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claims arising from agreements negotiated with the federal government after 1867, when the country was united.

The band's railway claim was the only one which fit that requirement.

The Prime Minister has promised that restriction will soon be lifted, and Ms. Lynne said the band would be free to ask the government to reconsider the two rejected claims if the policy is changed.

If that happens, the band's claims would join about 260 others currently in the system.

The Mississaugas of the New Credit band is also planning to join the queue, by re-submitting a claim for 80 hectares (200 acres) of land on the north shore of the Credit River, which had been suspended by the federal government.

Researching claims

The band is researching several other claims, which are expected to be filed soon.

Mr. Monture said most of the Six Nations claims are for land the band leased to white settlers, but refused to sell.

For example, the band has a claim for 3,072 hectares (7,680 acres) along Highway 6, the Hamilton-Port Dover Plank Road, in Seneca and Oneida Townships.

In the 1830s, the Six Nations Confederacy chiefs, the traditional leaders of the community, refused to sell the land. They did agree to lease plots for 42 years, with renewals.

Today, there is no money coming in from those leases, and the band wants to know why.

In other instances, Mr. Mon-

ture said, the Confederacy chiefs were intimidated and coerced into signing documents to surrender their land.

In the 1840s, as white settlers were increasingly finding their way onto the Six Nations lands, the government encouraged the chiefs to surrender all land they weren't occupying at the time.

The settlers, who were proceeding to build homes and set up farms, protested loudly when the chiefs said they would lease, not sell, their land.

The government continued pressing for a surrender. "The Indians were called everything, intimidated in any way possible," said Mr. Monture.

"The Indian agent was calling them ignorant...and basically saying that if they didn't surrender they couldn't prevent the land from being taken anyway."

A claim for land along Grand River which was flooded in the 1830s when the Welland Canal Company built a feeder line to the Welland Canal should be one of the easiest to resolve, said Mr. Monture.

According to the band's research, the federal government agreed in 1884 to pay the band \$28,672 to compensate for the flooded land.

However, Mr. Monture said, the governments of Upper and Lower Canada refused to consent to this payment.

They were afraid they would then be liable for other lost lands. The issue has never been resolved.

The Town of Dunnville has proposed building lift locks on the land under dispute.

"If that project gets the OK, and our land claim is still unresolved, we'll have to step in at some point," said Mr. Monture.

Dunnville Mayor Bernie Corbett said he understands the band's position, and he has pleaded with federal and provincial governments to settle the claim.

"We're just a pawn in somebody's big game, and the losers will be our community and the Indian band," if the project is stalled, he said.