



COMMUNITY NOTICE

For Immediate Release:
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MCA MAINTAINS OPPOSITION TO U.S. CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION TRANSITING AKWESASNE WATERS

The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne (MCA) is informing the community that the Government of Canada has advised MCA leadership it will proceed with a temporary Ministerial Order allowing designated United States (U.S.) Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers to transit a specific portion of Canadian waters with their firearms within Akwesasne.

The Order does not authorize CBP officers to conduct enforcement activities while in Canadian waters.

MCA does not support this decision, and Council's position has not changed.

Since the proposal was first brought forward in 2025, MCA has consistently opposed the presence of armed U.S. enforcement officers within its jurisdiction, citing concerns regarding Akwesasne's jurisdiction and rights, community safety, and the broader implications of permitting a foreign enforcement agency to enter the territory.

MCA proposed Akwesasne-led alternatives that would strengthen local policing and requested additional time, until March 31, 2027, to undertake broader community engagement before any decision was made.

While MCA participated in limited discussions with Canada, Council consistently expressed its opposition and does not consider the process to have constituted meaningful consultation. MCA maintains that decisions affecting Akwesasne and its waterways require meaningful consultation with all affected Akwesasne governments and policing services, including the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe (SRMT), Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Police Department (SRMTPD) and Mohawk Nation Council of Chiefs (MNCC).

Despite these concerns, the Minister of Public Safety advised MCA on September 16, 2026, that the temporary Order will take effect October 1, 2026, and remain in place until December 31, 2026.

CBP applied for an exemption under the Firearms Act to permit designated officers to transit through these waters while carrying firearms, which are to remain secured and covered during transit. The Order will allow designated U.S. CBP officers to transit approximately 2.8 kilometers of Canadian waterway, from the Canada-U.S. border west of Kana:takon to the mouth of the St. Regis River, to access the U.S. portion of the St. Regis River.



Canada has advised MCA that the Order conditions will include at least two hours' written notification before CBP begins transit; travel within a designated navigation corridor and at a set maximum speed; and firearms carried by designated officers remaining secured and covered during transit. These conditions were determined by Canada and were not agreed to by MCA.

MCA continues to have serious concerns regarding implementation of the temporary Order and the safety of Akwesasró:non, as well as the safety of police officers operating on Akwesasne's waterways.

MCA maintains that the Akwesasne Mohawk Police Service (AMPS) is the police service of jurisdiction within the Canadian portion of Akwesasne, a role also acknowledged by Public Safety Canada.

In response to Canada's decision, MCA is moving forward with several measures focused on community safety, jurisdiction and continued advocacy, including:

- Establishment of an Akwesasne Border Working Group (passed by Mohawk Council Resolution 2026-2027 #222) to coordinate Council, Akwesasne Mohawk Police Service (AMPS), legal and governmental work related to the Order;
- Continuing to work closely with AMPS to prioritize the safety of Akwesasró:non and police officers operating on Akwesasne's waterways;
- Continued coordination with AMPS, SRMT, SRMTPD and other Akwesasne partners regarding Akwesasne-led approaches to border and marine safety;
- Seeking engagement with Canadian and U.S. officials regarding implementation of the temporary Order and concerns raised by Akwesasne; and
- Engaging regional Indigenous leadership regarding Akwesasne's concerns.

MCA continues to support strengthening Akwesasne's own policing capacity and developing solutions that recognize the unique realities of a territory divided by an international border.

A Community Meeting will be forthcoming to provide further information on Canada's decision, the temporary Order and its implementation, and to hear directly from Akwesasró:non.

MCA will continue working to protect the safety of Akwesasró:non and our police officers, uphold Akwesasne's jurisdiction and rights, and ensure the community's concerns are heard.