



Robinson Huron Treaty LITIGATION FUND

Atikameksheng Anishnawbek
Aundeck Omni Kaning
Batchewana First Nation
Dokis First Nation
Henvey Inlet First Nation
M'Chigeeng First Nation
Magnetawan First Nation
Mississauga First Nation
Nipissing First Nation
Ojibways of Garden River
Sagamok Anishnawbek
Serpent River First Nation
Shawanaga First Nation
Sheguiandah First Nation
Sheshegwaning First Nation
Thessalon First Nation
Wahnipitae First Nation
Wasauksing First Nation
Whitefish River First Nation
Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory
Zhiibaahaasing First Nation

The Hon. Harry S. LaForme appointed to lead Office of Mzhinawé for the Robinson Huron Treaty Litigation Fund

Robinson-Huron Treaty Territory - We are pleased to announce the appointment of the Honourable Harry S. LaForme to lead the Office of Mzhinawé for the Robinson Huron Treaty First Nations in the ongoing annuities litigation.

Justice LaForme is Anishinaabe from the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, Ontario, where he was born and raised and where some of his family continue to reside and remain active in First Nation leadership.

Dr. Alan Ojiig Corbiere from York University describes the Mzhinawé as “traditionally being the keeper of the pipe, a keeper of wampum or other records, and perform other described duties for the grand chief”.

In the role of Mzhinawé, Justice LaForme will examine issues and engage in consultations with the members and communities of the Robinson Huron Treaty Anishinaabek. The Mzhinawé, in collaboration with the Robinson Huron Treaty leadership, will engage in information sessions about the Restoule case and any possible settlement that may arise from the ongoing negotiations with Canada and Ontario. The information sessions will ensure that RHT beneficiaries are aware of the governing structure of the Robinson Huron Treaty Litigation Fund, formulas for distributing any global damages awarded through the litigation or settlement amount agreed to through negotiations, and additional information regarding settlement of the litigation, if settlement is achieved.

“The Office of Mzhinawé, led by Justice LaForme, will fill a critical role in ensuring our communities and beneficiaries have accurate information and that their voices are heard,” says Duke Peltier, Trustee from Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory.



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Justice LaForme has an extensive background in First Nation leadership and law. He served as Co-chair of the Independent National Chiefs Task Force on Native Land Claims; Chief Commissioner, Indian Commission of Ontario; and Chair, Royal Commission on Aboriginal Land Claims. He taught "Rights of Indigenous Peoples" at Osgoode Hall Law School. In January 1994, he was appointed a judge of the Ontario Superior Court of Justice, at the time one of three Indigenous judges ever appointed to this level of trial court in Canada. In November 2004, he was appointed a judge of the Ontario Court of Appeal, the first Indigenous judge appointed to an appellate court in Canada's history. He retired from the judiciary in October 2018 and joined Olthuis Kleer Townshend, LL.P as senior counsel.

Upon appointment by Canada's Minister of Justice & Attorney General in March 2021, Justice LaForme led consultations with over 215 international and domestic experts to make recommendations for an independent wrongful convictions commission, and the resulting report delivered to the Minister in November 2021 .

In 2022, Justice LaForme was awarded the Indigenous Peoples Counsel by the Indigenous Bar Association and the Order of Canada and has been gifted numerous Eagle feathers. He received the most recent one in Bawaating (Sault Ste. Marie) from the Robinson Huron Treaty leadership.

"Leadership from the Robinson Huron Treaty First Nations is confident Justice LaForme has the right skills to complete this important work on behalf of leadership," says Chief Dean Sayers of Batchewana First Nation. "Although our negotiations with Canada and Ontario are still ongoing, it is important that we continue to engage with our communities about the annuities case."

Progress continues to be made in negotiations between Robinson Huron Treaty Litigation Fund leadership and the governments of Canada and Ontario. Those negotiations remain confidential.



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For media inquiries or more information, contact media@emdashagency.ca.