

On September 13th and 14th, 2008 members and friends of the Burt Lake Band (aka Cheboiganing Band) of Ottawa & Chippewa Indians will be taking part in a Water Walk around Burt Lake. Burt Lake which was traditionally called Cheboiganing, is the "passing through" lake along the historical "Indian Highway" trade and transport route today known as the Inland Waterway.

The event which is open to the public, both women and men, is being put on in conjunction with the tribe's "Ottawa Bmaadziwin: The Ottawa Way of Sustainable Living" Environmental Training Project with funding provided by the Administration for Native Americans. Contact the tribe if you are interested in taking part in all or part of the walk. For cultural reasons, women and girls should wear long comfortable ankle length skirts. Due to auto traffic along the walking route parents must be responsible for their children's safety. This event is not appropriate for small children.

The Water Walk will serve as a reminder of the importance of water protection for all people and will be led by Josephine Mandamin an Ojibwe grandmother from Thunder Bay, Ontario recognized for her efforts to bring attention to water issues and the role of women in the protection of water. Josephine, one of a group of Mother Earth Water Walkers (www.motherearthwaterwalk.com) recently completed their goal of walking around all five of the Great Lakes.

The Burt Lake Water Walk is tentatively scheduled to begin at approximately 4:30pm on Saturday September 13th at the public access at Maple Bay with an opening offered by Josephine Mandamin, Simon Otto and the Woodland Singers women's Hand Drum group. The Water Walkers will then proceed:

East along Chickagami Trail around Indian (aka "Colonial") Point, North on West Burt Lake Road to Hogsback Road (east) to East Burt Lake Road (south) and stop at Hoppies Tavern for dinner.

The walk is schedule to pick up Sunday morning at about sunrise from Hoppies and continue clockwise around Burt Lake to Burt Lake State Park in Indian River, north on Miller Road to the Crooked River crossing and conclude full circle at Maple Bay. The walk is free but donations will be accepted to be split between the Mother Earth Water Walkers and Ottawa Bmaadziin project.

The approximate length of the walk is 45 miles on paved and unpaved roads and will take place "relay style" with groups of walkers covering ¼ to ½ mile at a time and then passing a copper kettle with water from Burt Lake and an eagle feather staff on to the next group of walkers waiting along with support vehicles.

For more info contact: Kathy Kae, Burt Lake Band Environmental Outreach Coordinator at (231) 529-6113 or kathykae47@gmail.com. Additional details available at www.burtlakeband.org and for information during the event call the mobile support line at (231) 740-6819.