

# RED LAKE BAND of CHIPPEWA INDIANS

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Red Lake Nation Statement Regarding Impoundment of Aircraft Following Emergency Landing on Sovereign Lands**

**Red Lake, MN** - The Red Lake Tribal Council issues the following statement to clarify the rationale and next steps related to the impoundment of the aircraft operated by Mr. Darrin Smedsmo after his landing on October 15, 2025, within the boundaries of the Red Lake Reservation.

The Red Lake Nation maintains its sovereign authority over its lands, natural resources, and the safety and welfare of its citizens. The Red Lake Nation's Constitution and the Red Lake Tribal Council-adopted resolutions provide for the regulation of activity within Reservation boundaries.

We are glad that Mr. Smedsmo is safe and was assisted by Tribal law enforcement. The Tribe undertook the impoundment of Mr. Smedsmo's aircraft because of the following:

- The aircraft landed on reservation land without prior authorization or required coordination with Tribal authorities.
- The landing created immediate safety, liability, and resource-protection concerns for the Tribe.
- The Tribal law enforcement response includes ensuring public safety, protecting Tribal property, and ensuring compliance with Tribal laws and resolutions.

This matter is still under investigation, and once that investigation is complete, court proceedings will commence. Those proceedings will provide Mr. Smedsmo with due process under Tribal law.

The Red Lake Nation is committed to upholding the inherent sovereignty of the Tribe, preserving and protecting its lands and waters, and maintaining respectful relations with our neighbors. We acknowledge the urgency involved in emergency aviation events and reiterate that the Tribe's primary concern is the welfare of its citizens and the integrity of its inherent sovereignty over Tribal lands.

We welcome engagement with the FAA and governmental peers to clarify Tribal protocols for emergency landings and Tribal laws and resolutions governing overflight, so that future incidents may be handled with greater transparency, cooperation, and mutual respect.

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