1. Introduction

Idle No More was founded by four women named Nina Wilson, Sylvia McAdam, Jessica Gordon, and Sheelah McLean. In early October, in light of upcoming legislation, these women began organizing teach-ins to get people to understand what this legislation entailed for indigenous communities and the land.

1.1. Manifesto (from the Idle No More website):

http://idlenomore.ca/index.php/about-us/item/120-manifesto

“We contend that: The Treaties are nation to nation agreements between The Crown and First Nations who are sovereign nations. The Treaties are agreements that cannot be altered or broken by one side of the two Nations. The spirit and intent of the Treaty agreements meant that First Nations peoples would share the land, but retain their inherent rights to lands and resources. Instead, First Nations have experienced a history of colonization which has resulted in outstanding land claims, lack of resources and unequal funding for services such as education and housing.

We contend that: The state of Canada has become one of the wealthiest countries in the world by using the land and resources. Canadian mining, logging, oil and fishing companies are the most powerful in the world due to land and resources. Some of the poorest First Nations communities have mines or other developments on their land but do not get a share of the profit. The taking of resources has left many lands and waters poisoned - the animals and plants are dying in many areas in Canada. We cannot live without the land and water. We have laws older than this colonial government about how to live with the land.

We contend that: Currently, this government is trying to pass many laws so that reserve lands can also be bought and sold by big companies to get profit from resources. They are promising to share this time...Why would these promises be different from past promises? We will be left with nothing but poisoned water, land and air. This is an attempt to take away sovereignty and the inherent right to land and resources from First Nations peoples.

We contend that: There are many examples of other countries moving towards sustainability, and we must demand sustainable development as well. We believe in healthy, just, equitable and sustainable communities and have a vision and plan of how to build them. Please join us in creating this vision.”

1.2. The legislation in question

- Bill C-27 First Nations Financial Transparency Act
- Bill S-2 Family Homes on Reserve and Matrimonial Interests or Right Act
- Bill S-6 First Nations Elections Act
• Bill S-8 Safe Drinking Water for First Nations
• Bill C-428 Indian Act Amendment and Replacement Act
• Bill S-207 An Act to amend the Interpretation Act
• Bill S-212 First Nations Self-Government Recognition Bill and the “First Nations” Private Ownership Act
• BILL C45

1.3. Chief Spence

2. Teach-Ins

Following the model of teach-ins and in keeping with the diversity of voices involved in this grassroots movement, a good way to learn about INM is to take advantage of the breadth of technology that allows us to virtually take part in teach-ins. Below are some speakers and artists who bring their voice to the discussion.

2.1. Montreal - Chelsea Vowel
Education/History/Treaty Relations---->
8:48mins http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oZGaLJ9wJzs

âpihtawikosisân is Métis from the Plains Cree speaking community of Lac Ste. Anne, Alberta. She currently lives in Montreal, Quebec. Her passions are: education, Aboriginal law, the Cree language, and roller derby. She holds a BEd, an LLB and teaches indigenous youth.

2.2. Alberta - Pam Palmater
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=STatNSjcrvo

Dr. Pamela D. Palmater is a Mi'kmaw lawyer and member of the Eel River Bar First Nation in New Brunswick. She teaches Indigenous law, politics and governance at Ryerson University and heads their Centre for Indigenous Governance.

2.3. ISA McGill Teach-In - Artists & Grassroots

2.3.1. Projek Toombz and the Immortal Curse

These two young First Nations men who work as intervention workers for PAQ, Project Autochtone du Quebec.
Song: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4JEkgF8WuKU 4:21mins

2.3.2. Tiffany Harrington Poem

Tiffany Harrington is an executive member of McGill’s Indigenous Students Alliance and Eastern Métis. She wrote and performed this spoken word poem for an Idle No
More Teach In focusing on the importance of the grassroots nature of INM and the involvement of artists in the movement:

I speak to the ancestors and Creator to listen
I call out to the Peoples to give thanks for what been given
But I head allegations and discourse of terrorism
You can’t fault the Peoples for speaking out on racism
Especially in a country thought to be just and diverse
Some call Indigenous Peoples’ blessing while others scream curse

And we’ve grown tired of being slated to the sidelines, we plead
Guilty to legislation, ruled from a colonial seed
Planted to assimilate our populations and now it’s grown
Into a forest being chopped down by those who had sown it
And now the fallen lumber is being sold by the culprit

Our peoples are reaching out from the tar sands- we’re drowning
In bureaucracy and laws which hold no accounting
Compassion and awareness of our situations are lacking
They’re injecting words of hatred into our veins to separate us like the fracking
They’re doing to split apart the rocks for our oil
They maintain they own all things above and below the soil
But they have no conception of what it is they’re doing
That is why we have stood up to prevent the ensuing
Disaster at our hands if they’re left to their own devise
they thought they’re plan would go unannounced but much to their surprise
we are not dying out like they prophesied long ago
we are not the occupy movement emerging from an economic low
No! in fact it is their machines of war and terror which have been occupying this land for centuries
While our brothers and sisters are going missing we don’t even make a press release
And we are done with empty promises
We’re through with false aspirations
We have been stewards of this land since the time of its creation

This is not a new movement
But simply a continuation
Our ancestors stood for us in their time
Now it’s the turn of our generation

There are many issues that we’re speak to and for
And they cannot be reduced to one session in a forum
And though the media would like to synthesize our voices into one
We will not be confused from where it is that we come from

Stand proud all Peoples in this cause, you’ve every right to do so
It’s more a duty to your children so we’re no longer an escrow  
To the state, up for debate of who we are and how we live  
Endless rulings, and court decisions trickling in like sand in a seive  
They propogate development, but only for the economy  
They’d sooner see monetary growth than lifting us from poverty  
They will not stop pillaging, ravaging, drilling until they have reached the core  
And that is why we must stay strong to show that we are idle no more.

3. Journey of Nishiyuu----> March 28

“Six young Cree men and a guide started the epic Journey of Nishiyuu on January 16, 2013, to carry a message to embrace and celebrate culture, hope, peace, the protection of Mother Earth, unity and healing of all humanity.

The seven walkers embark on the historic snowshoe journey from their hometown of Whapmagoostui, which is located along the coast of Hudson Bay in Northern Quebec, to Ottawa, Ontario - this is The Journey of Nishiyuu.” -

This montage features moments from the first 200KM and the eventual arrival in Chisasibi, Quebec: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I2WJnXerqBE

Resources:
http://www.idlenomore.ca/
http://nishiyuujourney.ca/