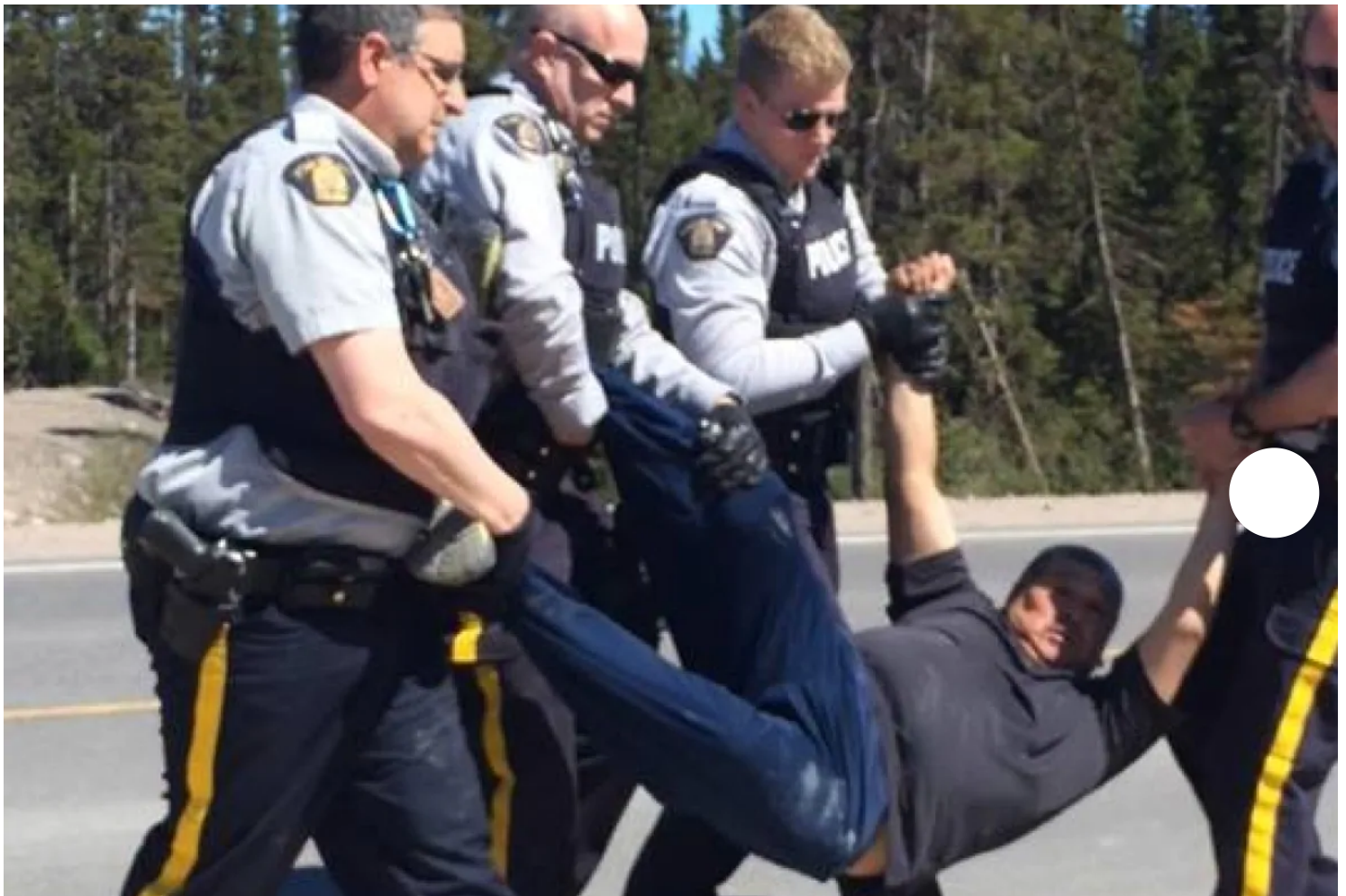




'This is a message to our leaders': Muskrat Falls protesters appear in court



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A photo posted on Facebook over the weekend shows an Innu protester being taken away from the Muskrat Falls work site. (Madeline Benuen/Facebook)

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Six Innu protesters who were arrested at the entrance to Muskrat Falls over the weekend were in court Monday morning where some friends and relatives showed up to offer support.

- [Muskrat Falls protesters force Astaldi to keep some workers home](#)
- [Muskrat Falls entrance blocked by protesters](#)

The group blocked the entrance to the construction site and stopped traffic in protest of an environmental study on the impact of the hydro project on caribou in the region.

They were arrested on Sunday for disobeying the Supreme Court of Newfoundland and Labrador order directing protesters stay clear of the construction site's entrance.

A crowd of family and supporters came to the courthouse to stand with the protesters during Monday's appearance.



Six protesters were arrested at Muskrat Falls on Sunday during a demonstration against the hydro project's environmental impact. (Jacob Barker/CBC)

"We want to make the point that this is not going away," said Joanna Michel, whose sister Helen Andrew was one of those arrested.

"Whether they use intimidation to treat these people like criminals, this is a political matter ... We won't back down."

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police reported that five protesters were arrested late Sunday morning after they ignored the court order and continued protesting.

A sixth protester arrived with another group of people shortly after and was arrested for obstruction.

A video shared on Facebook by Helen Andrew shows a man and woman being arrested by police outside of Muskrat Falls.

Innu Nation office also shut down

Despite the arrests, the RCMP said the ongoing protests at Muskrat Falls have been peaceful.

Michel described what happened.

"We were trying to make a point. This is not going to go away and this is the message to our leaders in the community," she said.

"The environmental assessment is going ahead without consulting the elders or the community members. They are just going ahead on their own and this is what we don't like. We'd like to be informed about what is going on. We don't want to be left in the cold."



Joseph Selma manning the tent in front of the boarded up Innu Nation office.

Protesters have been calling on Grand Chief Anastasia Qupee to step down, but have not been able to get a meeting with Innu leaders.

"Community leaders never met us. They never even came to our tent. We've got the Innu Nation barred off and we got a tent there and we've been there all night," said Michel.

"I'm disappointed. I've worked with five chiefs and I see this happening all the time and people step in and the leader gets taken out and so the people are saying she should resign."

Qupee told the CBC Friday that the caribou report is publicly available and was shared with the Innu nation's environmental department.

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