



CHIEFS COUNCIL

RESOLUTION of the Matawa Chiefs passed at the 37th Annual General Meeting in Aroland First Nation to be effective from and after 1:00 pm Eastern Standard Time on July 29, 2025

RESOLUTION #04-31-07-2025

SUPPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION OF EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE PLANS FOR PETS DURING EVACUATIONS IN MATAWA FIRST NATIONS

WHEREAS Canada has experienced the continuation of a trend of longer wildfire seasons, with more frequent and extreme fire behaviour, and modeling suggests that by 2100, the overall fire occurrence could increase by as much as 75%; and

WHEREAS several Matawa member First Nations are in high-risk zones for wildfires and climate-related events and have faced (or are planning to face) various levels of community evacuations; and

WHEREAS emergency preparedness and response is led by the province of Ontario with the federal government assuming responsibility for all costs for on-reserve emergency events; and

WHEREAS emergency preparedness and response in Ontario fails to consider pets in situations of evacuation (where pets are suited for transport); so

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Matawa Chiefs-in-Assembly fully support the development and implementation of comprehensive emergency preparedness and response plans for pets—companion animals, community-owned, abandoned, stray, and feral—during all levels of evacuation within Matawa First Nations; and

FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED that the Matawa Chiefs-in-Assembly mandate Matawa Animal Wellness Services to advocate to all levels of government for legislative and policy changes, and for sustained, dedicated funding to ensure emergency plans explicitly include provisions for pets, while maintaining human safety as a top priority; and

FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED that, under a herd health and community wellness model, when a Matawa First Nation declares a state of emergency, the Chief and/or their designate shall be empowered to authorize the implementation of emergency evacuation and shelter-in-place plans for animals, and to





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make decisions related to medical interventions, animal care, and housing accommodations as necessary; and

FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED that Matawa Animal Wellness Services, in collaboration with Matawa Emergency Management Coordinator and community partners, co-develop culturally relevant emergency response plans for pets, including educational tools and community training resources; and

FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED that the Matawa Chiefs-in-Assembly call upon all levels of government, emergency response services, and regulatory bodies to recognize and uphold Indigenous Peoples' right to self-determination and their inherent, traditional, and spiritual connection to the land and to animals—including companion animals—as integral to community well-being and emergency response planning.

FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED that nothing in this resolution will derogate or take away from individual First Nation initiatives, funding or proposals to address this issue; and

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED that regular updates be provided to the Matawa Chiefs Council as they become available.

MOVED BY: Chief Solomon Atlookan, Eabametoong First Nation

SECONDED BY: Chief Gary Quisess, Neskantaga First Nation

OPPOSITION(S): 0

ABSTENTION(S): 0

CARRIED.

Chief Executive Officer

