The Anishinaabe Nation

Ojibwa (or Chippewa) “keepers of the faith”

Odawa (or Ottawa) “keepers of the trade”

Potawatomi (or Bodewadomi) “keepers of the fire”
Reaffirmations of Sovereignty

The following list contains significant statutes relevant to the reaffirmation of KBC sovereignty and assertion into the future.

1934 American Indian Law Act for protection of cultural & natural resources.
1934 Indian Reorganization Act US affirms self-government, tribal governing bodies.
1936 Keweenaw Bay Indian Community Federal Recognition, KBC Constitution.
1966 National Historical Preservation Act Historic Places Register.
1971 People vs Jedoreau Michigan Supreme Court reaffirms KBC 1842 Treaty rights.
1978 Indian Self-determination & Education Assistance Act grants tribes authority to contracts with federal government for health, education, and social programs.
1983 Lac-Cite Orellets vs Wisconsin (Vigil Decision) US Supreme Court reaffirms treaty rights in ceded territories.
1990 Native American Graves Act and Protection. Act requires federal institutions to return cultural items to affiliated Indian tribes.
2004 Executive Order 13326 American Indian, Alaska Native Education Programs.
2004 Presidential Memorandum government-to-government relations with tribes (Bush II).
2009 Presidential Memorandum Tribal Consultation & Implementations of Executive Order 13177 (Obama).
2018 Indian Health Care Improvement Act provision of health care to American Indians, Alaska Natives.
2019 EPA Administration re-commitment to 1984 EPA Policy. Administration of Environmental Programs on Indian Reservations.

Present-Day Governance

The Keweenaw Bay Indian Community is dedicated to the long-term preservation and protection of treaty resources & Ojibwe Way of Life. For the past several decades, governance of treaty resources has strengthened along with federal government agencies. Treaty resource issues depend on healthy ecosystems. Traditional treaty rights include fish, wildlife, game mammals, berries, trees and plants are gathered within landscapes in both the local and wider region. The following list includes Community governance mechanisms important for sustaining our treaty and resource systems.

1984 KBC Fish Hatchery: Hatchery is the 1st fishery to address for Keweenaw Bay Indian Community.
1989 GLIFWC KBC becomes the 11th member tribe of the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission (GLIFWC). GLIFWC supports off-reservation awareness of treaty rights, resource management, conservation, and legal & policy affairs throughout the region. GLIFWC is a member of the Ojibwe Nation.
1990 KBC National Resources Department (NRD) By order of the Tribal Council, the NRD is established to administer natural resources datasets and programs, which currently includes fisheries, fish stocking, surface and groundwater quality, air quality, restoration, and environmental programs. NRD is also responsible for conservation activities in the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community.
2002 KBC Integrated Resource Management Plan (IRM) A 10-year plan approved by Tribal Council to combine the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) for the purpose of creating a sustainable treaty. The plan is also responsible for monitoring natural resources and their impacts on human health.
2002 Keweenaw Bay Indian Community Tribal Code of Law: Title XIV, Endangered Species, and Cultural Resources. Title XIV of the Tribal Code enacts rules to regulate the use of treaty resources and to ensure protection for uses for future generations.
2005 KBC Strategic Plan Outlines overarching KBC goals and values, and specific activities to achieve goals across KBC governance departments. Updates are currently being proposed for this living document.

"To live in harmony while enhancing and stewarding the resources of the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community for the Seventh Generation." -Vision from the 2003 Integrated Resource Management Plan (IRM)

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First Treaty

Since time immemorial, Great Lakes Indigenous peoples have long-standing nation-to-nation agreements between themselves and their more-than-human relatives for the protection and stewardship of traditional territories. These agreements serve as the foundation for shared governance. According to Anishinaabek teachings passed from one generation to the next, the people have a long-time, reciprocal obligation with all orders of nature rooted in the people’s First Treaty with Gitche Manito (the Creator). Also known as Sacred Law or The Great Laws of Nature, the First Treaty obligates all orders of creation, all created from rock, water, fire, and wind — the physical world of sun, stars, moon and earth; plant beings; animal beings; and human beings — to care for one another. The Great Laws govern placement, movement, powers, rhythm and continuity: all things live and work by these laws. ("Ojibway Heritage," Badel Johnson, 1976)

Who We Are

The Great Lakes Basin is the ancestral, traditional, and contemporary lands and waters of many Indigenous nations, including the Anishinabe or Ojibwe (original people). They are one of the largest Indigenous groups in North America with nearly 150 different bands living throughout their homelands in present-day United States and Canada. Currently, Anishinaabek are known by various names: Chippewa, Ojibway, Ojibwa, or Ojibwa, as well as Ottawa or Odawa and Potawatomi or Bodowadomi. All of these peoples are bound within the Anishinaabek, their traditional geographical boundaries, comprised of the two, lakes and brazos, in the Atlantic-shores of North America and began settling throughout the Great Lakes region.

The Anishinabe were instructed to migrate west to the "land where food grows on water," also known as manoomin or wild rice, as part of the Seven Fires prophecies. The migration is believed to have begun to the west of Lake Superior and continued across generations, approximately 500 years. The journey included seven major stopping points along the southern shores of the St. Lawrence River, and proceeded among all of the Great Lakes. The journey on the Anishinaabek would come to call themselves the nation of the Three Fires upon the establishment of peace with the Iroquois Confederacy. The Three Fires nations were comprised of the Ojibwe-food-warriors (the keepers), the Odawa-wads (trade keepers), and the Ojibwa (trade keepers). Each group named described their respective responsibilities in the physical world and spiritual survival of the Anishinaabek. These groups are the present-day Potawatomi, Ottawa, and Ojibwa people who made permanent settlements throughout the region during their migration journey, one of which included Lake Superior’s Keweenaw Bay.

Government to Government Relationships

The government-to-government relationship between American Indian Nations and the U.S. Constitution, treaties (the "supreme law of the land"), statutes, and court decisions. The following list contains some of the key statutes of the nation to nation relationship relevant to RBIC.

1795 Treaty of Greenville established boundaries between U.S. and several nations of the Chippewa. The delineated boundaries between several tribal nations that were not subject to treaty negotiations. 1838 Treaty with the Chippewa-Chippewa leaders agree to the boundaries of the 1825 Treaty. 1837 Treaty with the Chippewa established borders between the Chippewa and Menominee. 1842 Treaty with the Chippewa (Copper or Mineral Treaty) Ceded territory in N Wisconsin and the western U.P. of Michigan, tribes retain rights to hunt, fish, trap, or gather in any category of occupancy. 1950 Presidential Executive Order (Removal Order) federal policy for the relocation of Chippewa to Cadotte Territory to be removed into lands west of the Mississippi. 1952 Presidential Executive Order Removal Order is rescinded by successor after meeting of Ojibwa chiefs. 1854 Treaty with the Chippewa established Ojibwa reservations in WI, MI & MN, ceded land in 1848 treaty. 1871 Indian Appropriations Act abolished Treaty-making between the federal government and Native American tribes. 1885 Major Crimes Act federal jurisdiction over crimes committed by an American Indian in Indian country. 1887 Dawes Act (General Allotment Act). Authorized the subdivision of Indian reserves from land held in common for tribal or private allotments by individuals; remaining allotments were appropriated to settlers. 1921 Snyder Act (Indian Health Act). 1934 Indian Citizenship Act granted American Indian citizenship, did not relinquish tribal membership. 1936 People vs. Chosa Michigan Supreme Court ruled that Native Americans rights to hunt, fish and trap in public forests and national forests determined by the U.S. Constitution.

1953 Public Law 280 enabled states to assume criminal, civil, and jurisdiction in matters of Indians on Indian reservations.

1958 Indian Civil Rights Act incorporated certain restrictions and protections on tribal governments into the U.S. Constitution.

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