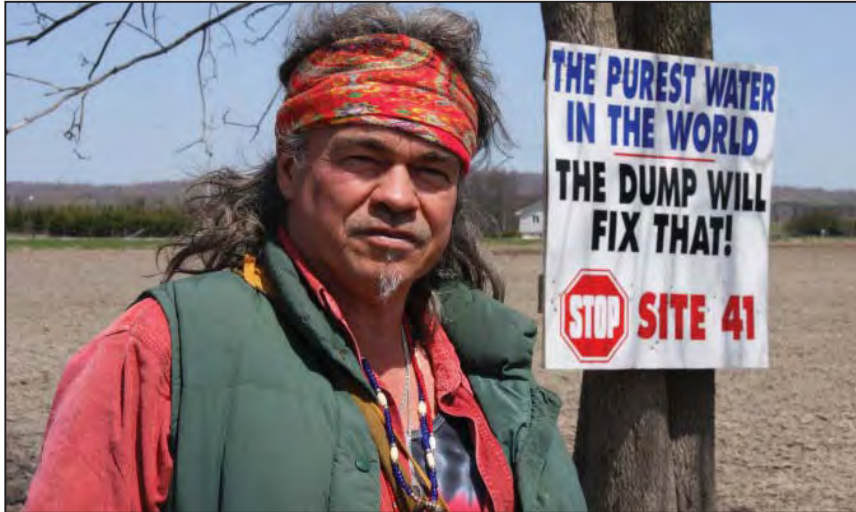


WATER: Lifeblood of Mother Earth



Mohawk environmentalist Danny Beaton is leading a protest against the proposed location of a dump over the site of a pure-water aquifer in Tiny Township, near Penetanguishine, Ont.

Protesters fighting dump proposed over pristine water

By Sharon Weatherall
PENETANGUISHINE – First Nation forces are banding together to protect the Lifeblood of Mother Earth in Tiny Township.

Mohawk environmentalist Danny Beaton continues to marshal support to block a proposal to locate Landfill Site 41 directly above the Alliston Aquifer, which some experts say contains some of the purest drinking water in the world.

Beaton says First Nations peoples respect earth, air, fire and water as life-giving forces.

“We recognize these forces in our way of life so we respect them and have ceremonies to honour them and thank them for giving us life; that’s what our Elders teach us and these teachings are passed down from our ancestors. Ojibway and Mohawks, Owendat and Chippewa, Huron and Métis are the leaders of these territories and we need to unite now for our children’s future. We need to protect the water now before it is destroyed.”

Some concerned citizens from the closest First Nation, Beausoleil, have joined the opposition and are camping on private property opposite the proposed dump site, vowing to remain there until plans for the landfill are dropped. They are circulating a petition on Christian Island to create more awareness of the situation and asking residents to sign in support of closing the dump.

“We are appealing to the federal government of Canada to intervene on the behalf of First Nations people,” said Vicki Monague, a Beausoleil FN mother of three. “We will not give the McGuinty Government and the Ministry of Environment the power to put dumps wherever they please without the consent of or consulting with First Nations people.”

“We are camping out at the gates of Site 41 and inviting all our people to participate,” said Monague. “We will have a sacred fire burning and will be offering songs from the drum all weekend long. Everyone who is opposed to Site 41 is invited to attend.”

On May 4 Beaton led 500 supporters on a protest walk from the Mineral Spring in Elmvale to Concession 2 in Tiny Township where Site 41 is located. The landfill lies atop an aquifer which has scientifically proven to be among “the cleanest waters in the world”.

William Shotyk, a geochemistry professor at the University of Heidelberg in Germany, has tested the water from the area of the proposed dump site and said it was “kind of like the old-growth forest of natural waters ... the best water on Earth.”

Beaton says it is corporate greed behind this blatant disregard for the natural environment and it’s all about money.

“The corporation is Miller Waste Systems, the same corporation that was kicked out of Kirkland Lake. These springs have been here for centuries – pure mineral water is health and now what they want to do is drain the aquifer; it’s already started,” said Beaton, who has filed his own court injunction against the landfill. “No Natives have been consulted about that and the Ojibway people or any Native can stop it with a court injunction. I have had a meeting with Environment Commissioner Gordon Miller who said only a Native could stop the dumpsite because they have not been consulted about the taking of the water.”

Beausoleil First Nation “Water Carrier” Gloria King did a water ceremony to light the sacred fire at the gates of Site 41 where the camp-in is taking place.

Band Councillor Elizabeth Brass Elson says she cannot speak on behalf of the First Nation, but is protesting as a corporation, Seventh Generation Resource Management Inc.

“What is happening here is the County and stakeholder of this project are thinking bucks and not ducks,” said Bass-Elson.



Pauline Monague

Beausoleil women pledge to keep vigil at dump site

By Vicki Monague

BEAUSOLEIL FN – My name is Vicki Monague and I am one of five Anishinaabe Kweag from Christian Island who are making a stand for the Water where the purest water in the world is being threatened here by Dump Site 41 (www.stopdumpsite41.ca).



Vicki Monague away from Ashcroft Indian Reserve, near Cache Creek.

This dump site has been approved by Ontario’s McGuinty Government and is currently under production. It is slated to start receiving the waste products of four municipalities in Simcoe County later this year. This “debated, reviewed and approved” landfill site is being built on top of the world’s purest water source, the Alliston Aquifer, which runs from Georgian Bay right to the Oak Ridges Moraine and affects all the Great Lakes of Ontario. This Aquifer is part of a larger, deeper hydro geological system. Three First Nation communities – Rama, Georgina Island and Beausoleil – are located in this territory.

Some major components of the approved site plan have already been proven to be ineffective when implemented in Cache Creek, British Columbia in 1989. This site was built in an arid climate zone and in a natural depression with a sealed liner which was thought to be secure from leaks. Researchers found traces of leachate almost everywhere they looked outside the dump site as well as in underground water. Contaminants in the underground water system were found as close as two kilometers

With the Alliston Aquifer running directly below into every major body of water in Central Ontario, there is very real danger of the world’s purest water source becoming contaminated. As Anishinaabe Women, it is our duty to stand up for the water to ensure its preservation for generations to come. As First Nations people, it is our duty to protect the land. Site 41 is not only raping Mother Earth, it will also give her the disease called leachate for which the affects could be felt for many, many generations to come.

A group of 30 native and Métis people have been holding vigil at Site 41 in Tiny Township in what was to be a weekend peaceful protest. However, it seems very clear to us that our work is not done and we are going to continue to hold vigil over Site 41 until the fed-

eral government stands up for the rights of First Nations people and overturns the province of Ontario’s approval for Site 41.

We have been receiving the support of non-native local community members who have taken part in our Water Ceremonies and our songs from the Drum. To my knowledge, this is the first time in Canada that the non-Native People and First Nations have taken a stand in this region, side-by-side, against the levels of Government. We will continue to stand unified with our White Brothers and Sisters against Site 41.

Our voices have also been heard by Native Elders in Utah and California and we are quickly gaining support from other First Nation communities. Our Sacred Fire has been lit and will continue to burn until our demands are met. We are now inviting all First Nations People in Canada to come and take part in our Peaceful Protest of Site 41. Your First Nations Women need your support. We are going to protect our Heritage Land!

We will not leave until Site 41 is stopped permanently.

Sincerely,

Vicki Monague
Ojibwe of the Wolf Clan
PO Box 148, Christian Island, ON L0K 1C0
(705) 247-2636
bugskie54@hotmail.com

