FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 25, 2019
Contact:
Phil Pantano
Pantano & Associates, L.L.C.
716-601-4128
phil@pantanoPR.com

Seneca Nation Reaches Agreement for Thruway Repairs on Cattaraugus Territory

Allegany Territory (Salamanca, NY) – The Seneca Nation of Indians announced today that it has reached an agreement with the New York State Thruway Authority regarding long-needed repairs on the portion of the New York State Thruway that crosses the Nation’s Cattaraugus Territory.

“After multiple requests, the Seneca Nation was finally able to engage the New York State Thruway Authority in direct communication over the last several days regarding the deplorable condition of this stretch of Thruway,” said President Rickey Armstrong, Sr. “That direct communication resulted in a cooperative agreement, so that this work can finally begin.”

Today’s agreement follows a flurry of communication initiated over the past two weeks. The Nation’s Transportation Department sent a request to NYSTA Commissioner Matt Driscoll on September 12 to discuss the needed repairs. A second request was sent on September 17, after which the Nation received and reviewed information from NYSTA regarding its plans for making the repairs. The details of the final agreement were finalized between the two parties between late last week and today.

Thousands of motorists from across New York and beyond travel the approximately three-mile stretch of Thruway located on the Cattaraugus
The highway is also an important route for commercial traffic.

“Motorists on our territories, whether Seneca or non-Seneca, New Yorkers or travelers from other areas, deserve the same safety and consideration as those who travel the rest of the New York State Thruway,” President Armstrong said. “New York State, not the Seneca Nation, receives toll revenue from everyone who travels this state roadway across our territory. The Seneca Nation wants to see these repairs completed. The Thruway Authority has indicated an aggressive work schedule for completing the first phase of repairs over the next several weeks. The Nation’s Transportation Department will coordinate with the Thruway Authority to make sure that happens.”

The agreement outlines two phases of work. The initial phase, which is expected to begin within the next few days, involves repairing the most dangerous sections of the Thruway. Phase 2, which should take no longer than ten weeks, involves a more thorough milling and paving project. The Nation and the Thruway Authority are working to complete all of the work before winter, but may have to schedule Phase 2 in the Spring of 2020, depending on weather conditions and the availability of asphalt to complete the project.

In addition to the long-overdue Thruway repairs, the Nation is urging New York State to address other glaring transportation issues related to state roadways on Nation land, including poor road conditions in Salamanca.

“When the State engages the Nation in direct, respectful dialogue, we can make progress on issues of mutual interest, just as we have today and on other past projects,” President Armstrong added. “Now that we have come to an agreement on the Thruway, I hope the State will show the same urgency in prioritizing and addressing the poor condition of other state roadways that impact people’s daily lives. The safety of these roads and the people who travel them deserve the State’s attention, even if the roads don’t generate toll money for the State’s coffers.”