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PRESS RELEASE

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Environment Office announces results of Legislation Project survey

For immediate release

(Kahnawake – 9, Ohiari:ha/June 2022) The Kahnawà:ke Environment Protection Office (KEPO) wishes to announce the results of the “Kahnawà:ke Environment Legislation Project” survey that took place in March of this year.

The survey was created to gain community input on a number of environmental matters, with an emphasis on the potential development of environmental laws. Approximately 200 people participated, answering a series of questions that ranged from awareness of past or current laws in the community; concerns; priorities; setting aside or protection of certain lands; and the ‘rights of nature.’

Among those who participated, slightly less than half the respondents indicated awareness of environmental laws. 85% indicated support for the development of environmental laws in the community, with 3% against, and about 12% undecided. The most commonly suggested body for enforcement of environmental laws was Conservation, with the second most common mention being a collaborative effort among various entities.

The following were listed as the greatest environmental concerns for those surveyed: 1) water quality; 2) loss of traditional knowledge; 3) contaminated sites & illegal dumping and; 4) the loss or degradation of habitats, plants, and wildlife. These top four all scored near or above 40% of respondents.

The list of top priorities to be addressed was led by 1) the need for environmental standards for projects and activities that may impact the environment. Others included: 2) the protection of bodies of water and wetlands; 3) protection or enhancement of habitats and biodiversity and; 4) protection of culturally important plants or hunting sites.

There was overwhelming support (91%) for setting aside certain common lands to remain undeveloped. There was also over 70% support for ‘giving rights to our relations in nature.’ When asked to indicate what was working well in relation to protecting the environment, the most common mention was the Island and Bay Restoration Project.

“We were pleased with the high level of engagement shown by those who participated in our survey,” said KEPO Director Lynn Jacobs. “We carefully reviewed the results and took note of all comments. It is clear that people are passionate about protecting the environment and thinking about how we can all do a better job for the future.”

The results of the survey have been analyzed by KEPO staff and will be useful in determining how environmental legislation should be considered in the future.

The full survey results can be accessed by [clicking here](#).