

The Kinzua Dam

STOLEN LAND FOR
RECREATION AND
DEVELOPMENT



OFFICE OF
**DIVERSITY
& INCLUSION**
WARNER COLLEGE OF NATURAL RESOURCES

From 1778-1871 the U.S.
Government has entered 500
treaties with Indian Nations.

ALL OF THEM
have been broken or violated.

One such treaty was made between the U.S.
and the Iroquois Confederacy in 1794. It affirmed
a “permanent friendship” between the fledgling
United States and the Confederacy.

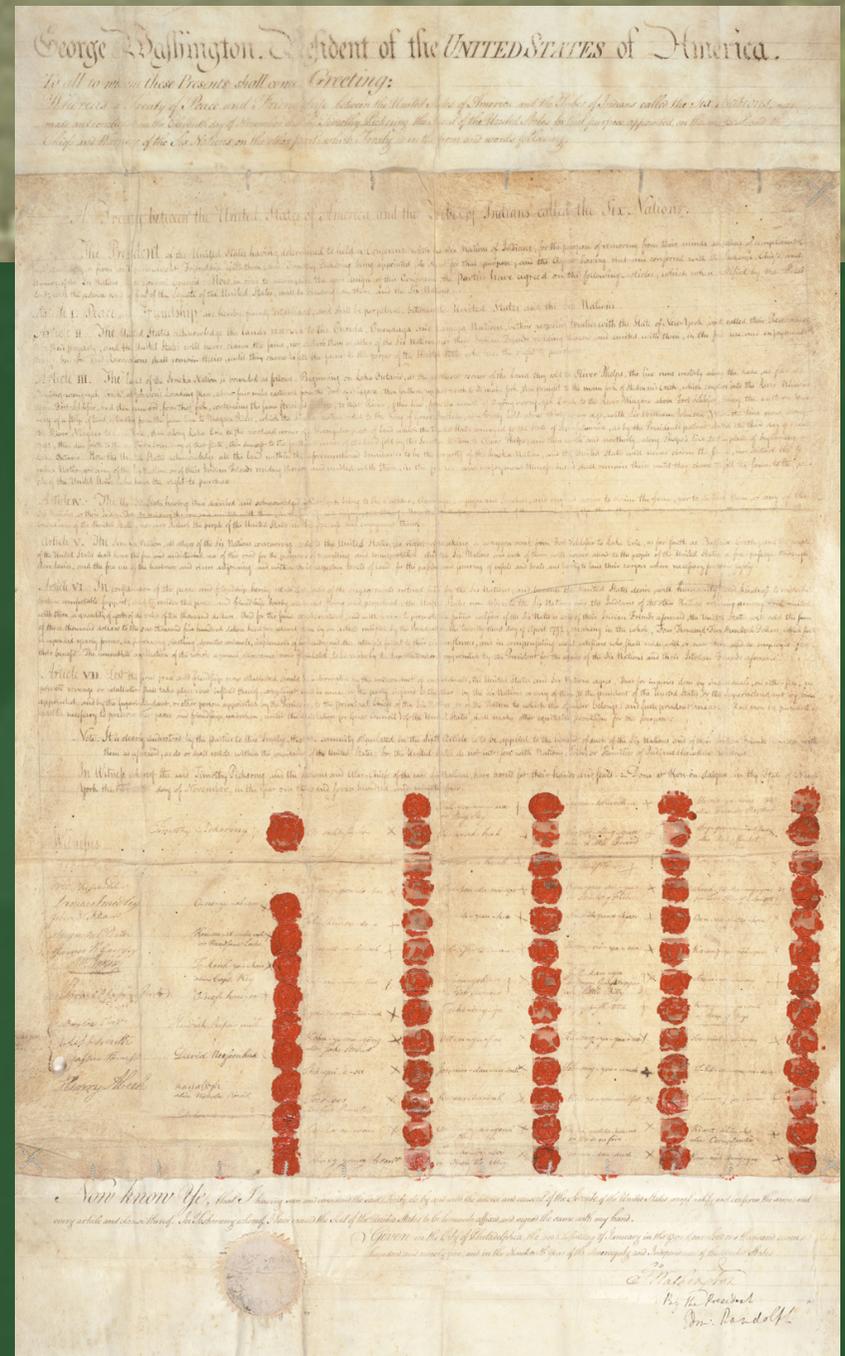
It was broken by the United States in the pursuit
of the land now used for the Kinzua Dam.

THE TREATY

The 1794 treaty established “an area that encompassed the entirety of western New York” and states:



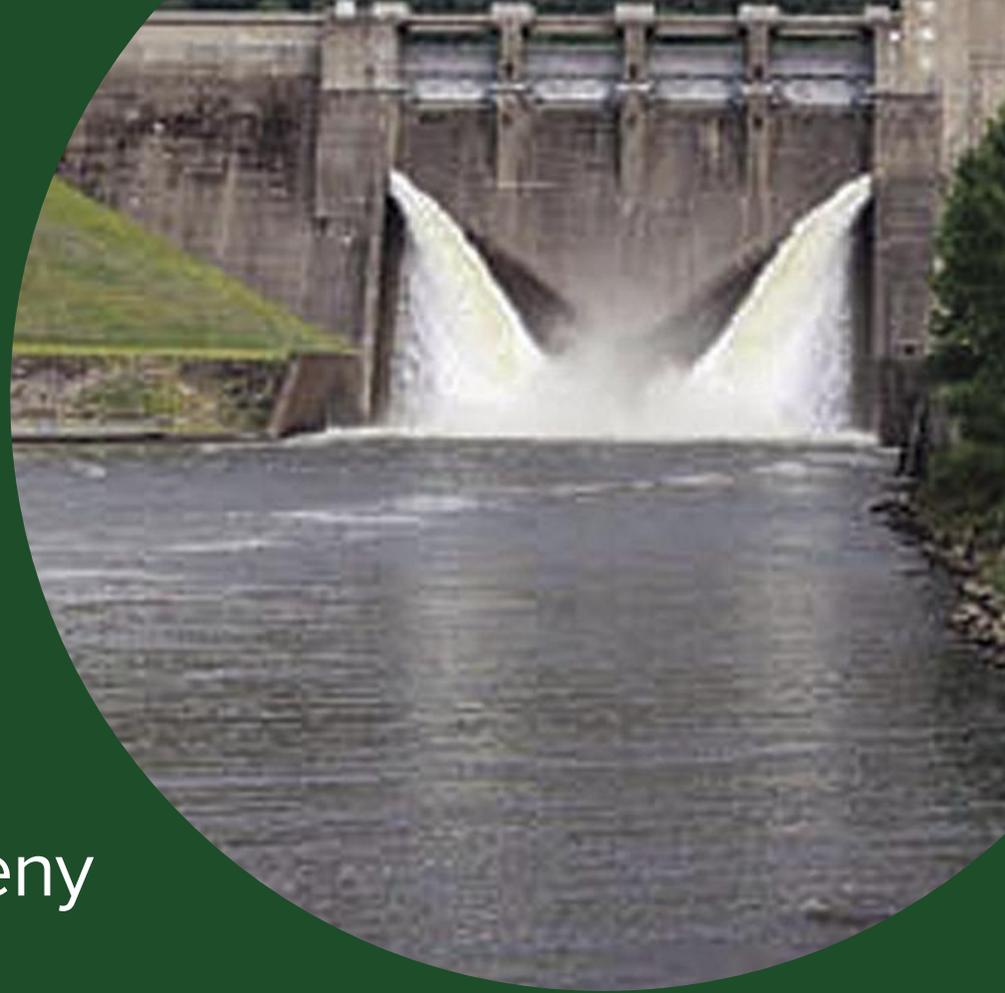
“The United States will never claim the same, nor disturb the Seneca Nation, but it should remain theirs, until they choose to sell the same to the people of the United States, who have the right to purchase.”



KINZUA DAM

FAST FACTS

- The Kinzua Dam, built in 1965, is located on the Allegheny River in Warren County, PA.
- It rests on the ancestral homeland of the Seneca Nation, one of the Six Nations comprising the Iroquois Confederacy.
- It was constructed by the Pittsburgh District of the United States Army Corps with two main purposes: flood control and water quality improvement for the Pittsburgh region.



Seneca Nation is known originally as Onondowahgah (pronounced: Oh-n'own-dough-wahgah) or "People of the Great Hill."

PROTESTS ERUPT



- The Senecas protested the building of the dam led by their president, George Heron.
- They proposed an alternative site for the dam that would not flood ancestral lands and took the government to court.
- Ultimately, the Army Corps rejected the alternative plan.



Kinzua Burning

LAND STOLEN, COMMUNITIES DESTROYED

- The Seneca Nation of Indians lost around 10,000 acres and 9 communities with 600 Seneca people due to the Kinzua Dam.
- The Army Corps used the flowage easement to forcefully relocate the inhabitants.
- After that, they burned the towns to the ground.

“

The U.S. Government took the general store, churches, the long house, schools. They did not stop until 145 houses were burned and demolished.”

-George Heron
Activist and President of
Seneca Nation of Indians.

”



ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS



Algal Bloom on Erosion photo of Ohi:yo' (Allegheny River)

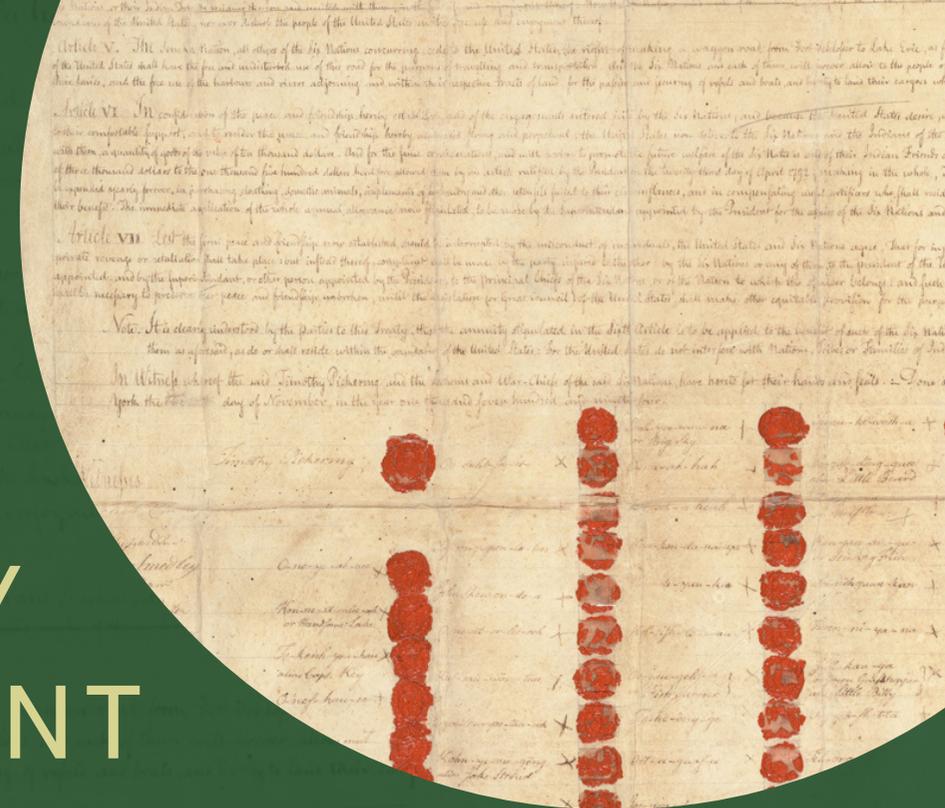
The dam presents environmental concern according to the Seneca-Iroquois National Museum. Severe erosion has grave impacts on culturally- significant vegetation and algal blooms threaten the safety of drinking water from the river and reservoir. Also:

- Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs)
- Riparian Zone Degradation
- Invasive Plant Species
- Degraded Fish Habitat
- Sedimentation & Erosion

A NOT-SO LEGALLY BINDING AGREEMENT

- The Seneca Nation grounded a legal defense in the Treaty of Canandaigua.
- The Canandaigua Treaty is one of the earliest treaties between the United States of America and the Six Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy

The Treaty had originally affirmed Haudenosaunee land rights - the Canandaigua Treaty restored to the Six Nations lands in western New York State that had been ceded by the Fort Stanwix Treaty.





TODAY: WALKING TO REMEMBER

Every September, Seneca people gather for the Remember the Removal Walk, a procession that commemorates the painful story. It is accompanied by eloquent radio and film documentaries illustrating what once happened on their land.



OFFICE OF
**DIVERSITY
& INCLUSION**
WARNER COLLEGE OF NATURAL RESOURCES