



A SPECIAL CIRCLE OF ALL NATIONS REPORT

**La Grande Marche Pour
La Protection Des Forets**

December 11, 2021



Introduction

Circle of All Nations is pleased to have engaged in La Grande Marche pour la Protection des Forets. Patrick Gravel and Jolyane Lamontague, the primary organizers of this six week walk, participated in the annual Circle of All Nations Gatherings hosted by Elder William Commanda over many years. He inspired environmental stewardship, protection of old growth forests and affirmation of Algonquin presence on the land. They, together with multiple colleagues from First Nations communities (including elders and politicians) environmental organizations and activists, community representatives, teachers, youth and political leadership, organized the six week walk to campaign for the protection of biodiversity in a hundred zones across Quebec. Circle of All Nations coordinator and spokesperson, Romola V. Thumbadoo, Phd, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, participated in the opening launch in Ripon, Quebec, and in other planned events. The walk concluded with a very encouraging discussion with provincial government officials in Quebec City.

This report captures key moments of this Inspirational initiative.

FELICITATIONS ET GRATITUDE to the WALKERS!



Report by Patrick Gravel, Botanist: Part I

La Grande Marche pour la protection des forêts

La dernière année a été épique pour toutes les personnes ayant participé de proche ou de loin à La Grande Marche. Nous voulons remercier les personnes, organisations, municipalités, entreprises et Premières Nations qui ont soutenu ce mouvement citoyen autonome et bénévole.

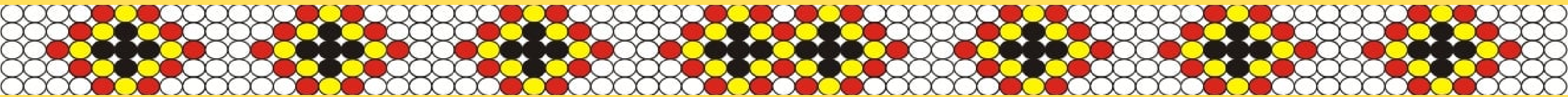
Nous avons ensemble, marché dans plusieurs régions du Québec des milliers de km, avons rencontré des milliers de personnes et avons fait des dizaines de rassemblements dans tous le Québec. Tout ceci dans un esprit de rencontre, de nonviolence et d'unification des allochtones et autochtones, ce qui fut pour plusieurs le gage de succès de ce mouvement. Cette démarche a d'ailleurs été inspiré par la vie du sage anishinabe William Commanda.



Report P.Gravel: Part 2

À Québec le 16 octobre a eu lieu un rassemblement historique sous une pluie torrentielle. Selon les dires de Constant Awashish, chef du grand conseil Atikamekw: " C'est une pluie qui nettoie et c'est notre nouveau commencement".

Le 19 octobre, les organisateurs-trices de la Grande Marche ont rencontrés le ministre de l'Environnement et de la Lutte contre les Changements Climatiques, monsieur Benoît Charette, ainsi que le ministre des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs, monsieur Pierre Dufour. Ceux-ci ont reçu nos propositions et demandes avec intérêt et ont affirmé vouloir rester en lien avec notre collectif pour faire avancer ces solutions suggérées. Nous sommes en contact avec le gouvernement, mais savons que notre mouvement doit continuer à œuvrer à unifier la population et à demeurer actif.

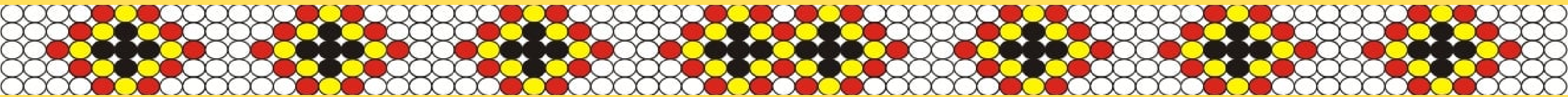


Report P.Gravel: Part 3

Continuons à créer un réseau et nous réunir pour la nature dans toutes les régions avec toutes les autres gardiennes et gardiens des forêts.

Merci et à bientôt ! ...très bientôt...reposez-vous et soyez prêts pour la suite !

Le collectif initiateur de la Grande Marche pour la protection des forêts



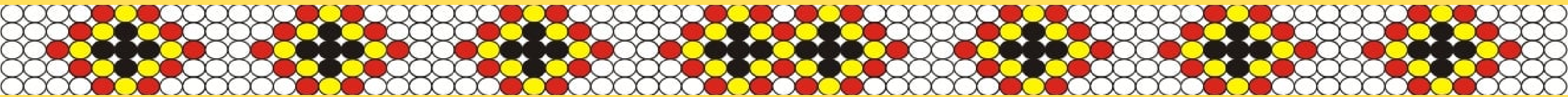
**Avec les dessins et
les ministres**



About la Grande Marche

"Protecting the North is good, but Southern Quebec is richer in species diversity and increasingly threatened by human activities. It also needs protection! Every time a species disappears, we lose a loyal ally and the fragile balance of nature is endangered. So we are putting our own health at risk... scientists say it, biodiversity is the health of all living beings... including humans." À propos | La Grande Marche

Environmental Conservation Organization qui est un grand mouvement, une marche et un rassemblement de tous les peuples du Québec. L'importance de la biodiversité est un point culminant de la création de 100 aires protégées dans le sud du Québec.



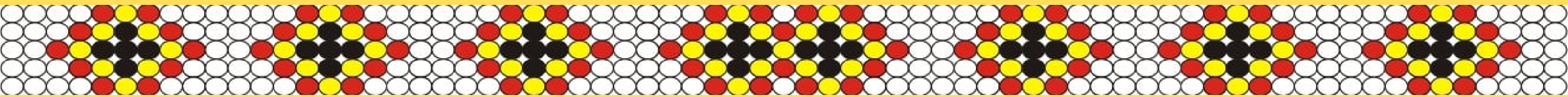
Patrick Gravel, the primary coordinator of La Grande Marche, comments on the conclusions of this innovative bridge building environmental initiative, inspired by Grandfather William Commanda's work, example and leadership

October 16 :

Québec City, a historical rally took place during a torrential downpour, "It is a cleansing rain and this is our new beginning." (Constant Awashish, head of the Atikamekw Grand Council).

October 19 :

The organizers of La Grande Marche met with Minister of the Environment and the Fight against Climate Change, Mr. Benoît Charette, and the Minister of Forests, Wildlife and Parks, Mr. Pierre Dufour. The ministers received the proposals with interest, and parties committed to remain in contact with the organization to further work towards creating solutions.



Target audience:

**OUR AUDIENCE IS A DIVERSE MIX OF YOUTH, PROFESSIONALS, ACTIVISTS,
POLITICIANS, ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS, COMMUNITY MEMBERS.**

**Des milliers de personnes participent à la Grande Marche, établissant des liens
avec Mère Nature, l'environnement et les uns avec les autres en cours de route.**



Overview

- **Locations: 24 places, and counting.**
- **Activities: converging and walking across the province of Quebec. Public information sessions, presentations, and conversations.**
- **Goals and objectives: to build bridges cross-culturally. Link climate change priorities and influence the UN general meeting in November 2021.**
- **Benefits: bring cross-cultural awareness and create action as a community**



The Vision for Marching



1

Community environmental awareness

Bring together individuals and groups across a multitude of backgrounds, cultures, and races.

2

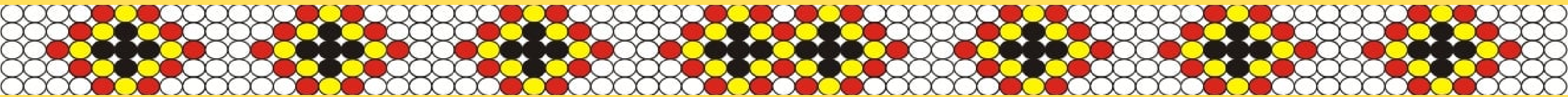
Local News and Politicians

Reach the public through the march across the land, to encourage living with and amongst the forests of Quebec, reconnecting with nature's beauty.

3

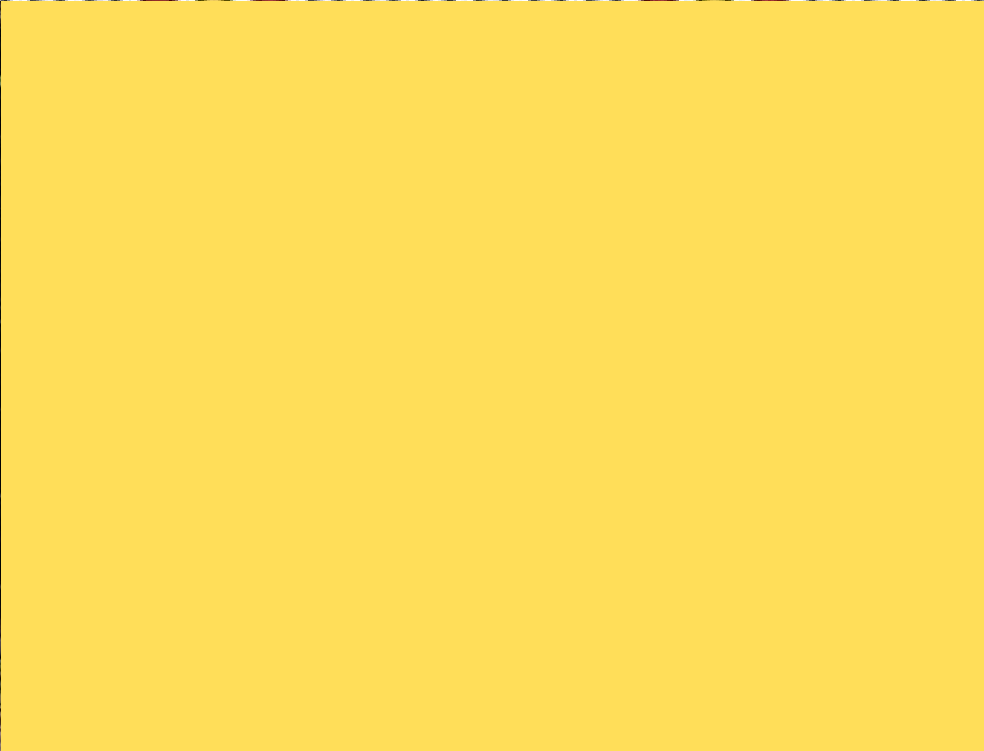
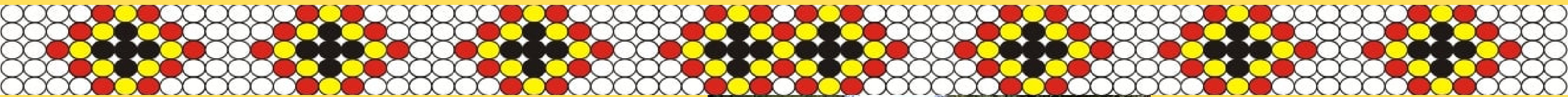
Bridge Building

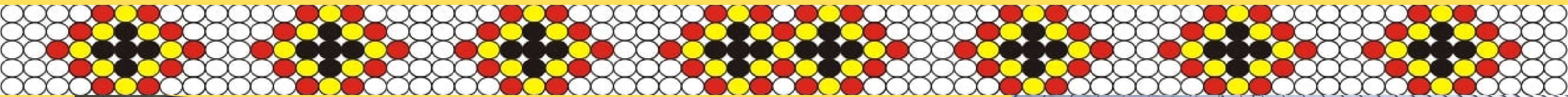
Manifesting the vision of Elders that have passed on, bringing their passion and love for Mother Earth to life. **Elder William Commanda** inspired this approach

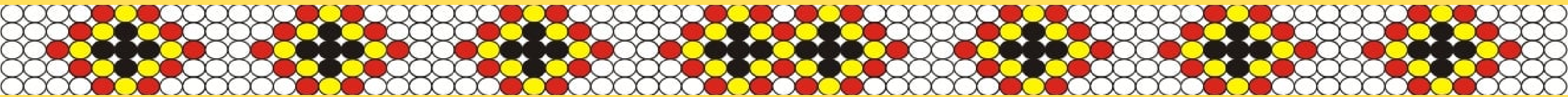


Photographs and Images

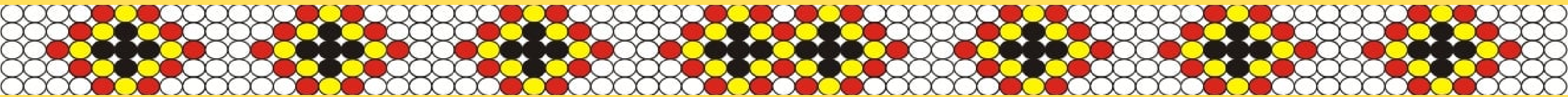




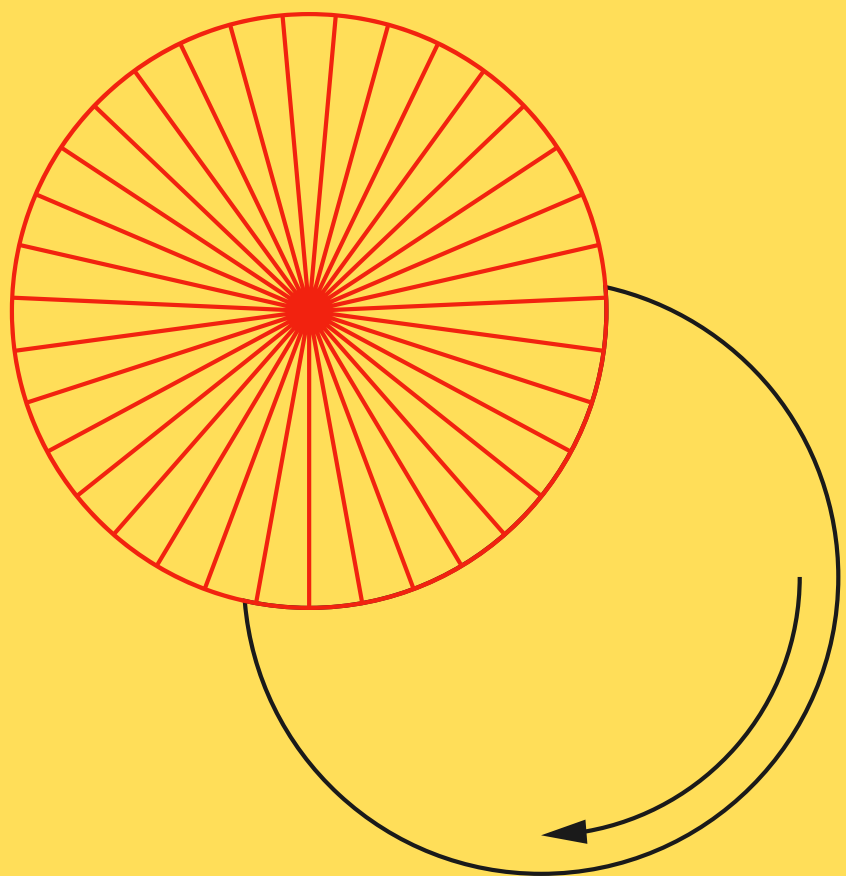




At great strides, Indigenous and Allochtones from all walks of life completed the journey of La Grande Marche pour la Protection des Forêts. The demonstrators arrived in Quebec City on October 16, continuously supported by SNAP Quebec and many partners, this is a movement from citizens which defends protected areas projects south of the 49th parallel. The walk does not end here!



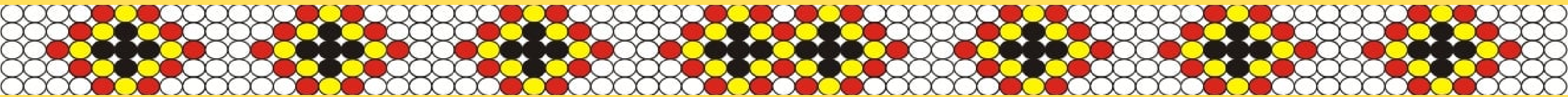
Public engagement and acknowledgments





Attendees & Public Supporters

- **The Réseau Demain le Québec (David Suzuki Foundation), the Anishinabe community of Kitigan Zibi, Nature Québec, SNAP-Québec, Mothers at the Front, La Planète s'invite au parlement, Le Grand Conseil des Atikamekws, L'Action Boréale, the Front Commun pour la Transition énergétique (FCTÉ), the Réseau québécois des Groupes écologistes (RQGE), the Association québécoise des médecins en environnement (AQME) and more!**
- **Patrick Gravel (botanist), Jolyane Lamontagne (environmental educator), Marguerite Lepage Fisher (elder), Colin Perreault (educator and community organizer), Marie-Émilie Lacroix (cultural mediator and lecturer at UQAR in Indigenous Studies), Emmanuelle Bourassa-Beaudoin (dance teacher at UQAM) and Véronique Gaboury-Bonhomme (biology teacher at CEGEP de l'Outaouais).**



Additional Resources:

Accueil | La Grande marche

La Grande Marche pour la Protection des Forêts | Facebook

Report created by Emaline Saylor and Romola Thumbadoo

CIRCLE OF ALL NATIONS CONTACT DETAILS

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Find us on Facebook: Romola Vasantha Thumbadoo,
Circle of All Nations, William Commanda, William
Commanda Legacy Asinabka, Romola's Nature CAN TEACH

Thumbadoo, R.V. (2018). *Ginawaydaganuc and the Circle of All Nations: The Remarkable Environmental Legacy of Elder William Commanda* PhD Thesis. Ottawa. Carleton University. <https://curve.carleton.ca/aa4e3cbb-5b83-464d-8286-a901fcd77b06>