

*MEDIA RELEASE*

**Friday, November 10, 2023**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**FOUR RIVERS ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES CELEBRATE GIS MAPPING DAY IN CANADA 2023  
WITH COLLABORATIVE VIDEO**

**THUNDER BAY, ON:** Four Rivers Environmental Services Group (Four Rivers), of Matawa First Nations Management, is getting ready to celebrate Geographic Information System (GIS) Mapping Day 2023 (November 15, 2023) with a collaborative video developed with Esri Canada, Global Water Futures and Wilfrid Laurier University. It can be viewed: [here](#). The video is a model of innovation and partnership in a region facing unprecedented environmental changes.

The video weaves Indigenous and Western science into innovative solutions for natural resource management and empowers Indigenous wisdom with GIS technology telling a story of sustainability and knowledge. It is especially relevant to Indigenous communities and environmental supporters. This collaboration empowers Indigenous communities ensuring that they are leading the research and have the solutions to strengthen their cultural heritage preservation as they enhance their resource governance and decision-making.

Portions of the video were filmed from June 13–15, 2023 when Four Rivers gathered Indigenous organizations from across Canada and Aotearoa (New Zealand) to celebrate water's intrinsic value and sacredness in a [Water & Environmental Gathering](#). The event nurtured a rich discussion about how Indigenous communities address pressing challenges and manage invaluable water resources using GIS technology. Four Rivers highlighted some of the ways GIS is used to empower Matawa member First Nations including:

- Facilitating community-led research and decision-making;
- Supporting research and field work for Environmental Guardians;
- Fostering collaboration among Indigenous groups; and,
- Advancing environmental stewardship initiatives



Sarah Cockerton, Managing Director, Four Rivers said: “We are pleased to share this collaborative video and are looking forward to celebrating GIS Day with our member First Nations. Four Rivers has been working to support our member First Nations in environmental stewardship, including through valuable tools & technology like GIS for over 12 years.”

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