

Etujk Samqwan

FOR THE WATER

by JOSEPH BROOKS



The view from the support vehicle.

Contributed by Mawikufi'k Society

Samqwan (Water) is viewed as the most precious and sacred of our natural elements for the Indigenous people of Turtle Island and would be fairly viewed across humankind. In its natural ability to absorb both negative and positive energy, it can grant life and take into the life stream of our planet. A medicine and ability is bestowed to flow through women as the Water Carriers, and the blessing that brings new souls with us from the spirit world. These spirits or beings surround all of us and flow with the waterways.

Samqwan is in danger: its waterways have been stopped, withheld, and ruined by the contamination caused by the disposal and debris of mining acid water drainage and release of other chemicals justified by the federal government. The cleansing ability within this medicine is not to be taken for granted, like the abilities and knowledge of our Matriarchs. Those are the lessons of our kijus' (grandmothers) and other elders in our lives. Many days had passed that we have not drawn upon them for each communal decision we make.

We see that our waters feel the decomposition in the quality of our natural environment, which rises from a male-driven orientation woven into today's societies. Both the Indigenous and non-Indigenous people witnessed the damage caused by this dysplasia of their lands. It is like the views and images displayed in James Cameron's fictional story, Avatar. However, the urge for progressive economies of scale, and negative discourse about Indigenous peoples caused each wave of immigration to be blinded to the collective thought and governance they could offer. Instead, blissful in their ignorance, focused on individualized wants, they are led to take part in and continually aid in the occupancy, silent takeover, and denial of Indigenous Inherent rights and titles to these lands of Turtle Island (North America).

The Great Lakes of Ontario are deemed one of the worst polluted waterways in the world. Spiritual leader Eddie Benton Baa had the vision that water's economic value will be higher than gold by the year 2030. Grandmother Josephine Mandamin Baa was inspired and saw that it would be upon Indigenous Matriarchs who would stand for the lifeblood (samqwan) of our lands. They set the example and reminders upon their children and grandchildren for love, gratitude, and honouring of the water for future generations.

High spirits on the Water Walk.

Contributed by Ducie Howe



A copper vessel is used to carry the water.

Contributed by Ducie Howe



The Bay of Fundy Water Walkers

in 2022. Contributed by Ducie Howe

They also extend these teachings to all non-Indigenous people, as all grandmothers are required to teach their men to stand for all the beings within our natural environment. Over the past many Mi'kmaq and other Indigenous people have attempted to stand for their land, only to be slaughtered and hindered in their ability to properly steward these lands. In the recent 8 years, the Mi'kma'ki Waters Walkers have been committed to holding Water Walks within and outside of Nova Scotia.

Sharing teachings bestowed from Sister Josephine Baa, Carol "Ducie" Howe, Marian Nicholas, and Dorene Bernard, the Mi'kma'ki Water Walkers, continue to offer these teachings, as they had with Tara Lewis who had conducted the first Water Walk within the Unama'ki territory (Cape Breton). The Water Walkers urge people to not just make a physical, financial, and ceremonial effort for Samqwan and other natural medicines, but to stand with them against inappropriateness caused by governmental or privatized uses due to the marketplace's inflated order to induce hysterias amongst the public.



Contributed by Mawikuti'k Society

TAKE ACTION

You can donate to support the Mi'kma'ki Water Walkers and the Mawikuti'k Society by sending an e-transfer to MikmakiWW2022@gmail.com or mawikutik@gmail.com.

As we are coming into the era of the rainbow children prophecy, Indigenous people would be again sought for teaching and their understandings would be fostered by the new age of parenting to the youth of Turtle Island against hate and towards an open-minded society that would not require our culture to be concealed anymore. Along with time, women will be strong in their roles as water carriers, and time will grow into identifying and holding a role to preserve all life, the waters and all sacred elements for our future generations. A person who respects protocols and is introduced to a Water Walker or Sundancer would benefit by properly presenting tobacco, and asking how they could participate, assist, or support their future ceremonies.

Mawikuti'k Society, Samqwan Pana Mimajuaqan, a Wela'liek.

Joseph "Joey" is a band member of Sipekne'katik First Nation, originally born in Boston. He is a founding member of the Mawikuti'k Society, which works in a self-governed way to promote Indigenization for community healing.