



Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians

Lac Courte Oreilles Tribal Governing Board
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Louis Taylor Sr., Chair
Tweed Shuman, Vice-Chair
Bill Trepanier, Secretary/Treasurer

Council Members:

Michelle Beaudin (term began 2019)
Gary "Little Guy" Clause (term began 2019)
Don Carley (term began 2021)
David Bisonette (term began 2023)

Location: Sawyer County, northwest Wisconsin



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Tribal Statistics

There are currently 7,275 Lac Courte Oreilles (LCO) tribal members.

- 17 and under = 1098
- Ages 18 - 64 = 5,360
- 65 and older = 817

The LCO Reservation, located mostly in Sawyer County, totals 76,465 acres; approximately 10,500 acres are lakes.

- 24,364.89 acres are tribally owned
- 23,652.26 acres are individually allotted
- 6,072.38 acres are considered fee land
- LCO has additional trust land located in Burnett County near Rice Lake and Washburn County near Rocky Ridge Lake
- Approximately 2,306 tribal members live on reservation, trust, or fee land along with 708 non-tribal members.
- Additionally, large numbers of tribal members live in Minneapolis, Milwaukee, and Chicago.

LCO is the largest employer in Sawyer County (*Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development*), employing approximately 900 people.

Tribal Government

The LCO Tribal Governing Board is composed of seven members.

- A chairperson
- Vice-chairperson
- Secretary/treasurer
- Four council members
- The council meets weekly
- Decisions are made by a majority rule
- Elections are held in June every two years (every odd numbered year) for a four-year term. Terms are staggered

Brief History

The Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin historically occupied a vast territory within a 100 mile radius of the present location of the Lac Courte Oreilles Reservation located near Hayward, WI. The Lac Courte Oreilles (LCO) people are one band of the large Ojibwe Nation that originally occupied the upper eastern woodlands area of the North American continent. The Treaty of 1854 established the LCO reservation.

In the years of 1825, 1837, and 1842, many bands of the Ojibwe Nation entered into sovereign treaties with the United States. In the treaties, the Ojibwe Nation ceded territories of land, which became a part of the United States and reserved unto themselves rights to use the land and its resources. In 1854, the Treaty of LaPointe established specific territorial rights of the LCO people including the right to hunt, fish, and gather in the northern third of Wisconsin. The off-reservation hunting, fishing, and gathering rights of the Ojibwe people were recognized in 1983 after years of litigation in Lac Courte Oreilles v. Voigt, 700 F.2d 341 (7th Cir. 1983). In addition to Wisconsin, off-reservation hunting, fishing, and gathering rights were subsequently established in the State of Minnesota in a similar treaty rights case involving a Minnesota tribe.

At the time the LCO reservation was established, the tribal elders wanted to protect certain resources that included wild rice beds and fishing areas on the Grindstone, Chief, and Lac Courte Oreilles Lakes. The land was also rich in timber stands of oak, conifer, maple, hickory, cedar, and birch. There were bountiful fishing sites on the Chippewa, Chief, and Couderay rivers as well as hunting and trapping areas for waterfowl, deer, bear, beaver, mink, muskrat, and other game. The Tribe also used historical water transportation routes via the Chippewa, Flambeau, and Namekagon rivers.

Although the tribe already had a traditional government that provided safety and welfare to its people, after years of resistance, the Lac Courte Oreilles Tribe adopted an Indian Reorganization Act Constitution in 1966. The constitution establishes a seven member Tribal Governing Board to make decisions on behalf of the LCO people on the areas of land, establishment of a tribal court, ordinances, contracts, agreements, governmental negotiations, tribal businesses, housing, etc. The constitution recognizes the sovereign immunity of the tribe along with jurisdiction within its territory on and off the reservation. The LCO Tribe is a federally recognized tribal government that exercises its rights of sovereignty and governance established by the treaties of 1825, 1837, 1842, and 1854 along with its constitution, initially adopted in 1966.

Tribal Services

Law Enforcement

- Seven officers
- Cross-deputized with the Sawyer County Sheriff's Department
- Funded primarily with tribal funds, some discretionary federal grants, and Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance funds

Court System

- One part-time judge and one magistrate
- Practitioners must be admitted to the tribal court bar
- Appeals consist of one law-trained judge from the Wisconsin Tribal Judges Association (WTJA) followed by a 3-judge panel from the WTJA
- Attorneys and law advocates must be admitted to the tribal court.
- The court system handles the following civil cases – adoption, child custody, child welfare, adult and minor guardianships, conservation, traffic, ordinance violations, divorce, paternity, name change, landlord/tenant, small claims, and filing of foreign judgments.
- Funded by the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, U.S. Bureau of Justice Assistance, Great Lakes Indian Fish & Wildlife Commission, filing fees and forfeiture payments.

Education

LCO youth are educated in three primary school districts. These districts are:

- Lac Courte Oreilles School
- Winter School District (70 students/17% of student body)
- Hayward School District (485/24.2%)

(Source: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction)

Lac Courte Oreilles Head Start/Early Head Start provides early education to tribal children and their families:

- Head Start educates children ages 3 to 5
- Head Start has an enrollment of 102 children
- Early Head Start educated expectant mothers and children from birth to age 3
- Early Head Start has an enrollment of 64 for center-based education
- Early Head Start serves 24 children under home-based education

Waadookodaading – Ojibwe Language Immersion Charter School:

- Primary goal is to create new speakers of Ojibwemowin and reach highest standards of academic achievement
- All core subjects taught in Ojibwemowin (Ojibwe language)
- Serves Pre-k through 5th grade students
- Enrollment of 28 students

Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa K-12 School System

- The Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa School is a pre-K - 12th grade school
- Total enrollment of 330 students
- The school is accredited
- Some funds from the Bureau of Indian Affairs
- A portion of the food program receives state funding
- No state equalization aid or charter school funds
- The Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa School has a 95% graduation rate

Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College (LCOOCC) serves higher education needs in Northern Wisconsin:

- Enrollment of 550 students from five reservations – the LCOOCC Campus, and for outreach sites on the Red Cliff Reservation, Bad River Reservation, St., Croix Reservation, and Lac du Flambeau Reservation.
- “Open Door” enrollment policy recruits both native and non-native students
- Accredited by the Higher Learning Commission

Healthcare

Community Health Center

- Routine care, ambulatory care, pharmacy, dental, lab, x-ray, diagnostics lab, behavioral health, alcohol and other drug abuse (AODA) services, women infants and children (WIC) programs, community health, diabetes care, Honor Our Children, optical, and nutrition.

Mushkiki (Medicine House):

- “Walk-In” clinic open after regular center hours.
- Healthcare funded by Indian Health Service and the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, with some tribal funding.

Social Services

- Oakwood Haven - an emergency shelter
- Consolidated Family Services Department
- A halfway house

- An Indian Child Welfare Department
- AODA counseling
- Child care assistance programs
- Funded through a variety of sources including tribal, state and federal monies

Economic Enterprises

- LCO employs approximately 900 people
- 21% of those are non-Native American
- 79% are Native American

Business	Type of Business
LCO Casino, Lodge, Convention Center Hayward, WI	Gaming/lodging/meeting facility
LCO Cranberry Marsh Hayward, WI	Cranberry marsh
LCO Development Corporation Hayward, WI	Construction/infrastructure/trucking
LCO Commercial Center Hayward, WI	Grocery/Cigarettes/Liquor Store
LCO Quick Stop Hayward, WI	Gasoline/light grocery
Grindstone Creek Casino Hayward, WI	Gaming
LCO Convenience Store Hayward, WI	Gasoline/car wash/light grocery/liquor
LCO C-2 Spur Station	Gasoline/Light Grocery
LCO Smoke Shop Hayward, WI	Cigarettes/tobacco
LCO Federal Credit Union Hayward, WI	Savings/loans
The Landing Hayward, WI	Full Family Resort with Restaurant, Bar & Cabins for Rent
WOJB-FM Hayward, WI	100 KWatt Community Radio station
Hydro Facility Winter, WI	Electric plant
Chippewa Wood Crafters Hayward, WI	Custom Wood Furnishings in Rustic Styles
Pineview Funeral Services Hayward, WI	Tribal & non-Tribal Funeral and Burial Services

LCO Fireworks Station
Hayward, WI

Seasonal Sales

LCO Transit
Hayward, WI

Transportation System

Lynk's Café
Hayward, WI

Leased Business –
Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

Morrow's Native Art
Hayward, WI

Leased Business – Arts & Crafts