



Four Rivers Inc.



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*MEDIA RELEASE*

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **FOUR RIVERS ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES GROUP OF MATAWA HOSTS ENVIRONMENT GATHERING 2018**

**THUNDER BAY, ON:** [Four Rivers Environmental Services Group](#) (Four Rivers) today, announced they are hosting the Matawa Environment Gathering 2018. It is scheduled to take place from December 11 – 13, 2018 at the Airline Hotel & Conference Centre in Thunder Bay in the traditional territory of Fort William First Nation.

The gathering will provide an opportunity for Elders, lands and resources staff, environmental monitors, community communication staff and other interested members of the First Nations in Matawa to gather as Nations to put community priorities at the forefront of future environmental initiatives. The group will have detailed discussions and working sessions along two themes of environmental issues: Climate Change Adaptation: with an emphasis on establishing a foundation of information and knowledge for effective adaptation to weather impacts, and, Watershed Stewardship: with the goal of starting conversations to set priorities for community-based water monitoring and stewardship. Over 60 delegates from across the Matawa region are attending.

In the new year, Four Rivers will be kicking off several new projects to support environmental issues in member First Nations. Among them is a three-year project to assess vulnerability to climate change in member First Nations as part of climate change adaptation planning. Outreach and research projects on caribou and the little brown myotis (little brown bat), two species-at-risk within the Matawa member First Nations homelands will also be carried out. All this work is expected to help support long term environmental and watershed stewardship goals and community-based monitoring in member First Nation homelands. These topics will all be discussed at the Matawa Environment Gathering 2018 and community feedback will drive the planning and delivery of all environment initiatives.

Four Rivers supports capacity building in communities throughout northern Ontario by coordinating and supporting initiatives aimed to assist community-based land and resource management. Four Rivers uses a holistic, community-based approach to projects and strives to be open and honest in all aspects of our work; be responsive to individual community needs and capacity barriers; build capacity through training and create legacy projects for communities; and, provides innovative, cost-effective and sustainable community-based solutions. Since its inception, Four Rivers has delivered on many visionary and ground breaking projects. It has been the proud recipient of an Environmental Stewardship award from the Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce and a GIS Excellence Award from ESRI Canada.

Over the last decade, Matawa First Nations Management and Four Rivers has hosted numerous environment training courses, workshops, meetings and conferences to support community-based land use planning, environmental assessment, environmental policy, youth outreach and to support community environmental stewardship initiatives. The governments of Canada and Ontario, Laurentian University, Wilfrid Laurier University, Lakehead

University, Wildlife Conservation Society, and Anita Asche were partners and collaborators in supporting this year's environment gathering.

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**For more information, please contact** Carol Audet, Matawa Communications Manager at (807) 632-9663 or by email at [caudet@matawa.on.ca](mailto:caudet@matawa.on.ca).

**Four Rivers** was established in 2011 as an environmental services group within Matawa First Nations Management to provide environmental support and technical services to the Matawa First Nation communities facing unprecedented development with their shared traditional territories. In 2017, Four Rivers Inc. was created as a stream of Four Rivers to expand service offerings beyond Matawa member First Nations in a cost-effective and competitive manner. Follow them on Facebook at: FourRivers Matawa or Twitter at: @FourRiversFRG

**Matawa First Nations Management** is a Tribal Council providing a variety of advisory services and programs to 8 Ojibway and Cree First Nations in James Bay Treaty No. 9 and 1 First Nation in the Robinson-Superior Treaty area. Follow them on Facebook or Twitter @MatawaFN

## QUOTES

“With several ambitious and highly important environmental stewardship initiatives anticipated in the new year, it was critically important that we took the time to bring everyone together to discuss, in detail, community member values, concerns and priorities. That way we can make sure that future environmental initiatives will be planned and carried out in the right way: with member First Nations’ visions for the future at the forefront.”

—Sarah Cockerton, Manager Environmental Programs, Four Rivers, Matawa First Nations Management