



2022 / 2023

# Annual Report

Prepared for the Matawa 35th Annual General Meeting  
July 25 - 27, 2023  
Hosted by Long Lake #58 First Nation





# ISO 9001 Quality

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## Matawa First Nations Management Annual Report

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Matawa First Nations Management

# Message

from the **President of the Board**



Time has flown, and we are in the middle of the year 2023. There is no doubt that this past year 2022/2023 has been remarkable in many ways for Matawa First Nations Management (MFNM). Visiting and taking a tour of the Matawa Wellness Centre was a highlight for me. Seeing the fruits of all the hard work our dedicated staff carried out over the year was inspiring. Our members have access to a facility that will address their social, physical and mental well-being as well as their education and skills all in the same location.

The globe slowly came out of the pandemic while some of our communities continue to face ongoing challenges related to Covid-19. Unfortunately, Covid-19 is going to continue to be around, but we need to know how to live with it in a way that won't cause disruption in our everyday lives. Our staff at MFNM continue to work hard and provide services for our members and communities. Safety for all staff and the members we serve was and continues to be the utmost priority. We cautiously opened our offices in July as we returned to normal operations at our various locations.

Representing my community of Constance Lake First Nation as a member of the board has truly been an honour. Being elected by the board to be President in September 2022 was another highlight for me. It's been a pleasure serving along side my fellow board members.

As a former employee of MFNM myself, going back to the early 2000s, I am so amazed by the growth of the organization. I've often said it was one of the best First Nation organizations I have had the opportunity to work for. Back then

I believe we only had the one office on Court Street. Now MFNM has offices throughout the city providing much needed services to our community members.

We can never afford to stand still, and we are not. Matawa First Nations Management continues to adapt to the needs of our members. While I'm excited to see what new ventures are in store to better serve our members, let's take the time to review the year 2022/2023 Annual Report as presented here.

**Rosemary Moonias**

**President**





## Matawa First Nations Management

# Board of Directors - 2022/2023

### President

**Rosemary Moonias**  
Constance Lake First Nation

### Vice President

**Christopher Moonias**  
Neskantaga First Nation (until March 31, 23)

### Secretary/Treasurer

**Lisa Echum**  
Ginoogaming First Nation

### Charlie Okees

Eabametoong First Nation

### Stanley Oskineegish

Nibinamik First Nation

### Frank Onabigon

Long Lake #58 First Nation

### Roy Spence

Webequie First Nation

### Robert Moonias

Marten Falls First Nation

### Vacant

Neskantaga First Nation





CEO

Dr David Paul Achneepineskum

[illegible]

**Matawa Vision LC** • **ᑲᐃᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦ**

Matawa First Nations will be prosperous and enriched First Nations both individually and collectively. By creating enhanced social and economic opportunities for everyone, the Matawa First Nations will reach their maximum potential and have confidence in the future.

[illegible]

- Matawa First Nations work together. ᑭᓕᐱᑦ ᑕᓯᓴᐃᓇᓐ ᖃ ᐃᑕᓄᓲᑦᐱᑦᐱᑦ
- Matawa First Nations are dynamic and sustainable communities. ᑭᓕᐱᑦ ᑕᓯᓴᐃᓇᓐ ᑭᐱᑦᐱᑦ ᖃᓴᓂᓲᑦᐱᑦ ᖃᑦ ᖃᐃᑕᓅᑭᐱᑦᐱᑦ ᑲᓲᓇ ᑕᓯᓴᐃᓇᓐᓇᑦ
- Matawa First Nations uphold quality of life. ᑭᓕᐱᑦ ᑕᓯᓴᐃᓇᓐ ᖃᓂᑲᓂᑕᑭᐱᑦᐱᑦ ᑲᓲᓇ ᐱᐃᑦᑲᑦ ᑳᐱᑭᓲᑦᐱᑦᐱᑦ

## Matawa Strategic Goals LC

**Goal 1: Educational Strength**

Refers to building capacity across the Matawa region in education and training and includes promoting learning to people of all ages, ensuring self-awareness, developing a healthy workforce and nurturing future community leaders.

[illegible]

## Goal 2: Economic Strength བློ་རྒྱུ་གི་ རྩིས་ལྡན་དམངས་ཁྲིམས་

Refers to the health and opportunities available in the regional economy and includes developing factors such as diversified employment, skilled workforce, competitiveness, investment and industry.

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### **Goal 3: Social Strength**

Refers to building social well-being in the home and the workplace and engaging the participation of the Matawa membership in capacity building and decision-making processes. Social Strength is vital to developing all other areas.

[illegible]

How we get Direction...  $\triangleleft^a \cap b \triangleright^a r \cdot \Delta C L d^4 \cdot P \mathcal{J} L r C d P^4 \cdot_{xxx}$



**Matawa Chiefs Council**

- [illegible]

**What will the future look like....**

- [illegible]

- Communities will be connected to all weathered roads which will be governed and owned by the First Nations
- ᑕᓴᓄᐃᓇᓪ ᓯ ᐃᓂᑕᓴᓯᑲᑭᑦ ᑲᖅᐃ ᑲᑲᓇ ᓯᐸᐸᑕᑲᑦ ᖁᑳ ᑲᓯᓇ ᑕᓴᓄᐃᓇᓪ ᐅᑲ ᑎᑲᑕᓇᐸᓚ
- Matawa region will have a strong effective environmental protection for their lands, water and resources wherein our Peoples of the Land will enjoy the use of their homelands the way our ancestors did. Matawa will maintain its own environmental services and laws.
- ᑕᑕᐸᐸ ᑎᑲᓯᓄᐃᓂ ᑕ ᑕᑲᑲᐸᓂ ᓯᓇᑕᑕᑲᑲᑦ ᐸᓯ ᐱᑕᓴᓯᐃᓪ ᓴᓴᑲ ᑲᓴᑕᓇᓯᐸᑲᑦ, ᓂᐱ ᖁᑳ ᑳᑕᓯᑲᓪ ᑲᓯᓴᑲᑕᑳᓯᐃᓂ ᐃᓴᐃᑕ ᑲᓴᑕᑲᑲᑦ ᐸᓂᓴᓇᖅᑲ ᑲᑲᓴᑕᑲᑲᑦ ᐃᑕᑕᓴᐃᓇᓪ ᑎᑲᓂᓪ ᖅᑲᑲᑦ ᐸᓂᓴᓇᖅᑲ ᑲᓯᓴ ᐱᑕᓴᓯᐃᓪ ᓯ ᑲᓇᖅᓴᓯᑲᑭᑦᓚ ᑕᑕᐸᐸ ᐅᑲᑎᑲᑕᓇᐸᐸ ᐸᓂᓪ ᓄᓴᓇᑕᑕᑕᑲᑲᑦ ᐸᓯ ᐃᑕᓴᐃᓇᓪ ᖁᑳ ᐅᓇᑳᓂᓄᐃᓇᓪᓚ
- Matawa communities will have a governance system driven and own by the Peoples of the Land
- ᑕᑕᐸᐸ ᑕᓴᓄᐃᓇᓪ ᐃᓇᐸᐸ ᐅᑲᐅᓴᑕᓇᐸᐸ ᐸᓂᓪ ᓄᑕᑕᑕᐸᐸᑲᑦ ᐅᑕᓴᓄᐃᓪ ᖁᑳ ᐃᓴᐃᑕ ᑲᑕᑲᑲᑦ ᐸᓂᓴᓇᖅᑲ ᑕ ᐅᑲᑕᑕᐸᐸᓚ
- Matawa First Nations will have a share common vision of being united, self-sufficient, self-governing peoples within a healthy, thriving culture, living in an environment that shall sustain them for all times.
- ᑕᑕᐸᐸ ᑕᓴᓄᐃᓇᓪ ᑕ ᑕᑕᖅᑕᑕᐸᐸᑲᑦ ᑕᑳ ᓯ ᑕᑕᐃᑲᐸᐸᐸᐸᑲᑦ, ᓯ ᑎᑲᓂᓴᓴᓯᐸᑲᑦ, ᐃᓇᐸᐸ ᑲᓯᓇ ᓄᑳᓇᓪ ᓯᑕᑕᑕᓴᓯᐸᑲᑦ ᓴᓴᐃᑲ ᓴᓂᓴᓇᖅᑲ ᐸᓴᓯᐃᓪᓚ, ᑲᓴ ᐱᑕᓴᓯᐸᑲᑦ ᐃᓇᐸᐸ ᓴᐱᐃᑕᐸᐸᑲᑦ ᑲᓯᓇ ᓄᑳᓇᓪ ᐅ ᑕᓴᓄᐃᓂᓪᓚ
- Matawa First Nations in Unity assert their authority over their lands and resources by requiring consent before any development will proceed.
- ᑕᑕᐸᐸ ᑕᓴᓄᐃᓇᓪ ᑕᑕᑕᑕ ᓯᐸᑕᑕᐸᐸᑲᑦ ᖁ ᑎᑲᓂᓴᓴᓯᐸᑲᑦ ᐅᓴᐃᑕ ᐸᓯᓴ ᐱᑕᓴᓯᐸᑲᑦ ᖁᑳ ᑲᓯᓇ ᓄᑳᓇᓪ ᐅᓴᐃᑕ ᐸᓯᓴ ᑲᓴᑕᑳᓯᐸᑲᑦ ᐱᓇᑕᑕ ᓯ ᑲᓄᓴᑕᑕᑲᑲᑲᑦ ᓯᑕᑕᑕ ᑕᓯᓂᑲᑭᑦ ᐸᓯᓴ

# Current Matawa Chiefs Council

The Matawa Chiefs Council is comprised of nine (9) First Nations Chiefs of the Matawa First Nations. The Council provides overall strategic direction to the organization and broad governance on collective issues.

For updates on Resolutions passed this year, refer to the 2022/2023 Matawa Chiefs Council Report which is available under separate cover.



**Chief Dorothy Towedo**  
**Aroland First Nation**



**Chief Sheri Taylor**  
**Ginoogaming First Nation**



**Chief Chris Moonias**  
**Neskantaga First Nation**



**Chief Ramona Sutherland**  
**Constance Lake First Nation**



**Chief Judy Desmoulin**  
**Long Lake #58 First Nation**



**Ogamakan Michael Sugarhead**  
**Nibinamik First Nation**



**Chief Solomon Atlookan**  
**Eabametoong First Nation**



**Chief Bruce Achneepineskum**  
**Marten Falls First Nation**



**Chief Cornelius Wabasse**  
**Webequie First Nation**

Note: Chief Chris Moonias joined the Chiefs Council this year replacing former Chief Wayne Moonias (on April 1, 2023)





## Matawa First Nations Management

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## VISION

Matawa First Nations will be prosperous and enriched First Nations both individually and collectively. By creating enhanced social and economic opportunities for everyone, the Matawa First Nations will reach their maximum potential and have confidence in the future.

## MISSION

Matawa First Nations are committed to supporting each other and focusing our collective efforts on core strategic priorities. By working together as a regional community, we will use our combined knowledge and resources in order to champion the social and economic vitality of our First Nations and invest in community and people building.

## VALUES

### Matawa First Nations Work Together

We have the opportunities to grow and reach our maximum potential as a regional group. The diversity within our regional communities is valued and a source of local and regional pride. We are proactively involved in the economic, cultural and political development of the Matawa territory.

### Matawa First Nations are Dynamic and Sustainable Communities

We integrate modern social and economic development practices with our traditional culture and heritage. We build capacity and economic wealth for present and future generations and are well positioned to succeed in the national economy.

### Matawa First Nations Uphold Quality of Life

We invest and protect our quality of life – socially, economically, culturally and environmentally – and ensure that the Matawa First Nations are prosperous and healthy communities in which to live, work and raise a family.



# Communications

## STAFF:

Carol Audet, Communications Manager

## OVERVIEW:

The Communications Department provides communications and advisory support to First Nations in Matawa, Matawa Chiefs Council, Matawa First Nations Management departments, services, corporations, and KKETS departments and services in the following areas:

- Media monitoring and support
- Development of informational materials and promotion
- Brand implementation and visual identity
- Website/cultural portal/intranet updates and training (shared role with Matawa IT)
- Social media updates and monitoring
- Radio broadcasting, recording, PA systems
- Translation equipment

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Continued assistance to communities in employment recruitment and providing up to-date information on COVID-19 and other issues (social media and website updates)
- Communications (Comms) Support for: Ginoogaming FN (Agoke and Minodauman employment ads, 3 media releases, newsletter); Constance Lake FN (language proposal, employment ads); Neskantaga FN (1 news release, employment ads, video for school fundraiser); Long Lake #58 FN (employment ads, sample animal welfare by-laws); Aroland FN (employment ads); Webequie FN (1 media release, employment ads); Marten Falls FN (employment ads); Eabametoong FN (employment ads); all First Nations (animal services pilot project proposal, Gathering of Rivers for Community Care 50/50 raffle draws for kids mattresses)
- Comms Support for Education: 4 news releases, online fillable forms for website, Seven Youth Inquest Recommendations 112 and 116 social media campaigns, promotion

of Safe SoberingSite's winning of 2021 Mayors Community Safety Award for Outstanding Community Project, creation of Crisis Line posters for Education's PASS program, graduation comms support

- Comms Support for Awashishewiigihiwaywiin: 1 news release, website updates
- Comms Support for Regional Priorities & Jurisdiction: 6 news releases
- Comms Support for Matawa Health Co-operative: employment ads, updates to website, 2 media advisories
- Comms Support for Technical Services: winter road social media/web updates
- Comms Support for CEO's office: 2 media releases, preparation of Annual General Meeting (AGM) materials and comms support prior to/ during AGM
- Comms Support for Health & Social Meno Biimadeswin: rack cards, employment ads
- Comms Support for Chiefs Council: proposal to Ontario Trillium Foundation to address re-triggered intergenerational trauma due to attendance at Indian residential and day schools, job description/budget for Advisory Councils Coordinator, Chiefs Council resolution updates
- Comms Support for KKETS: 2 media events, 1 media advisory
- Comms Support for Four Rivers: 2 media releases, 1 media advisory
- Comms support for Matawa Training & Wellness Centre: participation in monthly update meetings and worked with design company on temporary/ permanent signage for inside and outside

## Media Monitoring and Support

Regular media monitoring and support was provided as follows:

- An average of 1-2 articles/month were published in Wawatay News on an issue related to a Matawa community or MFNM program/service
- 15 media releases (10 issued last year and 28 the year prior)
- 5 media advisories (2 issued last year and 5 the year prior)
- 3 Matawa First Nations media releases
- 38 Weekly Ring of Fire Media clips (33 issued last

year and 42 the prior year)

- Staff kept apprised of news items, published reports/studies, funding opportunities relevant to respective departments

### Radio Broadcasting

- 22 Bi-weekly radio shows ongoing providing continuous updates on Matawa programming via Wawatay

### Matawa Messenger Newsletter

- Met workplan target of 4 newsletters/year

### Informational Materials and Promotion

- Matawa Monday Memo issued every Monday (or Tuesday, if it was a holiday) highlighting schedules of Matawa First Nations Management staff and upcoming events
- Continued participation in Thunder Bay Anti-Racism & Respect and Thunder Bay Anti-Racism and Inclusion Accord Committees
- Promotion of Matawa's support of LGBTQ2S Two-Spirit People during Pride Month

### Social Media Update and Media Monitoring

- Increasing followers and likes on social media platforms (Twitter and Facebook) and continuing to double or triple amount of likes/followers
- Creating content responsive to community/world events and efforts made to engage audiences and educate our Peoples

### Website Updates

- Continuous updates of staff directory, department updates (where requested)
- From August 1, 2022 - July 1, 2023: total employment postings for MFNM (both website and social media posts): +120; total for Matawa First Nations: 51

## CHALLENGES:

### Maintaining Adequate Staffing Levels

- Department continues to be understaffed for the amount of users of the services
- Require a minimum of 2+ permanent positions and a part-time time translator to support the increased number of departmental/community requests and to fulfill some of the opportunities that are available

## OPPORTUNITIES:

- Continued training opportunities for First Nations and MFNM staff in graphic design
- With the approval of respective Matawa First Nations, collaborate with appropriate non-mainstream media outlets and/or policy think tanks on First Nations issues needing exposure







# Awashishewiigiihiwaywiin

## STAFF:

Robin Haliuk, Program Manager  
Michelle Levesque, Office Administrator  
Suzanne Pelletier, Budget Officer  
Destiny Young, Receptionist

## FAMILY SUPPORT

Kelly Tiboni-Ranta, Lead Family Support Worker  
Brittini Westphall, Family Support Worker  
Jessica Minoletti, Family Support Worker  
Karen Westerback, Family Support Worker  
Jeremy Charette, Family Support Worker  
Raili Kuurila, Family Support Worker  
Carlee Kwandibens, Cultural Coordinator  
Nicole Gamble, Early Childhood Educator/Program

## NEXT STEPS (POST MAJORITY CARE)

Ron Frost, Lead Youth Transition Worker  
Isabella Shields, Youth Transition Worker

## JORDAN'S PRINCIPLE

Dionne Beardy, Program Lead  
Vacant, Case Manager  
Amy Digby, Jordan's Principle Navigator  
Jamesina Sugarhead, Jordan's Principle Navigator  
Maria Taylor, Jordan's Principle Navigator  
Morgan Slipperjack, Jordan's Principle Navigator  
Sylvia Metzner, Jordan's Principle Navigator

FAMILY TRANSITIONAL HOUSING UNIT STAFF  
Under Development

## OVERVIEW:

### VISION

- Healthy, strong, spiritual, families together



## MISSION

- Children are a gift from the Creator, it is our sacred responsibility to protect, love, teach and honour them
- Awashishewiigiihiwaywiin will support children and families to restore family connection and unity
- We will empower our children, families, parents and communities by wrapping them in a blanket of love, care, trust and support
- We acknowledge and understand our family systems
- We are culturally-based and rooted in a historic understanding of Anishnawbe way of life

## AWASHISHEWIIIGIIHIWAYWIIN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Over the past 4 years, attempts were made to have a functioning advisory committee. To date, a full complement of membership representing all 9 of our communities has not been obtained.

With the April 1, 2023 discontinuance of funding to support an advisory committee, another type of committee (a client-based advisory committee) is being explored.



## KEY PRIORITY AREA:

### FAMILY SUPPORT

Awashishewiigihiwaywiin Family Support (Social Services Framework) provides assistance to families from the Matawa First Nations off reserve who are at-risk of child welfare involvement, have open files, or have had children apprehended. It also supports families from the Matawa First Nations with Customary Care Agreements, Kinship Agreements, and advocacy.

Opportunities are also provided for care givers and children to participate in traditional parenting programs, life skills, cultural programs, and other group programs along with:

- Support when dealing with child welfare agencies
- Assistance navigating the system
- Support for personal goals
- Connect to other resources
- Life skills
- Housing advocacy
- Nutritional programming
- Crisis counselling and support
- Address housing, domestic violence, and child custody issues
- Referrals to additional supports that work towards family needs
- Traditional programming

### NEXT STEPS

Our Awashishewiigihiwaywiin Next Steps Program is a post-majority support services assist Youth aging out of care and young adults formerly in care, from the age of majority up to and including the age of 25.

- Puts the needs of First Nations youth aging out of care and young adults formerly in care at the center
- Is more accessible and timely
- Minimizes administrative burden

Post-majority support services aim to support the safety and well-being of First Nations Youth and young

adults in a way that is: culturally appropriate in their self-identified best interest provided on the basis of substantive equality.

The goal of post-majority support services is to provide wrap-around support that meets the distinct needs of First Nations Youth and young adults and promotes and supports holistic positive outcomes for thriving Youth and young adults. Supports could include help with:

- Housing
- Food
- Employment and financial security
- Mental health, wellness, and addiction supports
- Healthy relationships
- Principles
- The culturally-based safety and wellbeing of First Nations Youth aging out of care and young adults formerly in care is paramount
- First Nations Youth aging out of care and young adults formerly in care are to be holistically supported in (re)connecting meaningfully with their family, as well as, have access to supports that promote reunification and/or repatriation
- First Nations Youth aging out of care and young adults formerly in care are to have: culturally appropriate services and supports that meet their needs and the standard of substantive equality
- Stability and connection in areas of housing, employment, education, mental health, and wellbeing
- Access to financial support
- The opportunity to remain connected and actively engaged in their communities, language, and culture
- Holistic support with an approach that recognizes historical and contemporary disadvantage and contextual and cultural differences
- Access to supports that promote safety, security, and stability to develop necessary life skills

Post-majority support services are Youth-and-young-adult-centered and needs based: to support thriving First Nations Youth and young adults during their transition to independence, their self-identified best interests, including their physical, emotional, cultural, relational, and psychological safety, security, and well-being are paramount considerations.



In supporting First Nations young adults formerly in care, unique supports may be required because of the time between when the young adult was in care and the point in time they are accessing post-majority support services.

Youth and young adults accessing post-majority support services include:

- Youth who are in FNCFS care approaching the age of majority
- A youth is in FNCFS care when the care costs for the child or youth are funded by the FNCFS Program
- Youth who were in FNCFS care and who exercised a voluntary care provision to leave care prior to the age of majority

Individuals who: have reached the age of majority are under the age of 26 or the eligibility age for post-majority services, and were in FNCFS care on the day they reached the age of majority

The Next Steps program envisions a world where all youth regardless of past child welfare involvement are prioritized and provided with the same opportunities as other Youth and young adults in Canada. The Next Steps program is focused on meeting each youths' unique goals, strength-based, trauma informed support, distinct needs and self-identified goals, autonomy of service plan.

See page 17 for the 8 pillars that are the standard of the Next Steps program.



## JORDAN'S PRINCIPLE PROGRAM

Jordan's Principle is a legal requirement resulting from the Orders of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (CHRT) and is not a policy or program.

Jordan's Principle is a child-first principle that aims to eliminate service inequities and delays for First Nations children. Jordan's Principle states that any public service ordinarily available to all other children must be made available to First Nations children without delay or denial.

Jordan's Principle is named in honour of Jordan River Anderson, a young First Nations boy from Norway House Cree Nation in northern Manitoba, who spent his entire life in hospital while caught in a jurisdictional dispute between the governments of Canada and Manitoba, which both refused to pay for the in-home medical care necessary for Jordan to live in his home and community.





Jordan's Principle is a legal directive to ensure that never again will a child be forced to wait for care that is in their best interest to thrive in their home and community.

It can be used to apply for mental, physical, and educational health support to ensure your child has the care they need and your family has the resources to provide for a loved one with complex or chronic health needs.

Jordan's Principle can be accessed to help families and communities provide child-first solutions and culturally appropriate supports and services. Awashishewiigiihiwaywiin Jordan's Principle can assist in navigating the process, applying for funding, providing letters of support, and submitting product and service requests.

### **FAMILY TRANSITION UNITS**

Construction of 6 family units within the Matawa Wellness & Training Centre (MWTC) is complete. As of May 2023, we are in the process of applying for funds to support the staffing needs of the units. The units are set up to assist families with housing needs for a period of up to 2 years depending on needs. The goal of the program will be to stabilize the family and hopefully secure either rent geared-to-income units in the city or market rent.

To qualify to stay in the units, families will need to be involved with the Awashishewiigiihiwaywiin program and have immediate housing needs that might warrant child welfare involvement. Families must have children in their care under the age of 18 to be eligible and agree to rules of the units including signing a Rental Agreement as it is not a shelter.

Families will be required to still provide their own food and cooking while in the unit and attend regular programming to enhance life skills that will hopefully work at bettering the family unit.

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

- Increased in-person Family Programming to daily occurrences during the week
- Offered 'Circle of Security Parenting Program' regularly
- Provided cultural programs: beading, regalia making, and land-based dog-sledding
- Provided life skills opportunities: community kitchens, teen cooking, budgeting, berry picking
- Provided family engagement opportunities: fun family activities, back to school events, Christmas party, Easter Lunch
- Assisted with Thanksgiving groceries for families
- Continued Annual Christmas Bags for families
- Established new programs as follows: Next Steps (Post Majority Care) and Jordan's Principle Navigation Services
- Added a Budget Officer to the staff compliment
- Closed 40 child welfare files this year
- Completed 40 housing applications and have secured housing for many
- Completed 48 mental health referrals
- Cared for a case load of 237 children
- Provided court support for families
- Sat in and advocated for family needs during child welfare case reviews
- Undertook case reviews with Community Band Representatives
- Provided assistance with medical appointments and advocacy
- Provided increased mental health crisis response
- Continued with child apprehension prevention
- Hired Next Steps (Post Majority Care) staff
- Completed 16 Next Steps intakes
- Hired for Jordan's Principle program and have begun completing applications and purchasing
- Staff completed training on: First Aid Certification, Safe Food Handling, WHIMIS, Lateral Violence, Harrassment, Communication
- Staff attended: Child Well-Being Conference, NAN Jordan's Principle Conference
- Provided monthly in-city Food Banks for Matawa Members until March 2023
- Presented at Nishnawbe Aski Nation Band Representative Conference



# Awashishewiigihiwaywin

## CHALLENGES:

- Limited space for increased staff
- Onboarding and training with so many new staff
- Completing annual submissions rather than multiyear agreements
- Lack of fully developed advisory committee
- Loss of funding support for the positions of: Training Coordinator, and Food Security Coordinator after March 31, 2023
- Filling vacancies with qualified individuals
- Ongoing addictions crisis
- Creating policies to reflect the growth and development of our growing and evolving department
- Limited availability of rent-geared-to-income housing in the city of Thunder Bay and long wait lists
- Keeping updated with who are the community and in city band reps for all Matawa's 9 communities
- Lack of child care for families wishing to further education or return to work

Some challenges that the Next Steps Program have faced:

- Youth are tentative to engage for the initial intake appointment. We have worked to overcome these barriers by meeting Youth in comfortable and familiar places in the community. We have made it a point to make appointments less 'clinical.'
- The program is small (2 employees) and the intakes and need for this service is strong for our Matawa Youth. We are overcoming this by spacing out intakes and using strong time management skills.

## OPPORTUNITIES:

- Having increased housing options with the opening of the family transition units
- Being in our permanent space once construction is completed at the Matawa Training and Wellness Centre (MWTC)
- Now having a full compliment of services to support the growing needs of Matawa families
- Partnerships with other departments and service agencies to make sure families have additional resources needed for success
- As we grow, we have implemented Program Leads to assist in the supervision and development of the programs and restructuring
- Development of a Family Resource Centre
- Hope to have 12 units in Bertrand Court (a housing complex in Thunder Bay near the MWTC) next year to assist with housing needs for our Next Steps Program





## AWASHISHEWIIIGIIHIWAYWIIN NEXT STEPS (POST-MAJORITY CARE) 8 PILLARS

1	Financial	Every young person should have the financial resources required to meet their needs. Youth in care deserve to have a financial starting point that is above the poverty line and allows them to pursue their career interests and dreams.	<b>PHYSIOLOGICAL</b>
2	Education and Professional Development	Every young person should experience an environment where they can learn and grow in ways that are meaningful to them and at their own pace.	<b>SAFETY</b>
3	Housing	Every young person should have a place where they call home without strict rules and conditions to abide by.	<b>PHYSIOLOGICAL</b>
4	Relationships	Every young person should have people in their life that they can count on unconditionally and interdependently. Youth in care need to feel like they belong, have worth and are valuable members of their community.	<b>LOVE AND BELONGING CULTURE</b>
5	Culture and Spirituality	Every young person should be connected to their culture and spirituality, in ways that are meaningful to them, safe and at their own pace.	<b>CULTURE</b>
6	Health and Wellbeing	Every young person should be provided with timely ongoing services and benefits that support their lifelong health and wellbeing. These supports need to be offered within a trauma informed, non-judgmental harm reduction approach, without significant wait times	<b>ESTEEM</b>
7	Advocacy and Rights	Every young person should have their rights respected and should experience environments where their voices are heard, and their silence is addressed holistically.	<b>SELF- ACTUALIZATION</b>
8	Emerging Adulthood Development	Every young person should experience environments that cultivate personal growth and development as they transition into adulthood.	<b>LOVE AND BELONGING</b>



# Health & Social Meno Biimadeswin



## STAFF:

Francine Pellerin, Health & Social Meno Biimadeswin Director  
Miranda Waboose, Health & Social Administrative Assistant  
Nicole Jacob, Regional Crisis Intervention & Victim Services Coordinator  
Elizabeth (Liz) Wapoose, Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) Client Navigator - 1  
Cheryl Suganaqueb, Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) Client Navigator - 2  
Hilary Fox, Social Emergency Coordinator  
Breanne Anderson, Anti-Indigenous Racism Coordinator

## OVERVIEW:

The Health & Social Meno Biimadeswin (HSMB) department oversees the management, administration, coordination and implementation of several health and social wellness programs and initiatives. HSMB provides advisory, advocacy and technical support to Matawa First Nations and limited direct supports for social crisis and/or emergencies. HSMB supports primarily community-based programs, offers limited education, promotion and prevention awareness as requested by the First Nations. We also provide client advocacy and referral services for people accessing NIHB and assist with Jordan's Principle applications. HSMB department works in partnership with several groups, organizations, agencies and institutions who are affiliated with our First Nations in Health and Social Services. Below are the programs.

FP

### Community Health Coordination (ISC Annualized – Health Consultation & Liaison)

- services four remote First Nations – Eabametoong, Neskantaga, Nibinamik & Webequie
- provides advisory, advocacy, & technical support for community-based health programs
- facilitates & assists in the development and management of community-health programs

NJ

### Crisis Intervention Coordination (NAN Annualized – Provincially Funded)

- services for eight First Nations under NAN (except Long Lake #58 First Nation)
- provides advisory, advocacy and technical support in social crisis in FNs
- assists in developing crisis response plans
- coordinates capacity building and training

FP & Team

### Mental Wellness Teams and Crisis Support (ISC and OMCYS)

- services all nine First Nations
- provides crisis response and supports when communities experience social crisis
- employs short-term contract team to work with First Nation community
- provides limited traditional healing & wellness supports

FP

### Traditional Housing & Support Program (OMCSS – Violence Against Women)

- funded for seven Matawa First Nations – Aroland, Constance Lake, Eabametoong, Marten Falls, Neskantaga, Nibinamik and Webequie
- supports women and their children who are in abusive relationships
- provides family violence prevention and awareness activities
- provides community-based resources to hire one full-time in 5 FNs & 2 half-time workers

NJ

### Victim Services (OMAG)

- services all nine Matawa First Nations
- provides supports and services for victims of crime (male & female over the age of 16)
- provides prevention and awareness of victim services
- provides community-based resources to hire one full-time Victim Services Worker

NJ

### Victim Quick Response Program

- services all nine Matawa First Nations
- provides assistance for victims of crime to access resources, services and compensation for being victimized



FP

**Approaches to Community Wellbeing (SLFNHA ongoing)**

- services four First Nations–Eabametoong, Neskantaga, Nibinamik and Webequie
- provides supports in the development of a SLFNHA Public Health System
- facilitate and coordinate information and training sessions relating to the components of ACW–Safe Communities, Healthy Living and Raising our Children

FP

**Traditional Healing (ISC–NIHB Annualized)**

- program covers Traditional Specialist fees for services
- coordinates with community–based service workers to provide services as upon request

EW &amp; CS

**NIHB Client Navigator (ISC–NIHB)**

- services all nine First Nations
- provides support, advocacy and coordination of care and services to clients of NIHB
- collaborates with FN Health staff, other health care providers, organizations, and institutions to facilitate improved care
- assists members to access Jordan's Principle resources as needed

HF

**Social Emergency Management (OIA – 10 year funded)**

- services nine First Nations
- co-develop new capacity–building programs for responding to social emergencies
- coordinates training
- support the development of community plans
- assist in social emergencies and physical emergencies

BA

**Anti-Indigenous Racism Initiative (Heritage Canada)**

- education initiative (ending 2023)
- to introduce Anti-Indigenous Racism concepts and promote cross-cultural understanding between Matawa First Nations communities and surrounding municipalities
- to address issues of racism and discrimination

**Regular Yearly Proposal–Based Funded Programs**

HSMB department coordinates the yearly proposal-based funded projects primarily for communities to access training and programming.

- Capacity–building Funds (Prov. MCSS)
- NAN Health Transformation (NAN–regional project to support health transformation)
- Human Trafficking Awareness/Training (Prov. MAG Funded–create awareness of HT)
- Family Violence Prevention Project (ISC Funded–community-based project for family violence prevention)

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

- Continuation of all HSMB Programs. HSMB maintains and administers ten ongoing programs and four one-time/short term initiatives
- Anti-Indigenous Racism Awareness Symposiums. Coordination of two (2) awareness symposiums in two municipalities with area First Nations
- Regional Front-line Workers Forum on Mental Wellness & Addictions. 20-25 Participants gathered in Thunder Bay for a three-day learning and sharing
- Community Training/Workshops/Gatherings - Coordination of two (2) community-based training sessions. BiimadeswiGamik Life Lodge-Case Management and Mental Health First Aide
- Secured Emergency Response training funds
- Through the social emergency management program, a proposal was submitted and was approved for community-based Wilderness First Responder Training for front line workers and

volunteers

- Continuation of First Nations crisis support
- Mental health/crisis response and support was provided to all nine First Nations experiencing overdoses, substance and alcohol related incidents, sudden deaths, homicides and

**CHALLENGES:**

- Filling the two vacant positions.
- Lack of human resources available to respond to communities in crisis especially on week-ends.
- Coordination of services continues to be a challenge.
- Lack of funding continues to be a challenge. HSMB continues to operate with what is committed. Government funding does not meet the high cost of living.
- Travel to the remote communities is limited due to lack of accommodations/housing and

- cost of air travel
- Communication challenges within the system both internal and external
- Continued social and healing challenges- addictions issues, lack of housing, dealing with historical trauma-residential school, day school, other trauma

### OPPORTUNITIES:

- To create and enhance community programs/ services through integration of other initiatives.
- To increase participation and partnership with other organizations in health transformation and planning for health system change i.e. conducting community planning, engagements and assessments with partners
- To increase access and improve internet/ communication systems for First Nations
- To increase training and awareness of social emergencies and emergency management





# Financial Advisory

## STAFF:

Lloyd Wabigwan, CPA, CMA, Director Financial Advisory Services

## OVERVIEW:

The Financial Advisory Services Department works closely with the CEO and more specifically; the Band Managers Committee to assist with the on-going development and improvement of member First Nations' administrative capacity and opportunities with a focus on accounting, finance, and governance. The department is community-based that provides outreach services, supports, and resources directly to the First Nations administration and individuals at the community level with a focus on sound fiscal management.

## COMMITTEE:

The Financial Advisory Services Department works in collaboration with the Band Managers Committee (BMC). The committee consists of the Band Manager and Finance Manager from each Matawa member community and the Financial Advisory Services Department Director. Its purpose is to have each community collaborate with each other via sharing as much knowledge and information as possible on various opportunities, funding sources, capacity building channels, managerial successes, and anything else that member communities can take advantage of to assist with the successful administration of the community's head offices. The committee also provides guidance and direction to the Financial Advisory Services Department as to what services may be offered by the department.

## KEY PRIORITY AREA:

We aim to support Matawa First Nations administrators by offering support, information, and resources in the areas of Accounting, Finance, and Governance. These services encompass

various forms of assistance, including support in audit preparation, accounting and bookkeeping, awareness of financial aid opportunities, development of administrative policies, proposal development, and other aspects related to effective administration management for First Nations. Additionally, we also extend our assistance to individual community members, aiding them in preparing and filing simple Income Tax returns, submitting First Nations Drinking Water Claims, and other government applications, for example, Old Age Security. Our ongoing initiative aims to assist community members, both residing within and outside the community. We provide this service to individuals and are open to inquiries regarding financial guidance, government applications, and other financial challenges they may encounter.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Continuously researching funding options for communities and updating the Band Managers Committee with funding streams that could be considered by the communities for their needs.
- Facilitated a personal budgeting workshop for Elders.
- As requested, provided support to communities in relation to auditing challenges, policy development, job interviews, banking, and proposal development.
- Attended the National Aboriginal Trust Officers Association's Trust and Investment Conference and the Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) Joint Gathering.
- Assisted internally with the Matawa team.
- Provided an Income Tax preparation service to those Matawa members with little to moderate incomes i.e., preparing and submitting tax returns for membership.
- Assisted individual members with non-tax related enquiries to assist with understanding issues they may have in relation to government related applications, forms, contacts, etc.
- Assisted individuals with preparation and submission of Drinking Water Claims.





# Financial Advisory

## CHALLENGES:

Our objective is to secure a long-term commitment for funding from governments to support the human resources requirements and activities of the Department of Financial Advisory Services. We have submitted proposals over the years, but the uncertainty of government funding has hindered the implementation of our strategy. While exploring alternative revenue sources is challenging, it is not impossible. We recognize the need to establish our own revenue streams, and this necessitates advocating for revenue-sharing partnerships with governments, eliminating the need for constant application and reporting.

Getting those member communities who may be under the ISC Default Prevention and Management Policy out; with the goal of keeping them out (all communities) now and into the future. Ensuring member communities will no longer be at risk of insolvency and that funding and financing avenues are predictable and consistent.

With the lack of suitable broadband width for internet in communities, it has presented a challenge in terms of utilizing the internet for communicating i.e., on-line meetings or other on-line activities.

## OPPORTUNITIES:

To continuously promote educational opportunities for community finance staffers and potential future finance staffers, to market it so that future generations take a keen interest in this sector of First Nation management.

To establish a Matawa made capacity development process and/or system which will allow for current community-based staff to increase capacity and understanding of accounting, finance, and governance, and

to ensure there will be others who are willing to apply for staffing positions responsible for these roles if and/or when they become vacant.

To improve member First Nations accounting, finance, and governance systems so that accurate and timely information to evaluate a member First Nations financial status is readily available to management for decision making purposes; and to third parties such as financiers to make confident decisions about a First Nations borrowing capacity. This will assist with long-term borrowing needs a First Nation may have, i.e., large infrastructure projects.

Improve BMC communication, establish an avenue for the BMC members to share their successes and failures and to mentor each other.

Having the BMC collaborate on what type of common services the Tribal Council can provide in the future in terms of accounting, finance, and gover-







# Technical Advisory Services

## STAFF:

Saverio Rizzo, Acting Manager (since Dec 1, 2022)  
Aaron Wesley Manager of Technical Services (on leave from Dec 1, 2022 to present)  
Leah Echum, Technical Services Administration Support

### Capital Projects and Housing

Dharmender Dhankar, Community Development Engineer  
Lindsay Jupp, Capital Projects Coordinator  
Carla Jean-Chisel, Capital Projects Coordinator  
Saverio Rizzo, Housing Coordinator/Inspector  
Shane Ostamus, Tech Services Projects Support

### NIBI Services

Michael Bazdarick, Water and Wastewater, Overall Responsible Operator (ORO)  
Meghdeep Chauhan, Water and Wastewater Operator Support  
Mitchell Elsey, Water and Wastewater Operator Support  
Neil Neegan, Water and Wastewater Operator Support

### Environmental/Public Health

Oksana Ostrovka Environmental/Public Health Inspector  
Karen McGoldrick Environmental/Public Health Inspector

### Emergency Management

Monica Budeslic, Emergency Management Coordinator  
Moe Douglas, Fire Marshall

## OVERVIEW:

Matawa Technical Services assist member communities in the development and maintenance of community infrastructure. This includes assisting communities with

all aspects including the environmental components and Indigenous Services Canada capital project approvals process. Technical Services responds to First Nation requests and services provided will vary according to individual community needs, levels of individual capacity, technical proficiency, and management expertise.

The services we provide include;

### Capital Projects and Housing

- Project Management
- Capital Projects and Housing Applications
- Project Reporting
- First Nation Infrastructure Investment Plans (FNIIP)
- Operations & Maintenance (O&M) Reporting
- Asset Condition Reporting System
- Project Advisory
- Building Inspections
- Conceptual Drawings

### NIBI Services

- Water and Wastewater Operator Support
- Remote Monitoring

### Environmental/ Public Health

- Water and Wastewater Sampling and Reporting
- Soil Testing
- Housing Inspections
- Safe Food Handling
- Communicable Disease Investigations
- Dog Bite Investigations

### Emergency Management

- Emergency Management Coordination
- FireSmart Planning
- Emergency Declarations
- Emergency Response Planning
- Fire Investigations
- Hazardous Identification Risk Assessments
- 911 Services Planning
- Community Wild Fire Protection Plans
- Incident Management Systems
- Fire Mapping



# Technical Advisory Services

## KEY PRIORITY AREA:

All the services that Technical Services provides are key priorities, however water/housing/environment have been the focus the last couple of years with several major capital projects underway. Lifting the long-term drinking water advisories is ongoing.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

(See Challenges and Opportunities on pages 30 and 31)

### Community Wide Projects:

1. Integrated Capital Management System (ICMS) 2022-23
2. Asset Condition Reporting System (ACRS) – summer 2023 - \$600,000
3. Waste Coordinator – 2022 - \$137,000.00, 2023 – cost TO BE DETERMINED
- a) Greenstone Waste Steering Committee EA Engagement 2023 – MINOR CAPITAL APPLICATION sent for funding APPLICATION sent for funding – \$179,300
4. ii. Steering Committee Travel 2023 – MINOR CAPITAL APPLICATION sent for funding - \$36,375 Northern Ontario First Nation Environment Conference (NOFNEC) Fall 2023
5. First Nations Housing Conference (FNHC) Fall 2023
6. Winter Road Crossing Upgrades – 2023 - \$1,005,949
7. Asset Management Program – Approved - \$30,000 per community.
8. Maintenance Management Program – Approved - \$16,000 per community. Working on engineering, and project management.

### Individual First Nation Capital Projects

#### Aroland

1. Solid Waste Management Plan - 2021 - \$224,000
2. Capital Planning Study – 2021 - \$186,882 / 2023 COR \$253,424
3. Fire Hall / Emergency Building Study – Phase 1 - \$73,255
4. Daycare Design – 2022 - \$150,000

5. Greenstone Waste Steering Committee
6. Addition to Reserve (ATR) Environmental Assessment Phase 3 – Project Team member
7. Recycling Program 2022 – Minor Capital Application sent for funding - \$186,655
8. Garbage Truck 2022 – Minor Capital Application sent for funding - \$311,244
9. Mainline Repairs 2023 – Minor Capital Application sent for funding - \$201,489
10. School Sprinkler Upgrades – To Be Determined – estimated \$500,000
11. Wastewater Lagoon Expansion Study – Submitted and approved - \$119,600
12. Water and Wastewater Professional Services Accommodations -Submitted and waiting for funding to be available - \$437,000
13. Remediation of the existing lagoon – Complete - \$65,000
14. Elders Complex – design phase approved so far - \$20,585,124
15. Band Representative Building – draft proposal submitted for review - \$1,563,500
16. CMHC - Sec. 95 - 4-unit project (now completed)
17. ISC 2021- 2 new units (duplex) (close to completion)
18. Rapid Housing Initiative - 6 major renovations (70% completed)
19. CMHC -RRAP – 1 unit (completed)
20. ISC 2022-23 - 10 renovations. (to start) - \$696,000

#### Constance Lake

1. School Repairs 2016 – remaining 10% work to be completed - \$708,024
2. School Repairs Assessment 2021 – Minor Capital Application sent for funding - \$1.1m
3. Solid Waste Transfer Site – cost to be determined
4. Wastewater System and Lagoon Upgrade- \$7,186,124
5. Minor Capital Application for Capital Plan Study – Submitted - \$251,550
6. Water and Wastewater Professional Services Accommodations -Submitted and waiting for funding to be available - \$437,000
7. CMHC Sec. 95 project - 8 units (completed)
8. Rapid Housing Initiative-6 new single houses - (3 complete)
9. ISC - 2 new units (2 houses) – (complete)
10. Insurance re-build (1) – (complete)
11. ISC 2022-23 - 10 renovations (to start) - \$696,000

### Fabametoong

1. Soil Remediation 2015 – Treatment Year - \$9,942,077
2. Landfill 2017 – Need site selection confirmation from FN
3. New Generator Install & Upgrades 2022 – 1.5MW & Upgrades - \$8,714,129
4. Independent Power Authority (IPA) Operational Support – 2022/2023 - \$664,303
5. Heavy Equipment Repairs & Maintenance – case by case basis
6. Water and Wastewater Professional Services Accommodations -Submitted and approved - \$437,000
7. East End Development – waiting for Project Approval Request (PAR) approval
8. School feasibility project – Architectural Design phase
9. Rapid Housing Initiative-5 new duplexes – (complete)
10. ISC-2 new units – (complete)
11. 1 RRAP (complete)
12. 1 insurance rebuild – (complete)
13. 2 new Isolation unit (6 suites each) (90% complete)
14. ISC 2022-23 - 5 new units (started in May 2023) - \$2,457,500
15. New Sewage truck – Minor Capital Application - \$171,496
16. School Portable renovation – Minor Capital Application submitted



### Ginoogaming

1. Recycling Program 2023 - \$54,996
2. Garbage Truck 2022 - \$237,336

3. Municipal Type Service Agreement (fire, water/ sewer, waste)- ongoing
4. Greenstone Waste Steering Committee
5. Water and Wastewater Professional Services Accommodations -Submitted and waiting for funding to be available - \$437,000
6. RHI-9 new single houses, 1 new 4-plex – (complete)
7. ISC - 2 new units – (complete)
8. CMHC Sec. 95 – 7 units (to be started)
9. ISC 2022-23- 8 renovations (to be started) - \$556,800

### Long Lake #58

1. Recycling Program – Minor Capital Application sent for funding - \$170,111
2. Garbage Truck 2022 - \$273,943
3. Municipal Type Service Agreement (fire, water/ sewer, waste) – 2022 updated ISC funding contributions
4. Greenstone Waste Steering Committee
5. General Store Upgrades – cost TO BE DETERMINED
6. Public Works Yard – cost TO BE DETERMINED
7. Water and Wastewater Professional Services Accommodations -Submitted and waiting for funding to be available - \$437,000
8. Capital Planning Study – approved - \$241,888
9. Retrofit for Elementary school- Feasibility Study – proposed
10. Rapid Housing Initiative - 1 new 6plex, 1 new duplex - (not started)
11. ISC -Renovations - 3 units - (complete)
12. Sec. 95 - 7 major renos (with extensions) – (75% complete)
13. ISC 2022-23- 7 renovations (not started) - \$487,200

### Marten Falls

1. Hydro One Remote Diesel Generating Station Upgrades 2020 - \$7,442,874
2. School Repairs 2017 - \$264,737
3. School Upgrades – cost TO BE DETERMINED & submit application
4. Modularity & 4plex Teacherages 2021 - \$2,564,346
5. Solid Waste Management Plan 2019 - \$250,000
6. Water and Wastewater Professional Services Accommodations -Submitted and approved - \$437,000
7. Low Lift Station rebuild - Relocation of Wet Well Project
8. CMHC – 5 major renovations – complete





# Technical Advisory Services

9. ISC - 2 units or duplex (80% complete)
10. 1 new isolation unit (3 suites) – (50% complete)
11. ISC 2022-23 - 3 new units (to start) - \$1,311,000
12. ISC 2022-23- 10 renovations (to start) - \$825,000

## Neskantaga

1. Solid Waste Management Plan 2019 - \$384,000
  2. Hydro One Remote Diesel Generating Station Upgrades 2023 - \$13,780,567
  3. Nursing Station Remediation & Upgrades 2022 - \$167,328
  4. Winter Road Crossing #4 Temporary Bridge & Inspections - \$95,999
  5. Winter Road Otokowin Bridge Design – cost TO BE DETERMINED
  6. New NAPS Detachment - \$13,314,790
  7. Capital Planning Study – submitted to ISC for approval
  8. Water/Waste Water Assessment – submitted and approved - \$331,971
  9. Soil Remediation – approved - \$5,249,984
  10. Rapid Housing Initiative - 5 new duplexes – (80% complete)
  11. ISC - 2 new units (duplex) – (70% complete)
  12. CMHC - Sec. 95 - 5 new, 5 major renos – (new units done in 2020, major renos complete in 2023)
  13. 1 new Isolation unit (6 suites) – (70% complete)
  14. ISC 2022-23 - 4 new units (to start) - \$1,748,000
- Lift Station Upgrades – Minor Capital Application – approved & to be completed - \$106,100

## Nibinamik

1. Addition to Reserve (ATR) Environmental Assessment Phase 3 2022 - \$536,851
2. Independent Power Authority Operational Support – Annual – 22/23 - \$545,058 (a) New C18 (generator) purchase 2022 - \$201,500
3. Winter Road Crossing Upgrades 2022 - \$232,744
4. Solid Waste Management Plan 2019 - \$249,875 (a) Hazardous Waste Winter Road Prep & Backhaul 2022 - \$102,350
5. Diesel Generating Station Upgrades – cost TO BE DETERMINED - \$3.5m (a) New C18 purchase 2023 - \$259,000
6. Airport Tank System – cost TO BE DETERMINED
7. School Fuel System Upgrades – cost TO BE DETERMINED



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## MINED

8. Water and Wastewater Professional Services Accommodations -Submitted and approved - \$437,000
9. Lagoon rehabilitation
10. Rapid Housing Initiative – 5-plex, 4-plex, Tri-plex, duplex– (complete)
11. ISC - 3 units (major reno) – (90% complete)
12. CMHC Sec. 95 – Tri-plex – (complete)
13. RRAP - 2 units (complete)
14. 1 new isolation unit (3 suites) – (not started)
15. ISC 2022-23 - 5 new units (to start) - \$2,185,525
16. ISC 2022-23 – 5 new lots (to start) - \$344,000

## Webequie

1. Airport Remediation – MTO/Hydro One Remotes – cost TO BE DETERMINED
2. Solid Waste Management Plan 2018 – \$580,250
3. Waste Diversion 2020 - \$400,154
4. Winter Road Crossing Upgrades 2022 - \$232,744
5. Hydro One Remote Diesel Generating Station Upgrades 2021 – \$5,017,075
6. School Repairs & Upgrades – cost TO BE DETERMINED
7. Modular Classroom Portables Install – cost TO BE DETERMINED
8. School Feasibility Study – Project Team member as of May 2023
9. New Teacherages – 4plex – cost TO BE DETERMINED & submit MINOR CAPITAL APPLICATION for funding
10. Water and Wastewater Professional Services Accommodations -Submitted and approved - \$437,000
11. Project management on housing projects (ISC, CMHC)
12. Band Representative Building – draft proposal submitted for review - \$1,563,500
13. Arena – design is 95% completed
14. Elder Complex Feasibility Study – TBA



15. Arena – proposed project - \$15,600,000
16. Garage Building & Feasibility Study
17. Disaster Mitigation Fund- two Bay Emergency Garage – proposed project
18. ISC - 2 single units – (complete)
19. RRAP - 1 unit (complete)
20. 1 new isolation unit (3 suites) (complete)
21. ISC 2022-23 - 5 new units (started) - \$2,185,000
22. ISC 2022-23- 10 renovations (to start) - \$825,000

### Environmental Health Officers

EHOS have instilled a number of temporary boil water advisories due to various reasons in a few different communities. These have been since lifted after the proper water testing provided.

#### *Bacteriological Water Testing*

- July 2022 – Aroland, Constance Lake, Eabametoong, Long Lake #58, Neskantaga, Webequie
- August 2022 – Constance Lake, Marten Falls, Webequie
- September 2022 – Constance Lake, Nibinamik, Webequie
- October 2022 – Constance Lake, Eabametoong, Marten Falls
- November 2022 – Aroland, Constance Lake, Neskantaga
- December 2022 – Constance Lake, Eabametoong
- January 2023 – Constance Lake, Nibinamik
- February 2023 – Constance Lake, Eabametoong, Neskantaga
- March 2023 – Aroland, Constance Lake, Ginoogaming, Long Lake#58, Marten Falls
- April 2023 – Constance Lake, Webequie
- May 2023 – Constance Lake, Marten Falls

#### *Quarterly Water Testing*

- July 2022 – Eabametoong, Long Lake #58, Neskantaga, Webequie
- August 2022 – Marten Falls, Webequie
- September 2022 – Nibinamik, Webequie
- October 2022 – Constance Lake, Eabametoong, Ginoogaming, Marten Falls
- November 2022 – Aroland, Neskantaga
- December 2022 – Eabametoong
- January 2023 – Nibinamik
- February 2023 – Constance Lake, Eabametoong,

Neskantaga

- March 2023 – Aroland, Long Lake #58, Marten Falls
- April 2023 – Webequie
- May 2023 – Marten Falls

#### *Quarterly Water Testing*

- July 2022 – Eabametoong, Long Lake #58, Neskantaga, Webequie
- October 2022 – Ginoogaming

#### *Water Colour testing - Total Organic Colour (TOC), Dissolved Organic Colour (DOC):*

- July 2022 – Eabametoong, Neskantaga
- August 2022 – Marten Falls
- September 2022 – Nibinamik
- October 2022 – Eabametoong, Marten Falls
- November 2022 – Neskantaga
- December 2022 – Eabametoong
- January 2023 – Nibinamik
- February 2023 – Eabametoong, Neskantaga
- March 2023 – Marten Falls
- May 2023 – Marten Falls

#### *Wastewater Monitoring- Wastewater Systems Effluent Regulations (WSER)*

Sampling was conducted at the following lagoons:

- July 2022 – Webequie, Neskantaga
- August 2022 – Webequie, Marten Falls
- September 2022 – Webequie
- October 2022 – Eabametoong, Marten Falls
- November 2022 – Webequie, Aroland, Neskantaga
- December 2022 – Webequie
- January 2023 – Webequie
- February 2023 – Webequie
- March 2023 – Webequie
- April 2023 – Webequie
- May 2023 – Marten Falls

#### *Food Safety*

- Food Handler Certification course presented in Constance Lake May 9, 2023
- The Food Handler Certification Course will be incorporated into the “life skills” class being offered at the school. This will be an annual addition



# Technical Advisory Services

## Housing and Building Inspections (Environmental Health)

### Aroland:

- July 2022 – Mould Complaint Inspection - 5 housing houses

### Constance Lake:

- June 2022 – Lecours Lumber site visit with ISC Environmental Officers
- May 2023 – School kitchen inspection – routine
- February 2023 – Mould Complaint Inspection - 4 housing inspections attempted, only one completed due to unavailability.

### Ginoogaming:

- July 2022 – Daycare inspection – routine (new location)
- October 2022 – Mould Complaint Inspection - 3 housing inspections done

### Eabametoong:

- July 2022 – Pest Infestation Complaint Inspection, community resident
- July 2022 – Public Complaint Inspection, community resident
- February 2023 – Indoor Air Quality Assessment, Band Office, HSS & Tikinagan Building Inspection

### Long Lake #58:

- October 2022 – General store inspection – routine
- Marten Falls:
- March 2023 – Mould Complaint Inspection, community resident
- May 2023 – HCMS school and playground inspections

### Nibinamik:

- September 2022 – Bedbug complaint inspection, Lodge

### Neskantaga:

- July 2022 – Fuel spill at Nursing Station. Assisting Warrior Engineering with investigation and sampling.

### Webequie:

- September 2022 – Mould Complaint Inspection, community resident

## Biomedical Waste Disposal

- Biomedical waste / sharps were picked up from Marten Falls, Aroland and Constance Lake and collected by Stericycle as per the current agreement
- The new account in Hazardous Waste Registry was created (February 2023) as the Ministry of Environment moved from HWIN to RPRA; the new/updated information was provided to Stericycle.

## Matawa Hub

- Responded to 62 after hour calls to assist with operational and maintenance concerns at the various water and wastewater facilities.
- Responded to one emergency call requiring immediate on-site operational support.
- Continued with OJT training, technical direction, support and assistance to the relief operators at the Marten Falls WTP.
- Two site visits to Nibinamik to address operational concerns with construction of the new WTP.
- Daily check of facilities through remote monitoring is ongoing and continues to be an asset in maintaining the various plants and operations.
- Attended construction progress meetings for the Eabametoong and Nibinamik WTP.
- Attended construction meetings for the Nibinamik lagoon project.
- Provided over 25 rounds of operator relief at the Marten Falls WTP ranging from 10 to 14 days.
- Developed and implemented operational procedures, daily log and spread sheets for daily operation of the Marten Falls WTP.
- Assisted with lab work.
- Carried out monthly calibration and servicing of analyzers when required.
- Provided routine maintenance and calibration of various equipment.
- Reviewed best operating practices with plant operators to optimize plant operations and maintenance.
- Liaison with Northern Water Works Incorporated to complete annual inspections of water and wastewater facilities as requested by ISC.
- Trained on-site contractors on proper use of hydrants and ONT.REG 170 requirements for taking

water.

- Attended the Aboriginal Water and Wastewater Association of Ontario's conference in Orillia Ontario to complete required courses and training to maintain level of certification for licenses.
- With the support of the Chief and Council of Marten Falls, our Overall Responsible Operator would like to make a recommendation to initiate the process for the lifting of the boil water advisory in Marten Falls.

#### Overall

24/7 technical guidance and direction given over the phone continues to be a major factor in the reduction of emergency responses into the remote communities. The lack of qualified licensed operators is of high concern and affecting the safe operation and maintenance of the majority of the water treatment plants. Accommodation while on site also continues to affect the level of support that could be provided.

### Emergency Management

#### 1. FireSmart Program – All nine communities

a) Phase 1 completed – Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP) March 2022 - **\$64K**.

b) Phase 2 completed – CWPP Overview – Chiefs Meeting (All Chiefs) – FireSmart Capacity Building Resolution adopted - 15 December 2023

c) Phase 3 in progress (to be completed by June 2023): **Approximately \$798K Total for Phase 3.** Breakdown as follows:

- Forest Fire Suppression Equipment - **\$297K**
- FireSmart Mitigation Equipment – **\$108K**
- Two Wildfire Brush Trucks (4X4 Crew Cab) (Winter Road delivery 2024)
  - Webequie – Brush Truck – **\$197K\***
  - Eabametoong - Brush Truck - **\$197K\***

d) Phase 4 – FireSmart/S100 Training – waiting for funding approval.

e) FireSmart Canada – Upon application – we were awarded three (3) FireSmart Public Education Kits along with \$500 to go with each kit for a total of



e) Flood/Fire Mapping – All nine communities – partnered with Four Rivers

#### 2. Flood/Fire Mapping – All nine communities – EMC partner with Four Rivers

- Fire Mapping completed – fall 2022.
- Flood Mapping – in progress – EMC partner with Four Rivers.

3. *911 Data Collection* (in progress) – GIS Mapping – collaborating with Four Rivers and Tech Services – for all communities – require compatible software to input data for 911 services. This project is a work-in-progress.

4. *Community Emergency Response Plans (CERP)* – for each community – Various stages of completion and some have to be developed

a) Checklist of sub-plans for Critical Infrastructure - completed and requires updating– for each community and incorporation into each community emergency response plan. Update per community:

- Aroland - Community Emergency Response Plan – to be developed. Provided input - Fire Hall / Emergency Building Study – Ph1.
- Constance Lake - Community Emergency Response Plan – to be developed. Blastomycosis – research, State of Emergency (SOE)
- Eabametoong - Community Emergency Response



# Technical Advisory Services

Plan - current and update. Community established Emergency Management Program Committee Emergency Management. Remote Airport Exercise.

- Ginoogaming - Community Emergency Response Plan – to be developed. Provided a shortened version of an evacuation plan
- Long Lake #58 - Community Emergency Response Plan - to be developed
- Marten Falls - Community Emergency Response Plan – to be developed. Community EMC – investigating funding for salary for this position. Emergency Management. Remote Airport Exercise.
- Neskantaga - Community Emergency Response Plan – updating. -Emergency Management - Remote Airport Exercise
- Nibinamik - Community Emergency Response Plan - to be developed. Emergency Management – Remote Airport Exercise
- Webequie - Community Emergency Response Plan – to be developed. Emergency Management - Remote Airport Exercise

## Fire Marshall

- 2022-2023 Matawa First Nations communities did not have a serious fire injury or fatal fire.
- The Matawa Training and Wellness Centre training project (Fire Watch) will extend into next fiscal year.
- The continued effort of working with our First Nation fire departments for additional fire protection equipment, fire training, fire prevention, and furthering the development of critical building Fire Safety Plans in all our communities.
- Virtual attendance to Matawa fly in communities' MTO airport table top exercise.
- COVID-19 had and is still at the forefront of our communities and has placed tremendous restriction to the normal fire safety activities in our communities.
- Aroland - Building fire inspections for special requests (School), and fire inspections with an area fire plan, existing mobile fire apparatus inspection and training with school O&M staff.
- Constance Lake - Multiple house and building fire investigations follow ups, house fire inspections for

special requests, Eagles Earth fire inspections with an area fire plan, assist with the successful acquisition of a Fort Gary Mobile Fire Apparatus with firefighting equipment and training (\$505,129.00).

- Eabametoong - Multiple house and building fire investigations follow ups, mobile fire apparatus repair/maintenance. Unsuccessful with the repair to the pump. Assist Matawa Emergency Management Coordinator with wildfire rapid attack vehicle specifications.
- Ginoogaming - Building fire inspections for special request (Aboriginal Head Start) and training.
- Long Lake #58 - Building fire inspections for special request (Early Learning Centre) and training.
- Marten Falls - House fire investigations follow ups.
- Neskantaga - House fire investigations follow ups.
- Nibinamik - House fire investigations follow ups, assist with the specifications for a rapid attack mobile fire apparatus. Delay in manufacturing due to supply issues.
- Webequie - House (four plex) fire investigations follow ups, assist with the specifications of Mobile Fire Apparatus with firefighting equipment and training. Assist Matawa Emergency Management Coordinator with wildfire rapid attack vehicle specifications.

## CHALLENGES:

The Operator HUB funding is currently secured through March 2026. With all the new water treatment plants that will require to have certified operator oversight, we will have to advocate for an extension of this program and be able to staff additional operators to assist/mentor community operators. There also should be a succession plan to bring in younger operators with proper training to take over when the current operators retire. The communities that have had new water treatment plants, have witnessed issues with sewage collection and treatment systems due to a number of factors including design, capacity, construction, and insufficient O&M. These issues have significantly impacted the construction of new infrastructure. For capital and housing projects, COVID-19 definitely played a part in delays for construction projects. Things seem to have been slowly getting back to normal as of right now (May 2023) and moving forward. One last item, it has been encountered on a



number of occasions that community representation on project teams is sometimes lacking as staff is overextended and that could hinder projects from advancing. We need to continue to push ISC for more core funding to support capital projects positions in the communities. The ISC admin fees are insufficient, to support a position and those fees typically go towards their finance department. If there is more coordination, payment reviews and reporting, we would be able to do a lot more across the board.



Eabametoong Sewage Vac Truck



## OPPORTUNITIES:

We will continue to work with ISC in regards to the Matawa HUB with regards to additional staffing and extending the funds in future years. There are some project management opportunities available within approved capital projects that some staff have taken on. There will continue to be project management opportunities like this moving forward. As of May 2023, we have just been informed about a program through CMHC that we will explore that may be able to provide much needed lot development for all of the Matawa communities.





# Regional Priorities & Jurisdiction

## DEPARTMENT COMMITTEES:

- Matawa Chiefs Council representing the nine (9) Matawa member First Nations functions as the main reporting and direction providing committee from within the Matawa First Nations Management (MFNM) structure
- The Regional Priorities & Jurisdiction Department (RP&J Department) as it functioned during the 2022-2023 fiscal year continued to provide policy analysis and support to the Matawa Chiefs Council on the extensive number of international, federal and provincial issues that are being monitored and briefed for the information of the Matawa communities over the course of the year
- Matawa Development Corporation (MDC) Board of Directors represents the seven (7) member First Nations of Long Lake #58, Constance Lake, Marten Falls, Eabametoong, Ginoogaming, Aroland and Nibinamik at this point in report preparation, and the work continues to provide the opportunity for all Matawa member First Nations to participate in this initiative
- Matawa Development Corporation and Founding Partners Working Group representing the MDC and the four founding business partners; PCL, Enterprise Canada, EPCOR and OPG. The working group provides advice and direction on potential business opportunities that the MDC and group of companies may consider

## STAFF:

### Regional Priorities & Jurisdiction

Kathryn Brady, Manager

Alanna McKenzie, Policy Coordinator

Rosanna Peever, Logistics Coordinator

### Matawa Development Corporation

Harvey Yesno, Interim Chief Executive Officer

## OVERVIEW:

Originally mandated in 2016 by the Matawa Chiefs Council based on Resolution #01-15/12/2016 Jurisdiction Table the Regional Priorities & Jurisdiction Department is the continuing of the Chiefs direction to examine different topics, mechanisms and options related to and of interest to the Matawa member First Nations. The original topics included but were not limited to roads, permitting and land management. Over time, after the end of the Matawa/Ontario Regional Framework Agreement (2014) by the Ford government in 2017, the Regional Priorities & Jurisdiction Department continues to provide the information, analysis and support to Matawa member First Nations in a broad scope of issues that are related to this area of work.

In 2021 the Matawa Chiefs Council further adopted Resolution 2021-03-07 Matawa Development Corporation Structure Appointments to establish the Matawa Development Corporation formally and directed the Regional Priorities & Jurisdiction Department to carry out this work. As directed, this new regional development corporation (MDC) has been formed to develop opportunities to meet the infrastructure needs of the Matawa communities, and other potentially emerging business opportunities. As part of this process, a number of reputable and established Canadian companies with experience in large-scale construction projects including roads and highways, water treatment, electricity, government relations and finance have signed Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) (March 2020) with Matawa to help develop a new path forward. Most recently, the MDC and partners have furthered their business relationship by signing Letters of Intent (LOIs) and Non-Disclosure Agreements. Going forward, these processes are intended to progressively position the Matawa member First Nations to research, plan and participate in the socio-economic aspects of regional development opportunities in the North.



## KEY PRIORITY AREAS:

The Regional Priorities & Jurisdiction Department has worked to carry out two (2) essential mandates within the Matawa Chiefs Council direction:

### a) Regional Economic Development Capacity and Opportunity Building

The establishment and formal incorporation of the Matawa Development Corporation (MDC) and the preliminary developmental and relationship building work required with the Matawa, Enterprise Canada, PCL, EPCOR and OPG (MOU Partners). The focus of the regional economic development initiatives is to explore and present real opportunities for the member communities and based on the community driven and directed positions of the First Nations represented. The next priority area is to negotiate and solidify “Alliance Agreements” with the four founding partners to outline our business relationship in detail. The MDC is aiming to have all agreements completed by December 2023; and

The Matawa Development Corporation (MDC) is a for-profit entity that currently consists of seven (7) Matawa member communities. The MDC focus is on owning and operating large-scale regional businesses that will provide our membership with improved community infrastructure, project management, capacity building, employment and training opportunities. The MDC will approach development in an environmentally responsible and culturally appropriate manner. Together with our strategic partners, the MDC will establish business relationships that support our wholistic vision towards reaching our goals of self-determination through the creation of our own economy. The MDC Board of Directors hired an Interim Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in November 2022 to assist in operationalizing the MDC through funding and development of policy and procedure of the MDC.

### b) Regional Jurisdiction & Development Related Strategic Issues

Continuing to provide the Matawa Chiefs Council with detailed updates and briefing notes on strategic issues related to the development of the North, changing Ontario and Canada legislation related to rights, land management and significant technical processes

such as the forthcoming Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC) Regional Assessment on the Ring of Fire Region. Information provided to the Matawa Chiefs Council has focused on positioning and supporting Matawa member First Nations as the leaders of decision-making and developments in their homelands and territories.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

Specific work product of this year includes the following deliverables:

### Matawa Chiefs Council Resolution

- 2022 07 27 – Acceptance In-Principle of the 2022 Matawa Chiefs and Regional Priorities & Jurisdiction Reports
- 2022 07 28 – Matawa Chiefs’ Council Reject Processes that are Proceeding without the Consent of Indigenous Rights Holders
- 2022 07 28 – Matawa Member First Nations Reject Metis Assertions in the Matawa Homelands and Territories
- 2022 07 28 – Matawa Chiefs’ Council Accept Revised Draft Mining Resolution for Further Review, Input & Consideration
- 2022 07 28 – Support for Regional Priorities and Jurisdiction Omnibus
- 2023 01 26 – Matawa Chiefs’ Council Direction for UNDA/UNDRIPA Legal Opinion and Research Project on Metis Rights Assertion in Matawa Territory
- 2023 02 07 – Matawa Chiefs’ Council Direction for Capacity and Support Funding Required for the Matawa Region

### Nishnawbe Aski Nation Resolution - Secured

- 2022 08 11 – Direction on Revised Draft Chiefs of Ontario Mining Resolution

### Chiefs of Ontario Resolution - Secured

- 2022 11 16 – The Emerging Development of the North and the Ring of Fire Region

### Political Briefing Notes – Matawa Chiefs Council

- 2022 06 10 – The Governments of Canada and Ontario’s Strategic Objects and Initiatives

## Bill 71

An Act to amend the Mining Act

Underway for Controlling the Development of the North Including the Matawa Homelands and Territories – Visual Briefing Chart

- 2022 06 22 – Revised Draft Chiefs of Ontario (COO) Resolution Work Progress
- 2022 07 14 – Summary of the Briefing Note Prepared on the Draft Agreement to Conduct the Regional Assessment Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC) – Canada and Ontario
- 2022 07 14 – Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC) Regional Assessment – Draft Agreement between Canada and Ontario
- 2022 07 26 – Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC) Regional Assessment (RA) – Current Status and Issues
- 2022 11 04 – Chiefs of Ontario (COO) Mining Resolutions and Economic Growth and Prosperity Table
- 2022 11 14 – Critical Minerals
- 2022 12 12 – Update on Critical Minerals
- 2022 12 12 – Issues Arising from Critical Minerals Strategy
- 2023 01 16 – Legal Opinion on the UNDA/UNDRIPA and Research on the Metis Assertions in Matawa member First Nations Territory
- 2023 03 03 – Ontario Bill 71 Building More Mines Act, 2023
- 2023 03 05 – Bill 71 Political and Technical Statements and Queen's Park Response
- 2023 03 20 – Quick Issues Briefing
- 2023 04 21 – Bill 71 and Mining Update

### Media Releases

- 2022 08 02 – Matawa Annual General Meeting 2022- Matawa Chiefs Council Setting a Clear Path Forward on Issues Impacting Their Communities
- 2022 08 11 – Matawa Chiefs' Council Call for Anishinabek Nation Grand Chief Reg Niganobe to Retract Comments Endorsing the Acceleration of Ontario's Access to Development of the North
- 2022 10 07 – Matawa Chiefs' Council Support the Three Treaty No. 9 First Nations Launch of Historic Lawsuit Against the Crown of Ontario on Forestry Impacts and Compensation
- 2022 11 17 – Matawa Chiefs' Council Acknowledge the Support of the Chiefs of Ontario in Asserting their Sovereignty, Rights, Interests and Jurisdiction in the Ring of Fire Region
- 2022 12 15 – Matawa Chiefs' Council Call on the Government of Canada to Stop the Colonial Backroom Deals and Establish a Dedicated Federal Crown Table to Prepare for the Development of the Ring of Fire Region and Critical Minerals





# Regional Priorities & Jurisdiction

- 2023 04 23 – Matawa Chiefs Council Issue Formal Response to Ontario Government’s Proposed Bill 71 – Building More Mines Act: Ontario Prepares Itself to Boom on Mining and Critical Minerals While Minimizing Environmental Oversight and Avoiding Crown Responsibilities to First Nations Across the North

## Letters to First Nations Organizations & Government

- 2022 07 29 – Matawa Chiefs Council Letter to National Chief RoseAnne Archibald, Assembly of First Nations, Ontario Regional Chief Glen Hare, Chiefs of Ontario and Grand Chief Derek Fox, Nishnawbe Aski Nation RE: Matawa Chiefs’ Council Rejects Processes that are Proceeding Without the Consent of Indigenous Rights Holders
- 2022 09 15 – Matawa First Nations Management Letter to the Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister of Natural Resources Canada RE: Canada’s Critical Minerals Strategy: Discussion Paper
- 2022 10 24 – Matawa First Nations Management Letter to Valerie Gideon, Associate Deputy Minister of Indigenous Services Canada RE: Matawa Development Corporation Proposal
- 2023 02 14 – Matawa First Nations Management Letter to the Honourable George Pirie, Minister of Mines RE: Matawa Chiefs Council – Matawa First Nations Management Proposal Presentation for 2023-2024 Fiscal Year and On-Going
- 2023 02 22 – Matawa Development Corporation Letter to the Honourable Patty Hadju, Minister of Indigenous Services Canada RE: Matawa Development Corporation Proposal February 17, 2023; Response received May 24, 2023
- 2023 03 13 – Matawa First Nations Management Letter to the Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister of Natural Resources Canada, the Honourable David Lametti, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, the Honourable Marc Miller, Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs, the Honourable Patty Hadju, Minister of Indigenous Services Canada & FEDNOR RE: Matawa Chiefs Council – Matawa First Nations Management Proposal Presentation for 2023-2024 Fiscal Year and On-Going

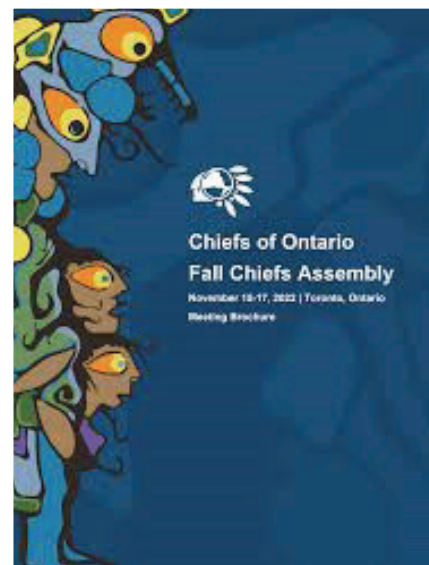


### Standing Committee Submission

- 2023 04 03 – Matawa Chiefs Council Submission to the Standing Committee on the Interior RE: Ontario's Proposed Bill 71 Building More Mines Act and Standing Committee Hearings

### Matawa Development Corporation Meeting Minutes

- 2022 05 06 – Matawa Development Corporation Board of Directors' Meeting
- 2022 07 18 – Matawa Development Corporation Board of Directors' Meeting
- 2022 08 22 – Matawa Development Corporation Board of Directors' Meeting
- 2022 09 20 – Matawa Development Corporation Board of Directors' Meeting
- 2022 10 04-05 – Matawa Development Corporation Board of Directors' Meeting
- 2022 11 04 – Matawa Development Corporation Board of Directors' Meeting
- 2022 12 02 – Matawa Development Corporation Board of Directors' Meeting
- 2022 12 06 – Matawa Development Corporation Board of Directors' Meeting
- 2023 03 28 – Matawa Development Corporation Board of Directors' Meeting – Draft





# Regional Priorities & Jurisdiction

## Major Research and Support Projects Completed

Over the course of the 2022-2023 fiscal year, the Regional Priorities & Jurisdiction completed two (2) major research and support projects as directed by the Matawa Chiefs Council via Resolution #34(a)-26-01-2023 Matawa Chiefs' Council direction for UNDA/UNDRIPA legal opinion and research project on Metis Rights Assertion in Matawa territory. First, Gowling GWL (Canada) LLP completed the legal opinion on the UNDA/UNDRIPA process for the Matawa Chiefs Council consideration, presenting their work on March 24, 2023. Second, the Matawa Metis rights assertions research project was completed by Dr. Darryl Leroux and Dr. Celeste Pedri-Spade, presenting their work on March 28, 2023. Both of these research projects were funded by the Department of Justice and are important for the information and direction going forward of the Matawa Chiefs Council on these important and inter-related topics.

## RP&J Department Meetings and Work Time for the Year

MEETING TYPE	TOTAL
1 Matawa Chiefs Council Meetings & Updates	21
2 Internal Matawa Departments	38
3 Matawa member First Nations Community Meetings	10
4 MOU Partners	16
5 Matawa Development Corporation (MDC)	67
6 Other Organizations – AFN, NAN, COO, Federal and Provincial Government	68
7 RP&J Internal Department – Working Sessions and Planning Meetings	18
8 Coeuraj	22
Total Meeting and Work Events	260





## Regional Priorities & Jurisdiction Department Funding

As the Matawa Chiefs Council and Matawa Board of Directors have been advised, the Regional Priorities & Jurisdiction Department funding for the 2022-2023 fiscal year was not renewed as in previous years. The Regional Priorities & Jurisdiction Department has competed on a national level for the limited funding available through Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada's (CIRNAC) Nation Rebuilding Program for its core operations, and Matawa management works to secure the additional funds from federal partners to add financial resources for the activities directed. As the financial resources required to support our strategic and issues based RP&J Department expired, and the challenge to support the establishment of the Matawa Development Corporation were occurring at the same time - the Regional Priorities & Jurisdiction Department advocated to both federal departments and provincial ministries for new department core funding as well as the start-up funding for the operationalization of the Matawa Development Corporation.

The Matawa Chiefs Council, Matawa Board of Directors, Matawa CEO and Regional Priorities & Jurisdiction Department staff continue to work towards identifying and developing alternative funding sources for this strategic department and area of work to support the Matawa Chiefs Council as directed.

Recently, we have received confirmation that the core RP&J department and the start-up costs for the Matawa Development Corporation will be funded as put forward and recommended by the new Ontario Ministry of Mines. . A request for funding was directly submitted to the Ontario Treasury Board,, and at the time of this report verbal confirmation has been received, that the proposal was approved. In addition, on a separate note from the federal department advocacy, the Matawa Development Corporation has secured funding through Indigenous Services Canada and FEDNOR for activities during the 2022/2023 fiscal year.

As a department, we continue to advocate for the Matawa member First Nations to receive basic capacity and support dollars at the community level, With the May 17, 2023 letter and proposal made by Minister Wilkinson, Natural Resources Canada (NRCAN) we will await the Matawa Chiefs Council direction on how the new potential process(s) that may emerge with federal partners and new funding will support the capacity and needs for our communities to make informed decisions regarding the future development of the North.

Furthermore, as we mark the close of the Regional Priorities and Jurisdiction Department by the Matawa Board of Directors due to lack of fundingweare now working as a Matawa Development Corporation Secretariat to continue this important work going forward and continuing to support the directives of the Matawa Chiefs Council and the Matawa member First Nations.





# Regional Priorities & Jurisdiction

## CHALLENGES:

- Matawa member First Nations are at a challenging point in their individual community histories and poised for the potential of significant development (health, social, community, economic, resource, cultural, technological, educational, environmental) of the North.
- It is within this framework and potential issues management that the Regional Priorities & Jurisdiction Department has worked to provide the practical and technical support to communities. All work is based on either Matawa Chiefs Council direction, regional priorities and topics identified that may be of interest, regional and community-based requests for information and research, with the overall goal of positioning and supporting Matawa member First Nations towards their community goals and aspirations of self-determination and economic independence.
- The topic areas of the Regional Priorities & Jurisdiction Department can be sensitive, involving both short and long-term considerations while meeting the legitimate demand for First Nations to realize true governance, true economic opportunities and meaningful partnerships with government, industry and other First Nations.
- Securing multi-year funding to support the directives of our Matawa member First Nations has been very challenging from both the federal and Pfovincial governments departments, ministries and programs. The government talks of reconciliation and supporting self-determination but yet continues to impose their ideals through funding agreements and predetermined outcomes.

## OPPORTUNITIES:

- Continued coordination and support for the Matawa Development Corporation (MDC) Board of Directors as the structure and formation of the corporation continues, including the gathering of business and technical data and information for Matawa member First Nation infrastructure needs with the Matawa MOU Partners Working Group; this technical aspect is also carried out as required in collaboration with the Matawa Technical Services department and staff.
- Continued research, monitoring and presentation of emerging legislative and policy issues and potential positions/strategies to the Matawa Chiefs Council, as the governments of Canada and Ontario continue to proceed with significant initiatives that impact the rights and interests of Matawa member First Nations. Despite the significant health and public safety threat of the COVID-19 global pandemic, the pandemic economic recovery plans now combined with Canada's focus on positioning itself as a world leader in the new green or net-zero economy and at the forefront internationally on critical minerals and strategic resources - has required all levels of government represented by Canada and Ontario and industry to proceed with the development of the North. Monitoring these developments is required, while maintaining focus on Matawa member First Nation priorities such as community infrastructure like safe drinking water and wastewater, energy supply and demand study and the battery storage plant.
- Overall, the Regional Priorities & Jurisdiction Department works towards supporting Matawa member First Nations in these regional and local community impacting areas of work, as directed by the Matawa Chiefs Council. Matawa First Nations Management (MFNM) may be the only tribal council in Ontario with an established economic, resource, northern development, lands and Treaty/Inherent Rights based unit at this point in time. The strategic importance of the Regional Priorities & Jurisdiction Department has continued to be an investment by the Matawa Chiefs Council and the MFNM Board of Directors since the discovery and continuing discoveries yet to be made in the Matawa region, homelands and traditional territories continues to be significant.
- Human Resources Strategy to be outlined that encompasses a wholistic approach to the development of the North and preparing our membership for employment and business related opportunities.



# Human Resources

## STAFF:

Angelle Rebelo, CHRP, CHRL, Human Resources Manager

## OVERVIEW:

Matawa Human Resources provides the structure and ability to meet the needs of our First Nations and Matawa First Nations Management's strategic goals through managing our most valuable resources—our employees.

When requested, Human Resources will assist with the annual review and revision of First Nation policies and procedures.

## KEY PRIORITY AREAS:

- Review, revision and development of Human Resources policies and programs
- Recruitment, selection and onboarding the right people for the right jobs
- Employee training and development
- Sustaining a healthy and safe work environment, physically and psychologically
- Managing employer-employee relations
- Overseeing compensation and benefits
- Staying current and ensuring compliance with all relevant government legislation (federal, provincial, First Nation) and labour laws
- Advising employees on human resources matters and concerns

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Assisted with the development and implementation of the new Payroll module – Criterion
- Development of Policies and Programs – COVID-19 Vaccination Policy; COVID-19 Safety Plan; Corporate Vehicle Policy; Right to Disconnect From Work; Workplace Injury Reporting Program (First Aid – Medical Treatment (Workplace Safety and Insurance Board) – Critical/Fatality); Workplace Harassment and Violence Policy and Program
- Lifeworks Employee and Family Assistance Program available to all employees regardless of employment status
- Re-establishment of MFNM's Joint Health and

Safety Committee with health and safety representatives from each department and entity

- Assisted with the review and revision of Neskan-taga First Nation Human Resources Policies and Procedures
- Part 1 (3 days) and Part 2 (2 days) Joint Health and Safety Committee Certification of nine health and safety representatives
- Compliance with First Aid Regulation 1101 that Matawa has the adequate number of employees trained in 1st Aid/CPR (AED) across each department
- Workplace Violence and Harassment Prevention workshop for Managers and Supervisors held Jan 18-2023 and May 31-2023
- Investigation and resolution of various complaints, grievances and legal issues.

## CHALLENGES:

- Adapting from working from home to returning to work in the physical building after COVID-19 restrictions lifted (July 2022)
- Expedient growth of Matawa First Nations Management in all departments and entities necessitates increasing our human resources (staffing) across Matawa to provide the program supports and services required
- Currently, insufficient staffing of the Human Resources Department. In order to keep up with Matawa's growth, there is a need to hire additional Human Resources staff to carry out various Human Resources functions and new programs
- Recruitment and retention of human resources in specialized employment opportunities

## OPPORTUNITIES:

- Continue with the roll out of the Workplace Violence and Harassment policy and program to employees
- Exploration of Criterion's Human Resources and Talent Engagement modules to automate various human resources functions (such as applicant tracking/recruitment, on boarding and off boarding, performance management, employee self-service, reporting and data access) and document management
- Review of Human Resources and Finance Policies and develop work instructions
- Develop Health and Safety policies, programs and work instructions; communicate and train employees
- Develop an Employee ID Badge Program (with fobs)



# Information Technology (IT) Services

## STAFF:

Rob Wesley, Manager IT Services

Stefano Fata – IT Helpdesk Analyst Tier 1

Chris Harrington – IT Helpdesk Analyst Tier 2

Tom Paradis – IT Helpdesk Analyst Tier 2

## OVERVIEW:

### *1. Ensure corporate information technology is accessible and equipped with current hardware and software*

- Perform professional, technical and analytical tasks to identify business requirements and to procure information technology-based enhancements that meet our corporate business needs and objectives
- Identify, select, design, and implement policies, conventions, and standards for server and network technologies and infrastructure
- Plan, organize, direct, control and evaluate the operations of information systems
- Meet with Program Managers to discuss system requirements, specifications, costs and timelines
- Hire and manage information technology personnel and contractors where required to design, develop, implement, operate, and administer computer and telecommunications software, networks and information systems
- Manage the IT Services budgets and expenditures
- Troubleshoot hardware, software and network operating systems
- Be familiar with all hardware, software and network operating systems
- Provide orientation to new users of existing technology
- Train staff about potential uses of existing technology
- Provide individual training and support on request
- Provide recommendations about accessing information and support
- Maintain current and accurate inventory of technology hardware, software and resources

### *2. Manage, monitor and maintain technology to ensure proper and secure access*

- Troubleshoot all technology issues
- Maintain logs of required repairs and maintenance (Helpdesk Software Application)
- Make recommendations about the purchase of technology resources
- Research current and potential resources and services
- Provide network access to all staff and students
- Maintain servers
- Install work stations
- Connect and setup hardware and install all required software
- Provide network accounts and passwords as required
- Configure and maintain network access requirements
- Implement and monitor security of all aspects pertaining to the network infrastructure
- Advise staff of security breaches and/or a change in passwords or security status
- Identify and prepare hardware for disposal by ensuring removal of all corporate data

### *3. Assist with overall management of corporate information technology and computer systems*

- Assist with planning, organization, direction, control and evaluation of the operations of information systems
- Implement policies and procedures for IT management and computer systems operations and development
- Meet with Program Managers to discuss system requirements, specifications, costs and timelines
- Supervise information technology personnel and contractors who design, develop, implement, operate and administer computer

and telecommunications software, networks and information systems

- Operate within identified computer systems budgets, policies and procedures

#### 4. Quality Management System (QMS)

- Adhere to, implement, review and improve Matawa First Nations Management's Quality Management System as it relates to all duties of the department

*5. Prepare progress reports, briefs, work-plans, budgets and other reports as requested or required for the Chief Executive Officer and/or Board of Directors.*

### KEY PRIORITY AREA:

The IT Services department's key priority area is to provide secure, reliable and continuous access to Matawa's data and information systems to support the sustained delivery of Matawa First Nations programs and services to its partners and communities. IT Services strives to ensure connectivity to such resources by providing a well-designed and reliable network infrastructure.

An additional requirement of the IT services department will be to oversee the Operations and Management of the pending fibre optic network with the Rapid Lynx Telecommunications group. The IT services staff will be the initial trainees to all components involved once the project goes online.

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Recently hired two additional full-time IT Helpdesk Analyst staff, this has proved very beneficial to both the IT Services department and to all staff we serve
- Assisted with initial requirements in moving Long Lake #58 First Nation to their own email system
- Adaptation of new management tools regarding our email system change
- Working with several new departments to ensure their IT requirements exceeded expectations

- Assisting the Education department with their move to their own Microsoft 365 Tenant for email, and occasional maintenance and upgrades of their servers
- Partaking in the construction phases of the Matawa Training & Wellness Centre with respect to the IT requirements, security cameras, door lock mechanisms
- Manage and maintain 20+ individual servers, within Matawa and KKETS
- Community Email Systems with over 400 email accounts, recently moved to a paid subscription model
- Network reconfigurations necessary to keep up-to-date with newer technologies
- Adapting to new recommended ways in server use and server management

The Matawa IT Services department oversees the maintenance of the following in-house hosted web sites:

- [www.matawa.on.ca](http://www.matawa.on.ca)
- [www.community.matawa.on.ca](http://www.community.matawa.on.ca) (to be updated and/or changed)
- [www.ginoogamingfn.ca](http://www.ginoogamingfn.ca)
- [www.gatheringofrivers.com](http://www.gatheringofrivers.com)
- [www.moccasintrailsadventures.com](http://www.moccasintrailsadventures.com)
- [www.rapidlynx.ca](http://www.rapidlynx.ca)

### CHALLENGES:

- Learning technologies that have not been in use at Matawa First Nations before.
- Moving all Mailboxes (emails) to the cloud, with the recent move of all emails working exclusively from the cloud.
- Adapting to the continuing changes of Microsoft 365 Administration tools.
- All IT Services staff to attain Industry Standard Certifications in various areas of expertise.

### OPPORTUNITIES:

- Could easily host additional community web sites
- Intranet site (document sharing site) can now be implemented in a limited capacity using Microsoft 365 and their SharePoint solution





# Four Rivers Environmental Services Group

*Community Focused Environmental & Professional Services Centred in the North*

## STAFF:

Sarah Cockerton, Manager, Four Rivers Environmental Services Group  
Peter Moses, Mineral Development & Information Support Officer  
Kevin Wabasse, Linguistics Officer  
Laura Prior, Communications Specialist  
Kimberly Jorgenson, Environmental Services Coordinator  
Holly Pyhtila, Environmental Services Coordinator  
Jennifer Duncan, Geomatics/Project Manager  
Jasmine Baxter, Environmental Technician  
Graeme Saukko-Sved, Geomatics/Environmental Technician  
Erin Desjardins, Stewardship Intern & Matawa Water Futures Student  
Dinesh Gunawardena, Environmental Information & Systems Specialist  
Amanda Misnakoshkang, Geomatics Intern  
Sonny Black, Environmental Coordination Officer/RPAS Specialist  
Alex Horne, Communications, Logistics & Admin Officer  
Lynn Palmer, Environmental Technical Specialist  
Alanna Robbins, Engagement Specialist



## OVERVIEW:

Four Rivers was established in 2011 as an environmental services group within Matawa First Nations Management (MFNM) to provide environmental support and technical services to the Matawa member First Nation communities facing unprecedented development within their shared traditional territories. In early 2017, Four Rivers Inc. was created as a stream of Four Rivers to expand our service offerings beyond the Matawa member First Nations, in a cost-effective and competitive manner.

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 capacities;
- Build capacity through training and create legacy projects for communities; and,
- Provide innovative and sustainable community-based solutions.



# Four Rivers Environmental Services Group

Community Focused Environmental & Professional Services Centred in the North



*Four Rivers Staff - April 2023*

## DEPARTMENT COMMITTEES:

### **Matawa Environmental Technical Table (MET Table)**

Aroland First Nation	Mark Bell
Constance Lake First Nation	Wayne Neegan, Bertha Sutherland
Eabametoong First Nation	Harry Papah
Ginoogaming First Nation	Denan Kuni, Peter Rasevych, Calvin Taylor (Marianne Echum, Leslie O’Nabigon)
Long Lake #58 First Nation	Ervin Waboose
Marten Falls First Nation	Alanna Downey-Baxter (Lawrence Baxter)
Neskantaga First Nation	Marcus Moonias (Leroy Moonias)
Nibinamik	Walter Oskineegish, Jolene Wabasse
Webequie	Leslie Spence, Gordon Wabasse

\*Participants in brackets attended only one or several (early)

In June 2022 the Matawa Chiefs Council gave direction to establish the Matawa Environmental Technical Table (METT) to provide technical advice and recommendations for the Regional Assessment (RA) to be undertaken in the Matawa community homelands. The RA is a type of federal Impact Assessment that will assess impacts of existing and potential future developments, including cumulative effects, in a defined area that includes the Ring of Fire mineral deposits.



*METT meeting at the Delta Hotel, Thunder Bay, August 2022*

The Chiefs' direction to establish the METT followed their decision to work together on the RA with Mushkegowuk communities whose homelands will also be impacted by any developments in the Ring of Fire area. METT membership consists of one or more technical community representatives from the Matawa member First Nations, as appointed by leadership. METT is supported by Four Rivers, Matawa First Nations Management. Through METT's work at regular meetings over the year, the members developed a Terms of Reference and two sets of recommendations (July and December 2022) they presented to the Chiefs Council. The Terms of Reference was approved by Chiefs Council Resolution in October 2022. An important aspect is that METT's work is guided by the 15 Elders Principles.



METT's recommendations support a collective vision for the lands, waters and natural resources in the shared territories of the Matawa homelands:

- commitment for all communities to work together on the Regional Assessment
- establish a Land and Water Management board for the Matawa member First Nations
- Regional Assessment must be led by the communities
- Regional Assessment must include all territories of the Matawa member First Nations





# Four Rivers Environmental Services Group

Community Focused Environmental & Professional Services Centred in the North

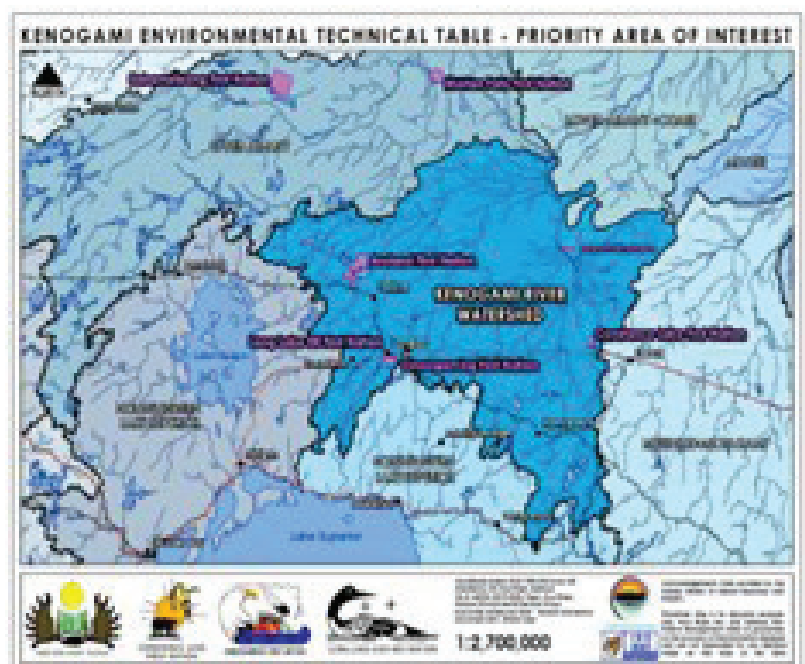
## Kenogami Environmental Technical Table (KET Table)

Aroland First Nation	Ernie Gagnon, Sam Kashkeesh
Constance Lake First Nation	Bertha Sutherland, Wayne Neegan
Ginoogaming First Nation	Denan Kuni, Calvin Taylor, Peter Rasevych
Long Lake #58 First Nation	Horis Mansuri, Shelly Rahme



The KET Table (KETT) was established in December 2019 by the road accessible Matawa member First Nations to address common environmental issues impacting their shared territories within the Kenogami watershed. The membership includes up to two technical representatives and two alternates each from Aroland FN, Long Lake #58 FN, Ginoogaming FN, and Constance Lake FN, who have significant existing capacity in environmental stewardship and lands & resource initiatives. KETT welcomed new members this year from Long Lake #58 and Ginoogaming.

Over the year, KETT held several in-person and virtual meetings to share knowledge and information as well as to discuss strategies and planning for joint environmental initiatives. Highlights of KETT's accomplishments this year were a two-day meeting with in Ginoogaming focused on enhancing community roles and values in forest management and the completion of a report from a project funded by Ontario's Great Lakes Local Action Fund on water quality monitoring in Long Lake.





## KEY PRIORITY AREA #1: ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Four Rivers has developed and delivered numerous environmental programs to support community capacity in the areas of:

- Environmental monitoring;
- Environmental research;
- Environmental governance; and,
- Environmental planning.

Four Rivers aims to help position communities to a place of active leadership relative to the stewardship of their lands and waters. Armed with the knowledge, working relationships, tested techniques, advanced partnerships, and expanded environmental networks, Four Rivers is well-situated to work with communities to advance their environmental projects and program visions.

Four Rivers has provided over 120 environmental presentations, training sessions and workshops at various events including community open houses, environmental conferences, university forums and Elder gatherings. Environmental support services have been focused in the areas of environmental assessments & policy; water, soils, and sediment samples; vegetation surveys and assessments; acoustic and video surveying technology for monitoring frog, bird, bat and wolf and caribou populations; GIS/GPS for values collection &

monitoring, benthic biomonitoring; contaminated sites assessments and drone imagery. Four Rivers actively partners with organizations and institutions to bring enhanced environmental services to communities. Four Rivers has recently acquired new equipment to assist with these efforts, including a snow machine and sled, canoe, equipment trailer, prospector tent & stove and camper trailer.





# Four Rivers Environmental Services Group

*Community Focused Environmental & Professional Services Centred in the North*

## KEY PRIORITY AREA #2: GEOMATICS AND MAPPING SERVICES

Four Rivers offers comprehensive, award-winning mapping and geomatics services – the goal of which is to provide the support that communities need to gather, store, analyze and display important land, resource, and values data to ultimately make informed decisions about their lands and waters. Once again this year, Four Rivers won a national mapping calendar contest with Graeme Saukko-Sved's submission featured in the February 2023 page. The customized services include map creation, data collection/storage and project support, as well as training opportunities. Four Rivers has established secure data storage solutions for information including: GIS data, drone imagery, environmental research data, and traditional knowledge & values data. It is crucial for communities to have access to an organized bank of environmental information in order to guide/participate in environmental stewardship & monitoring; climate change adaptation planning; community-based land use planning; source water protection initiatives; impact/environmental assessment processes; and resource development processes. Four Rivers new "Geohub" will house this data and will be launched very soon. This year's addition to the Four Rivers drone fleet is a drone boat – capable of doing autonomous bathymetry to accurately capture detailed lake and river depths, contours, and additional aquatic measurements.



## KEY PRIORITY AREA #3: PROJECT AND INTERNAL SUPPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS, LOGISTICS & TRANSLATION SERVICES

Four Rivers works with communities to build internal capacity in the resource development sector to 'bridge the gap' from the community outwards. Major barriers often exist for communities in their efforts to lead lands and resource development projects in their homelands. These challenges are often based in the absence of established communication processes to successfully link community members to the information required for informed decision-making. Communities also often seek support in developing project proposals, project coordination and reporting.

The ultimate goal of all Four Rivers' services is successful communities who are well-informed, knowledgeable, and able to fully participate in projects and initiatives that are happening within their homelands. Four Rivers' project support and communication services are wide-ranging, and apply a holistic approach to community barriers.

ers. Every community's or project's unique constraints are considered when developing appropriate implementation strategies, and we regularly apply creative or innovative solutions in addition to tried and tested strategies to convey information. Our team has a proven track record of organizing and facilitating many successful large and small scale meetings, events, workshops and conferences, including a large Gathering in December 2022.

Four Rivers has also assisted with MFNM departments internally, reaching out to provide administrative, logistical, technical and translation services. Matawa Chiefs Council meetings were provided assistance throughout the year, as well as contributions to the Rapid Lynx Broadband project – both Phase 1 and Phase 2.



*Matawa & Mushkegowuk Chiefs & Minister of Environment and Climate Change Meeting, January 20, 2023*

## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

Four Rivers successfully carried out numerous projects and initiatives throughout the year both as part of Matawa First Nations Management's publicly funded environmental programs as well as through Four Rivers Inc. Some initiatives include support of other projects being carried out by MFNM. An overall summary of projects and initiatives is shown in the table on the next page.





# Four Rivers Environmental Services Group

*Community Focused Environmental & Professional Services Centred in the North*

Four Rivers Environmental Services Group 22-23 Project List	
Project	Brief Description
Four Rivers Webinar Series (#20-4444-01)	Broadcast of environmental information that can help build capacity or inform on environmental issues through webinars to Matawa member First Nations.
ENDM MDISO (#19-1117-07)	Support to communities on mineral industry & plans and permits through the Mineral Development & Information Support Officer.
Broadband Support (#21-5007-01/02)	Support of Rapid Lynx's broadband project engagement, including providing drone imagery for proposed corridors, related GIS imagery & administrative and technical support.
IAAC Capacity Support Program (#19-1117-10)	Support of Matawa member First Nations participation in the Impact Assessment Act by supporting capacity building activities. Support of ad hoc committees, hosting information & training sessions.
Wellness Gardens (Domes) (21-1117-10)	Construction of 5 geodesic 26' garden domes in Thunder Bay (outside the Matawa Wellness and Training center, Ginoogaming, Constance Lake, Long Lake #58 and Aroland First Nations.
Translation Services (20-3000-01)	Provision of oral and written (Romanized and syllabics) translation services internally and externally.
IAAC Regional Assessment (#20-1117-05)	Support of Matawa member First Nations in engagement, capacity building, and education surrounding the Regional Assessment (RA) in the Ring of Fire area.
Drones & GeoHub (22-4444-01)	Provision of drone flights and related imagery as requested, and development of the central data storage and dissemination hub for better data compilation and sharing/display with member First Nations.
ISC Climate Change Health (#21-1117-05)	Development of community climate change vulnerability assessments, with a major focus on the emergence of Blastomycosis and mitigation planning.
ISC Climate Change Monitoring (#21-1117-06)	Regional coordination and support of community-based climate monitors and the development of climate monitoring stations including weather stations and a monitoring cell phone app.
Chiefs Council support (23-1117-01)	Provide administrative, logistical, technical and translation support when required for Matawa Chiefs Council meetings.
Matawa Water Futures (#19-7005-01)	Working in collaboration with Wilfrid Laurier, Lakehead and Laurentian Universities, this project captured community priorities for community-based water monitoring and stewardship and create substantive learning and capacity building opportunities.
ECCC Caribou (#18-1117-10)	Project supports caribou research and research capacity building within Matawa member First Nation communities.
ECCC AFSAR Bats (#19-1117-02 & MOECP SARSP Bats (#20-1117-03)	Projects aim to identify at risk bat species with participating member First Nations through the use of acoustic recorders, as well as to deliver outreach and training/capacity building opportunities to increase awareness of at-risk bat species and their ecological importance.
ECCC CWS Acoustic (#20-1117-04)	Project aims to support the development of acoustic baseline monitoring programs with interested northern Matawa member First Nations, by working with individual communities to identify monitoring priority areas, and to design acoustic monitoring programs to support their vision.
ECCC Regional Guardians Network (#19-1117-05)	Project aims to support community capacity development to empower member First Nations to actively manage their traditional homelands. The long-term vision is to establish a network of employed community environmental monitors that are the eyes and ears on the lands and waters, supporting our communities to leverage available opportunities to effectively respond to contemporary environmental challenges.
DFO Indigenous Habitat Protection Program (#21-1117-01)	This 2-year project will expand on the established fisheries monitoring capacity and will assist in coordinating 5 community DFO projects (WFFN, EFN, GFN, LL58 & CLFN). Four Rivers will coordinate outreach, training and research programs on fish and fish habitat in the Matawa member First Nation homelands, with a focus on specified community priorities.
MOECP Great Lakes Local Action Fund (#21-1117-03)	This co-developed project will work with four member First Nations (AFN, LL58, GFN and CLFN) in a technical capacity (through the KET table) to advance baseline data collection/ water monitoring priorities on Long Lake and its connection to Lake Superior.
Four Rivers Inc.	Support of <b>over 15 projects</b> to nine clients throughout the year.



## HIGHLIGHTS, CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES:

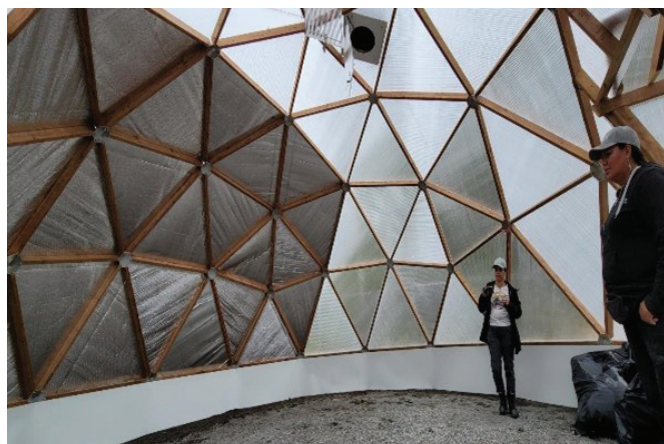
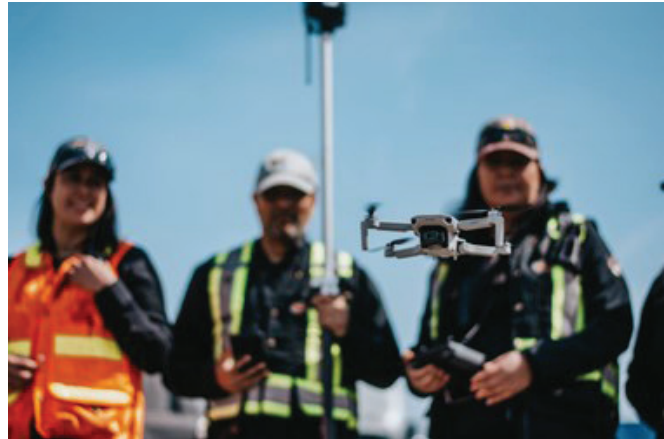
Coming out of several years of restrictions and limitations due to COVID-19, the past year brought with it the ability to finally get out into the field and into communities for Four Rivers staff. This year saw growth and new challenges, with work expanding as well for Four Rivers Inc.

New approaches to the way work is performed, along with much-needed new field equipment, improved performance and productivity in the field, while at the same time reducing rental expenses and providing immediate access to the gear, vehicles & accommodations needed to do the work.

Work continued on new, alternative methods for Blastomyces sampling, with a major literature review being initiated through Laurentian University. A preventative ecological model for Blastomycosis mitigation has also begun in order to provide communication and education for Matawa members and leadership. The construction of 26' geodesic garden domes continued with four more being constructed in the road-access Matawa communities, and work inside the domes is now being done by communities themselves, embarking on their first growing season.

In-community environmental and engagement programs were able to be conducted, as well as a back log of field work through the summer, fall, winter and spring. With the additional new equipment, gear, staff, experience, certifications, and knowledge, opportunities for Four Rivers' services continue to grow. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic has also ended, allowing work to continue. Restrictions on work and travel however, will continue in the form of accessing accommodations, as most Matawa member communities are facing housing and accommodation space limitations. A large procurement project which required the purchase and delivery of communications gear and equipment to Matawa member communities was completed as well.

Four Rivers holds over 30 projects and initiatives at any given time, and this past year was no exception.



NEW FOUR RIVERS OFFICES & WAREHOUSE (187 JOHNSON AVENUE, THUNDER BAY)

Four Rivers relocated to a much larger warehouse space across from the existing main Matawa offices in the summer of 2022, with additional office space for the growing needs of the environmental services staff. This new space was needed initially to house the bulk equipment and materials purchases, which were part of a large procurement project Four Rivers took on.



# Four Rivers Environmental Services Group

*Community Focused Environmental & Professional Services Centred in the North*



## DRONE MAPPING & GIS DATA COLLECTION

Drone flights were completed for communities, projects, and for the Rapid Lynx Broadband corridor, as well as for other First Nations where services were provided through Four Rivers Inc. With the addition of a “drone boat” Four Rivers also now has the capability to do accurate mapping of lake and river bottoms, all done autonomously.





## ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING & DATA COLLECTION

Throughout the year, in every season, Four Rivers staff head into the Matawa Homelands by truck, snow machine, canoe, boat, float plane, helicopter, or on foot, to collect important information on the multitude of species that exist in this pristine region. On the land, in the air and in the water, samples are taken to add to the existing data collection - housed in the Four Rivers GeoHub database. This is special work and with the assistance of community members who know and live on the land, our staff are able to complete their projects. While they are out on the land, Four Rivers staff also get to experience things first-hand.



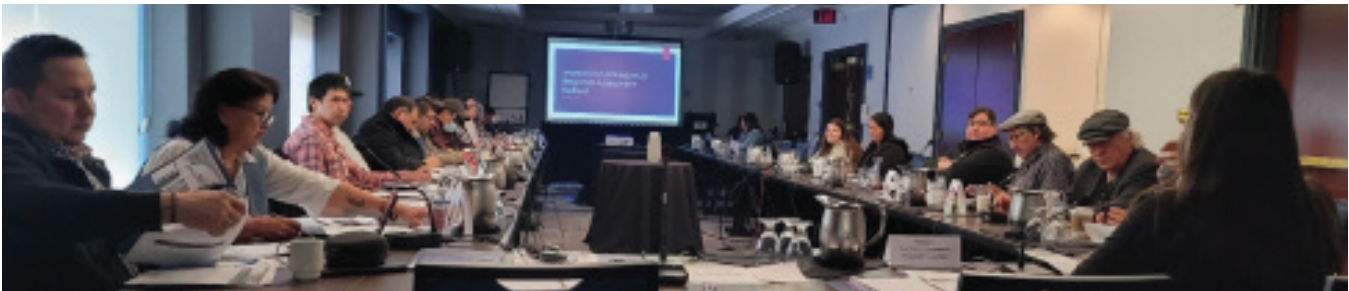


# Four Rivers Environmental Services Group

Community Focused Environmental & Professional Services Centred in the North

## PDAC 2023 & CHIEFS MEETING ASSISTANCE

Throughout the past year, Four Rivers has provided assistance to the Matawa Chiefs Council with logistics, translation, administration and technical support for Matawa Chiefs meetings, including a large retreat held prior to PDAC this March 2023.



## ENVIRONMENT GATHERING AT THE NOR'WESTER HOTEL IN THUNDER BAY

Over 40 delegates from the Matawa member First Nations attended the third annual Matawa Environment Gathering 2022 on December 5-7, hosted by Four Rivers, at the NorWester Hotel in Thunder Bay. Community lands & resource staff, environmental monitors & stewards, Elders, youth, and other interested members gathered for workshops to reflect on 10+ years of regional environmental programming and data collection, to share knowledge, build capacity, and participate in discussions on what's to come.





## TRAINING, TRAINING AND MORE TRAINING

Due to the rugged and remote type of work Four Rivers completes, it's important to have field staff trained in the areas necessary to their work. This year Four Rivers staff and available community members attended a variety of intensive training programs including: Wilderness First Aid, Chainsaw Safety, Fire Extinguisher Training, Trailer Towing, Snowmobile Safety & Swift Water Rescue.



## JOURNEY TO OUR HOMELAND - A LEGACY FILM FOR THE LATE TOMMY YELLOWHEAD

In September 2019, Nibinamik Elders Tommy Yellowhead and Stephen Neshinapaise, originally from Pinnae Mootang, along with a group of six Nibinamik youth and a film crew, journeyed by canoe to the village where they were born. The documentary that resulted from that journey is now being shown at film festivals across Canada. In May 2023, the film received a national award for Best Research – with the honour going directly to Tommy Yellowhead. Sadly, however, he was not alive to celebrate this achievement, having passed away in March 2023. The award will be presented to his family. One of the messages Tommy left behind when the film premiered on September 7, 2022, was that he wanted Matawa communities and First Nation members to 'think beyond the Indian Act' and start reconnecting with each other through their lakes, rivers and trails, as they have done for millennia.

Posthumous congratulations to the late Tommy Yellowhead for his award and for this beautiful film.





# Quality Assurance

## STAFF:

Shelly Boudreau, Quality Assurance Coordinator

## OVERVIEW:

Matawa First Nations Management is ISO 9001-2015 registered and has held an ISO Certificate of Registration. Matawa First Nations Management is ISO 9001-2015 Registered, ISO is an internationally recognized certification which assists the organization to provide quality services and increased credibility. Transparent workplans ensure that the goals and objectives of the organization are being monitored, achieved and improved upon. The use of Work Instructions ensures that the organization maintains organizational knowledge, assists in the training process and makes sure that the services provided are consistent so the outputs are consistent as well.

## QA REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE:

The Quality Assurance Department has a committee made up of Quality Assurance Representatives from each of the Matawa Departments. The QA Reps. meet to discuss issues/concerns, review current processes and identify areas which may require improvement to the Quality Management System. They are a great resource for other staff in their department.

## KEY PRIORITY AREAS:

Matawa First Nations Management's member First Nations are its number one priority. Each individual community has different needs and wants and it is the responsibility of each department to know what those needs and wants are.

The Quality Assurance Department's key focus is to ensure that ISO 9001:2015 requirements are being implemented and followed in each of Matawa's departments. This is done through training of all employees, department visits, communication and promotion of the Quality Management System.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

While this was a year of coming back from COVID-19 and working hard to get regular work processes back into practice, I believe that there were many accomplishments throughout the year.

Always working with the Matawa Member First Nations in mind, the organization has been successful with getting several projects off the ground and providing new services that add to the life and well-being of the community members. Former services that have been provided in the past have also been reviewed and improved (where necessary) to reflect the current needs of our Member First Nations.

Many policies and processes are being worked on to ensure that they are current and clear. These will then be promoted throughout the organization to ensure that all staff understand their roles and responsibilities in these areas.

## CHALLENGES:

The challenge for the Quality Assurance Department is probably the same challenge many of the other Matawa departments have. The organization has grown so quickly and we have added so many new programs and employees that it is sometimes a challenge to get everyone trained and onboard with the Quality Management System in a timely manner. My resources are being stretched thin while I work with the various departments, however I am confident that we will have each employee and program where they need to be.

## OPPORTUNITIES:

The opportunities for the Quality Assurance Department with regards to assisting all Matawa departments to achieve their goals and objectives are endless. Working alongside Program Managers and staff enables my department to share my experiences and truly motivate staff to use the principles and tools of Quality Assurance to enhance their programs and help provide services that will improve the lives of the communities we serve.

As for the Quality Assurance department itself, there is an opportunity to improve the efficiency and technology used to manage documentation, records, files, etc. I will be pursuing those opportunities in order to assist the Matawa Departments in following the requirement of the Quality Management System in a way that is more convenient to use.



# Finance

## STAFF:

Neil Miller CPA, CA, Manager Finance & Administration  
Mike Harding CPA, CA – Finance Controller  
Tina Gordon, Finance Officer  
Brook Mainville, Finance Officer  
Robina Baxter, Finance Officer  
Carl Levesque, Finance Officer  
Laureen Kahgee, Finance Officer  
Thomas Kelos, Finance Officer  
Ethan Crawford, Finance Officer  
Tanya Watts, Payroll and Benefits Officer  
Ashley Tomagatick, Receptionist  
Courtney Sagutcheway, Casual Receptionist  
Claudia Rheault, Casual Receptionist  
Amanda Goulet, Casual Receptionist



## OVERVIEW:

The Finance Department (“FD”) of Matawa First Nations Management (“Matawa”) provides financial and administrative support services to the Matawa Chiefs, Board of Directors, CEO and Program Managers.

The FD is responsible for regular financial and compliance reporting (monthly and annually) and proper maintenance of all financial activities for MFNM and its related entities.

The FD is also responsible for the reception services at the Main office at 233 Court Street South – 2nd floor. Matawa has 11 reporting entities which are all under the “umbrella” of Matawa and for which the Matawa Finance Department is “responsible,” they are:

- **Matawa First Nations Management** – Tribal Council
- **Matawa Non-Profit Housing Corporation** – non-profit providing subsidized housing to persons of low or modest income
- **Matawa First Nations Property Inc.** - for profit enterprise consisting of building and property at 233 Court Street South in Thunder Bay
- **Four Rivers Inc.** – for profit enterprise providing environmental and other services (more info. at: [www.fourrivers.group](http://www.fourrivers.group))
- **Matawa Training and Wellness Centre** – providing office and training spaces for health, social services and training and education
- **Gathering of Rivers for Community Care** – registered charity (more info. at: [www.gatheringofrivers.com](http://www.gatheringofrivers.com))
- **Achieving the Dream Through Education** – registered charity
- **Rapid Lynx Telecommunications GP Inc.** – broadband project (more info. at: [www.rapidlynx.ca](http://www.rapidlynx.ca))
- **Matawa Development GP Inc.** – for-profit economic development

The Matawa Finance Department also provides accounting, bookkeeping and payroll services for **Matawa Health Co-operative Inc.** and **Kiikenomaga Kikenjigewen Education and Training Services (KKETS)**.

The FD works out of the 2nd floor offices at 233 Court Street South in Thunder Bay. We are responsible for payroll and paying the bills and reporting to Matawa’s funders. Our clients are all the other staff of MFNM and its associated entities. We work closely with Program and Department Managers to provide support and guidance in not only financial matters, but also any operating issues that may arise.



## KEY PRIORITY AREA:

The key priority of the Finance Department is maintaining the financial viability of Matawa First Nations Management and its related entities. Matawa's variety of programs need to be operated efficiently and effectively and within constrained financial and human resources. Matawa's Program Managers have done a tremendous job in controlling their financial resources and working within the budget constraints of the funding agreements. The Finance Department assists the Program Managers in the proper accounting for all the revenue and expenses to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the program funders.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

Matawa has its books and records audited annually by a local auditing firm. The audited financial statements are required by Matawa's funders to ensure funds were expended in the manner prescribed in the contribution funding agreements. Matawa has received an unqualified audit opinion in its consolidated financial statements since Matawa's inception. This is a very high standard and difficult to maintain. This aspect of our work plays a critical role in the on-going success of Matawa.

In the past fiscal year, the Finance Department implemented new accounting and payroll systems to better serve the staff and membership of Matawa. The transition to Sage Intacct and Criterion required hundreds of hours of staff time. The FD encountered many issues typical for such a change, but it is hoped and expected that the results will be more timely and effective information. There are still some growing "pains", but we are confident the hardest work is now behind us.

## CHALLENGES:

Cash flow continues to be a challenge for Matawa. The demand for services requires constant management of the financial resources of Matawa. Matawa has been very successful in signing contribution agreements with our funders. But, for many reasons outside the control of Matawa, it often takes quite some time to receive the funds that were committed to us. These

delays often require much time and effort to manage our vendors and suppliers. But our staff does a great job in keeping them happy!

Adequate human resources are also critical for the Finance Department to operate. Our staff need to be skilled, experienced, and resourceful. This skill set is always in demand, so these positions are often difficult to fill. We have been fortunate to find and attract qualified candidates, but more creative methods may be needed in the future to attract and train staff as Matawa continues to grow.

## OPPORTUNITIES:

Matawa has been very successful in obtaining contribution agreements which provide funding for specific programming, and a modest amount of funding for ancillary support services (Finance, HR, IT, etc.). This available funding, which used to be 10% of a program's budget, has been shrinking in recent years. Matawa has been successful in expanding and diversifying its various revenue streams. But more effort and focus need to be directed towards utilizing non-government sourced funding to reduce our reliance on funding from outside authorities.

Self-sufficiency remains a goal for Matawa, as it is for our member First Nations.

As Matawa First Nations Management continues its growth in programming and services to its members, the Finance Department needs to continue to keep pace with the demand for its services. Human resources will be critical to the future success of Matawa's Finance department. There are opportunities for Matawa's members for a satisfying career in Finance.

The Finance Department recently received an operational review conducted by an independent third party. The review, which was generally very favorable in its assessment of the department, resulted in several recommendations that will be implemented over the course of the next several months.

The Finance Department of Matawa looks forward to continuing to be a strong and vital component of the current and future success of Matawa, its operating entities, and its membership.



# Education Staff



## **Advisory Services & Administration**

Dr. Sharon Nate, Executive Director  
Stephanie Hogan, Education Coordinator  
Angela Wapoose, Education Executive Assistant  
Jeffrey Yellowhead, Education Receptionist/ Budget Officer Assistant  
Tracy Ostamus, Education Receptionist

## **Pathways to Achieve Student Success (PASS)**

Skylene Metatawabin, PASS Program Manager  
Douglas Gagnon, Cultural Education Coordinator  
Katherine Hughdie, School Success Lead  
Maryann Nawagesic, Mental Health Lead  
Olivia Merko, Student Nutrition Program Coordinator  
Shelby Ch'ng, EPP Liaison Officer  
Susan Zgolak, Student Success Lead

## **Education IT Department**

Rafal Zgolak, System Administrator  
Aaron Gray, IT Technician  
Nathaniel Salgueiro, Database Helpdesk

## **Matawa Waka Tere Indigenous Language Team**

Tai Watene, Budget Officer  
Aroha Watene, Indigenous Language Revitalization Specialist  
Andrea O'Nabigon, Tutor Instructor, Long Lake #58 FN - Ojibway  
Bentley Cheechoo, Assistant Tutor, Thunder Bay - Oji-Cree  
Bernadine Mendowagen, Assistant Tutor, Ginoogaming FN - Ojibway  
Caitlyn Balcombe, Student Support Officer  
Cathy McGuire, Assistant Tutor, Thunder Bay - Ojibway  
Cathy Therriault, Assistant Tutor, Aroland FN - Ojibway  
Cheyanne Patabon, Assistant Tutor, Long Lake #58 FN - Ojibway  
Colleen Moonias, Assistant Tutor, Neskantaga FN, Oji-Cree  
Eileen Wabano, Assistant Tutor, Eabametoong FN - Ojibwe  
Elizabeth Sugarhead, Tutor Instructor, Neskantaga FN, Oji-Cree  
Gloria Champagne, Indigenous Language Specialist Assistant  
Gordon Yellowhead, Tutor Instructor, Eabametoong FN - Ojibwe  
Joanna Wabano, Procurement Support Officer  
Joe Baxter, Tutor Instructor, Aroland FN - Ojibway  
Lillian Stoney, Tutor Instructor, Webequie FN – Oji-Cree  
Loretta Wabasse, Tutor Instructor, Nibinamik FN -Oji-Cree  
Lawrence Therriault, Indigenous Language Specialist  
Lois Whitehead, Indigenous Language Specialist  
Mary Meshake, Assistant Tutor, Aroland FN - Ojibway  
Michael Graham, Indigenous Language Revitalization Specialist  
Nancy Ritch, Indigenous Language Specialist  
Sandra Spence, Assistant Tutor, Webequie FN – Oji-Cree  
Sariane Fiddler, Tutor Instructor, Thunder Bay – Oji-Cree  
Sharon Mendowegan, Tutor Instructor, Ginoogaming FN - Ojibway  
Syndyn Baxter, Project Officer  
Tracy Spence, Indigenous Language Coordinator  
Wanda Baxter, Tutor Instructor, Thunder Bay, Ojibwe

## **Post-Secondary Program**

Georgette O'Nabigon, Post-Secondary Coordinator  
Carly Perras, Post-Secondary Student Support Worker

## **Matawa Education & Care Centre (High School)**

Jacqueline Carrier, Interim Principal  
Nick Shaver, Vice Principal  
Aaron Beardy, Outdoor Education Coordinator  
Allan Wemigwans, Trauma Informed Care Coordinator  
Allyson Gilmour, Guidance Counsellor  
Aly Wood, Mental Health Land Based Coordinator  
Ashley Nate, Land Based Support Worker  
Brad Battiston, Partnerships Development Administrator  
Brandon MacLeod, English Teacher  
Brett Desimone, PLAR Teacher  
Brittany Kennedy, Programs Administrator  
Caitlin McKeich, Social Sciences Teacher  
Cheryl Ugray, Special Education Coordinator  
Chris Palmer, Trades Development Officer  
Debbie McDougall, PLAR Teacher  
Eddie Baxter, Mental Health Land Based Coordinator  
Emily Jacob, Elder  
Faith Jacob, Classroom Assistant  
Heather Alanen, Special Education Resource Teacher  
Jacqueline Carrier, Interim Principal  
Jason Randle, Student Safety Support Coordinator  
Jennessa Darosa, Mental Health Worker  
Jeremy Oxford, Teacher Coach  
John Colledanchise, Classroom Assistant  
Joseph Missewace, Land Based Support Worker  
Joseph Willis, Curriculum Development Officer  
Kaleigh Caputo, Distance Education Coordinator  
Katy McGuigan, Interim Mental Health Coordinator  
Keshia Teddy, Student Transition Coordinator  
Kylie Haney, Special Education Resource Teacher  
Lindsay Johnson, Special Education Resource Teacher  
Lisa Adams, Special Education Resource Teacher  
Luke Pretto, Teacher  
Melinda Rody, Education System Navigator  
Noreen Missewace, Indigenous Language Coordinator  
Paul Colosimo, Science Teacher  
Paul Ochnicki, Math Teacher  
Phyllis Goodwin, Teacher  
Rebecca Sutherland, Education Receptionist  
Rebecca Wheeler, Wellness System Navigator  
Robert Elliott, Choose Life Assistant  
Samantha Bachynski, Life Skills Teacher  
Samantha Renaud , Head Teacher  
Sarah Moonias, Elder  
Shilpa Dhankhar, Math Teacher  
Sid Okees, Student Support Worker  
Steve Achneepineskum, Cultural Lead  
Steve Lipson, Cooperative Education Teacher  
Steve St. Jean, Student Achievement Officer  
Tim Sofea, Student Support Worker

## **Matawa Student Care Centre**

Malinda Staal, Interim Manager  
Agnes Kwandibens, Security  
Akansha Kaur, Tutor  
Alexandra Robertson, Mental Health Worker  
Amberzina Sutherland, Cultural Activities Worker  
Antoine Moonias, P/T Cultural Activities Worker

Ashanti Benson, Custodian  
 Brooklyn Ballentine, Youth Care Leader  
 Cassida, Yapput, Youth Care Leader  
 Chancy Atwood, Mental Health Worker  
 Crissy Hamlin, Youth Care Leader  
 Cynthia Edwards, Youth Care Leader  
 Dakota-colt Meshake, Cultural Activities Worker  
 Dawn Restoule, Youth Care Leader  
 Emmalee Goudie, P/T Youth Care Leader  
 Ethan, Alatyppo, Youth Care Leader  
 Faith Bruyere, Cultural Activities Worker  
 Fallan Bain, Youth Care Leader  
 Flora Moonias, Youth Care Leader  
 Jared Pemmican, PT/ Youth Care Leader  
 Joanne Fox, Mental Health Worker  
 Johnathon Echum, Youth Care Leader  
 Joshua McCart, Mental Health Worker  
 Keith Debassigne, Security  
 Honey West, Youth Care Leader  
 Kelly Soulias, Youth Care Lead Supervisor  
 Kyra Metatawabin, Youth Care Leader  
 Laurie DePerry, Mental Health Worker  
 Levi Yellowhead, Youth Care Leader  
 Lisa Wingert, Youth Care Leader  
 Lucille Atlookan, Cultural Activities Worker  
 Magell Ritch, Youth Care Leader  
 Matilda Suganaqueb, Youth Care Leader  
 Mary Ann Lachinette, Youth Care Leader  
 Mary Kakegamic, Security  
 Micah Beardy, Security  
 Michelle McConnell, P/T Youth Care Leader  
 Milad Berenjkari, Youth Care Leader  
 Nancy Allen, Mental Health Worker  
 Natalie Ferris, Youth Care Leader  
 Peter Nawagesic, Youth Care Leader  
 Raven Echum, Youth Care Leader  
 Renee Lavoie, Cultural Activities Worker  
 Rhonda Moonias, P/T Youth Care Leader  
 Richard Jourdain, Youth Care Leader  
 Roberta Mattinas, Youth Care Leader Supervisor  
 Supneet Kaur, Youth Care Leader  
 Tracy Dore, Youth Care Leader  
 Tyarra Goodman, Youth Care Leader  
 Ziigwan Moses, Youth Care Leader

#### **Matawa Student Care Centre Kitchen Staff**

Alexandra Missewace, General Cook  
 Blanche Swalwell, General Cook  
 Charles Wesley, General Cook  
 Charlotte Baxter, Student Nutrition Support Worker  
 Landy Moose, Dietary Aide  
 Mary Lou Baxter, Dietary Aide  
 Remy Cote, General Cook

#### **MECC – Safe Sobering Site**

Stephanie Ritch, Youth Inquest Manager  
 Sabrina MacLaurin, Youth Inquest Assistant  
 Cheyanne Meekis, On Call Worker  
 Destiny Edwards, On Call Worker  
 Durrell Oskineegish, P/T On Call Worker  
 Edith Edwards, Youth Residential Worker  
 Esther Semple, Addictions Crisis Worker  
 Harold Meeseetawageesic, On Call Worker  
 Isaac Meekis, Outreach Worker  
 Jada Sofea, On Call Worker  
 Jared Yellowhead, After Hours Support Worker  
 Joseph Meeseetawageesic, Addictions Crisis Worker  
 Klarissa Sakanee, On Call Worker  
 Marcia Jacob, After Hours Support Worker  
 Marilyn Missewace, Addictions Crisis Worker  
 Michael Sutherland, On Call Worker  
 Mya Dixon, After Hours Support Worker  
 Robyn Kakegamic, Outreach Worker  
 Timothy Fox, Addictions Crisis Worker  
 Tanya Towner, P/T On Call Worker

#### **Building Maintenance & Janitors**

Scott Russell, Operations & Maintenance Facility Manager  
 Gerald Suganaqueb, Facilities Manager Assistant  
 Beatrice Mamakwa, Custodian  
 Charlie Martin, Maintenance Lead Hand  
 Colin Sobey, Maintenance Lead Hand  
 Conrad Moonias, Lead Custodian  
 Felix Quisses, Custodian  
 Mitchell Spence, P/T Custodian  
 Mitchell Sutherland, Custodian  
 Nathan Yellowhead, Custodian  
 Ophelia Moonias, P/T Custodian  
 Rebecca Missewace, P/T Custodian

Support and advisory services to community schools and local education authorities | school improvements and positive impact | quality of students' learning | liaises with Indigenous organizations, governments and education institutions at all levels | continues to develop its capacity to provide second-level services to schools in the Matawa First Nations | IT support under the Pathways to Achieve Student Success (PASS!) program | Post-Secondary Student Services | community liaison | education partnership program liaison | Education Conference | professional development



# Education

*We Work Together to Make a Change*

## OVERVIEW:

The Matawa Education Department (MED) provides educational support and advisory services to Matawa First Nation community schools and Education Authorities. The MED also networks with applicable organizations, service providers, Ministry of Education, regional school Boards, and Post-Secondary institutions.

The MED works collaboratively with the Education Authorities to provide after-hours services through the Matawa Safe Sobering Site, Outreach and On-Call program, Cultural and Recreation Workers, as well as the Matawa Student Care Centre (MSCC). The MSCC opened in the fall of 2022, housing Matawa youth who have transitioned to Thunder Bay from their remote First Nations to attend high school. The MED, through the Pathways to Achieve Student Success (PASS) program, continues to provide second level services to community-based schools, in the areas of Information Technology (I/T), mental health and cultural supports, as well as Indigenous language development, and nutritional programs.

The Matawa Post-Secondary Program is responsible for administering services to five Matawa communities including Aroland, Ginoogaming, Long Lake # 58, Neskantaga, and Webequie First Nations.

In addition, the MED operates the Matawa Education and Care Centre (MECC), located in Thunder Bay. The MECC is a specialized private high school, approved by the Ontario Ministry of Education to grant Ontario Secondary School credits and diplomas. The design of the program is to facilitate opportunity that encompasses an all-inclusive approach to each student with a focus on their wellness, personal growth, and academics through culturally enriched programming

### Matawa Education & Care Centre Overview

The MECC empowers youth to connect to their identity in a safe and supportive environment. The MECC is housed in a building which formally operated as a long-term care facility in Thunder Bay. Since 2018, the building has undergone extensive renovations and retrofitting with most of the work scheduled to be completed by September 2023. The MECC holistic program integrates students' mental, physical, emotional and spiritual self into the daily schedule and operational programming. The MECC understands success is not defined by academics, but by personal growth and development.

A high percentage of youth enrolled at the MECC have been out of secondary school for an extended period or removed from provincial schools for varying circumstances. As a result, when youth arrive at the MECC, they often lack the confidence needed

to successfully pursue their long-term personal and academic goals. The MECC continues to work diligently to create opportunities to bridge service gaps for Matawa youth to continue achieving personal and academic success.

The design of the program and building is to facilitate opportunities that encompass an all-inclusive approach for each student with a focus on their wellness and personal growth through culturally enriched programming. Specific jobs have been created to combat the immense hardships and challenges Matawa youth face while relocating to a new city.

The MECC returned to a semestered schedule during the 2022-2023 school year, maintaining flexible learning supports such as in-person, remote delivery, and adaptive learning models. The MECC peak enrollment was 188 students, with twelve (12)

graduating students.

St. Joseph's Care Group (SJCG) and the MECC entered its sixth year of collaboration and partnership, which continued to provide two (2) fulltime Youth Workers, four (4) Trauma Counselors/Specialists, and a parttime Family Therapist for the school year. The partnership also includes off-site primary care with academic and behavioural assessments with appropriate specialists. SJCG provided extensive training for MECC staff in trauma-based education approaches, while working with students dealing with addictions. Further, MECC students continued to have primary access to the SJCG Sister Margaret Smith Centre, to deal with substance abuse addictions, as well as the gymnasium facility for the MECC physical education courses and after hours student activities. As of March 2023, the funding to continue onto the seventh year of collaboration was approved.

The Principal worked with the Executive Director of Education, and applicable staff in meetings, discussions, and proposals based on the Jury Recommendations resulting from the First Nations Youth Inquest. The work includes advocating for the implementation of community-based recommendations and the continuation of Choose Life and Jordan's Principle funding.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

The MECC Guidance granted 317 credits during the 2022-2023 academic year. The MECC completed the year with its highest credit count and largest graduating class to date. Graduating students were taken to Vancouver, British Columbia to celebrate their accomplishments.

The MECC completed the final year of the five-year Youth Inclusion Partnership with the City of Thunder Bay. This included food hampers for participating students and their families, personal wellness checks for some students, and coverage of monthly transit fees for 30 students.

The MECC implemented new credits that were developed with the Critical Thinking Consortium (Tc2). Work has also commenced on the development of six (6) additional credits for next two (2) academic years. Tc2 is recognized as a world-wide leader in curriculum development, as such, Tc2 and MECC were presenters in Chile during the International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement Conference, November 2022.

The MECC offered Co-operative Education (co-op) credits, which also included a course through a partnership with Focus Forward for Indigenous Youth, in which students built a changeroom beside the outdoor skating rink. This was a paid co-op program where students worked with a General Contractor.

Our Special Education Program had four (4) Special Education Resource Teachers and three (3) Classroom Assistants to provide services and supports to students in-person and remotely. We continued to provide Life Skills and Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) courses as per student academic needs.

Mental health and wellness supports were provided to remote learners by telephone and on-line. When needed, in-person wellness checks were conducted by SJCG staff in Thunder Bay, and through Nishnawbe Aski Police Services (NAPS) and/or the Nursing Station for students living in community.

The MECC Mental Health and Land Based Coordinators provided students with several experiential learning opportunities with a focus on developing leadership and cultural knowledge which improved self-esteem. These opportunities were applied to credits. Some highlights include moose hunting, dog sledding, ice fishing, goose hunting, and Whitewater rafting. Several students were able to earn various certifications, such as firearms safety, motorboat safety, Whitewater paddling, and First Aid.

The MECC gymnasium is expected to be completed in September 2023. The school community is looking forward to having its own athletic facility to offer sports programming and competitive opportunities with local schools.

In collaboration with the Thunder Bay Police Service, the MECC procured funding to hire a School Resource Officer (SRO). The SRO's primary role was to support the school community, which includes students, parents, school staff, and administrators.

The MECC was awarded the Capital Equipment and Consumables fund through the CWB Welding Foundation, which allowed for the development and expansion of the MECC Welding Program. CWB Welding Foundation provided teacher training for several educators to safely deliver a welding program in September 2023.





# Education

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## CHALLENGES:

Regretfully, three (3) MECC students passed away within weeks of each other. While these events affected students and staff deeply, all were supported through specialized grief counsellors and programs.

Several community First Nations Youth Inquest recommendations still need to be implemented. MECC continued working with Matawa leadership to advocate for these recommendations to receive the necessary funding to be implemented. More work is necessary to ensure the government provides predictable and reliable funding.

## OPPORTUNITIES:

The construction on the gymnasium is scheduled to be completed in September 2023. Upon completion, the MECC will offer a wider range of student programming and events. This would also include opportunities for Matawa First Nations Management and the Matawa First Nations to hold large gatherings at the MECC.

With the completion of the welding classroom, the MECC will offer more skilled trades courses. It will also create further opportunities for partnerships with trades unions, organizations and service providers resulting in more career pathways for students when they graduate high school.

The MECC will be working with NAPS and Thunder Bay Police Services to promote career opportunities in policing. We also hope to create a high school credit course based on the Police Foundations program at Confederation College.





# Education

*We Work Together to Make a Change*

## After Hours Student Support Overview

The MED After Hours Student Support Program (AHSSP) consists of the following programs and services: Safe Sobering Site, On-Call Services, Student Outreach, and the First Nation Seven Youth Inquest. The AHSP operates during the evenings and weekends.

### *Safe Sobering Site Overview*

The Safe Sobering Site was created to support Matawa youth experiencing high levels of intoxication. The site is housed in the MED building, operational 24/7, and monitored by professionals such as Addictions Crisis Workers and Youth Residential Workers. These professionals transport students to and from the Thunder Bay Regional Health Science Centre and Thunder Bay Police Service facility.

### *On-Call Services and Student Outreach Program Overview:*

The On-Call Services and Student Outreach program are the front-line workers once school operations are closed for the evening. These staff are responsible for the safety of Matawa students attending school in Thunder Bay. Student safety includes taking preventative measures, providing, and participating in education and awareness training, activities, and workshops regarding what to do in situations, available supports, alcohol and substance abuse, peer pressure, and gangs, etc.

The On-Call Services and Student Outreach staff patrol in high-risk, frequented areas and respond to calls from parents, students, guardians, and local community members pretraining to Matawa youth. For youth to be safely monitored, the On-Call Workers transport the youth to the Safe Sobering Site or call the emergency services if necessary. The On-Call Workers work directly with the youth, parents, boarding home parents, Thunder Bay police, and the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre to ensure the overall safety of the Matawa youth.



### *First Nation Seven Youth Inquest Overview:*

The Seven Youth Inquest was called following the deaths of students Jethro Anderson, Reggie Bushie, Robyn Harper, Kyle Morrisseau, Paul Panacheese, and Jordan Wabasse. The inquest into the deaths of the seven youth began October 05, 2015, and concluded June 28, 2016, when the Jury rendered its ruling. At the conclusion of the inquest, one hundred and forty-nine (149) Jury recommendations were developed, aimed at keeping youth safe.

The Youth Inquest Manager provided direct support to the achievement and tracking of each recommendation associated with the MECC. The Youth Inquest Manager has compiled the Matawa Education and Care Centre's Seven Youth Inquest Annual Report to the Ontario Coroner's Office for review.

The Youth Inquest Manager acted as liaison between MECC and government, as well as First Nation Inquest partners, to complete items associated with the Political Table, Education Table, and Task Team Tables. The Youth Inquest Manager oversaw the AHSSP by providing direct supervision to attending staff and students.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

In December 2022, the MED amalgamated the series of after-hour support services into the After Hours Student Support Program (AHSP). This structural change allowed for focused individualized training, guidance and support for AHSSP staff.

In 2022-2023, the Safe Sobering Site helped 217 students safely stabilize from alcohol and substances. Staff needed to call emergency services (i.e. ambulance or police) 23 times for students experiencing a variety of life-threatening emergencies; such as, alcohol poisoning, drug overdose, physical assault, and suicidal ideations.

The Matawa On-Call Service has continued to be a critical support for students during after hours evenings, nights and weekends which is demonstrated by providing 4000 safe rides yearly for students. Matawa On-Call Service staff helped students through 73 serious incidents as of May 2023. These incidents are similar to those described in the previous paragraph.

The Matawa Student Outreach Program was introduced this academic year. It is designed for Matawa's most vulnerable students, to help ensure they are home by their curfew. It also provides greater support for Matawa students during the evenings, nights, and weekends when school is closed, and students are experiencing crises associated with culture shock, loneliness, addiction, and mental health. Beginning next school year we will provide support to Education Authorities in implementing their respective student curfews.

The Seven Youth Inquest continues to support the following programs and important work within the Education Department:

- Jordan Wabasse Memorial Award,
- Development of the Matawa Student Care Centre
- Building renovations and new gymnasium
- Partnership with Critical Thinking to indigenize curriculum for secondary school credits
- Safe Sobering Site
- Special Education Services at the MECC
- Cultural and land-based programming
- Ojibway and Oji-Cree secondary school credits
- Student and staff training opportunities
- Partnership with St. Joseph Care Group



### CHALLENGES:

A primary challenge for the program was attracting qualified staff to fill new positions. At times this resulted in having to close various services for short periods of time as we did not have enough staff to work the appointed schedule.

The refusal of applicable government agencies and programs to fund a medical position within the department. This position would provide another layer of safety for students. We continue to advocate for this funding with the hope it will be provided in the next academic year.

In terms of the Seven Youth Inquest; our proposal to have a dedicated Inquest Team for Matawa First Nation communities has been denied funding. This has been an issue since the Jury Recommendations were released. We will continue to advocate for this funding in the next academic year.

### OPPORTUNITIES:

We have received funding for additional student support positions for the 2023-2024 academic year. These positions will include an Indigenous Cultural Reintegration Worker, Night Supervisor, Youth Crisis Intervention Worker, and additional Outreach Workers.

With the additional services we will be able to provide greater support to Education Authorities with student supports in Thunder Bay. This will provide another layer of support for all Matawa students.





# Education

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## Matawa Student Care Centre Overview

The Matawa Student Care Centre (MSCC) opened in September 2022, housing Matawa youth who have transitioned to Thunder Bay from their remote First Nations to attend high school. The MSCC is located on the second floor of the MECC and is able to accommodate one hundred and six (106) students. The MSCC managed the safety and security of the students, accommodations, food services, recreational, spiritual, and cultural activities, and liaised with health care service providers. The MSCC also worked closely with the MECC and provincial school boards ensuring applicable academic and tutoring supports were provided to students.

The MSCC provided extensive after hours recreational, cultural, and spiritual activities providing opportunities for students to get to know each other in order to create a sense of belonging to their own special community. It also provided pathways to learning new skills, participation in safe activities, and positive ways to connect with their school and the city of Thunder Bay. This sense of home life was further enhanced with intentional staffing of Matawa community members as much as possible.

The 24 hour care was done with a 8:1 ratio which equated to one (1) staff member to support eight (8) students. The consistency in scheduling and oversight built a strong sense of trust between students and staff. This allowed for students and staff navigate through difficult and challenging situations during the school year.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

Effective policies and procedures were implemented to ensure the well-being and safety of students and staff. Staff were trained in Mental

Health First Aid, Trauma-informed Practices, and Medication training.

The MSCC accommodated over forty (40) students during the school year. This has provided numerous opportunities to grow and learn best practices in the caring and support of students.

Four (4) students staying at the MSCC graduated high school this year.

A partnership was developed with The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (DSSAB) to accommodate six (6) funded beds available for Matawa students struggling with homelessness

## CHALLENGES:

Staff shortages due to a lack of qualified applicants. Other staff were utilized on a temporary basis to ensure student safety.

During this school year the MSCC experienced two (2) significant losses. One (1) was a student and one (1) was a staff member. While these tragic events impacted all students and staff. Immediate wellness supports were provided.

Indigenous Services Canada not providing stable and predictable funding to meet the actual needs of student and programming needs served as a significant barrier in the daily operations. We continue to advocate for this funding with the hope of securing it for the 2023-2024 academic year.

## OPPORTUNITIES:

Promoting the MSCC to Matawa communities, Education Authorities, families and students to ensure we operate at full capacity providing safe and secure living accommodations for students

Staff development and training to harness abilities, talents and understanding in the best ways to support students staying at the MSCC.

Enhance pathways and opportunities for students attending school as well as for after-hours programming and services.



# Education

*We Work Together to Make a Change*

## Pathways to Achieve Student Success (PASS) Overview

The Matawa Education Pathways to Achieve Student Success (PASS) program provides support services and resources for Matawa First Nation schools, and when required to Matawa First Nation communities (Primarily in the areas of literacy, numeracy, information technology, student retention, and community education initiatives):

- John C. Yesno Education Centre
- Neskantaga Education Centre
- Nibinamik Education Centre
- Henry Coaster Memorial School
- Simon Jacob Memorial Education Centre
- Ginoogaming First Nation



*This school raised \$6,000 on June 16, 2023 as part of their dance-a-thon fundraiser for the Neskantaga Education Centre and raised greater awareness and understanding amongst all the children and parents of the water issues plaguing the communities of Matawa.*

## KEY PRIORITY AREAS:

Pathways to Achieve Student Success (PASS) team supports with School Success Plans, numeracy and literacy, and other educational initiatives that support student success. Information Technology which helps schools with technology implementation and troubleshooting. Hosts Matawa Education Conference annually in March, which includes a wide range of professional development topics that address current needs for Matawa teachers, principals, education leadership, administrators, nutrition program staff, parents, and community members.

PASS also provides advisory services by continuing to share information about Regional Education Agreements and federal Education Transformation, gather input and feedback, and begin the development of a draft Regional Education Agreement (REA) for participating Matawa First Nations. COVID restrictions prevented the visits, but Matawa Education created a website for use by Education leadership, and community members so that information flow could continue while travel was limited to emergency purposes only. The information sessions will help Matawa First Nation communities determine whether a REA is the right funding mechanism for them. They will also help Matawa Education to identify priorities to be used to develop an agreement that can then be used to advance to the next phase of the REA process, which is to establish a technical table to prepare for negotiations with the federal government.



# Education

*We Work Together to Make a Change*

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

The 13th Annual Matawa Education Conference was held March 7-9, 2023, at the Valhalla Inn and Conference Centre. The PASS Team was thrilled to welcome back all nine Matawa First Nations educators, and support staff. We gathered with 400 registrants, and 44 presenters to the first in-person conference since COVID. The conference program was varied and included a wide range of professional development.

PASS team have partnered with Barn Owl Music in providing a blossoming music program into six Matawa schools for the 2022-2023 school year. During the 2023 Matawa Education Conference the music program student performers were showcased making them one of the highlights from the event.

Establishment of the new Student Nutrition Program for Henry Coaster Memorial School that included renovating and purchasing new kitchen equipment launched May 16, 2023. PASS celebrated with Henry Coaster staff and Marten Falls community members with a community feast that was well attended and appreciated.

Matawa schools received extra support in the area of Youth Life Promotion. Youth Life Promotion is the belief that all young people are capable of finding their own path to a meaningful life. Matawa schools with PASS support established programs that are holistic, strengths-based, and empowerment-focused while aiming to honor youth individuality and support wellbeing.

The Bowmanville Bursary is an annual event in partnership with the Rotary Club from Bowmanville, Ontario. The bursary is open to Matawa members who are attending elementary, secondary, post-secondary, adult education, training, apprenticeship, or trades programs. The goal is to promote excellence in literacy, language, leadership, personal achievement, as well as those who demonstrate determination and commitment with education and career goals. Chart provides breakdown of eligibility and potential prize to win.

Elementary Categories (English or Native Language)	Secondary Categories
<p><b>Junior &amp; Senior Kindergarten: Class prize \$400</b></p> <p>The class will choose ONE of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• write and illustrate a legend or narrative in book form</li><li>• use multimedia to capture a class: play, song, puppet show, dance, interview, photo album, slide show, movie, etc.</li><li>• create a board game or card game</li></ul> <p>For the JK - SK entries, signed parental consent forms are required to enable the Matawa Education department to publish and distribute the story to all Matawa communities</p>	<p><b>Grades 7 – 12: Native language \$500</b></p> <p>Entries must be fictional stories from the community, and written in syllabics or roman orthography, OR captured as an oral telling and spoken in the Native Language using multimedia.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2 or more pages for written</li><li>• 5 - 10 minutes for multimedia</li></ul>



<p><b>Grades 1-2: Class prize \$400</b></p> <p>The class will choose ONE of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• write and illustrate a legend or narrative in book form</li> <li>• use multimedia to capture a class: play, song, puppet show, dance, interview, photo album, slide show, movie, etc.</li> <li>• create a board game or card game</li> </ul> <p>For the Grades 1 and 2 entries, signed parental consent forms are required to enable the Matawa Education department to publish and distribute the story to all Matawa communities.</p>	<p><b>Grades 9-12: Creative Writing \$500</b></p> <p>Applicants will submit an ORIGINAL creative writing piece that has not, in any part, been copied from any source.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 300 or more words</li> </ul>
<p><b>Grades 3-5:</b></p> <p>1st place recipient - iPad 2nd place recipient - iPod</p> <p>The student will write or use multimedia to create ONE of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a narrative based on a community legend</li> <li>• a poem or song that is culturally relevant</li> <li>• a recount of an accomplishment</li> </ul> <p>The top two (2) entries will be published in our bursary booklet.</p>	<p><b>Grades 9 – 12: Multimedia with Written explanation \$500</b></p> <p>Applicants are encouraged to consider the question, “What motivates you in high school?” and convey their answer through a medium of their choosing (examples: audio, visual, electronic). A written explanation must accompany the entry, as the judges will be evaluating the written explanation as well.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 200 words or more for the written portion</li> </ul>
<p><b>Grades 6-8:</b></p> <p>1st place recipient - iPad 2nd place recipient - iPod</p> <p>The student will write or use multimedia to create ONE of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a 200-word persuasive essay OR a 5–7-minute video interview based on a current issue in a community or in the region</li> <li>• a 200-word autobiography highlighting athletics, cultural activities, or leadership opportunities that have been taken</li> <li>• an ORIGINAL creative writing, or multimedia piece</li> </ul> <p>The top two (2) entries will be published in our bursary booklet.</p>	<p><b>Matawa Education Centre Award \$500</b></p> <p>Students at the Matawa Education Centre who demonstrate hard work and perseverance through leadership or achievement in academics, athletics, work, cultural activities, or lifestyle choices are eligible. Applicants will submit an essay describing how they have demonstrated the requirements of the award.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 300 or more words</li> <li>• include your: name, home community, grade, age, school, educational goals, achievements, etc.</li> <li>• may also include optional supporting documents such as: newspaper articles, transcript, certificates of recognition, etc...</li> </ul>



# Education

And Matawa Education would like to congratulate 2023 Matawa school/community winners:

Johnny Therriault Memorial School:

- JK & SK category: Angela Towedo's Kindergarten Class
- Grades 1-2 category: Aleysha William's Grade 1/2 Class
- Grade 3-5 category: 2 winners ( 1st place: Claire Atlookan, Grade 3 and 2nd place: Catherine Mendowegan, Grade 3)
- Grade 6-8 category: 2 winners (2nd place: Alyssa Frost, Grade 7 and 4th place: Eleesah Atlookan, Grade 8)

Henry Coaster Memorial School

- Grade 6-8 category: 2 winners (1st place: Malikai Moonias, Grade 7 and 3rd place: Meadow Baxter, Grade 7)

PASS encourages all Matawa schools/communities and students to submit in the elementary/secondary award categories. Please visit [www.matawa.on.ca/services/education](http://www.matawa.on.ca/services/education) for next year's call out for submissions.

SNAP (Stop Now and Plan) is an evidence-based cognitive behavioural model that provides a framework for teaching children struggling with behaviour issues. Parents, emotional regulation, self-control, and problem-solving skills are supported through strategic strategies to promote a growth mindset. SNAP is currently in two Matawa schools (John C. Yesno Education Centre & Simon Jacob Memorial Education Centre) with the goal to have the program implemented in all six Matawa schools.

The IT team continues to offer support both remotely and in-person services. This year focused on individual school recommendations, student databases, networking issues and maintenance, and troubleshooting and deployment support.

The PASS team has actively been engaging online with community members through their Facebook page.

Find us at "Matawa Education – Pathways to Achieving Student Success."

## CHALLENGES:

Matawa schools continue to see varying levels of turnover in teaching staff and difficulty in recruiting suitable candidates. COVID-19 did not make recruitment or retention any easier and the Matawa schools struggled to hire teachers to meet their increased needs. The PASS team has been in communication with Matawa schools to determine the barriers and needs to establish a teacher retention framework.

## OPPORTUNITIES:

Schools across the province have been facing low engagement and reports are showing an increase in mental health supports being accessed and needed. Matawa Education staff have the qualifications to train school staff in ASIST (Applied Suicide and Intervention Skills Training) and CPI Non-Violence Crisis Intervention. PASS staff continue to seek out new and innovative ways to address the wellbeing needs of Matawa First Nations educators and students.

With the success of 2022 Odaminowag Games – land-based activities (online event) will return in September 2023 with the focus on coordinating with Matawa schools to engage community participation.

PASS in partnership with Lakehead University are conducting a Data Analysis from previous provincial standardized tests (Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO), Canadian Achievement Tests Fourth Edition (CAT 4) and Early Years Evaluation (EYE). The purpose of the project is to use the data to identify trends in student achievement and consider overall how students in Matawa schools are doing, and where support is needed.



World Indigenous Nations University (WINU) dressed in hood, cap and gown from L to R: Indigenous Language Specialist Dr. Aroha Watene - Meritorious Doctorate of Education (Hon.Ed) in Indigenous Education; Indigenous Language Specialist Dr. Michael Graham - Meritorious Doctorate of Education (Hon.Ed) in Indigenous Education; Matawa First Nations Management CEO Dr. David Paul Achneepineskum - Meritorious Doctorate of Education (Hon.Ed) in Indigenous Education; Dr. Rongo H Wetere, Vice-Chancellor, WINU Canada; Dr. Neville J. King, Acting Chancellor, WINU Aotearoa and Dr. Leah Fitzpatrick, Acting Vice Chancellor, Academic WINU Aotearoa. Photo taken at Award Ceremony: June 10, 2023. Missing: Matawa Education Executive Director Dr. Sharon Nate - Meritorious Doctorate of Education (Hon.Ed) in Indigenous Education.

### Matawa Waka Tere Indigenous Language Revitalization Overview

The Matawa Waka Tere Indigenous Language Revitalization Project (MWTILRP) began in March 2018 with the arrival of Aroha Watene and Mike Graham, from New Zealand, to assist Dr. Rongo Wetere in establishing language programs for Matawa First Nations Management under the MWTILRP. By adapting Dr. Wetere's delivery methodology, Ako Whakatere, which helped learners quickly learn the Maori language, 'Matawa Waka Tere' (translation: the merging of the rivers on a fast-moving canoe) was created.

In 2022, the MWTILRP secured three (3) years of funding from Department of Canadian Heritage Government of Canada, the Indigenous and Cultures Program. The MWTILRP hired trainers and tutors to deliver the language program in communities.

A student database was set up to track student attendance and academic achievement. This program is administered for all Matawa communities.

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

Receiving formal government recognition in the form of a three (3) year funding cycle to deliver Year One (1) Certificate and Year Two (2) Diploma which is subject to the accreditation body of the World Indigenous Nations University.

Initial MWTILRP student enrollment intake was approximately one hundred and ninety (190). At time of this writing the course is still being delivered.

Hiring instructors and tutors in all Matawa communities to deliver the program.

### CHALLENGES:

Securing a full time Indigenous Language Specialist (ILS) for the Cree curriculum to be based in Thunder Bay continues to be a vacant position. This position is currently covered by a part-time Cree translator based outside of Thunder Bay.

Securing classroom space in the communities as well as Thunder Bay to deliver the program to interested students.





# Education

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## OPPORTUNITIES:

Strategizing with community contacts to secure continuous and functional learning sites, classrooms and office space.

Providing computer literacy training to applicable staff enhance and advance educational initiatives within the MWTILRP.

### Matawa Post Secondary Overview

The Matawa Post-Secondary (MPS) Program consists of the following five communities: Aroland, Ginoogaming, Long Lake #58, Neskantaga and Webequie First Nations. The Matawa Post-Secondary Program was established in March 1997.

#### MATAWA POST SECONDARY ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

Annamarie Majiskon	Aroland First Nation
Martha Taylor	Ginoogaming First Nation
Angie Britt	Long Lake # 58 First Nation
Tony Sakanee	Neskantaga First Nation
Ennis Jacob	Webequie First Nation

The Matawa Post-Secondary Advisory Committee was established to ensure that each First Nation has decision making for their own post-secondary funding. The Matawa Post-Secondary Advisory Committee representatives are chosen by their own respective First Nations.

The Matawa Post-Secondary Advisory Committee meets 2 -3 times per year and is in continuous contact via: email and telephone throughout the year.

The main role of the Matawa Post-Secondary Advisory Committee:

- Liaison with Matawa Post-Secondary Program and their own First Nation

- Liaison for their students and Post-Secondary Staff
- Decision making with their First Nation Education Authority for student applications, requests, and budgets.

#### Department Staff

- Georgette O’Nabigon, Post-Secondary Coordinator
- Carly Perras, Post-Secondary Student Support Worker

#### The main role of Matawa Post-Secondary Staff:

- Administer post-secondary funding for five (5) participating First Nations
- Liaison for First Nation Communities, Students, Post-Secondary Institutes, and any other outside Resource organizations.
- Support & monitor students’ progress while in post-secondary as well as academic and social well-being

## KEY PRIORITY AREAS:

The Matawa Post-Secondary Program: provides support services, maintains a database, liaison for the Matawa Post-Secondary Advisory, students, and Post-Secondary Institutes. The Matawa Post-Secondary staff continue to be a member on various committees to represent our students throughout the year.

For the 2021 – 2022 school year the Matawa Post-

Secondary Program had 26 graduates from the five participating Matawa Post-Secondary Communities. The banquet was held on June 9th, 2022, to honor the graduates and the Matawa/Rotary Award winners.

For the 2022 – 2023 school year, the Matawa Post-Secondary Program has eighteen (18) potential graduates. This year's graduate recognition and awards banquet will be held on June 8th, 2023, at the Victoria Inn, Thunder Bay, Ontario.

For the 2022 -2023 Post-Secondary School year the Matawa Post-Secondary Program had ninety-nine (99) students enrolled with ten (10) withdrawals.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

The post-secondary program was successful in obtaining project funding through the Indigenous Targeted Initiatives Fund, Ministry of Colleges, and University for a Post-Secondary Transition Coach with the help of the Education Programs Administrator. Matawa Education Department is currently in the process of hiring for this new position.

### Project Objectives

Due to significant impacts transitioning can have on young people, their mental health, and overall achievement, Matawa Education will provide a Transition Program designed to teach students how to navigate urban environments safely. This specialized program has been designed to help Matawa students successfully transition to post-secondary education in a supportive environment. This will be achieved through a strong focus on developing individualized plans, mentoring, advising, career exploration, skill building and developing virtual reality tours of post-secondary institutes. In addition, the Transition Coach will Develop a Empowerment Program/ Resource and information Package for women and young moms.

### Maadaadizi Post-Secondary Student Orientation

In 2013 the Maadaadizi Committee was formed in Thunder Bay consisting of representatives from local Post-

Secondary Institutes and participating post-secondary administering agencies. Maadaadizi means he/she starts a journey in the Ojibwe language. It's a special day to welcome post-secondary First Nation students and their families to the post-secondary institutions and to the City of Thunder Bay. The event includes First Nation role models, keynote speakers and musical performances.

Information booths by various organizations are set-up with a lot of information and resources for students, children's activities, prizes, and refreshments. This event is free, and everyone is welcome to attend.

This event is hosted annually at the beginning of the post-secondary school year. The 2022 Maadaadizi orientation was held at the Marina Park on September 10th with keynote Pam Palmater. This year's 2023 event is in the planning stage and will be held at the Marina Park on September 9th.

The Maadaadizi orientation is funded by various organizations and local post-secondary institutions that donate either financially or in kind.

### Matawa Rotary Bursary Program

The Bowmanville Rotary Club and Matawa Education Department have been in partnership since 2008 to administer the annual bursary program. The award categories: Elementary, Secondary, Post-Secondary, Apprenticeships, Training and Adult Education. The bursary award criteria are based on literacy, class participation and personal achievements.

The bursary award criteria were determined by participating Matawa School representatives and the Bowmanville Rotary Club Mandate. The Matawa Education Staff facilitate the application process, recruit a judging panel with representatives from local post-secondary institutes and teachers. The intention of the bursary is to honor our community members and encourage them while they work towards their educational journey.

The 2022 awards event was held on June 9th at the Victoria Inn along with the Matawa Post-Secondary graduate recognition banquet. The 2023 award event will be held at the Victoria Inn along with the Matawa Post-Secondary graduate recognition banquet.



# Education

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## Indigenous Youth and Achievement Awards

The Northwestern Ontario Indigenous Youth Achievement and Recognition Awards was formally known as The Niigaantige Career Fair. It began in 1987 when a need was identified to address the high attrition rates among Indigenous students studying at the secondary and post-secondary levels. The Awards Ceremony has been gaining more recognition throughout the years and providing self-esteem for our youth.

The IYARA Committee is comprised of all volunteers and community members who represent organizations in Northwestern Ontario. We are committed to encourage and reward Indigenous youth who focus on innovative ways of learning about and planning for their future.

Due to COVID and other challenges, the IYARA did not have a banquet event for the past few years. However, they held a Youth Recognition week which honored students' accomplishments. This year's event is in the planning stages. Check out [www.iyara.ca](http://www.iyara.ca) for more information.

## CHALLENGES:

One of the biggest challenges is not having enough funding for all student applicants and the ability to increase the monthly allowance rates for some of our First Nations.

## OPPORTUNITIES:

The Post-Secondary staff have the opportunity to sit on various Committees locally to represent the Matawa Post-Secondary Program.

The Post-Secondary Student Support Worker has the opportunity to spend time during the week at the local Post-Secondary Institutes to meet with students and take part in student activities which helps with getting to

know the students and staff.

The Post-Secondary Coordinator in addition to other Committees has been invited to sit on the Negahneewin Council which is part of Confederation College.

The Post-Secondary Staff look forward to working with the new Matawa Post-Secondary Transition Coach to further develop the services to students.







# Rapid Lynx Telecommunications GP Inc.

Check out the new website at: [www.rapidlynx.ca](http://www.rapidlynx.ca)



## STAFF:

Wayne Slipperjack, General Manager in Training ... with support from: Rob Wesley, MFNM IT Director  
Gina Dore, Broadband Administrative Assistant Tom Paradis, MFNM Tier 2 Helpdesk Analyst

## OVERVIEW:

Matawa First Nations Management ("MFNM") and Matawa First Nations ("MFN") leaders elected to take control of their communities' broadband future in 2013 after learning that the Nishnawbe Aski Nation ("NAN") project would not have sufficient funds to connect the remote MFN communities as planned. MFNM formed a Broadband Working Group ("BWG") of representatives appointed by the communities to support the effort. MFNM facilitated the creation of Rapid Lynx Telecommunications, a for-profit corporation formed to oversee the effort and to own, govern and operate Rapid Lynx after MFNM has completed deployment and operational start-up, as required by Innovation, Science and Economic Development ("ISED") and Ontario Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry ("MENDM-NRF").

## RAPID LYNX BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Aroland – Sam Kashkeesh
- **Marten Falls – Robert Moonias, Treasurer**
- Eabametoong – Donald Meeseetawageesic
- Neskantaga – Edward Moonias
- **Webequie – James Suganaqueb, President**
- **Nibinamik – Matthew Sofea, Secretary**
- Ginoogaming - Henry Waboose
- Constance Lake – Wayne Neegan
- Long Lake #58 - Chris Kendall (Participation Agreement needs to be signed)

## KEY PRIORITY AREA:

- Build Rapid Lynx Fibre Optic Backbone to all nine Matawa First Nation communities and light the network for service.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Overall construction of the Rapid Lynx Backbone Network was 62% complete as of April 30, 2023
- Equipment Shelters were procured and delivered to the five remote First Nations and Aroland. Shelter locations have been selected.
- Equipment Shelters have been ordered for the

road access First Nations, including shelters for the upstream Internet connection with Rogers Communications at Ginoogaming, and for Long Lake #58 and Constance Lake First Nations. An additional shelter has been ordered for the upstream interconnection point with Bell Canada at Wunnumin Lake First Nation. A location for the Ginoogaming shelter has been selected. Shelter locations for Long Lake #58, Constance Lake and Wunnumin Lake are pending.

- Site preparation and set-up is complete in Aroland. MFNM has requested that each of the other communities name a Facility Manager who will be trained to maintain the shelter and



# Rapid Lynx Telecommunications GP Inc.

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compensated by MFNM. MFNM is awaiting the appointments by the communities.

- Engineering design has been completed for transport and access electronics to light the Rapid Lynx network at all nine locations and Wunnumin Lake. An equipment order is in process, pending completion of pricing negotiations with a Ciena Value Added Reseller (Clear Cable, Div. of Rogers Communications).
- MFNM located an alternative carrier fiber-optic route to interconnect the Rapid Lynx backbone network with the global Internet backbone running through Canada. Interconnection and high-capacity service at 10 Gigabits per second and higher were negotiated at pricing and terms highly favorable to Rapid Lynx, lowering Rapid Lynx's nonrecurring cost by 91% and recurring monthly costs by approximately 75%.

The route will connect the Remote communities and Aroland to the global Internet at Toronto over a route from Ginoogaming to Rogers Communications fiber-optic cable running to Toronto. Funding has been secured from ISSED's Universal Broadband Fund and Ontario's Ministry of Infrastructure through its ICON program to build the route between Aroland and Ginoogaming.

The communities of Long Lake #58 and Constance Lake will also be connected to Rapid Lynx and Toronto over fibre-optic cable through additional grant funding from ISSED's Universal Broadband Fund and Ontario's Ministry of Infrastructure through its ICON program.

ISED's and Ontario's combined grant awards for Phase 1 and Phase 2 Rapid Lynx networks totals over \$132 million

The network will be the only long-haul fibre optic network in Ontario's Far North, and it

will be 100% owned, controlled and operated by the Matawa First Nations.

As part of Phase 2 funding, MFNM will connect the Rapid Lynx backbone at Nibinamik to a second interconnection point to the global Internet near Wunnumin Lake. This route would form a Rapid Lynx backbone ring and maximize network security and uptime.

Rapid Lynx will place the Matawa First Nation communities only 1 hop off of Canada's global Internet backbone and allow Rapid Lynx to obtain ultra high-speed wholesale service at Toronto, where competition is robust and service costs are at the lowest levels in Canada. This will support the business plan of Rapid Lynx while keeping service costs to the communities at an affordable level.

- Four qualified and experienced operating partners expressed interest in bidding on start-up support for Rapid Lynx through a Request for Proposals process. Clear Cable Communications was selected by MFNM. The selection was reviewed and approved by the Rapid Lynx Board of Directors.
- A review of the Rapid Lynx infrastructure and business plans is underway by Clear Cable. Clear Cable participated in the design of the electronics for Rapid Lynx to ensure that its electronics will seamlessly integrate with Rapid Lynx. When Clear Cable's review has been completed, negotiation of the operating agreement between MFNM and Clear Cable will take place.

## MFNM mitigated major risks to the project in 2022--2023:

### Phase 1:

- Phase 1 construction dispute management and development of feasible alternatives. Contractor default insured by a performance surety bond of over \$48 million.
- Retained experienced construction attorney in 2022 to assist with document discovery by the contractor's legal counsel and surety.
- Formation of an Arbitration Committee to settle the contractor dispute, review and approval of committee members by MFNM and construction attorney.
- Document discovery completed in January, 2023.
- Notice of contractor default issued by construction attorney in January 2023, and notice given to the contractor's surety.
- Termination of contractor for cause by MFNM in January 2023 without prejudice to MFNM's right to access the contractor's surety bond.
- Retained an alternate contractor to complete section 5 between Nibinamik and Webequie after ensuring no objection by the contractor's surety.
- Completion of section 5 construction to Webequie in Winter 2023.
- Testing of the contractor's construction in section 5 and repair of fibre damage not repaired by the contractor will be completed in summer, 2023.
- Recovery of fibre reels valued at over \$4 million. Reels were wrongfully taken by the contractor when it abandoned the project in 2022. The contractor was ordered to return the reels to MFNM by the Arbitration Committee Chairman.
- Recovery of the reels from the contractor could not be completed before closure of the winter road in 2023 due to delays by the contractor. MFNM ordered additional reels in time for delivery on the winter road to be able to complete construction along community access roads in summer, 2023.
- Redesign of the Phase 1 network between Neskantaga and Webequie to shorten the route and avoid areas of heavy surficial bedrock. The redesign is expected to reduce the cost

of backbone construction by \$6.75 to \$8.2 million and allow MFNM to complete Phase 1 construction with the award funds remaining.

- After arbitration has been completed and the contractor is found to be in default, MFNM will recover additional costs and damages to the project caused by the contractor from the performance bonds. MFNM will make one claim to the surety at completion of construction when all damages and penalties have been identified.
- Coordination with the grant management teams of MENDM-NRF and ISED of the progress of arbitration and ensuring their continued support. The Ministries have extended the deadline for Phase 1 construction to March 31, 2025 to allow completion after the delays caused by the Contractor and recovery of MFNM's fibre reels.
- A schedule of the earliest completion dates for each community will be provided.

### Phase 2:

- Engineering of the Phase 2 network is underway. A conceptual design of the route from Aroland to Ginoogaming, Long Lake #58 and Constance Lake has been completed and will be presented to the Phase 2 communities and Aroland during community consultations.
- Final engineered is pending consultations with the Phase 2 communities. Consultations have been completed or are scheduled with all communities.
- Changes requested by the communities will be incorporated into the design.
- A Request for Qualifications for completion of the Phase 1 network and the Phase 2 network was issued to contractors expressing interest in bidding. Qualifications are due by June 23.
- Qualifications will be reviewed by MFNM and the Rapid Lynx Board of Directors, and qualified contractors will be invited to bid.
- A Request for Proposal will be issued to qualified bidders.
- Phase 2 construction from Aroland to





# Rapid Lynx Telecommunications GP Inc.

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Ginoogaming and Long Lake #58 is prioritized in 2023 because Ginoogaming is the upstream Internet interconnection point for all nine Matawa First Nations.

- Coordination with the grant management team from Ontario and ISED's Universal Broadband project management team is underway. Ontario has agreed to advance funds for the purchase of fiber to avoid long lead times for delivery. Funds can be advanced for construction only after consultations have been completed.
- The Phase 2 network is scheduled for completion in December, 2025.
- A schedule of construction completion dates by community will be provided.

## CHALLENGES:

- Consultations required for permitting by Ontario.
- Completion of consultations required for changes to the Phase 1 project design and for Phase 2 final engineering. Some consultations were completed in January and February 2023, but the remaining consultations cannot take place until later this month and in July. Final engineering and permitting for construction cannot take place until consultations are complete and any design changes incorporated into the plan. Permitting will take at least two months from submission of the final design.
- Wrongful removal of fibre from the project by the contractor. The fibre could not be recovered while the winter road was available. MFNM had enough fibre to complete section 5 and purchased additional reels to allow construction to continue along Phase 1 community access roads in summer 2023. Reel recovery was delayed by the contractor, causing summer construction to be delayed, but recovery and testing of the reels by MFNM is currently underway.
- Warmer than usual temperatures impacting winter road conditions. Section 5 was completed only two days before winter road closure. Reels

could not be staged in time for access on the winter road. Additional reels ordered by MFNM were staged in time, but only enough fibre is available for completion of construction on the Phase 1 community access roads and completion of drilling under the Albany River at Marten Falls. Similar climate conditions could delay construction in the 2023-2024 construction season.

- Wildfires across Canada may further delay construction.

## OPPORTUNITIES:

- All nine Matawa First Nations communities will have abundant and affordable Internet service over advanced fibre-optic cable valued at over \$132 million at completion. Fibre-optic cable has the longest functional life of any other technology – 40 to 75 years – and is scalable to meet higher future demands with only equipment upgrades. Fiber-optic cable is "Next Generation Technology" because of its long life, reliability and virtually unlimited capacity.
- Education, health care, public safety and economic development will be transformed by access to high capacity, reliable and affordable access to advanced fibre-optic Internet connectivity.
- Opportunities for direct employment will increase during construction of phase 2.
- Communities will benefit indirectly by providing support services and resources such as accommodations, fuel, meals, cleaning, waste management and other camp services to the construction and inspections teams throughout the life of the project.
- Future opportunities for direct employment on this project including brush cutting and clearing, technical and operational support services when the network is active.
- Matawa First Nations will own, govern and operate the only long-haul fibre optic network in Ontario's Far North, and will interconnect their network to the global Internet backbone at one of the largest connection points in Canada at Toronto.
- ***Ownership and interconnection to the global Internet backbone will ensure that the Matawa First Nations will control their own digital future.***



# Membership

## STAFF:

Barb Rabbit, Membership Indian Registration Administrator (IRA)

## OVERVIEW:

It offers membership benefits in the form of issuance of status cards (laminated Certificates of Indian Status), as well as reporting changes occurring in one's life during registration as a status Indian, such as births, marriages, divorces, and deaths. In addition, other reports contain amendments to, additions to, and updates to information on an individual's Registry page.

Matawa administers and coordinates membership services to the following First Nation communities:

- Aroland First Nation
- Eabametoong First Nation
- Marten Falls First Nation
- Neskantaga First Nation
- Nibinamik First Nation
- Webequie First Nation

*"The Indian Act is the Canadian federal legislation first passed in 1876 that sets out certain federal government obligations. It provides for the registration of person as Indians, identifies who is entitled to be registered and who is not, sets the requirements of Band Lists (membership) and makes provisions of protests of decisions concerning registration and membership and for appeals."*

*- Indigenous Services Canada Indian Registration Administrator Manual*

## KEY PRIORITY AREA:

To provide an accurate and up-to-date Indian Registry, Membership Service is mandated. The Membership Indian Registration Administrator manages the requirements for Indian Registration reporting related to the Indian Act, federal and provincial statutes, and the Indian Registration System's policies and procedures.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

### Certificate of Indian Status (CIS) Paper-Laminate Card

Membership Services-IRA provides the laminated paper status card to the cardholder that is still in circulation. The following reasons for issuance are as follows:

- lost/stolen/damaged card
- new/first card including new registrants such as infants, toddlers, etc.
- renewals – expired dated cards for both adults and children
- replacement – events related to marriage, name/ birth transfer changes, etc.

CERTIFICATE OF INDIAN STATUS REASONS ISSUED – Aug 2022 to May 2023	
First Cards	111
Lost Cards	573
Renewals	790
<b>Total Cards Issued</b>	<b>1474</b>

CERTIFICATE OF INDIAN STATUS ISSUED PER FIRST NATION ADMINISTERED BY MATAWA	
Aroland	132
Eabametoong	457
Marten Falls	129
Neskantaga	149
Nibinamik	143
Webequie	357
OTHER	
Constance Lake	24
Ginoogaming	16
Long Lake #58	31
Other First Nation	36
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1474</b>

### Event Reporting

Any changes occurring in the life of an individual registered as a status Indian are entered into the Indian Registry System (IRS). These changes are called events such as reporting a birth, marriage, divorce, and death. Other reports include miscellaneous amendments to amend, add and delete information on the individual's existing registry page.

August – May 2023						
Aroland	Eabametoong	Marten Falls	Neskantaga	Nibinamik	Webequie	Total
9	47	12	2	14	23	107

### Birth Registrations

To register a child with Indigenous Services Canada a long form is required with parental information.

### Community Visits

Matawa Membership Services had previously provided annual community visits to the six First Nations communities. The visits ensure updates on status card issuance and registration of minor children.

### Collaboration with First Nations Reps for Indian Registration Awareness

Our Matawa Membership Services, First Nation Liaisons and Representatives have been working on bringing awareness of First Nations programs for both birth and Indian registration. Programs like the Healthy Baby Healthy Children program are essential venues for expectant mothers and caregivers with children under six.

## CHALLENGES:

### Birth Registration

It has been an ongoing issue within First Nations regarding the registration of children after birth. This issue involves a variety of factors, including:

- Uncertainty regarding the birth registration process
- Confusion with Indian registration and requirements
- Financial difficulties (delayed payments of birth certificates and fees)
- Unable to access the necessary birth documents
- Issues with oral and written communication
- Procrastination to apply for birth until last-minute medical situations

### Identification Issues

It is a common issue that a significant number of individuals are lacking proper identification and are not aware of the necessary requirements for obtaining a Certificate of Indian Status (laminated card) or the new Secure status card. Unfortunately, financial constraints or other factors often prevent them from obtaining IDs. Matawa Membership Services is taking a firm stance on raising awareness about identification and is currently focusing on creating media, newsletters, and other informative

materials. Our organization is actively collaborating with Kinna-Aweya Legal Clinic and other groups to address these challenges head-on.

### ID Clinic-Project 2022

NAN, MGCS (Min of Government and Consumer Services) along with Matawa, ISC collaborated in one-time funding to address acquiring government-issued identification such as birth certificates, and delayed births.

The participating communities for Matawa were Eabametoong, Marten Falls, and Nibinamik in the pilot training, and ID Clinics. NAN had randomly selected other communities to participate. The project was completed at the end of March 2023. Nishnabwe Aski submitted the

MATAWA ID Clinic Participation		
Eabametoong - March	Birth Certificates/Delayed	32
Marten Falls - July	Birth Certificates/Delayed	63
Nibinamik - August	Birth Certificates/Delayed	45

### CERTIFICATE OF INDIAN STATUS LAMINATE CARD



- Currently in circulation until product (card) is terminated by INAC
- Most FN offices/Tribal units still carry the laminated card
  - CIS expires 5 years for Adults
  - CIS expires 3 years for Children

### NEW SECURE CERTIFICATE OF INDIAN STATUS CARD



- Applications available at any regional INAC offices across Canada
- SCIS expires 10 years for Adults
- SCIS expires 5 years for Children

## OPPORTUNITIES:

Planning to work with the Norwest Clinic and other organizations that are involved to do an ID Clinic this year. The ID Clinic is a one-day event and provides birth certificate registrations geared to people who can't access services or other needs.

Nishnawbe Aski Nation is working to do more training with First Nations with registrations and commissioner stamps for liaisons reps.





# Economic Development

*Advancing Economic Opportunities by Helping Create Opportunity-Ready Matawa Communities*

## STAFF:

Jonathan Neegan, Economic Development Advisor  
Brent Edwards, Energy Workshop Facilitator

## OVERVIEW:

The Matawa Economic Development Department works with our membership communities to promote and foster sustainable economic development through the delivery of quality information products capacity building initiatives and collaborative working projects throughout our region.

## KEY PRIORITY AREA:

1. Infrastructure Assessment
2. Community Engagement
3. Renewable Energy Workshops
4. Economic Development Conference
5. Microgrid Development
6. Northern College Innovation Center
7. Community Capacity Building
8. Negotiation/Financing

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- IESO – Education & Capacity Building Fund – School Renewable Energy Workshops
- NRCAN – CERRC – Community Energy Workshops
- IEDF – EDG – Community Mining Workshops
- FEDNor Infrastructure Assessment Study

## CHALLENGES:

As we all know, poverty, inadequate housing, lack of clean water and other economic development issues create significant barriers to our membership communities and we are not fully able to participate in Canada's economy due to it without the proper support from the government. We have no control over our own economic and social development destinies which is why we are starting to look more to the private sector to help us build our economy and capacity in our

communities so that when development happens, we will be fully training and have financing available to move forward.

## OPPORTUNITIES:

1. Community Infrastructure Assessment
2. Community Capacity Building
3. Revisiting or Applying for Economic Development Strategies
4. Renewable Energy Workshops
5. Business Development

## MATAWA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE:

Sam Kashkeesh (Aroland First Nation), Ernest Moore, Economic Development Officer (Constance Lake First Nation), Vacant, Economic Development Officer (Eabametoong First Nation), Denan Kuni, Economic Development Officer (Ginoogaming First Nation), Horis Mansuri, Economic Development Officer (Long Lake #58 First Nation), Robert Moonias, Economic Development Officer (Marten Falls First Nation), Edward Moonias, Economic Development Officer (Neskantaga First Nation), Byron Wapoots, Economic Development Officer (Nibinamik First Nation), Glen Wabasse, Economic Development Officer (Webequie First Nation)

## Notes

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# Notes





# Matawa First Nations Management

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[www.matawa.on.ca](http://www.matawa.on.ca)

## Matawa Education and Care Centre

200 Lillie Street North  
Thunder Bay, ON  
1-807-768-3300  
[www.matawaeducation.com](http://www.matawaeducation.com)

## Matawa Training and Wellness Centre

523 Algoma Street North  
Thunder Bay, ON  
Awashishewiigihiwaywiin: 1-807-698-7406  
KKETS: 1-807-633-6540



The Power of Unity  
The Dignity of Difference