantic coast, Everglades,

Northern Forest, and even desert plants such as cactus can be found regionally. The islands are an integral navigation route, for flora and fauna. With the Great Lakes to the west, and increasing urbanization to the east, the preservation of the natural migration route is necessary for the health of the environment.¹⁸

When lands are entrusted to the organization, individuals are able to ensure that the land will be protected and preserved forever. Increasingly, individuals who are concerned about increasing urbanization or development in the Islands and the watershed at large, are donating their properties, and occasionally smaller segments. The land trust functions as a charity organization and land donated to the trust is exempt from property taxes.

ACCESS TO NATURE

Although highly valuable, the conservation efforts of the land trust and even the initial formation of the national park, are examples of exclusionary mechanisms put in place. In theory the formation of the national park acted as a means by which to make more space for existing property owners who benefited by gaining more area for their recreational use without needing to purchase more land. The land trust acts as a way to ensure privately owned property will be protected and preserved, kept out of the hands of strangers who do not share similar sentiments to the existing residents. Owners of the land often donate large segments of the land to the trust, while occupying or potentially farming the land sustainably.

It can be argued that the Islands and the national parks are accessible to all members of the public. There are several publicly accessible docks along the waterfront. Any individual with access to a canoe, or kayak can potentially get to the Islands this way. A few small businesses offer canoe and kayak rentals for tourists, and some even offer kayak tours. Ferry

services connect Howe and Wolfe Islands to the mainland, and agricultural lots with a long history of presence occupy a large portion of these islands. In the summer months, the trails and campsites in the National Park are heavily used by the public. However, the islands are much more easily accessed by those of affluent backgrounds. With the high cost of land in the Islands and along the shore, those with the ability to purchase lots and maintain them are able to benefit the most from the scenic landscape and conservational amenities. The high cost of docking fees in the area similarly acts as a barrier. As the cost of land increases, and farmers are being pushed out to make way for luxury homes and more profitable developments. The land trust helps combat this.

TOURISM AND ECONOMIC STIMULATION

The Thousand Islands are a significant economic driver to the region, the hospitality industry has a long history of presence in the Islands adjacent cities of Kingston, Gananoque, and Brockville. In the early 19th century, the Thousand Islands became the backdrop for religious retreat. In 1875 a Methodist campground was founded on Wellesley Island“... where families could enjoy both spiritual and physical renewal.”¹⁹ The camp was tremendously successful. Within two decades over 500 cottages and a hotel were built, along with several public amenities. The camps successor, Thousand Island Park, is home to a variety of community organizations that similarly aid in *physical and spiritual renewal*. Wellesley Island is also home to the Thousand Island State Park with its trails and a campground. A wellness center and yoga studio based on the mainland regularly host events on the island. The international border lies between Hill and Wellesley Islands, and they are both infrastructurally connected through bridges and a major highway, resulting in higher traffic. Wolfe Island, which is connected through ferry services is also home to a few hotels and a yoga retreat is hosted annually.

According to the Thousand Islands Visitor Center, about \$84 million (CAD) was generated on average by tourists each year between 2015 and 2018.²⁰ The Shorelines Casino Thousand Islands generated \$257 975 of income for Leeds and the Thousand Islands Township, and the Town of Gananoque each in 2021. The casino has generated over \$30 million for both the township and the town of Gananoque since its opening in 2002. These funds pale in comparison to the income generated on the American side of the border. Tourism to the Thousand Islands generated \$574.8 million (USD) in 2019. \$173 million came from costs associated with seasonal second homes, and lodging accounted for another \$84 million.²¹ Travelers spent nearly \$35 million on recreational activities and \$85 million on food and beverage. The beauty and grandeur of the landscape is a significant reason for the economic success. The heavy traffic and tourism south of the river due to a larger population has created a massive income opportunity for the tourism industry. The hospitality sector that provides services to meet the high demand and businesses that cater to the needs of affluent seasonal residents allow for stimulation to the economy and accounted for 8863 jobs in 2019²².

ACCESS TO HOUSING

In recent years concerns surrounding the affordability of housing has greatly affected the region. Homelessness has become a pressing issue, and the high cost of housing has led to newer housing developments to attracting buyers from larger cities, where the median cost for a detached home is double. Longtime residents of Kingston and the surrounding region have noticed the large influx of Canadians migrating from the Greater Toronto Area to combat the recent rise in cost of living. Over the past decade, housing affordability has been a key factor in municipal elections.

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic caused serious disruption in the economy, turbulence and overcrowding in crisis shelters led to more unhoused people living on the street. The need for social distancing to mitigate the spread of disease led to the existence of an encampment at Belle Park, in Kingston's Rideau district by the Cataraqui River. The absence of housing and access to beds at crisis shelters led campers to pitch tents. Within months, a secondary crisis had formed. As early as April, city officials began advising campers to vacate, but without any place to vacate to, the encampment only grew. Eviction notices were delivered to campers in the park, the local police force was called upon as well to assist in clearing the park of its new inhabitants. Unfortunately, without adequate space to house those experiencing homelessness, the city had to find some sort of alternative support. The eviction notices circulated instructed campers to vacate by early June, June turned into July.²³ While juggling the public health crisis, the city managed to open an Integrated Care Hub to provide food and other support but not physical shelter. Of those experiencing homelessness in 2018, 78% cited welfare as a primary income source.²⁴ The funds required to rent a one bedroom apartment in Kingston exceed the monthly income of a couple on welfare²⁵, units that are subsidised or offer a rent-geared to income model are few and far between. The Mayor's Task Force on Housing reports, "... there is a shortage of nearly 3,900 units with rent suitable for households in the lowest income quintile. For all households about 14% or 7,000 households are in core housing need," meaning, that over 30% of their income goes to rent.²⁶

Concerns surrounding affordability, and access to housing have dominated the most recent mayoral election for Kingston and the Islands, each candidate addressed housing and affordability.²⁷ Candidates considered taking different approaches to housing development, by changing zoning regulations to better adapt to the need for housing, and adding more mixed-use buildings, increasing density,²⁸ and working to increase the number of rent geared to income apartments in the city overall.

The 2021 Results of the Urban Kingston Point-in-Time Count, is a report conducted by United Way; Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox and Addington, that surveyed individuals and families that have experienced homelessness in the region. The report includes anonymous accounts of people who are currently unhoused, "...those staying in emergency shelters, domestic violence shelters, transitional housing, service hubs, police custody, detox programs, hospitals and those staying outdoors in parks, makeshift shelters, on the streets, and in other public areas."²⁹ Over the past decade many initiatives have aimed to help those experiencing homelessness. Unfortunately, shortages of beds in crisis shelters and transitional housing has left many in dire need of a home. The data collected shows that only 22% of people surveyed are longtime residents of the region, and nearly 50% are from elsewhere in Ontario.³⁰ Of the individuals surveyed, 23% identified as Indigenous, and another 8% had Indigenous ancestry.³¹ The combined 31% shows a clear case of inequity, when compared to the representation of Indigenous people in the region of only 4%.³² It is apparent that the problem of homelessness is in part an Indigenous issue, and must be deeply connected to the historical land transfer and displacement of the nations that previously occupied the region.

VISUAL DOCUMENTATION

The following section of this chapter offers a visual study of the Thousand Islands depicting the land use and occupation of the land at present. The section highlights visual documentation of hospitality, transportation, agriculture, and residential land use in the region.

HOSPITALITY

FIGURE 31 | HOTEL WOLFE ISLAND



Hotel Wolfe Island (previously the General Wolfe Inn) boasts a central location in Marysville. It is an example of the historic presence of the hospitality industry in the islands. The hotel has undergone a makeover under new management. The hotel now a vibrant home for fresh local food and musical talent.



FIGURE 32 | KINGSTON WATERFRONT HOTELS



Proximity to the Thousand Islands has aided in fortifying the hospitality industry in neighbouring cities and townships. Cities such as Kingston, Gananoque, and Brockville each have several hotels and inns directly looking over the Islands. This image, taken from the Wolfe Island Ferry, highlights five hotels which can be seen along the Kingston waterfront.



RESIDENCE INN BY MARRIOTT



DELTA HOTELS



THE PRINCE GEORGE HOTEL



CONFEDERATION PLACE HOTEL



HOLIDAY INN

FIGURE 33 | VIEW OF THE PRINCE GEORGE HOTEL AND FOUR POINTS BY SHERATON FROM THE WATER



FIGURE 34 | HOLIDAY INN FACING 'KINGSTON 1000 ISLANDS CRUISES' DOCK



FIGURE 35 | KINGSTON WATERFRONT MARINA AND 1000 ISLANDS CRUISE DOCKS



Proximity to the Thousand Islands has aided in fortifying the hospitality industry in neighbouring cities and townships. Cities such as Kingston, Gananoque, and Brockville each have several hotels and inns directly looking over the Islands. This image, taken from the Wolfe Island Ferry, highlights five hotels which can be seen along the Kingston waterfront.



TRANSPORTATION - FERRY

FIGURE 36 | WOLFE ISLAND FERRY



FIGURE 37 | WOLFE ISLAND FERRY DOCK SCHEDULE AT DAWSON'S POINT



Regular ferry services connect Howe Island and Wolfe Island to the mainland in Kingston, Ontario. A third ferry connects Wolfe Island to Cape Vincent, New York. These ferry services connect Island residents to broader city networks, giving them access to many services which are not found on the islands.

FIGURE 38 | CONSTRUCTION WOLFE ISLAND FERRY DOCK IN KINGSTON



FIGURE 39 | CONSTRUCTION SIGNAGE AT MARYSVILLE FERRY DOCK ON WOLFE ISLAND



A new fully electric ferry will connect Wolfe Island and Kingston soon. The ferry named The Wolfe Islander III is currently in storage awaiting construction to finish at the Wolfe Island Ferry docks in Marysville and Kingston in order to service the new craft.

FIGURE 40 | HOWE ISLAND FERRY DOCK IN KINGSTON



FIGURE 41 | WOLFE ISLAND FERRY DOCK AT DAWSON'S POINT ON WOLFE ISLAND



TRANSPORTATION - BOATS

FIGURE 42 | CANOES ON PUBLIC BOAT LAUNCH IN KINGSTON



FIGURE 43 | AHOY BOAT RENTALS IN KINGSTON



Ahoy Boat Rentals is a central canoe and kayak rental business in Kingston Ontario, such businesses offer hourly and daily rentals to tourists. They can be found across the shoreline in other cities, some even offer kayak tours through the islands.

FIGURE 44 | WOLFE ISLAND BOAT CLUB



The water is a thoroughway for many island residents and tourists. Access to the land via canoe and kayak is only one way to get around. Most Islanders own personal boats as a means of transportation. Several boat and yacht clubs can also be found in the region.

FIGURE 45 | SPEED BOAT



FIGURE 46 | DECK BOAT



FIGURE 47 | SAILBOAT



This location's windy conditions make it a prime spot for sailing. Kingston is the freshwater sailing capital of the world. This prime location is between the shores of Kingston and Wolfe Island, away from the island clusters farther upstream.

AGRICULTURE

FIGURE 48 | AGRICULTURAL LAND ON WOLFE ISLAND

Wolfe and Howe Islands mainly comprise of agricultural communities. In the previous century, dairy was the main resource farmed on the land of Wolfe Island, however only two dairy farms remain. Now other staples such as corn, wheat, and soybeans are farmed locally. Farmers have also received government incentives to have wind turbines installed on the land, generating sustainable electric power. These turbines large footprints limit growing potential on agricultural lots.



FIGURE 49 | WOLFE ISLAND LIVESTOCK



FIGURE 50 | WOLFE ISLAND AGRICULTURAL LAND WITH WINDTURBINES IN BACKGROUND.



FIGURE 51 | HORSE GRAZING ON WOLFE ISLAND FARM



FIGURE 52 | WOLFE ISLAND FARM



RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE

FIGURE 53 | RESIDENCES IN MARYSVILLE



The Thousand Islands has a diverse array of residential architecture found throughout the landscape. Below are two typical Marysville residences. Outside of the town, large country lots are found. These country lots are typical of Howe and Wolfe Islands. Howe Island has a larger concentration of large homes and mansions especially along the shorelines.

FIGURE 54 | TYPICAL RESIDENCE OUTSIDE OF MARYSVILLE



FIGURE 55 | WOLFE ISLAND HOME IN MARYSVILLE NEXT TO MARINA



FIGURE 56 | VIEW OF HOWE ISLAND HOMES FROM GRASS CREEK PARK IN KINGSTON



FIGURE 57 | VIEW OF HOWE ISLAND HOMES FROM THE WATER



FIGURE 58 | TYPICAL SMALL SCALE THOUSAND ISLANDS COTTAGES



FIGURE 59 | THOUSAND ISLANDS COTTAGE



FIGURE 60 | NAPOLEONS HAT COTTAGE



FIGURE 61 | VICTORIAN COTTAGE



FIGURE 62 | WATERFRONT MANSION UNDER CONSTRUCTION



FIGURE 63 | EXAMPLE OF WATERFRONT MANSION FACING THE ISLANDS FROM THE MAINLAND



FIGURE 64 | WATERFRONT MANSION WITH INTEGRATED BOATHOUSE



FIGURE 65 | WATERFRONT MANSION CLOSEUP



Lack of zoning regulations at the birth of the regional cottaging industry has resulted in a variety of cottage architecture, this lack of cohesion offers its own unique charm to the region. Since then, strict zoning regulations limit the opportunity to build new structures on island real estate. Yet in some cases, municipal zoning regulations are disregarded in favour of development. In others, buildings which may have suffered significant damage from fire or water damage may be rebuilt upon the same building footprint. The influx of wealthy residents looking for waterfront real estate has caused tension between generational farmers and their new neighbours who prefer not to have views of agricultural lots.

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FIGURE 66 | THOUSAND ISLANDS NATIONAL PARK TRAIL MEETS THE ST. LAWRENCE RIVER



6

APPLICATION OF THE GREAT LAW OF PEACE IN REGIONAL GOVERNANCE

This section considers the potential for applying principles of the Great Law of Peace to evaluate the relationships between governing bodies in the Thousand Islands. It considers natural pairings of governing actors and analyses the existing relationships at a variety of scales. This section considers existing management plans and bylaws presently in affect, and outlines relevant sections which affect interaction between actors.

ONTARIO PROVINCIAL POLICY STATEMENT

In May of 2020 the provincial government of Ontario released an updated planning policy statement as a subsection of the Planning Act. These guidelines triggered re-assessment and updates to zoning and strategic plans of regional authorities. Although the policy does not apply to federally owned land within the province it is still considered a best practice to abide by the policies instated by the province. The introductory segment of the policy includes a direct call to action which drove many municipalities to engage more heavily with the Indigenous communities. Throughout the statement engagement and evaluation of the relationship between municipal governments, agencies, and Indigenous communities is repeatedly emphasized. The process and procedure by which Indigenous communities should be engaged and how relationships between agencies could be analyzed is not directly indicated in the Province's official statement. This section suggests a method by which Indigenous heritage and governance could be engaged in a respectful and impactful way.

Relevant sections of the *Ontario Provincial Policy Statement* include:

The Province's rich cultural diversity is one of its distinctive and defining features. Indigenous communities have a unique relationship with the land and its resources, which continues to shape the history and economy of the Province today. Ontario recognizes the unique role Indigenous communities have in land use planning and development, and the contribution of Indigenous communities' perspectives and traditional knowledge to land use planning decisions. The Province recognizes the importance of consulting with Aboriginal communities on planning matters that may affect their section 35 Aboriginal or treaty rights. Planning authorities are encouraged to build constructive, cooperative relationships through meaningful engagement with Indigenous communities to facilitate knowledge-sharing in land use planning processes and inform decision-making.¹

SECTION 1.2

A coordinated, integrated and comprehensive approach should be used when dealing with planning matters within municipalities, across lower, single and/or upper-tier municipal boundaries, and with other orders of government, agencies and boards.²

SECTION 1.2.2

Planning authorities shall engage with Indigenous communities and coordinate on land use planning matters.³

SECTION 2.6.1

Significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved.⁴

SECTION 4.3

This Provincial Policy Statement shall be implemented in a manner that is consistent with the recognition and affirmation of existing Aboriginal and treaty rights in section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982.⁵

SECTION 4.8

The Province, in consultation with municipalities, Indigenous communities, other public bodies and stakeholders shall identify performance indicators for measuring the effectiveness of some or all of the policies. The Province shall monitor their implementation, including reviewing performance indicators concurrent with any review of this Provincial Policy Statement.⁶

FIGURE 67 | THE STATE OF WHOLENESS

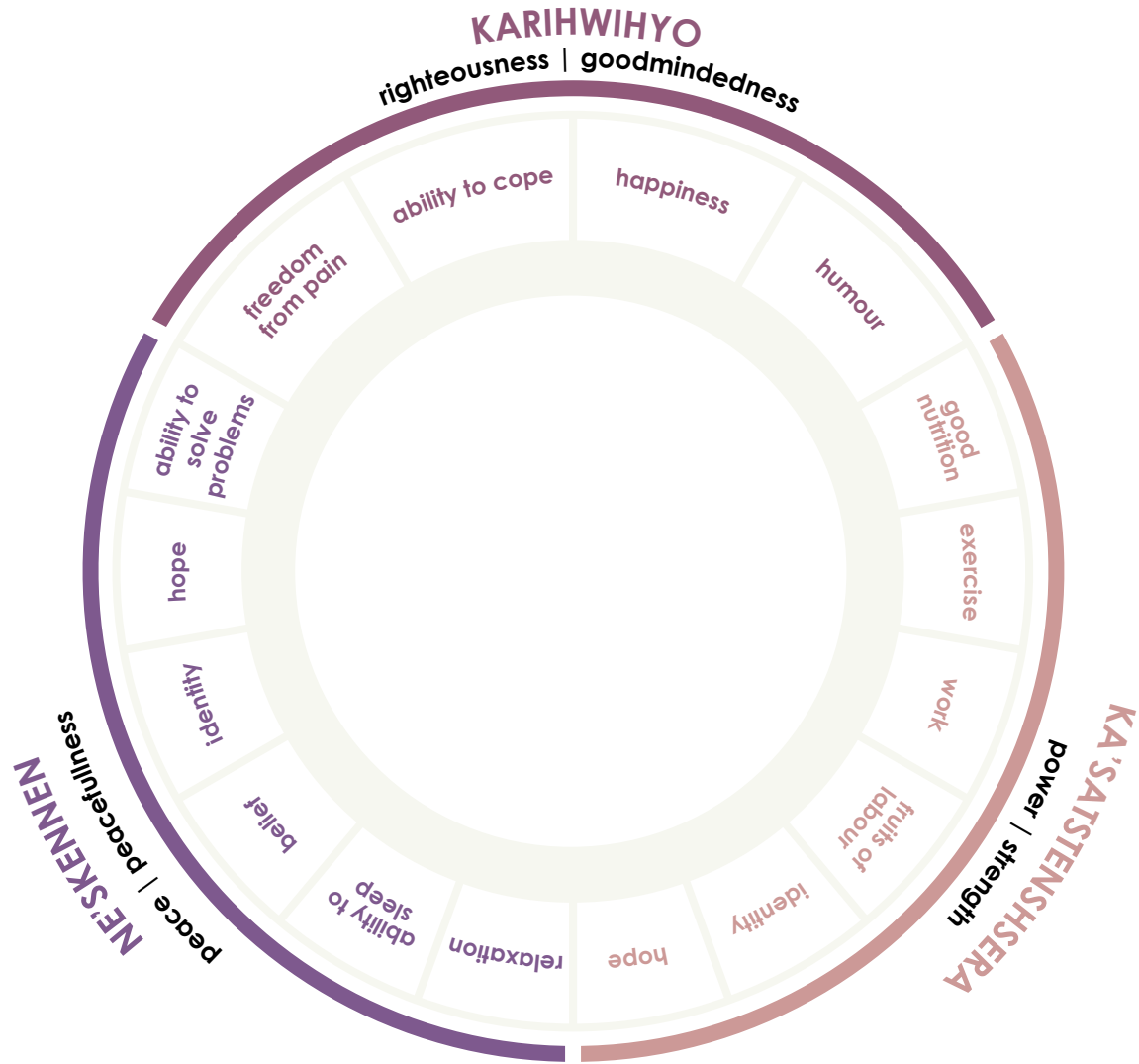
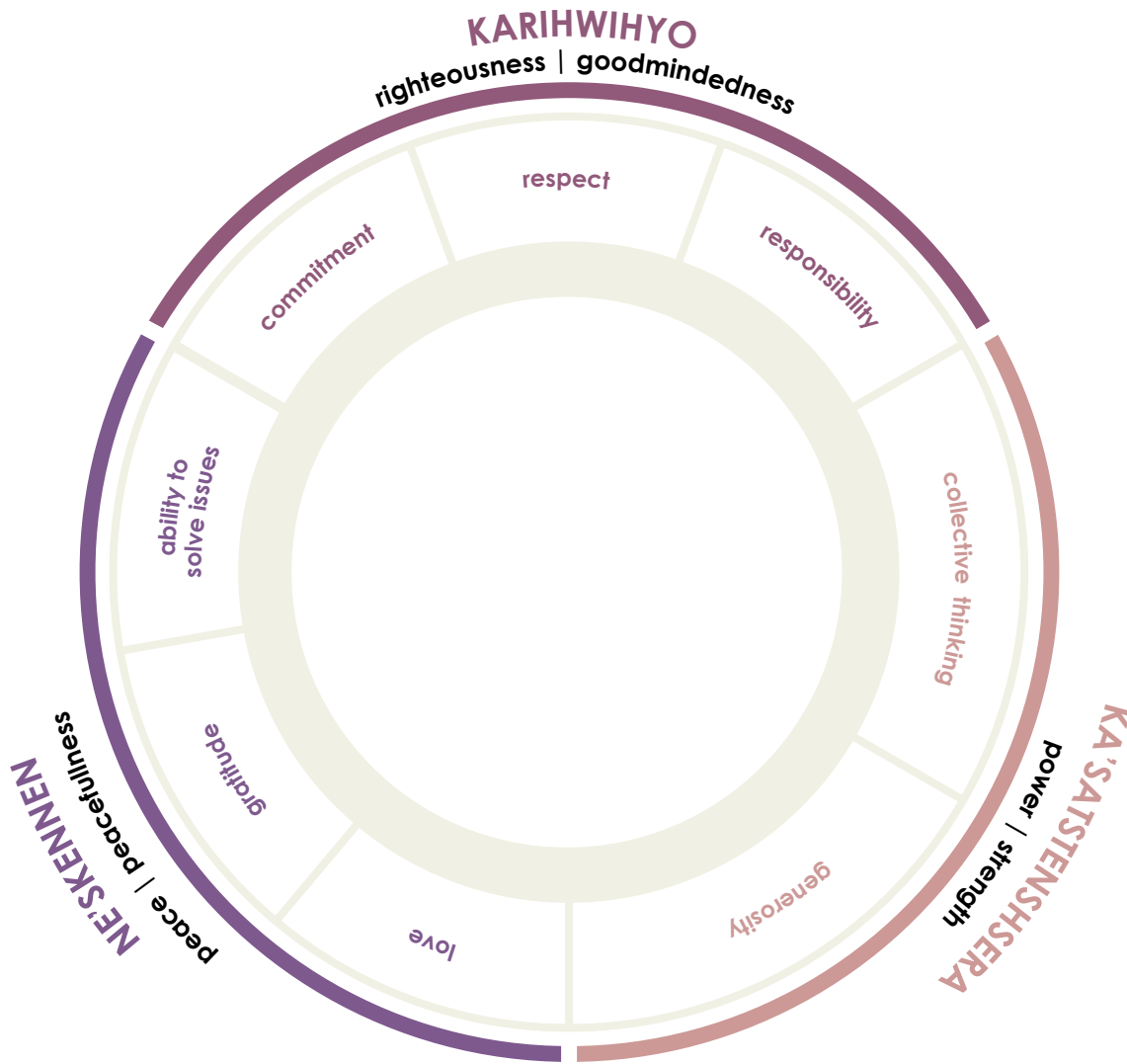


FIGURE 68 | THE STATE OF GOOD RELATIONSHIPS



The Haudenosaunee Environmental Protection Process (HEPP) breaks down each of the three principles, righteousness, peace, and power into subcategories to assess the health of each actor, referred to as their state of wholeness. These principles similarly breakdown into subcategories to assess the health of relationships between different actors. In this section the relationships between each actor in the region will be evaluated.

Brenda E. Lafrance and James E. Costello. "The Haudenosaunee Environmental Protection Process (HEPP): Reinforcing the Three Principles of Goodmindedness, Peacefulness, and Strength to Protect the Natural World" Preserving Tradition and Understanding the Past: Papers from the Conference on Iroquois Research, (2010) 65 http://www.nysm.nysed.gov/common/nysm/files/nysmrecord-vol1_0.pdf

FIGURE 69 | PAIRINGS OF THE GRAND COUNCIL

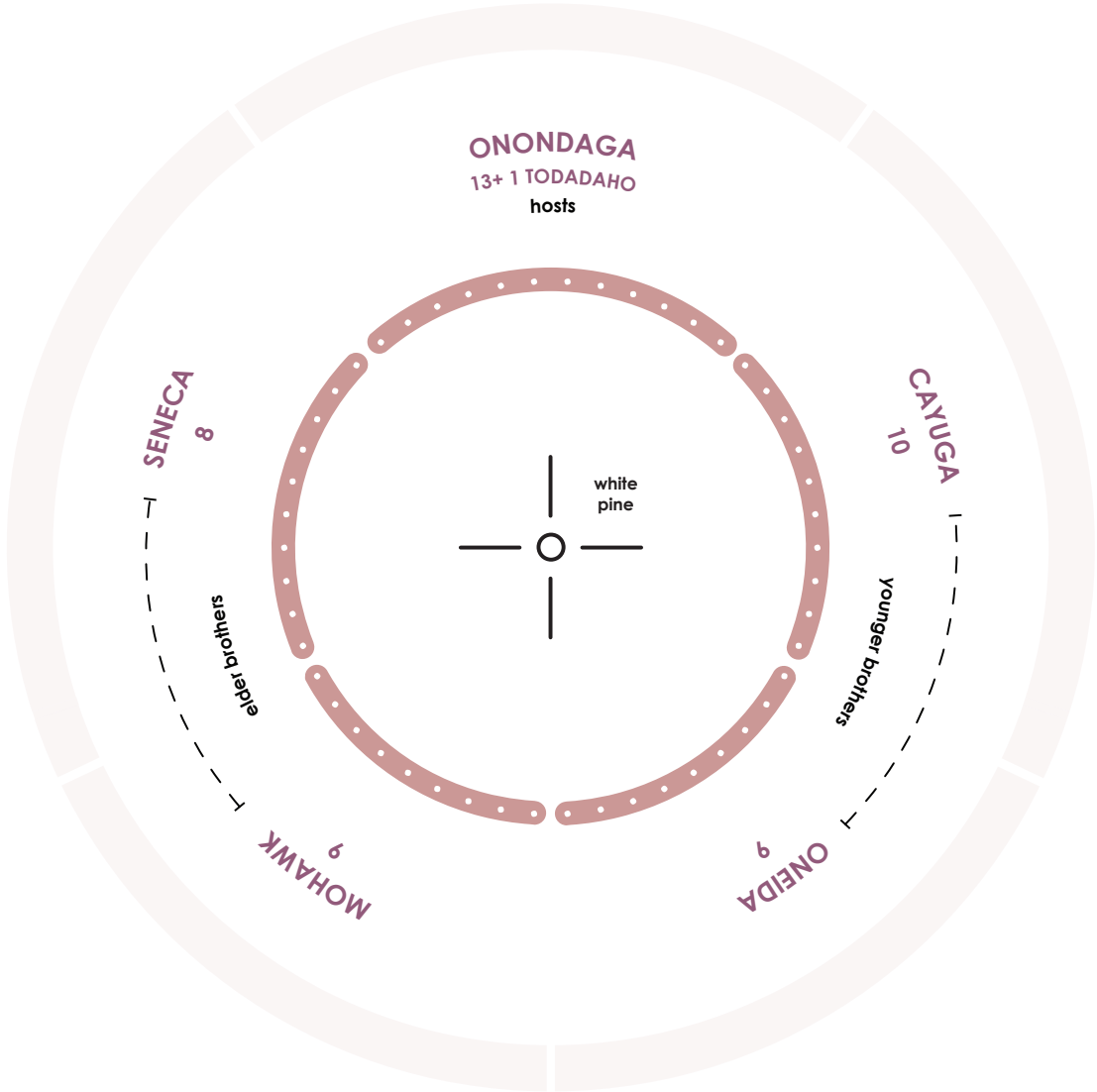
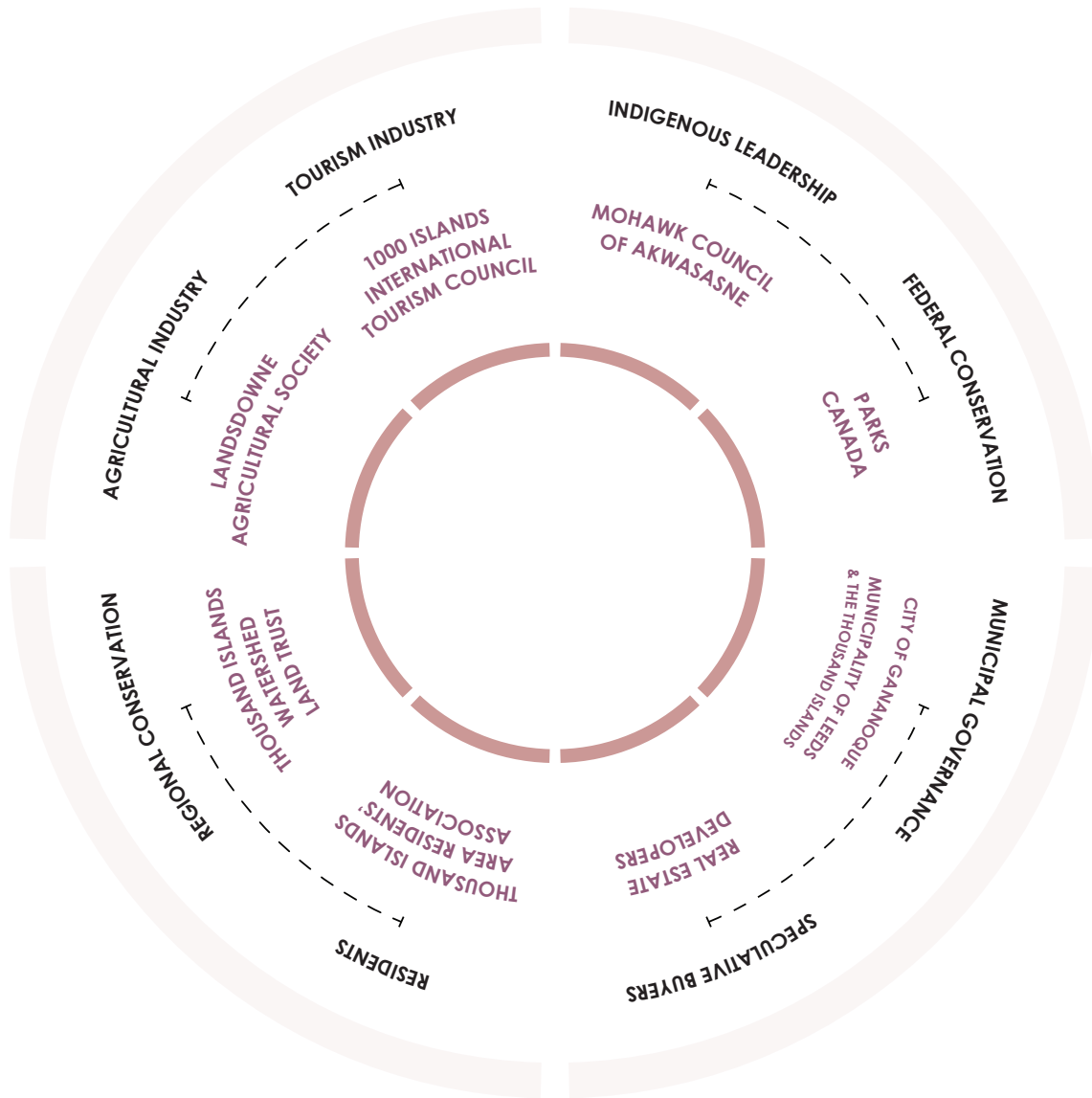


FIGURE 70 | PAIRINGS OF REGIONAL ACTORS



As pairings of nations are made in the formation of the grand council, pairs can similarly be made of regional governing bodies.



Each group has deliberated and come to consensus, appointing a speaker for clarity's sake.



Each speaker voices their group's opinion to the other group. Both take one another's concerns into consideration.



Each group adjusts their opinion as a result of the points brought forth and opinions begin to merge.



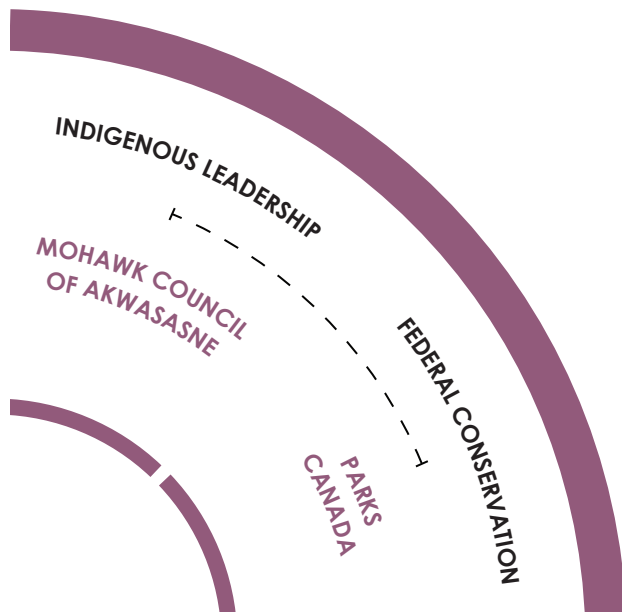
A new form of consensus is reached and both groups have **become of one mind.**

The Grand Council of the Haudenosaunee outlined in the constitution describes the methods by which a council of fifty representatives may find consensus on problems at hand. The process by which the nations of the Haudenosaunee have historically reached consensus may be applied to the relationships between key actors of the region, as a means to address the problem of future development.

In previous chapters, a long history of presence and inhabitation to the region has been established. Actors with different philosophical and political ideals surrounding land ownership and occupation, are actively at work in developing management plans and legal regulations surrounding potential development. In the Thousand Islands, several organisations at varying scales both national and regional, offer systems of governance. By analysing the existing relationships between the key actors, pairs of committees may be made, as the nations of the council are divided into *Elder Brothers* and *Younger Brothers*. Considering the practicality of building upon existing relationships allows for a higher likelihood of cohesion, eight actors are identified and as such, this thesis suggests that the following pairs should be considered:

- 1 The Haudenosaunee and Regional Conservation Authorities**
- 2 Residents and Regional Conservation**
- 3 Regional Governance and Speculative Buyers**
- 4 The Agriculture and the Tourism Industries**

INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP FEDERAL CONSERVATION



The largest scale of governance considered in this thesis is the national scale. The Government of Canada's *Parks Canada Agency* works nationally to protect and conserve culturally significant portions of land including historic sites, and terrestrial and marine conservation areas. This agency is active in the Thousand Islands within the grounds of the Thousand Islands National Park. At a national scale, Parks Canada continues to build upon the relationship that the Nation of Canada has developed with the nations that preceded it, including the Haudenosaunee. The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne and Parks Canada have developed a collaborative relationship in support of traditional ecological knowledge in park management. The Mohawk Council and Parks Canada began working together regarding parklands farther east of the Thousand Islands. This relationship has grown to include consultation between the council and Parks Canada, as future management plans are developed in the Thousand Islands, in consideration of the long history of Haudenosaunee presence along the St. Lawrence River and in the Thousand Islands.⁷

The relationship between the Akwesasne Council and Parks Canada began in 2007 marked by the Smokey Fire Ceremony on Grenadier Island. Park staff and members from the Mohawk community camped out on the land.⁸ Ever since, the Mohawks of the Akwesasne have been consulted in Parks Canada's official management plans of the Thousand Islands National Park and other islands of parkland downstream. Each year, the Mohawk community at Akwesasne has been invited to help manage the white-tailed deer population in the Islands⁹ in effort to preserve the pitch pine¹⁰, one of Canada's rarest

tree species.¹¹ Parks Canada has also consulted the Akwesasne community in choosing plant species in efforts to increase local access to the Indigenous community.

In 2017 Canada celebrated the 150th anniversary of Confederation. Several celebratory programs and events were held across the country. A statement released by Parks Canada in June of 2017 states “...the history of this land and the contributions of its people present a rich tapestry and date back far beyond 150 years. We recognize that Indigenous Peoples have inhabited these lands since time immemorial.”¹² That summer, the Thousand Islands National Park Visitor Centre became the setting for an event that showcased Indigenous art and culture. Presenters showcased stories through spoken word, dance, and song, as well as an exhibit titled ‘Voices of the Akwesasne’¹³ comprising of several video vignettes that reflected the relationship between the Mohawk community and the Islands. Other exhibitions have also been displayed in the visitors’ centre including an exhibition titled *We Are From Akwesasne* in 2008. Events such as a youth camp and elder’s tours of the islands have taken place as well as an accessible pass that excuses the community at Akwesasne from paying for camping, mooring/launching, or parking in the park.¹⁴ Overall the collaboration between the Mohawk community at Akwesasne and Parks Canada has been more productive than other local actors. This relationship easily reflects the principle of goodmindedness through commitment, respect, and responsibility. With active consultation, some programming, and an interest between parties for collaboration, it appears that the Mohawk Council at Akwesasne and Parks Canada have had a relatively successful relationship and can be used as an example in how common environmental concern has brought two of the region’s actors together.

Most recently, the *Thousand Islands National Park Management Plan* released in May 2022, outlines the objectives of the park’s management and key-strategies for the next decade. One of the four key strategies outlined in the plan “... aims to develop new experiences that immerse both island and mainland visitors in the unique ecology of the area and the rich cultures of Indigenous peoples.”¹⁵ The plan seeks to build upon the relationship between the *Mohawk Council of Akwesasne* and includes a forward by the Environmental Services Manager. Objectives 2.3 and 4.1 each outline targets for the decade to come in collaboration between the

Mohawk Council of Akwesasne and The Thousand Islands National Park. The relationship between both actors demonstrates a common commitment, respect, and responsibility for both one another and the land. The underlying generosity and collective thinking, that took place in order to complete the plan and its previous drafts is apparent. Ultimately, the ability to address love, gratitude, and finally the ability to solve issues will be seen over the next decade as the plan unfolds.

“We must work together to strengthen our relationships. We maintain peace amongst each other by moving forward with intentions grounded in a good mind. This management plan sets out key intentions for the future of Thousand Islands National Park. Indigenous people comprise less than 5% of the world’s population and protect 80% of global biodiversity (The World Bank, 2008). Herein lies the importance of collaboration that traverses cultural boundaries because complex problems require complex solutions that only diverse minds can bring to life. Furthermore, we must protect and engage with these landscapes, as kin, because they are here to care for us as we are here to care for them – our future depends on it.”¹⁶

Abraham Francis

Environmental Services Manager
Mohawk Council of Akwesasne

THE THOUSAND ISLANDS NATIONAL PARK

“Parks Canada works closely with Indigenous groups across the country. In the spirit of reconciliation, research in Thousand Islands National Park is conducted in a supportive manner with the Mohawks of Akwesasne. The Mohawks determine if research projects incorporate their priorities and traditional ecological knowledge components, contextual Indigenous worldviews, ethics, values and processes. The Parks Canada Research Coordinator will assist in making connections with the Mohawks of Akwesasne.”¹⁷

MOHAWKS COUNCIL OF AKWESASNE

“The Environment Program’s mission is to achieve Sken:nen for all of creation by undertaking programs, projects, and services that respect, protect and preserve the natural world. The staff work to fulfill their responsibility to the people and all creation by operating the Environment Program with a goal to achieve a clean and healthy environment in accordance with the traditions and culture of Akwesasro:non, thereby promoting Sken:nen”¹⁸

Relevant objectives and tasks from the *Thousand Islands National Park Management Plan*:

OBJECTIVE 2.3

Visitor experiences are enhanced as visitors discover Thousand Islands National Park as a place of Indigenous cultures and histories.

TARGETS

- *By 2025, new programs and products highlighting Indigenous cultures and the essence of place are developed in collaboration with Indigenous partners.*
- *By 2030, Indigenous language is prominent on park signage through a graduated signage replacement plan.*
- *By 2030, visitors have a minimum awareness of regional Indigenous and treaty history. For others, deeper learning experiences and programming are available.²⁰*

OBJECTIVE 4.1

Indigenous involvement in Thousand Islands National Park is increased.

TARGETS

- *By 2025, existing relationships with Indigenous groups are formalized and deepened.*
- *Relationship-building efforts are increased with other local Indigenous groups.*
- *Parks Canada continues to meet regularly with the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne and their departments to discuss various aspects of park management.*
- *Parks Canada continues to collaborate with the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne and the Mohawk Nation of Chiefs on ecological restoration projects, restoring connection to the land, and preserving cultural sites.*
- *By 2025, joint employment and tourism opportunities are explored and implemented with the Mohawks of Akwesasne.¹⁹*

RESIDENTS AND REGIONAL CONSERVATION

TWILT

The Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust (TWILT) works on the Canadian side of the border to protect and conserve the lands of the Thousand Islands watershed region, a sister organization *The Thousand Islands Land Trust (TILT)* works on the American side of the river border.²¹ The land trust works toward protecting and preserving the environment of the watershed. Land is acquired mainly through donations of private land and conservation agreements with conservation authorities at work locally.²² As the wetlands and marshes have been lost to development, the Islands have become prone to flooding in recent years. The land trust works to protect endangered species as well as species of concern found in the islands. Another major goal of the land trust is education and learning. Presentations pertaining mainly to environmental science and local heritage are given regularly and continued online over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic.²³ The land trust's members and volunteers are predominantly residents and members of the broader community concerned with conservation and preservation of the Islands and the watershed region. Volunteers are active in the stewardship of the lands conserved within the trust. When lands donated include cabins or other structures volunteers work to repair and maintain them.²⁴ In some cases landowners may donate portions of their lands to the trust while sustainably farming the land. To many, donation of land to the trust ensures that the regions' character will be preserved and maintained. To many landowners who have lived and worked on the lands generationally, financial concerns and the inability to keep up costly repairs are a driving factor to their donations, (to keep land away from developers or speculative buyers permanently, which threaten the present character of the region.)



TIARA

Thousand Islands Area Residents' Association (TIARA) is composed of landowners on the Canadian side of the river border working to maintain environmental and cultural ecosystems at work in the Thousand Islands²⁵. Preservation of the regions beauty and character are of great importance to many landowners as well as protecting the environment into the future. The resident's association not only has a history in aiding to form the first official plans in several riverfront municipalities, it continues to stay involved in mitigating any development that may cause any disturbance to the status-quo. Several requests for zoning-variances or completed projects that directly impact the visual or auditory character of the region have been halted such as the building of floating cottages, mega-docks, or in one instance a go-kart track. TIARA has also raised concerns surrounding several buildings which have fallen into disrepair.²⁶

TIARA was founded in 1975 in protest to federal plans to expand the Thousand Islands National Park. Parks Canada had been granted a budget for expansion with disregard to residents' objections. With plans to acquire thirty square miles of privately owned land over the course of five years, concerned landowners formed TIARA, and within six months 1500 members pressured the federal government to reconsider their plans of expansion. Parks Canada's land acquisition processes in aiming to expropriate private property were put into question, and a committee to address local concerns was established.²⁷ This began a consultation process between Parks Canada and residents. TIARA acted as a consultant to a group of residents in Nova Scotia who had similar concerns of land expropriation. The following decade saw TIARA's involvement in the formation of official plans and zoning by-laws, and the organization continues to advise local municipalities on matters of heritage and maintaining the picturesque quality of the region.²⁸

At a smaller regional scale, TIARA and TWILT both operate as organizations that aim to protect and preserve the quality of the region. These actors work at a similar scale and share many of the same objectives, and are entirely capable of working in tandem; both aim to facilitate land conservation and protection, and community connection surrounding the local environment. Concerns surrounding future development were major drivers in the formation of both organization. They are comprised primarily of local residents and operate entirely within the region, and aim to facilitate connection between residents while acting on conserving the environmental quality of the region. The goals of education and conservation of the land and its quality play a significant role for both the residents association and the land trust. The four major goals of the land trust are as follows; land, legacy, learning, and life (wildlife). Primarily the land trust operates as a mechanism to acquire land that maybe conserved by local residents and volunteers. A method that allows for conservation and stewardship to be facilitated at a regional scale, in contrast to the national park, which operates on the scale of a nation. This level of governance allows for a sense of autonomy by residents, to whom the health and environmental conditions of the landscape will inevitably effect most. The goals of legacy and learning allow for a commitment and continuation of stewardship to

maintain the environmental quality of the land, and in some cases improve its condition. The final goal, life, operates as a reminder that life exists beyond a human scale. The diversity of flora and fauna found in the microclimates apparent in the Thousand Islands are a unique characteristic and quality of the region. A quality that the TIARA seeks to protect in a way.

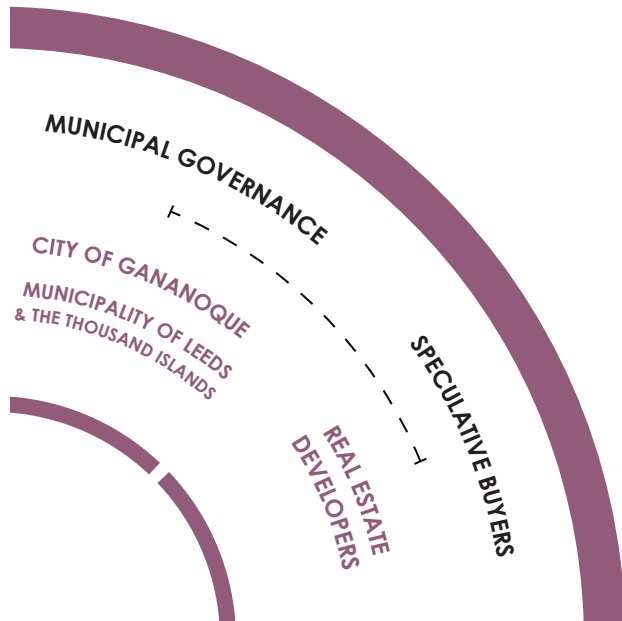
The Resident's Association's watchful eye aims to protect and preserve the unique qualities of the region, and by extension, concerns of the environmental health are paramount. Overdevelopment has already caused issues of flooding in the Islands. Properties that have stayed within families for generations, in some cases before confederation, are being affected by development of the watershed region. The resident's association identifies itself as a "supporter"²⁹ of local advocacy groups and a "liaison with other organizations."³⁰ It also aims to educate landowners on "promoting a healthy ecosystem"³¹ within the region. In many ways the goals of TIARA and TWILT are one in the same, education, conservation (in a broad sense), and community engagement are all essential components of both organizations. They are each essential actors at a regional scale, ensuring that any future goals and objectives that other actors may have in the region, are executed appropriately.

REGIONAL GOVERNANCE AND SPECULATIVE BUYERS

The next jump in scale considers the role of the county in regional government. The official plans of the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands, and Town of Gananoque both legislate the legal and zoning requirements for development and conservation in the region, and outline legislation and zoning for land use. The legal frameworks in existence aim to provide practical and explicit lists of goals, requirements, and limitations, for building and conserving in the Islands. The Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands considers the environmental and socio-economic needs of the region and includes a section outlining the intention for Indigenous engagement. **SECTION 9.9** of the official plan of states:

“While there are no Indigenous community reserves located within the boundaries of the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands, it is recognized that Indigenous communities may have an interest in planning matters in the Township. The Township will engage Indigenous communities including, but not limited to, the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte, the Mohawks of Akwesasne, the Algonquins of Ontario, the Algonquins of Pikwàkanagàn, and the Métis Nation of Ontario, on the following:

- 1. Consultation on cultural heritage or archaeological studies related to proposed developments where areas of Indigenous interest or values and/or the potential for encountering Indigenous artifacts have been identified:*
- 2. Consultation prior to the approval by Council of future Official Plan amendments or site plan approval, where an Archaeological Assessment has identified the potential for encountering Indigenous artifacts; and*



3. Input and possible participation in Stage 2 Archaeological Assessment required for land use planning or development purposes, where a Stage 1 Archaeological Assessment indicates areas of historical interest and/or the potential for encountering Indigenous artifacts.”³²

The Township of Gananoque’s 2021 official plan is currently under review by council. Their last plan was officially approved in 2010 and has no reference to Indigenous outreach or intention for future collaboration. In Gananoque, Indigenous communities have had little input in matters of zoning. The Township disregarded concern from local community members about the rezoning and development projects in the region that directly undermined the plans goals pertaining to preservation of natural heritage features and natural beauty, for profitable land development³³. The condominium development was approved and built while disregarding “evidence of indigenous settlement”³⁴ found on the property. A local Indigenous group had requested that the land be rezoned and developed as park space instead of a large residential development that limited visual and physical access to the waterfront. Eventually in 2020 the small group was compensated with the establishment of a park space along the waterfront named the *First People’s Park of the Thousand Islands*, however it goes to show that the language used in the official plan of inclusion and consultation is not acted upon and the relationship between the Indigenous community in the Thousand Islands and the local county is not one of equity. A report released by the township in September 2021 references a new provincial requirements obliging “panning authorities to engage with Indigenous communities and consider their interests when identifying, protecting, and managing cultural heritage and archeological resources.”³⁵

Several design guidelines set by the development permit bylaw that regulates the Town of Gananoque were challenged in favour of the development which was previously referenced. In this case, the generation of capitol was of higher importance to the city than enforcement of pre-existing regulations.

“No person shall use any land or erect, alter or use any building or structure, or alter grades or remove vegetation in the “Waterfront Overlay” designation, ‘W’ except in accordance with the following provisions of this Section and any other relevant Sections of this By-Law.”³⁶

“Existing vegetation shall be maintained, wherever possible and desirable in all of the setback areas. Enhancements by natural landscaping and additional native planting are recommended to create a vegetative buffer area to protect sensitive environments.”³⁷

“Locate buildings to one side in order to maintain as much of the viewsapes as possible.”³⁸

“The waterfront will be maintained and improved as a community focal point and will be enhanced through balanced, sustainable public and private development.”³⁹

SECTION 2.1.2.2 of the Township of Gananoque Official Plan considers the importance of public access to the shoreline:

SECTION 3.1.2.2 *Public Access and Use*

Planning for public use of and access to the shoreline shall recognize areas of existing private use and ownership of the shoreline and shall incorporate ways to ensure these uses are compatible.

1. *Acquisition of land for public walkways, or to create new or to add to existing windows to the river shall be considered where new development or re-development provides an opportunity to do so and where the acquisition furthers the objectives of the Lowertown*

2. Waterfront parks and related facilities shall be designed to provide safe, attractive and inviting places for public use and to visually separate private and public open spaces. Landscape plans that enhance the attractiveness of the waterfront and add significantly to the experience, enjoyment and appreciation of the waterfront shall be implemented. These plans will preserve environmentally sensitive vegetation and landforms and reflect the planned uses of the specific waterfront areas in accordance with the Lowertown Master Plan.

3. Shoreline structures should be located in such a manner as to minimize the visual impact on neighbouring properties, and should avoid sensitive environmental features, both on shore and in the water. The Zoning Bylaw may provide standards to require a minimum visibility triangle to regulate the visual impact of shoreline structures on neighbouring properties.

4. Parking areas shall be designed and located in accordance with the Lowertown Master Plan and shall be landscaped to complement the environment and to maximize the recreational and cultural open space uses of district.

5. A balanced transportation network for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists shall be implemented as development and re-development occurs and as Town resources permit. Decisions related to the extension of existing walkways, new or enhanced vehicular access points and intersections shall be consistent with the Lowertown Master Plan.

6. A continuous pedestrian walkway through the Lowertown district will be implemented through development and/or re-development in accordance with the Lowertown Master Plan. Wayfinding and directional signage as well as the development of vehicular and pedestrian gateways as demonstrated in the Lowertown Master Plan are considered to be a priority and will be developed as resources allow.

7. Council will make every effort to acquire and develop the former CNR right-of-way south of King Street for a public walkway.⁴⁰

The Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands produced a strategic plan in 2021 which aims to develop a common vision for policy makers, governing officials, residents, and local businesses. The strategic plan offers four pillars which consider targets and objectives in accountable governance, addressing concerns surrounding environmental stewardship, provision of public services, and economic engagement.

Some relevant action items include:

“Advocate for the Community :Foster relationships within all levels of government, municipal associations and stakeholder groups to advocate the interests of the township and its residents.”

“Mitigate Climate Change Impacts: Promote shoreline stewardship, protect wetland areas, and include environmental considerations in policy development.”⁴¹

“Improve Trails Lookouts and Waterfront Access: Invest in park infrastructure in alignment with the Township Asset Management Plan, develop and implement sustainable parks maintenance program, and work with external agencies to improve / enhance access to and maintenance of green spaces and trails.”⁴²

“Implore Opportunities for Affordable Housing: Document standardise and communicate processes to assist developers, create guidelines for consistent development standards, and pursue development of township owned property for residential development.”⁴³

“Preserve and Promote Heritage and Culture: Recognize local Indigenous culture and traditional lands.”⁴⁴

“Significant physical and biological features along the waterfront, as designated on Schedule F Natural Heritage Features, shall be preserved by preventing development in these areas or through the incorporation of these features into plans for waterfront parks and open space.”⁴⁵

Through the incorporation of Haudenosaunee teachings, the standard of morality at present can be re-examined to better re-enforce just building practices, finding methods by which economic success may be viable for speculative buyers, municipal governors, and residents alike.

THE ONGOING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE CITY OF KINGSTON AND THE ALDERVILLE FIRST NATION

The relationship between the Alderville First Nation and the City of Kingston is a good regional example of active collaboration between a municipal body and an Indigenous council near by. The Alderville First Nation made contact with the municipality in hopes to develop a relationship which acknowledged the history of the Mississauga in Kingston/Katarokwi over the centuries. A near decade long partnership resulted in the *Alderville First Nation Commemoration Project*. The city issued a call to Indigenous artists to produce an artwork to be commissioned at Lake Ontario Park. A jury of members of the Alderville First Nation and Indigenous Artists contracted Terence Radford, Metis Artist, and Landscape Architect, to produce an installation. A living art piece titled “Manidoo Ogitigan” (“Spirit Garden”). The piece is a public garden which takes inspiration from native plant species and Indigenous imagery such as the medicine wheel and wampum belt.⁴⁶ A place of gathering or quiet contemplation, this garden’s beautiful imagery is strikingly distinct due to unique paving, and flora, drawing attention to the path. Signage informs the reader of the significance of the artwork.

FIGURE 72 | MANIDOO OGITIGAN PATH

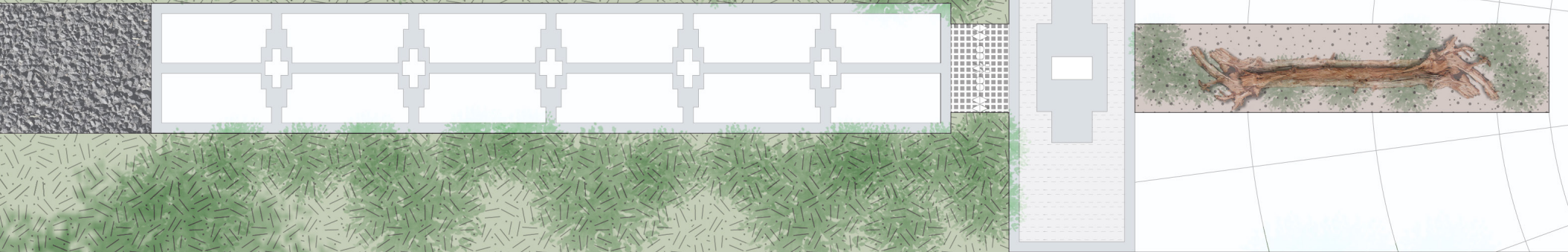


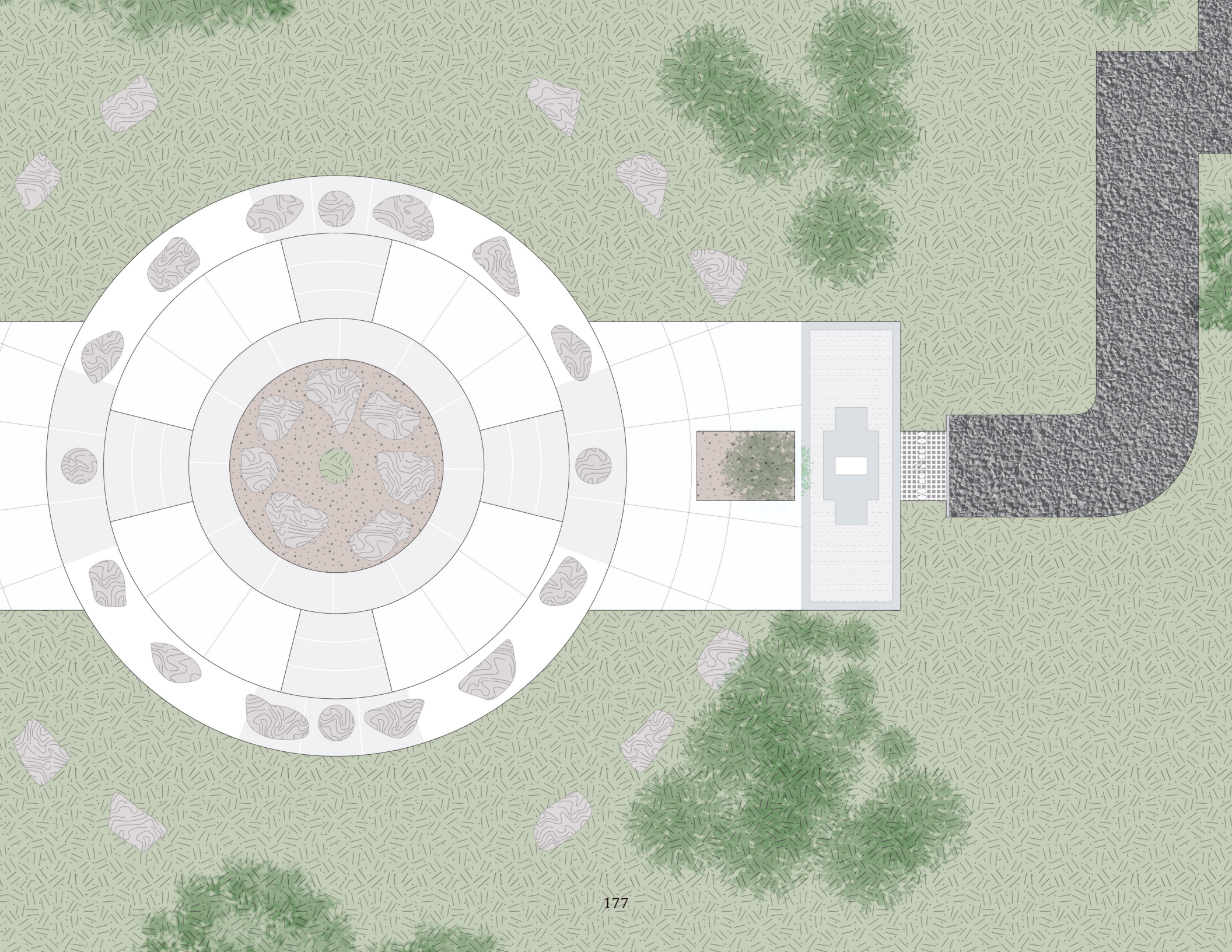
FIGURE 73 | MOTHER OF AUTHOR IN MANIDOO OGITIGAN “SPIRIT GARDEN” BY TERENCE RADFORD



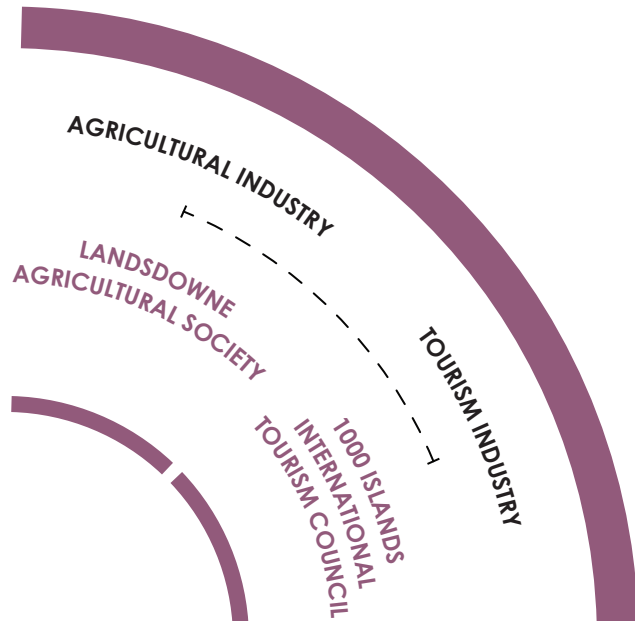
FIGURE 74 | MANIDOO OGITIGAN “SPIRIT GARDEN” PLAN (NTS)

Trophic Design “Alderville First Nation Commemorative Art Piece, Kingston.” Accessed June 20, 2023. <https://trophicdesign.ca/alderville-first-nation-commemorative-art-piece/>.





AGRICULTURE AND TOURISM INDUSTRIES



Lansdowne Agricultural Society is a Canadian organization that primarily caters to farmers in the region by organizing farmers markets, fairs, and producing materials such as paper and online directories that strengthen relationships between farmers and residents. *1000 Islands International Tourism Council (TIITC)* works to promote tourism to the region. Working across the international border, this agency offers advertisement opportunities for local agencies or businesses, as well as pushing positive media coverage to the region. The TIITC produces both digital and physical travel guides and directories to connect tourists to regional attractions and services available, connecting tourists to different actors across the hospitality and services sectors.⁴⁷

Agencies such as the *Lansdowne Agricultural Society* or the Tourism Council focus primarily on forming connections between farmers, residents, and tourists. As previously discussed, both the agricultural industry and tourism industry in the Thousand Islands have had a long history of presence. Farmers and the businesses that cater to the tourists have a large impact to the economic success of the region. At a more intimate scale the governance of family farms, and bed and breakfast type hospitality, gives a sense of autonomy to the residents in the region beyond the agencies of the residents association and the land trust. Farmers markets, fairs, and online directories, work at forming more connections between these autonomous actors. These resources cater more to the individuals or families running these establishments.

The agriculture and tourism industries have an existing connection regionally through agritourism. Across North America farmers have been diversifying income by opening farms and ranches for agricultural based tourism often referred to as *agritourism, farm recreation*⁴⁸, or simply, *country hospitality*.⁴⁹ This model offers farms the ability to supplement their income, increase employment, meet the demand for recreational activities, educating customers and building better relationships with them.⁵⁰ The *Leeds and Grenville Farm Directory* has 10 listings within Leeds and the Thousand Islands. 16 of which are tagged under *Agritourism* and four under *Farm Accommodation (Bed and Breakfast)*. Several farms offer visitors to see farm animals, pick fruit, or simply enjoy the scenic views and spend a night on the property.

ENDNOTES

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FIGURE 75 | CENTRAL AREA OF MANIDOO OGITIGAN “SPIRIT GARDEN”



7

CONSIDERING HIERARCHICAL SYSTEMS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR REGIONAL ACTORS IN RESPONSIBLE GOVERNANCE

The Six Nations Haudnesaunee have a long history of presence and historically confronted other nations within the region. The Six Nations have a wealth of Indigenous knowledge of the region, and the Great Law of Peace, a legal system with a potential for reforming the relationships between governing bodies. The Great Law of Peace's three main principles of peace, power and righteousness, produce a multitude of potential points to evaluate governing actors in the region as well as creating strong relationships between them. The structure of the historical Grand Council

of the Haudnesaunee outlined in the Peacemaker's constitution lends a process by which many people may reach consensus on problems that arise. This has the potential to produce stronger group cohesion, by which governing actors may better address the problems of development in the region. By engaging with philosophies that are in and of themselves Indigenous to the land, the people presently in positions of power, may benefit by shifting perspectives when addressing complex problems. Simultaneously, engaging with Indigenous ideas increases the level of social awareness and competence that organizations may be seeking to achieve. Increasingly, corporations, governments, and agencies at varying scales are looking to align themselves politically with the Indigenous narrative. The adoption of aspects of Indigenous philosophies enforces the language being used within new inclusive policies beyond conversation, this incorporation considers the validity of alternative governmental structures as a means of acknowledging problems and applying solutions amicably.

This form of governance could be applied to agencies of all levels as an alternative to hierarchical systems. Similar councils to the Grand Council could form better relationships between agencies and within agencies, when applied appropriately. In the traditional council, each Chief is selected by a clan mother, who further consults the women of the village, as well as the children. The needs of seven generations are further considered. This ensures that ideas are evaluated based upon their merit in relation to the greater good of the community and future progeny. This structure allows for group consensus, and may be applied within agencies to prioritize ideas rather than the existing power structures which in some cases may become stagnant, with an inability to address problems and execute solutions effectively.

Hierarchical systems have their benefits, as clear roles and responsibilities can be identified. However, in some cases hierarchical models can become dogmatic and may remove agency from the actors at work within organizations. A level of individual autonomy can be respected and considered in a council of equals in ways that can often be overlooked in a hierarchical system, especially as scales of dominion increase. This system may work to increase autonomy of individual actors within the overall system, favouring ideas and consensus. It aims to decimate the power imbalance that is encouraged by hierarchical structures, and favours individual autonomy. In a way, elements of the Great Law of Peace manage to incorporate concerns of civil liberties

and autonomy while simultaneously addressing concerns of racial and socioeconomic inequities. In a space of polarizing ideas prioritizing consensus is integral to finding solutions to common problems, and bridging the gap between platforms.

REGIONAL GOVERNANCE AT A NATIONAL SCALE

Varying scales of domain lend themselves to some level of overlapping interest, however between pairs, three major overlapping themes become apparent; economic success, cultural heritage, and conservation. Several governing bodies identify conservation and the overall ecological health of the region as being primary objectives. Organizations such as Parks Canada, and the Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust, aim to protect and preserve the land. The ongoing stewardship of the region has resulted in some areas of the land trust becoming inaccessible to members of the public in hopes to protect the fragile environment. Alternative forms of conservation which do not impede access should be considered as a public service. The reciprocal relationship between land and the people who live and work upon it must be considered an aid to ecological health rather than a hinderance when paired with a responsibility to the land.

Governing agencies at the national scale such as Parks Canada, and the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne have a history of collaboration in the management of national park land. The relationship formed in 2007 has become key in forming the Thousand Islands National Park Management Plan, which outlines objectives and strategies for the park's future. Objectives and targets related to the Indigenous history and culture of the site are identified. Objective 2.3 considers emphasizing the impact of Indigenous culture and history on park visitors. Objective 4.1 focusses on Indigenous involvement. The ongoing relationship between Indigenous leadership and federal conservation regionally has resulted in objectives and goals with clear dates by which park management aims to meet them. The collaborative work between the two has resulted in a formal plan which seeks to address the future management of the national park. In some cases, the goals outlined do little to address the larger problems which impact Indigenous people today, such as the proliferation of Indigenous signage. However, other goals such as the ongoing meeting with

the Mohawk Council regarding park management, and the collaboration on ecological restoration projects, hold great potential in improving and maintaining the relationship between Parks Canada and the Mohawk Council. Another target aims to build the relationship between other Indigenous groups locally. The management plan and the relationship at work between the two governing actors should be considered a model for other governing bodies in the region. It has resulted in a clear trajectory for regional governance, and solidifying the relationship between both actors.

COMMUNITY IMPACT ON REGIONAL GOVERNANCE

TIARA and TWILT both operate as regional governing bodies composed primarily of land owners and other residents in the region. TIARA has had major impacts to the organizational management of local governance. From its formation, research into the region and direct confrontation with planners and policy makers at both a regional and federal level has been a part of TIARA's mission in maintaining the quality of the Thousand Islands Region for its residents. TWILT operates as a regional conservation initiative which seeks to place the responsibility and stewardship of conservation lands regionally into the hands of locals. This grassroots organization plays a key role in keeping land away from speculative buyers, placing the responsibility of conservation into local hands. Many goals and objectives overlap between these governing bodies. It would be helpful in facilitating cohesive governance if the organizations worked collaboratively. Thus far, no formal documentation has been found on the relationship between TIARA and TWILT. It would be recommended for such similar organizations to form a collaborative partnership and develop a formal management plan or programming where objectives overlap. For example, TIARA has acted as a watchdog, notifying the municipal governing bodies of buildings or land falling into disrepair. TWILT and their volunteers have worked on maintenance and renovation of dilapidated buildings on lands donated in the past. Perhaps shared resources and collaboration between TIARA and TWILT could result in the development of collaborative programs aimed at helping property owners maintain and care for their land in a way which honours the landscape and ecological health of the region as well as the character.

Often owners are less than willing to sell their private islands and instead have seized the opportunity to donate their land to be conserved and protected through the Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust. TWILT has offered an option for landowners in the region to donate segments, or all of their land to be conserved and protected forever. The proliferation of the Land Trust offers residents and members of the broader community, to advocate for the landscape at present and in the centuries to come. It acts as an important beacon for those with concerns to the health of the local environment. Residents and volunteers are given a sense of agency over the lands within the Trust. This scale of conservation allows for a more direct form of stewardship, building a stronger connection between the land and the humans who live upon it. This reciprocal relationship that is enhanced by the trust goes beyond the biological elements, expanding to the structures that are built upon the lands donated to the trust. TWILT and Parks Canada have similar goals and objectives, however the methods by which they are achieved differ. The land trust is primarily focused on the region alone whereas, Parks Canada is concerned about an entire network of parks at a national scale. Because of this, TWILT is able to more adequately see the problems and concerns and work toward addressing them, problems that Parks Canada may not be aware of, or perhaps problems that are lower down on the list of concerns. Parks Canada however possesses a larger labour pool, and federal funding, that may lend themselves as parts of solutions. This can be expanded to other actors as well. Explicit solutions to the problems at hand are better addressed by the agents at work within the region. Common goals, problems and solutions are better identified between agencies at work.

POTENTIAL ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACTS THROUGH COLABORATION

The economic concerns of regional governments are similarly shared by the agricultural and hospitality sectors. More tourism benefits the small businesses and residents that work off of the land. The region's charm and character have a history of drawing in large crowds which adequately stimulate local economies, both in the Islands and the surrounding towns and cities. Due to their nature, the relationship between speculative buyers and the municipalities that govern the region is one of shared

profit and economical success. Although the Thousand Islands crosses several municipal and county lines, a majority of the Islands are housed within the jurisdictions of the City of Gananoque and the Municipality of Leeds and the Thousand Islands. The official plans of both municipalities attempt to regulate zoning and development in a way which honours the cultural context of the Islands. The Municipality of Leeds and the Thousand Islands considers objectives which overlap with other regional governing actors discussed in this thesis such as; a concern for the ecological and environmental health of the land, and Indigenous heritage of the region. Sections in the Official Plan of the Municipality outline intentions of engagement between local Indigenous organizations and municipal government. Several indigenous communities such as the nearby Haudnesaunee and Algonquin communities are to be consulted with on several matters. Including those where proposed developments impede on the Indigenous cultural heritage of the region, amendments to the official plan or site plan approvals, and any sites which require archeological examination.

Existing regulations aim to; honour the environmental heritage of the region, protect vegetation along the waterfront, include significant setbacks from the shoreline, and locate buildings in a way which minimizes obstruction of views to the Islands. These regulations although explicit are often disregarded in favour of developments which seek to turn a profit. On the islands themselves it has become increasingly difficult to build. Buildings which preceded island setback regulations may be re-constructed upon their existing footprints in the case of renovations or should significant water or fire damage result in the need to rebuild. The municipalities which overlook the islands are relatively small, surrounded by thousands of acres of farmland. With low population densities, the shoreline becomes the only lucrative area to build and develop upon with its direct access to the islands. The municipalities may find themselves with a dilemma, how may they increase density and encourage more development without necessarily impacting the ecological health of the shoreline, or the cultural heritage of the region. As developers have the potential to threaten the cultural heritage that exists along the riverfront, increasing density farther inland within the riverfront municipalities slowly should be considered. This may not generate large amounts of income in the same way that waterfront condominiums do, but in the long run, the cities may grow to accommodate higher economic stimulation that in turn benefit the tourism, hospitality, and agricultural sectors, without compromising the cultural heritage and beauty of the land. Growth and development may be

inevitable, but tactfully encouraging development in portions of riverfront municipalities that do not impede in conservation efforts in the islands, or visual enjoyment of the picturesque landscape, could mitigate concerns. As housing is becoming less affordable, perhaps incentives to develop riverfront municipalities by increasing mid-density housing developments farther away from the waterfront could address concerns surrounding the lack of affordable housing regionally, while giving speculative buyers the opportunity to make a profit. Due to the speculative nature of developers, the desire to produce the highest possible profit from each project will persist within these agencies. Profitable housing developments should not be entirely discouraged across the board.

It has been made clear that many heritage properties have fallen into disrepair in the islands due to the high cost of maintenance. Perhaps encouragement of affordable housing developments in certain areas of the waterfront municipalities in tandem with restoration and resale of dilapidated existing properties in the islands could be encouraged by the municipalities. Actors such as TIARA keep an eye on the state of properties that have fallen into disrepair, urging the regional municipalities to act. Perhaps a common interest between the residents, municipalities, and developers could be the restoration and re-sale of these properties. As zoning regulations make it nearly impossible to build new properties in the Islands, restoration of existing homes and cabins is a means of generating income. As indicated in the American economic study referenced previously, \$173 Million USD is generated by New York State through costs associated with seasonal second homes. Profitable developments that do not impact the beauty and character of the region are possible and may fit in with existing vernacular architecture . Perhaps, more explicit zoning regulations and requirements may help create more density, with minimal impact. This thesis suggests the development of a new plan to increase the urban density of these waterfront municipalities farther inland, paired with more stringent regulations which moderately increase density on the shore. Incentives to pair development lots along the shore and inland may entice speculative buyers. More explicit language in the by-law could be helpful. For example, the requirement to “Locate buildings to one side in order to maintain as much of the viewscapes as possible,” may be changed to include a maximum percentage of views which may be obstructed in elevation. Similar to the requirements of maximum site cover often included in zoning bylaws. Given

the increased desire to develop these sites by regional government and developers. New zoning plans and regulations with more explicit detail should be considered.

THE POTENTIAL FOR COLLABORATION BETWEEN INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP AND MUNICIPAL GOVERNING BODIES

Although referenced, Indigenous involvement between the waterfront municipalities and local Indigenous communities, is minimal. The intention to respectfully consider the cultural heritage of Indigenous people locally appears to have been pushed to the sideline. The example of “Manidoo Ogitigamn (Spirit Garden)” by Terence Radford and the collaboration between the Alderville First Nation and the City of Kingston (Katarokwi) is an example of an ongoing relationship between a local municipality and an Indigenous community. The garden, located at Lake Ontario Park is a commemorative art piece that considers the historical treaties of Canada and historical ownership and occupation of the land. This artwork is an example of municipal governance, Indigenous community building, and ecological stewardship, all themes which have been touched upon in this thesis. The tension that arose as a result of the rezoning of waterfront property in the City of Gananoque between the municipality and Indigenous locals, similarly resulted in the creation of a small park. The ordeal as a whole may have resulted in a similar outcome, but the process by which it was achieved, and the adversarial nature by which it started, did little to strengthen or develop a healthy relationship. Other municipalities seeking to develop stronger relationships with Indigenous communities should consider the use of public art, and more specifically gardens as a means of increasing awareness, and Indigenous involvement in local land use planning. The development of the relationship between the City of Kingston and Alderville First Nation of the *Spirit Garden*, should be considered a precedent guiding municipal governance in the Islands at a regional level with Indigenous communities present. The proliferation of such living artwork and other public parkland along the shoreline benefits the environmental health of the region, the overall cultural quality, and strengthens the relationship between local governance and Indigenous communities. Perhaps pairing culturally significant artwork and gardens in tandem with new plans to moderately increase density along the

shoreline could serve municipalities, developers, and residents, while addressing the lack of explicit plans for Indigenous involvement called for in official plans. Ideally maintaining an entirely public shoreline with direct visual and physical access to the Islands would be a public service to all.

The hospitality and tourism industries as well as agricultural industry are a major economic driver to the region. The agritourism model has begun to develop as a means of generating revenue for farmers and other rural residents. The potential of increasing revenue to the region through more incentives for farmers and other land owners, to consider how their land can generate more income, without causing a significant environmental impact or negatively impacting crops should be considered. The Lansdowne Agricultural Society and 1000 Islands International Tourism Council have had some success in marketing to tourists in regional tourist centres. However, it may be profitable to increase marketing to residents of neighbouring municipalities, or urban centers. The Thousand Islands region is relatively close to three major Canadian urban centres; Toronto, Ottawa, and Montreal. This industry has had little interaction between Indigenous communities. In accordance with the intentions of this thesis it should be considered that the organizations of the Lansdowne Agricultural Society, and 1000 Islands International Tourism Council increase their involvement with other local governing actors. As it seems both organizations aid in connecting local farmers and businesses with one another and residents, it may be useful to consider the impact larger governing actors can have on these organizations. Perhaps farms and other businesses can be positively impacted by a more formal relationship between them and other local governing bodies. It seems that the Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Tourism are the governing bodies which are responsible for regulating and providing support. Perhaps more direct involvement with local regional governance can aid in providing support at a regional scale. It is often the case that federal or provincial government has a large domain to consider. More aid and support at a regional scale may positively impact the agricultural and hospitality sectors. By increasing their involvement at a regional scale, concerns surrounding conservation, ethical stewardship, and Indigenous cultural history may be approached as well. As is, neither the Lansdowne Agricultural Society or 1000 Islands International Tourism Council seem to address Indigenous allyship or involvement.

FIGURE 76 | MANIDOO OGITIGAN “SPIRIT GARDEN” PLAN CLOSE UP (NTS)

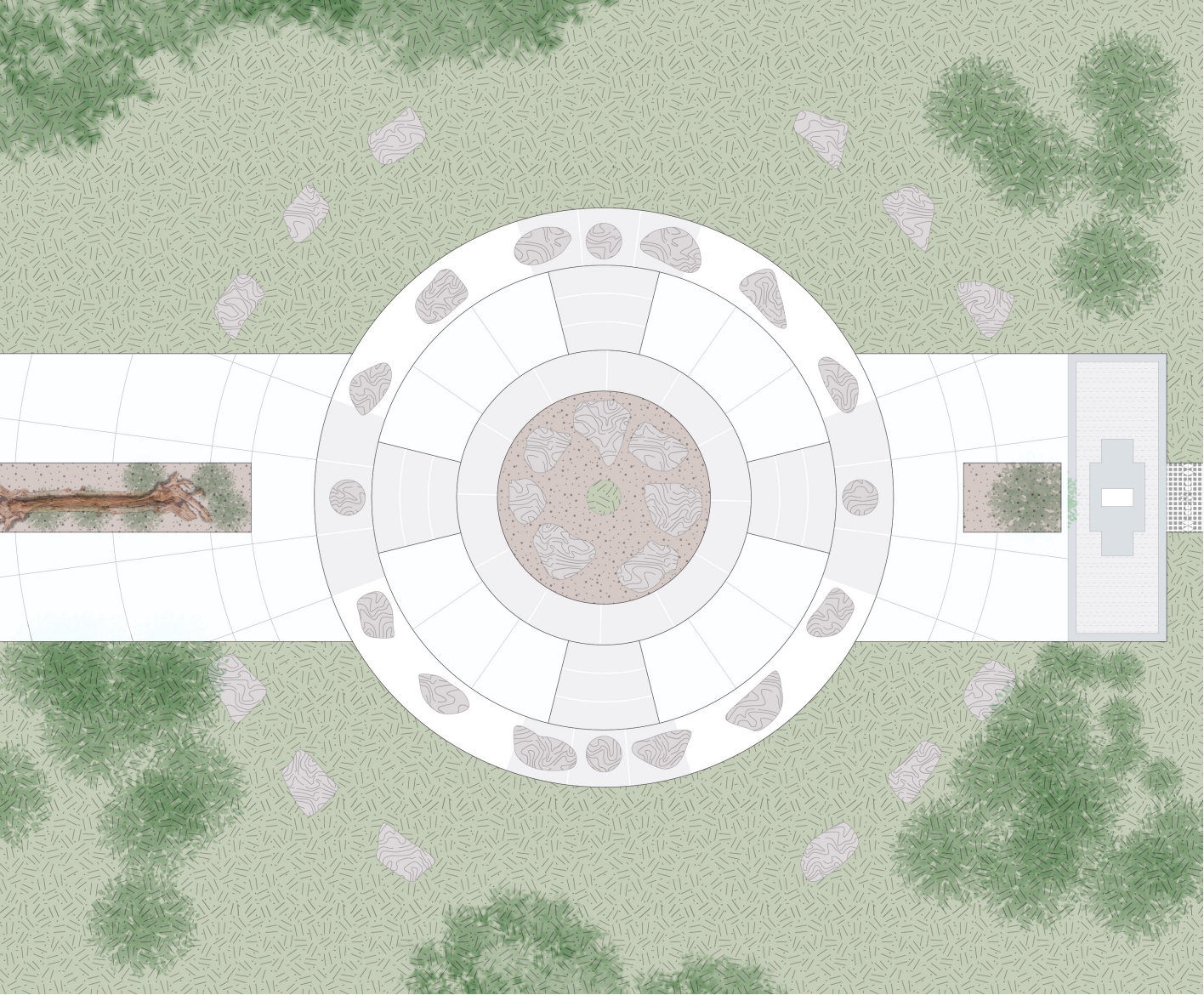
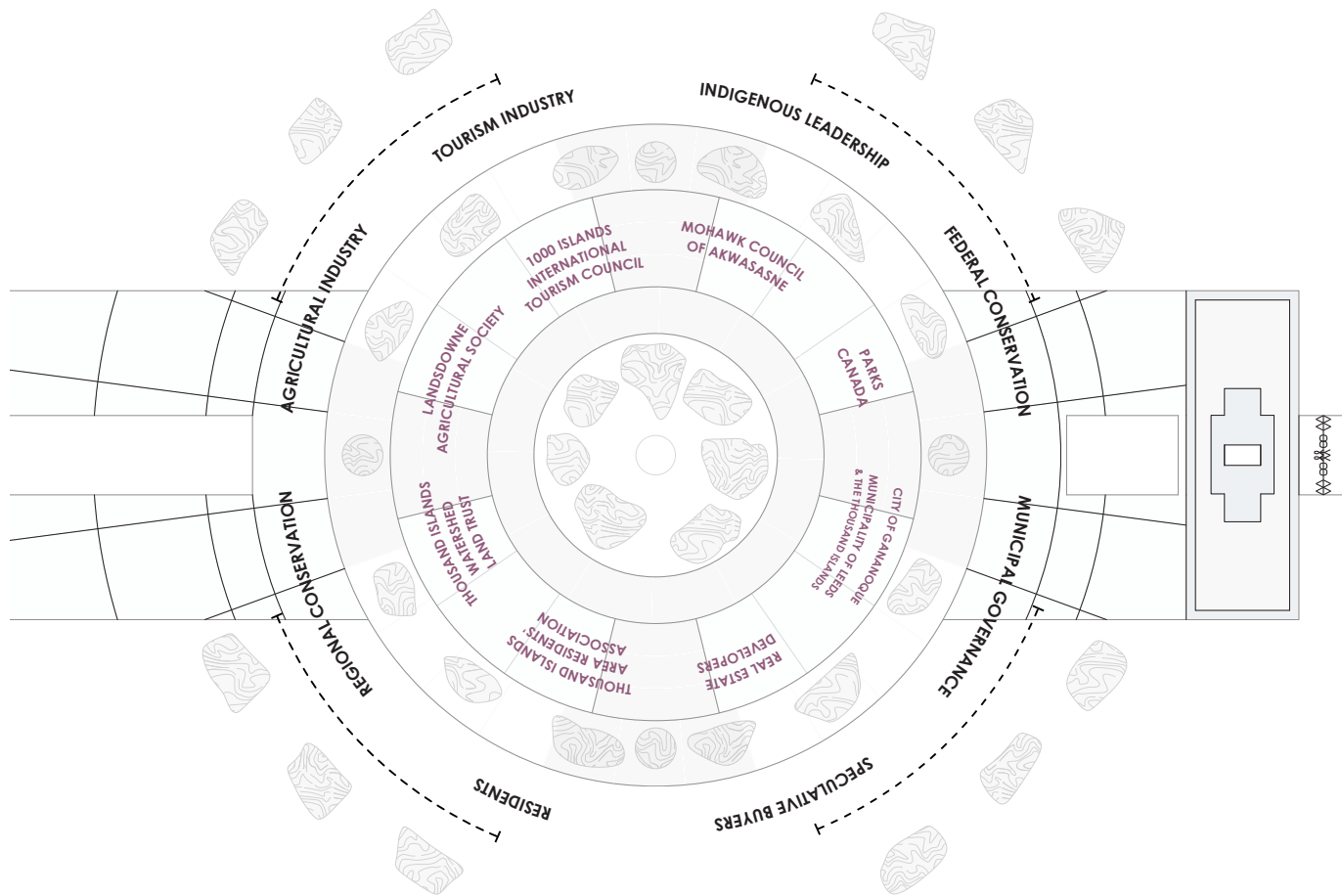


FIGURE 77 | MANIDOO OGITIGAN “SPIRIT GARDEN” PLAN WITH OVERLAY OF REGIONAL ACTORS



This thesis suggests that the Spirit Garden may be used as a potential meeting space for the proposed regional council. Ideally similar works would be propagated in other cities as the relationship between local municipalities and Indigenous leadership strengthens. Kingston is one of the largest cities in the Thousand Islands Region. The Spirit Garden located in Kingston’s Lake Ontario Park offers an ideal composition for the meeting of regional actors, in a way which mirrors the meeting of the council of chiefs. The nearby shoreline overlooks both Wolfe Island and Simcoe Island. Ideally, meetings are held in a natural setting with a sacred fire. Interestingly, Lake Ontario Park was previously a campsite. As a reflection of the ongoing relationship between local government and Indigenous leadership, this setting’s ideal circular plan and proximity to the Islands offers an interesting meeting space to actualize the council.

FINAL REMARKS

Conversations surrounding land claims and rights to the land in North America has led to questioning the legitimacy of land claims offered by Indigenous nations. It can be considered a natural progression of human civilization for nations to rise and fall, with them, the dominion of land, their legal systems and philosophies. This rise and fall of power may not necessarily be the result of flawed philosophical or legal systems which underpin the nation, but rather the power and scale of invading forces. Laws of governance and philosophies often develop as a result of long term stability within a nation. The lands of the Thousand Islands have been historically occupied by several nations in centuries past including the Wendat, Haudnesaunee, Mississauga, French and English. Each nation brought different ideals and philosophical approaches to land ownership and governance. With the French came a culture of commerce, with the English larger agricultural settlement. Later occupation resulted in a large hospitality and resort industry and eventually the proliferation of conservation efforts.

A history of conflict between Indigenous and later settler nations underpins the grandeur and beauty often associated with the region. The Thousand Islands has historically straddled international borders, initially the territories of the Wendat, Haudnesaunee, and Anishnaabeg nations, and later the British and American colonies. The history is imbedded into the landscape today, visually by the Martello towers which remain iconic aspects of the shoreline, as well as the placenames of the Islands. The largest of which are almost always named after British military officials, a commemoration of the Islands as a battleground. This ever present reminder of the death and destruction related to wars between settler nations is an example of disparity in the recognition and commemoration of any notable historical events of Indigenous nations locally . The historical violence that existed between Indigenous nations is not as evident, aside from the creation story of the Thousand Islands. The oral tradition of the Garden of the Great Spirit is one which recognizes the wars that took place before colonial occupation. However, it was difficult to find written documentation of the story with a clear primary source. Consistently referred to as an *Iroquois legend*, despite the fact that Manitou

is an Anishinaabeg figure, the reference to the historical conflict in the story is one of the few examples that commemorates this history of conflict between Indigenous nations. The disparity in whose history is written about or acknowledged especially in reference to warfare is a clear example of disparity in the value of human life historically. Given the prevalence of war history in the region, perhaps the battles that took place between Indigenous nations, or reference to Indigenous involvement in settler wars should be more apparent.

Research into the historical treaties of North America, and more specifically the Crawford Purchase and Treaty of Fort Stanwix gave insight into the process of treaty making in the early days of confederation. This was further enriched through an understanding of Indigenous and settler land philosophies regarding boundaries, right to the land, and property. It became clear that the terms and conditions of early treaties were ambiguous. Often large swaths of land would be traded for clothing, ammunition, or small gifts. The understanding that exclusive right to the land by settlers was given in return for such small gifts was perplexing. Through gaining better understanding of Haudnesaunee and Anishinaabeg treaties as covenants which mainly acted as agreements for mutual use of territory rather than exclusive, there came a clarity to historical miscommunication. These covenants were often made during formal ceremonies during which gifts of clothing were given. The covenants or treaties were made to commemorate peace between nations living, working, and hunting on shared grounds. The segmentation and commodification of land beyond one's personal use was a foreign concept. Similarly, ideas surrounding boundaries were also different. Often natural boundaries were considered by Indigenous people such as distinct geological or water features. The desire to segment land even further especially with the precision by which it was done by European settlers was another foreign concept. Land seemed an infinite resource in North America, unlike the bustling cities of Europe, from which the settlers came.

Now, centuries later, settlement in Canada and the United States has led to increased urbanization, and land is becoming increasingly scarce in many urban areas. North America has become home to migrants from every corner of the globe. Inhabitants which descend from early settlers have owned land for generations. The conversation surrounding reparations to the Indigenous settler relations in Canada and the United States has resulted in many activists to proclaim that the lands of North America be given back to the previous nations. The legitimacy of the institutions, and properties built upon treaty lands have been called into question. Although an interesting concept, displacement of a stable nation to rectify past errors is not a solution. Those who reside whether permanently or temporarily on treaty lands should consider understanding the Indigenous history of the land. Apologies aside, it should be considered a basic responsibility to educate oneself on the historical and socio-political context they are living in. Whether in North America or internationally, colonialism has a major impact on governments and institutions that developed in nations with a history of occupation. Indigenization of governance through engagement with Indigenous leadership in the formation of policy, education, and other landmarks of government may generate better outcomes overall to outright “returning” the land. Reforming the institutions which already exist through engagement with Indigenous leadership and education from Indigenous sources is a good first step that does more than the duplicity of simple land acknowledgments. This thesis suggests incorporating elements of the Haudnesaunee Great Law of Peace as a simple way to solidify engagement between Indigenous and non-Indigenous governing actors at any scale of governance, in a way, ideologically re-occupying the land.

“If any man or any nation outside the Five Nations shall obey the laws of the Great Peace and make known their disposition to the Lords of the Confederacy, they may trace the Roots to the Tree and if their minds are clean and they are obedient and promise to obey the wishes of the Confederate Council, they shall be welcomed to take shelter beneath the Tree of the Long Leaves.”

Dekanawidah, the Peacemaker

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