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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 29, 2023

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The Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg Presentation July 28

Watertown, NY – The Tug Hill Commission and Lewis County Chamber of Commerce, along with the Friends of the Black River community group, are sponsoring ***“We Are Still Here: The Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg”*** on Friday, July 28, 2023, from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. The presentation will be an introduction to the Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg, the Nation itself, and the confederacy it belongs to. In addition, it will discuss its historic and contemporary existence as well as its existence under settler-colonial rule and history and contemporary relationship with the Crown and the Canadian state.

This presentation will take place at the auditorium at South Lewis Central School, 4264 County Road 43 in Turin, NY, 13473. Doors will open at 6:30 p.m. For those that cannot be present in-person, a virtual broadcast will be offered via Zoom. Registration is required for this free event at tinyurl.com/BRHiawatha. Please note, all registrants will receive a Zoom link, even if they choose to attend in-person.

Chief Laurie Carr and Assistant Professor Chadwick Cowie will be the evening’s presenters. Chief Carr is the Chief of the Hiawatha First Nation Council, a position she has held during two different terms for a total of eleven years to date. In her role as Chief, Chief Carr’s responsibilities include intergovernmental affairs; negotiations; core consultation; legal/financial matters; political matters; treaty relations; and policing. The first female Chief, Chief Carr is also the Chairperson for the Dnaagdawenmag Binnoojiiyag Child & Family Services. Through Hiawatha’s Provincial Territorial Organization, the Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians, Chief Carr sits on their Chief’s Council and holds the Portfolio for Social and as an alternate for the Health Portfolio.

Chadwick Cowie is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Toronto. Professor Cowie is from the Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg community of Pamitaashkodeyong (also referred to as Hiawatha First Nation) and is of the Atik (Caribou) Dodem (Clan). Professor Cowie has Bachelor of Arts (Honours) with a specialization in Political Science and First Nations Studies (Western University) and a Masters of Arts in Political Studies (University of Manitoba), and is currently finalizing his PhD in Political Science from the University of Alberta. In addition to his current research into

whether

Helping local governments and citizens shape the future of the Tug Hill region.

Indigenous people's participation in Canadian federal electoral politics can bring change and reconciliation, Professor Cowie is also assisting with research and knowledge gathering on behalf of the Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg communities and Nation.

The Friends of the Black River group is honored to host Chief Carr and Professor Cowie in Lewis County. The Friends group originally connected with the Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg through *The Castorland Journal*, a historical account of the exploration of the Black River by early European settlers. The journal specifically states that the explorers met people from the Mississauga Nation who had traveled from the northwest part of Lake Ontario. This led to correspondence and the development of a relationship between Friends group member Heidi Lehmann and Chief Carr. A [recording](#) of the July 2022 Dr. John Gallucci's presentation on *The Castorland Journal* is available on the Tug Hill Commission's YouTube channel.

The Friends of the Black River is a group of community members working to support the Friends' mission to sustainably promote ecological, historical and recreational resources of the Black River, harmoniously respecting both public and private interest, and develop beneficial partnership for stewardship. This mission is accomplished through education and outreach, projects and development, and conservation and recreation.

Please contact the Tug Hill Commission with any questions regarding this event.

The New York State Tug Hill Commission is a non-regulatory state agency charged with helping local governments, organizations, and citizens shape the future of the region, especially its environment and economy. The commission uses a grassroots approach to build local capacity and provide technical assistance in land use planning, community development, and natural resource management.

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