

On Saturday, October 6, 2018 Bayfield County became aware of a Federal Lawsuit naming Bayfield county as a Defendant. The County learned of the lawsuit when contacted by media personnel. The suit involves jurisdictional zoning authority on fee lands within the Red Cliff reservation. The lawsuit emanates from county practice of zoning on fee simple parcels within the reservation. Bayfield County is of the understanding that this practice is in accordance with state and federal law. Bayfield County recognizes and honors tribal zoning on Trust Lands.

Bayfield County has strived for a strong working relationship with Red Cliff.

- In 2017 Bayfield County and Red Cliff held their first ever joint Red Cliff Tribal Council and Bayfield County Board meeting.
- In 2017 Bayfield County passed an indigenous peoples day resolution.
- Bayfield County plays an active role in coordinating Tribal County Relations meetings held two to three times a year. The purpose of these meetings is to ensure adequate communications. One of the goals of the County Tribal Relations Committees is to “facilitate the repatriation of lands to the Red Cliff Tribe while fostering mutual respect and cooperation”.
- In 2016 Bayfield County signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Red Cliff regarding tribal land recovery. The Memorandum of Understanding resolves that the parties agree to “work with each other to seek a suitable land exchange, trade or other conveyance of lands”.
- In 2017 and 2018, a total of 160 acres of county owned forest within the reservation was sold to Red Cliff.
- At the January 25, 2018 Tribal County Relations meeting five county departments made presentations to the Committee including Planning and Zoning. No one from Red Cliff made any comment with respect to the presentation of Planning and Zoning nor has Red Cliff made any request to discuss county zoning at any of the County Tribal Relations meetings.

Bayfield County values its relationship with the Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa and will continue to foster and promote dialogue to encourage better understanding of respective positions.