

WASOQOPA'Q FIRST NATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2023



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Chief and Council 2023

Chief Deborah Robinson

Kwe! To all Band Members of Wasoqopa'q

I welcome all those Band Members who will review this report for the year 2022/2023, which I always endeavour to prepare with you in mind so the words here will bring a clearer understanding on how we try to manage and control the functions of our Band in the best interests of you, the Band Members. The highlights and activities will be provided here by me, as your Chief, but further details will be provided by directors and staff who are directly responsible for all projects and activities.

I would like to take the time before continuing on, on behalf of Wasoqopa'q Council and staff, to recognize those of our families who have departed from us this past year and offer sincere condolences to those loved ones left behind. These are times which fills our lives with sadness and grief that cannot be avoided, but we gather strength from each other and manage to continue on.

I would like to begin with an introduction of the name change of our Band from "ACADIA" to "WASOQOPA'Q", this is most significant for us as a Mi'kmaq Nation to adopt a name that reflects who we are and where we come from. This name means "Bright Waters". We have been here since time immemorial and live with a name that was imposed upon us by bureaucrats, who knew nothing about us. Now we have adopted a name that comes from ourselves as Mi'kmaq, as many Bands have done already.

Wasoqopa'q First Nation currently has approximately 265 employees including our fisheries department. As always, I would like to acknowledge their hard work as well as that of those who have retired in the past year, thank you all for your dedication and years of service. The staff as well as volunteers ensure our businesses, administration and community events are successful and they continue to work relentlessly to ensure we stay on the path to success.

Our housing department has had a busy year and have completed 14 new builds within our communities and are in the process of many others. There is a Community Enhancement plan underway which includes paving roads. The construction of the Woman's Shelter is delayed slightly but a Ground-Breaking Ceremony was held and we will keep you posted on the progress of this very exciting project. Another exciting project is the construction of a Greenhouse in our Wildcat Community, which I am pleased to report has been completed.



Events within our communities were slowed the past few years due to Covid but are back on track. Some events which took place over the past year include; Student Awards, Powwow, Harvest Feast, Family Day Trips, Christmas Tree Lightings and Community Dinners. I was fortunate to attend many of these events this past year, along with many held outside of our Communities which I attended on behalf of Wasoqopa'q First Nation. Some of which include; Flag Raising Ceremonies, Truth and Reconciliation Day Events, Water Ceremonies, Federal, Provincial and Municipal Meetings, Assembly of First Nation Meetings, Treaty Day Events, Summer Games, Aboriginal Day N.S. Music Week, North American Indigenous Games, along with weekly board and committee meetings.

The above functions and gatherings are an important role of all Chiefs and require an immense amount of travel and time away from our homes and families. These sacrifices are crucial and one must be committed for effective leadership in decision making for all Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia. I am proud to continue to represent you all at this level.

Chief Deborah Robinson

I also sit on other boards such as; Mi'kmaw Family and Children Services (President, Executive, and board member), KMKNO, ANSCA (All NS Chiefs Assembly), M.K. (Executive, Education and Treaty Governance), APC- Executive Member, Tajikeimik (Health & Wellness Organization), Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre, NADACA- Executive, to name a few.

As we emerge as a self-governing Nation we are building organizations that are designed to administer Mi'kmaq programming. These boards serve as a place of discussion and are very important to our future as we move forward. This is just a broad overview of my many responsibilities as your Chief.

I have learned and value the true meaning of "community" and when both indigenous and our non-indigenous neighbours join forces in times of need and support each other... this in my view is building upon true Reconciliation.

Welalioq!
Chief Deborah Robinson

Councillor Avis Johnson

Portfolio's – Finance, Nova Scotia Power, Elders, Species at Risk/Ecology/Earth Keepers, Housing, EMO and newly acquired, Social.

My, how fast a year goes. Here we are with another year quickly coming to a close. Wasoqopa'q First Nation has been very busy and productive in all aspects of our First Nation. We have an incredible support staff who help carry on and keep moving forward all initiatives. Without them, we would not be able to be as productive and efficient as we have been in the past year. Wela'lin

Some portfolio and community highlights:

Wildcats' greenhouse has finally been installed and near full completion. We hope to be somewhat operational next year. However, it will take some time to be fully operational and explore business opportunities.

Wildcats' beekeeper (Crystal Jermey) harvested honey once again this year. If anyone is interested in purchasing honey, please contact Valerie Whynot at the Wildcat Office. It's a very tasty seller.

Medway through the METS program was able to install a community garden and through the hard work of our dedicated staff, the garden yielded a variety of vegetables in its inaugural year. We were able to supply fresh veggies and preserves to our Queens County Elders.

Councillor Avis Johnson

Councillor Charmaine Stevens and I along with the help of our support staff have initiated an Elders group that meets twice a month at Queens Place Emera Centre. This group provides an environment for guest speakers, crafts, language, games and social interaction for our Elders.

Nova Scotia Power – as most may know we have a working group that consists of Elders, Staff and Council members that normally would meet on a regular basis but for very various reasons projects have slowed a bit. We currently started to meet once again.

Tusket Main Dam Refurbishment is slated to begin work once again in 2025, with a completion of 2027.

Mersey Dam Refurbishment is on an indefinite hold for the time being. Updates will be provided, once the project gets closer to a start date. However, there will be ongoing talk with Nova Scotia Power in regard to fish passage on the Mersey system.

Roseway Dam Decommissioning work will begin sometime in the New Year where we will have monitors on-site to make sure that all archaeological protocols are followed, etc.

We currently have an Environmental Monitoring Team in place at Tusket to monitor fish passage/ladders. The team will wrap up in December and hopefully begin again in the spring.

We will continue to work on our Tier status for contracting through Nova Scotia Power. We currently hold a Tier 2 status contracting abilities.

Housing has been very busy this year and have been successful through the Rapid Housing Initiative and have seen a growth of homes within our communities. It is very rewarding to continue to watch our communities grow.

As we approach the holiday season, I'd like to wish you a joyous and safe holiday season.

Wela'liq, Avis Johnson

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Councillor Charmaine Stevens

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This past year at Wasoqopa'q First Nation was once again a challenging but rewarding year for me. I continue to focus my work mainly in the areas of Education, Fishing and Legal. I just recently acquired the Health portfolio and look forward to delving deeper into this file.

In Education we continue to work hard to fund as many Post Secondary applications as possible. While funding levels have not been increasing to keep pace with the number of applications received we have been successful in funding the majority of our applications. As always, we follow our policy guidelines when it comes to assessing applications. I encourage you to read the full education report from our Education Director Janice Francis.

As chair of the Kespuwick Fishing advisory committee I work with our Fishery Director, Curtis Falls, regarding our vast commercial fishing recourses. I sit on the committee for Food Social and Ceremonial Fisheries and also participate on the District technical committee for the Moderate Livelihood Fisheries file, which is extremely challenging and a continuous work in progress. Despite the challenges, it is rewarding to see our fishermen and fisherwomen out on the water exercising their treaty rights and I wish them all a prosperous fishing season.

As well as attending numerous Chief and Council meetings I attend various other meetings on behalf of the Band Council such as Confederacy of Mainland Mi'Kmaq, Atlantic Policy Congress, KMKNO, MK and many others including some at the National level. This past April I was proud to represent our Council in Ottawa at the Assembly of First Nations meeting of United Nations Declaration on Indigenous People.

I want to ensure you I continue to listen to concerns and speak up on your behalf.

Wela'lin

Councillor Charmaine Stevens

Councillor Rachel Falls

Portfolios: Culture & Language, Economic Development, Emergency Measures, Physical Activity, Housing, Community Seafood Deliveries.

Committees: I currently sit on the Culture and Language Committee, Yarmouth /Shelburne/Valley Recreation Committee, Economic Development Committee, Emergency Measure Committee, Physical Activity, Housing, Community Seafood Deliveries, Harvest Feast, and The Rose Purdy Center Committee. I also just started sitting on a Youth Mental Health focus group in Yarmouth and also volunteer with NSWALKS.

Highlights and follow-ups for 2022 and 2023:As of now the Addition to Reserve (ATR) for the land in Shelburne, Medway and the new land in Yarmouth has completed the first step of the Environmental Site Assessment. Now, we are just waiting to hear back from the reports, Gardener's Mill is a little more complicated because of the mining in the area. On October 24th, 2023 Chief and Council held a groundbreaking smudging ceremony for the women's shelter on Hammond Plains. The shelter will house Wasoqopa'q First Nation women as well as all Indigenous women and their children in Mi'kma'ki. The shelter is expected to be completed by late fall 2024.

Tru by Hilton in Yarmouth opened during the pandemic in 2021 with an average of 60% occupancy business is still doing tremendously well.

(NSITEN) Nova Scotia Indigenous Tourism Enterprise Network held a two-day conference this year at Digby Pine's Resort, owned by neighboring First Nation community Bear River. It was nice to see more of the Kespukwick District members in attendance and our crafters and vendors from our own district. The conference was well put together this year with lots of history shared and cultural practices brought from Cape Breton to Kespukwick District. NSITEN is a volunteer-based not-for-profit cultural tourism organization working to support the growth of authentic and cultural tourism and businesses and community enterprises in Nova Scotia.

Housing: The housing department has had a busy past few years, funding has been secured from the Rapid Housing Initiative program which has allowed us to house 14 families throughout Wasoqopa'q communities

Culture and Language: Our weekly Mi'kmaq classes started Nov 8th, 2023 via Zoom every Wednesday afternoon at 3 pm with Beverly Jeddore at Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey. Beverly is a fluent speaker from Unama'ki (Cape Breton) and has been instructing our classes since 2017.

The Culture and Language Committee acquired funds from the Department of Heritage Canada to begin the process of implementing a language program called Kepmite'Isultiek Kespukwick, (We are proud in Kespukwick). The class consisted of 14 students who learned the language through themed modules and classes ran from August 2022 to May 2023. At the end of the modules, students had a graduation ceremony in June 2023. The committee put forward a second proposal in August 2023, which will include previous learners as mentors to teach new learners. On October 28, 2023, the Indigenous Language Component Committee informed us that the application for funding was approved in the amount of \$202,383 to continue to support Wasoqopa'q First Nation's Language Program.

Our New Name Change: The Indigenous Languages Act received Royal Assent on June 21, 2019. In an effort to reclaim, revitalize, and maintain the Mi'kmaw Language, Acadia First Nation proudly announced the adoption of its Mi'kmaw Name **WASOQOPA'Q FIRST NATION** (Pronounced WASO-HOE-BAH) meaning Bright Water.

Physical Activity:

The Mi'kmaq Summer Games took place this year in Millbrook First Nation from August 20th to August 27th with 80 athletes from the District of Kespukwick and 25 from Wasoqopa'q. This year was the first time Kespukwick had enough boys to make up a basketball team and the team won silver. I was so impressed by how these boys came together and played such a great tournament without practicing and playing with each other until they met on August 20th. We have such amazing athletes within our band from hockey to baseball.

North American Indigenous Games (NAIG)

The NAIG games took place in the city of Halifax, outside Halifax County, Dartmouth, and Truro. The athletes were from all over North America and as far as Mexico. The opening ceremony was unbelievable to watch 5000 Indigenous youth athletes as they march into the stadium in their team colors representing their province, state, and countries they were awesome to watch. The talent that took to the stage to sing, dance, and drum, the speakers were amazing to watch, it was just an outstanding night that I will never forget. Wasoqopa'q had 18 athletes who made up the Nova Scotia team and 7 of our athletes won medals. I participated in NAIG by volunteering 3 days out of the 7 day event and it was an honour.

Councillor Michael Paul

Hello everyone, my name is Mike Paul, Councillor residing in the HRM area. I work with all of council for all of Wasoqopa'q and have an office in our Hammonds Plains location.

I work with and support all council members as we work together in the Governance of our Nation. My main portfolios are employment, training and education; economic development; finance and newly added human resources. I am also on the Board of Directors of the First Nation Finance Authority (fnfa.ca) a national organization that provides financing to First Nations across Canada.

There are 3 staff working out of our Hammonds Plains office. We have recently started construction of our new Women's shelter which will house and provide programming for Women and their children escaping domestic violence. This is scheduled to open in the fall of 2024. We have also just hired a company to look into the best way to install gas pumps at the HP location. We do have some challenges with road access and getting trucks in and out but we are working to figure it out. We still have land for future commercial development.

The Hammonds Plains office, per previous mailed notices, is now emailing out notices. If you are in the HP office area and have not already signed up for email notices I encourage you to send an email to acadiaband@acadiaband.ca to sign up and receive notices. I will also mention that if you are turning 65 please let the office know so you can be placed on our seniors list. If you are a new member (recently received status) please advise your local office so you can receive notices.

Wasoqopa'q continues to grow. As our population is just shy of 2000, we continue to build housing and assets. The HP office now has approximately 300 households (many with more than 1 member), 52 seniors and 130 youth. These numbers are always changing.

I would like to express my sympathy to the families who recently lost loved ones and wish hope to the families who have loved ones sick and/or in hospital.

Thank you, Mike Paul, mikepaul@acadiaband.ca 902 483-7040

Councillor Tom Pictou

Portfolios: Housing, Fisheries and Economic Development

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Committees/Boards: Kespuwick Advisory Committee, Harvest Feast Committee, Economic Development Committee and Shelburne & Yarmouth Rec Committees.

Highlights: In Housing, through the CMHC Rapid Housing Initiative, we have been able to provide a total of 14 new homes this past year in Gold River and Yarmouth. We are actively working to secure more funding for additional homes as we know the need is great.

The fisheries portfolio includes Commercial (Kespuwick Resources Inc), Moderate Livelihood (MLF) and Food, Social and Ceremonial (FSC). The Kespuwick Advisory Committee continues to meet regularly to discuss commercial operations, which has been very successful. I have had the opportunity to see many of you over the past few months during lobster deliveries to our communities. I have also attended many meetings regarding Moderate Livelihood throughout the year as we continue to establish our fisheries.

The construction of the Weliankweyasimk Women's Shelter, located in Hammonds Plains, has started with a completion date of Fall 2024. This much needed infrastructure project will provide emergency, temporary lodging for Indigenous women and children.

Economic Development- Tru By Hilton Hotel located in Yarmouth continues to exceed expectations with many sold out nights throughout the year.

We are currently working on upgrades to several of our outdoor spaces, such as the Gold River Mawio'mi grounds and a green space adjacent to the Tru Hotel in Yarmouth.

Our second Solar PV project will be located in Gold River and will be commissioned in 2024 which will deliver clean energy to the Gold Nugget.

Working on developing a gas bar in Hammonds Plains

We continue to work through the process on our Addition to Reserves (ATR) files: Gardners Mills, Shelburne, Medway and Yarmouth

I also attend regular Chief and Council meetings, Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq (CMM) meetings, Nationhood conferences and other various meeting and events.

I would like to thank all of our staff members for their hard work and continued dedication. It is through our staff that we continue to achieve success. This coming year, we will work towards continued growth and development to provide further opportunities to our members. I look forward to seeing you all at our community events throughout the year.

Councillor Natteal Battiste

Kwe', telusi nin Natteal Battiste, wetapeski Kespukwitk, wiki - Kjipuktuk.

Portfolios: Finance, Economic Development, Species at Risk, Nova Scotia Power, Sports/Recreation, Youth and newly added: Health

Committees/Board: Chester Playhouse, Mawaknutma'tnej Circle (King's College), Red Road Project, The Genevieve Francis Memorial Fund, Tribal Boxing Gym, DENR (CMM), Akwekon and WHOMS.

How quickly time flies! We are entering into Q4 of the 2023-2024 fiscal year. I'd like to start off by thanking our band members, employees, and the rest of Chief and Council for the continuous teamwork and goals that we continue to set and achieve. We have such a bright future and this year has really shown me where we all can go if we work together. **Apoqmatullinej ta'n Kisu'lkw tell ika'luksi'kw wla wskitqamu** (let us help one another as Creator intended when he put us on this earth).

Alongside the outstanding accomplishments our Chief, Councillors and Band Employees have accomplished together this year, below - are some additional accomplishments I would like to highlight.

Gold River has held the Red Road Project student summer positions- for three years in a row. I would like to acknowledge and thank Lacey Pennell and Jada Kaizer for dedicating their summer to promoting safe, alcohol free events for our youth.

The 2023 Gold River Powwow

Gold River Wednesday night Boxing still remains active

The AFN Language Committee's 'Kepmite'Lsultiek Kespukwitk'

language group graduated this year! Congratulations to all!

Our Rapid Initiative program that began in 2022 is completed and we moved several families into our communities.

Our Women's Shelter and Pow wow ground construction has begun!

Gold River's Afterschool program is back!

Ongoing Projects/Goals:

Continue to grow our relations with surrounding Municipalities (specifically HRM, Chester, Mahone Bay and Bridgewater). I have been active in HRM's Campaign School and economic development with Bridgewater - specific to their environmental/climate change projects

I have a key interest in technology innovation, oceans technology and international economic development - I will continue to educate myself in the economic development field, federal and provincial legislations to give a meaningful contribution on the economic development portfolio and future developments.

Community Development for Gold River - let's continue to work together to create a thriving safe environment for our current generation and the next to come!

Ongoing relationship building with the Chester RCMP with active communications, monthly reports and quarterly meetings.

Meetings with NSP and KMKNO in regards to the Tusket/Mersey River dam refurbishment, archeology and proper fish passage were paused for a majority of the year, and has now resumed.

Implementing a youth program within our youth portfolio

I have taken a key interest in UNDRIP and Child Welfare reform this year and will continue to educate myself and share my knowledge back with our communities

Deepen relationships with DENR, CMM and other L'nu organizations and bands for economic, employment and education opportunities.

As we come to an end for 2023, I'd like to take a moment to send my condolences to our beloved band members we have lost this year. My thoughts and prayers are with so many of our families. I send my best wishes and prayers to all of our communities as we enter into the colder months. Welalioq aqq Nmultus.

Councillor Jeff Purdy

Portfolios/Boards/Committees

Regularly carry-out a managerial role and establish direction with C&C as a team for Wasoqopa'q First Nation

Negotiate with private-sector partners to secure economic and commercial benefits for WFN

Co-chair the AFN Finance & Audit Committee, where we adjust and approve annual budgets that ensure the concerns of staff and community members are being addressed and year end audits are approved

Navigate and guide Forestry/ Archeology best Practices and harvest assessments with the DNRR on high sensitive areas.

Sit on a working group for Mi'kmaq Forestry Initiative best practices, helping develop IPCA's (Indigenous Conservation Areas) within the Province

Species at Risk working group developed and guided a collaborative approach with Bear River FN and Acadia FN and the Species at Risk within Kespukwitk District

Wasoqopa'q representative for KMKNO Atlantic Mining working Group. Work with mining companies within our District for lithium and Gold deposits

Main land moose recovery team with DNRR

CB moose Management working group with DNRR and KMKNO

Highlights March 2021-March 2022

Regular Archeology Meetings and updates with KMKNO developing proper Mi'kmaq Archeology protocols

KMKNO / DNRR moose management

Main land Moose Recovery Team

Regular Mining & Energy Meetings/ updates with KMKNO and the province

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Regular Forestry meetings with KMKNO and the Province on best forestry practices and Archeology assessments on harvesting blocks

Upcoming Projects/conferences/Future plans

Yearly CMM AGA

Yearly Nationhood Conference

Annual Mi'kmaq Archeology updates

Mi'kmaw Archeology sight visits

Mining sight visits

Mining symposium

As we move into 2024, 2023 has been challenging this year for emergency management. The wildfires & flooding that we encountered this year were very stressful, challenging and devastating for some of our members. C&C is very proud to have our new Mi'kmaw name Wasoqopa'q (bright water) Wasoqopa'qewaag (people of the Bright water), this step forward will ensure that we continue to revitalize and protect our language. We need to acknowledge the hard work and dedication our language committee has. Chief and Council will continue to move forward to assist members and their families and will continue to hold the best interest for Wasoqopa'q as a strong Mi'kmaw Nation.

Over the past year Mining & Energy, has become a bigger portfolio for me this year with a lithium deposit identified in Yarmouth. I continue to work with the mining Companies from Australia to make sure no archeology or traditional sights are destroyed.

I continue to keep staff update and work with staff on the day to day operations of our community and Business.

Our dedicated hardworking staff keep Wasoqopa'q FN moving and organized, C&C depend on our staff to carry out tasks and support for C&C in all roles. Our Managers and staff work hard for all programs and services, without the staff the programming would not exist. They face many challenges in their day to day work and do it with a smile. As we all know, Wasoqopa'q First Nation is spread out across South West Nova and beyond with the majority of our members living off reserve across the Province. Recognizing all Acadia band members and continuing to be inclusive of all, is top priority for Chief and Council and for all staff programming.

If you have any questions don't hesitate to contact me Jeff Purdy

COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT & CULTURE

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Melanie Robinson-Purdy Community Enhancement & Development Officer

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Submitted a proposal for Mi'kmaw Language and funding was secured, 100% of the funding was spent only for the Mi'kmaw Language instructor hired for the 11-month program and the 14 participants that participated in the language program. 11 intensive community based language / Mi'kmaw Culture sessions were held throughout the year for 3 days per session Participants committed to teach and share their teachings.

Applications were sent out and there was room for 15 applicants. Mi'kmaq Cultural Authenticity – Working specifically with advisory on the development of a Mi'kmaw Branding Policy for Mi'kmaw artisans and businesses. Continue working with the Mi'kmaw Kina'matenewey Advisory on Mi'kmaw Language

Advisory for the Mi'kmaw Language Legislation

Beaded Eagle Feathers – A call out to engage our Mi'kmaw Beaders and have our own beaders bead Eagle Feathers, we used these feathers for the Mi'kmaw Language Graduation and we have them for gifting Elders/community leaders and other events when needed

Leather Regalia Session conducted in three communities, Yarmouth, Wildcat and Gold River there were approximately 34 interested participants for this session

June 21, 2022 we celebrated National Indigenous Day in Kejimikujik National Park, we partnered with Two Eyed Seeing and MSVU where we Celebrated the Boat Launch with our Youth and the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic

Mi'kmaw Grieving Ceremony Teachings were conducted with our MLP through the Kepmite'Isultiek Program

Youth sewing class was conducted at the Rose Purdy Recreation Center where the youth made ribbon skirts and ribbon vests

Youth Drumming Classes continue in Yarmouth and our Youth Drum Group, Kespukwitk Samqwan Sunset Drummers meet at different events and perform their drum songs

Fly Tying workshops were held in Yarmouth, Gold River and Wildcat

Annual Mi'kmaw Student Awards

Truth and Reconciliation Day event held in Yarmouth

Blanket Exercise was held in Yarmouth- Gold River – Wildcat and Halifax

Sisters in Spirit walk are held yearly

Annual Mi'kmaw Harvest Feast

Medicine Bundles aqg Mi'kmaw Languages sessions in communities

Gratitude Seafood Laptop Giveaway

Working with Tru Hilton and our Mi'kmaw Artists for a Culturally safe venue to market their merchandise

Wasoqopa'q First Nation name change, I will continue to work with Department of Highway on signage changes

Fulfill Mi'kmaw Band Designate duties as confidentially outlined in job description

Manage Red Road Youth Project and Youth employed report directly to myself

Continue to work with Mi'kmawey Debert as Advisory member on the project, we are in the final Design of the project

Continue to work with the Acadia First Nation Mikmaw Language & Culture Committee

Continue to work with the Acadia First Nation Recreation Committee

Continue to work with the Town of Yarmouth and surrounding Municipalities working toward Reconciliation events and projects

Facilitate Drum workshops and Culture Workshops for youth in the Yarmouth Community

Working on a project for a Traditional Healing Heritage Park in Yarmouth, secured funding for landscaping/ beautification, Interpretive Panels and Pavilion, along with the EDO for Acadia Band.

KOKOM Interpretive Park is nearing completion, the Mi'kmaw Pavilion has been built, a callout for Mi'kmaw Advisory Committee for Interpretive Panels is underway.

Weliankweyasimk Women's Shelter has broken ground in Hammonds Plains and is aimed for completion in the Fall of 2024. Continue to work with other staff on the successful

Proposal submitted by Acadia First Nation for a Domestic Violence Shelter to be built in the Hammonds Plains reserve.

Ongoing projects and unfinished projects include:

KOKOM Heritage Park-Yarmouth

Weliankweyasimk Women's Shelter-Hammonds Plains

John Cook Memorial Park

Mi'kmaw Name Change for Wasoqopa'q First Nation

Kepmite'Isultiek Kespukwitk 2-Mi'kmaw Language Program – Funding has been secured for another successful Mi'kmaw Language Project for the Wasoqopa'q First Nation

Upcoming Projects/Future plans

New Mi'kmaw Youth Center-Yarmouth

Continue to seek ways to secure funding for the future of the Mi'kmaq of Acadia First Nation.

Youth Center-Gold River Community

Cultural Center/Artifact Holding Facility-Yarmouth

Culturally safe Mobile Mi'kmaw Artistry unit for all our Lnu'k & communities

Land Based Food Insecurity teaching houses and Healing Houses



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Rachel Stevenson Economic Development Officer rstevenson@acadiaband.ca

Completed projects/Highlights March 2022-2023 (events organized/held, yearly programming etc.):

Yarmouth Solar PV Project - WFN was a successful proponent of The Solar Electricity for Community Buildings Pilot Program, which allowed organizations to secure long-term power purchase agreements with Nova Scotia Power. This project is now in its second year of operation and provides up to 115,000 kWh of clean, emission-free power and displaces up to 88,700 pounds of coal annually.

Tru By Hilton Hotel – The hotel had a very successful year of operations with many sold out nights and a steady rate of occupancy.

WFN Economic Development Committee – our committee meets regularly to discuss new strategies and business development in an effort to increase and diversify our current business holdings, form strategic partnerships and to secure funding for projects.

Ongoing projects and unfinished projects include:

Gold River Mawio'mi Grounds Revitalization Project Phase 1: This project is currently underway in partnership with the AFN housing department. Infrastructure upgrades to the grounds are still underway, completed this year was a newly designated camping area. Finish work is on-going in our new comfort station (washrooms/sinks/showers) and will soon be complete. Funding for this project was secured through ACOA.

Weliankweyasimk Women's Shelter: The Weliankweyasimk Women's Shelter is a joint project through Economic Development, Housing and Community Enhancement. The Shelter will be located in Hammonds Plains and is currently under construction with a completion date of Fall 2024. This much needed infrastructure project will provide emergency, temporary lodging for Indigenous women and children. The project is being funded through ISC and CMHC.

Kokum Cultural Path: This project is currently underway in Yarmouth; adjacent to the Tru Hotel and was developed in partnership with our Community

Enhancement Officer. The Kokum Cultural Path will provide a green space with interpretive panels reflecting culture and history. This project is being funded through the Cultural Spaces in Indigenous Communities program. A pavilion/outdoor stage was constructed during the summer months as in addition to the green space and will enhance the area and provide a new community event space. Funding for the pavilion was provided by ACOA.

Lands Update: We are actively working on Additions to Reserves (ATR) in Gardners Mill, Shelburne, Medway and Yarmouth. These are lengthy processes however we remain committed to ensuring the success of these files.

Upcoming Projects/Future Plans:

Gold River Solar PV project – this will be commissioned in 2024 and will provide direct power to The Gold Nugget.

Hammonds Plains Commercial development

Gold River Mawio'mi Grounds Phase 2

Continue to seek funding for new business initiatives and partnerships.



EDUCATION

Janice Francis, Education Director

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Tina Dixon, Post Secondary Education Navigator

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Completed projects/Highlights - Participated and graduated from Wasoqopa'q (Acadia) First Nation Mi'kmaq language program.

Worked with the Region of Queens to infuse Mi'kmaq culture, language, music and vendors within their Canada Day activities and events.

Distributed Grade 12 graduation stoles throughout our communities.

Participated in the "Blanket Exercise" at the Wildcat Community Centre.

Attended and presented at the 2023 Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey (MK) Symposium.

Participated in staff training.

Liaised with Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey (MK) regarding the new Post Secondary Navigators. The package provided the new hires with a list of resources and supports to assist them with their new roles.

Unfinished Projects/Ongoing Programming Mi'kmaw language classes. Creating and sharing Mi'kmaq Language resources for various planned activities within our communities

Post Secondary educational assistance

Daycare, headstart, youth programming

Student support/tutoring services for elementary/secondary/post secondary students

After school programming

Annual recognition of our elementary/secondary students for their academic achievements

Working in collaboration with Mi'kmaw Education Coordinators at the Regional Centres for Education

Working in collaboration with Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey (MK)

Post Secondary Education Navigation Program – regular communication with students identifying and addressing issues/concerns and working in collaboration with post secondary institutions to ensure adequate support and services are available to students. Ongoing searches and sharing of bursaries, scholarship awards and various other funding opportunities.

Maintaining/updating the Wasoqopa'q (Acadia) First Nation Post Secondary Education Facebook page

Upcoming Projects/Future plans

Develop a partnership with Dominion Diving Company to provide our students with an opportunity to experience and learn underwater diving and other opportunities within the industry

Collecting education highlights/programming for the annual Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey (MK) Symposium

Develop a partnership with Mersey Marine Limited to offer students an opportunity to apprentice and/or work in the industry

Working on an introductory package for new/returning post secondary students. The package will provide students with various resources, supports and information that pertains to their education journey.

Develop a policy for student support assistance (elementary/secondary)

Take part in the Train – the – Trainer in order to facilitate the "Blanket Exercise".

Other plans:

Continue to make every effort to provide students with opportunities to grow, develop and succeed as independent learners thus reaching their full potential.

Effectively manage our resources and encourage our students to value the choices offered by higher education.

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

Wanda Westhaver – Indigenous Employment Officer
neo@acadiaband.ca 902-685-2956

Cecilia Ernst – IEO Assistant
neoassistant@acadiaband.ca 902-685-2956

Completed Projects/Highlights

- Apprentices- 1 participant- currently in level 4
- Skills Development- 18 Participants Summer Students- 7 participants
- Wage Subsidies- 16 participants Wildcat Project- 2 participants
- Archaeology- 7 participants Driver's Training- 3 participants
- Cultural activities Basket making- 6 participants
- 4 Ribbon skirt workshops- 34 participants

Unfinished Projects/ Ongoing programming

- Apprentices- 1 new participants Partnership
- Archaeology – 3 participants Friendship Centre – 2 participants

Upcoming Projects/Future Plans

- Plans to expand Community Garden in Medway Various Life skills Workshops
- Plans to offer cultural workshops Entrepreneurship training for small businesses
- Employment Workshops
- Continue to build partnerships with other funders and service providers



FINANCIAL REPORT

CAPITAL PROJECTS

From 2022-2024, Acadia First Nation has allocated approximately \$15,000,000 of its financial resources to capital projects or purchase of capital assets.

Key projects underway are:

- Construction of the Women's Shelter has begun in Hammonds Plains. This construction is to be funded by CMHC and ISC, with ISC further committed to
- funding the operating costs over a number of years.
- A second Rapid Housing Initiative will see an additional 8 new modular homes constructed over the next 2 fiscal years funded by CMHC under the federal program.

Funder	Asset Type	Cost 2022-2023	Forecasted 2023-2024	Total
CMM	Wildcat Greenhouse	9,974	-	9,974
Rapid Housing Initiative (CMHC)	Band –owned housing	2,660,823	1,500,000	4,160,823
OSR/ECCC	Vehicles	103,740	100,000	203,740
OSR/ACOA	Recreation equipment	136,919	-	136,919
OSR	Retail operations assets	71,925	50,000	121,925
OSR	Green Energy projects	-	250,000	250,000
OSR	Fisheries Assets	497,289	1,500,000	1,997,289
ISC	Computers/Electronics	35,644	30,000	65,644
CMHC/OSR/ISC	Community Buildings	125,842	150,000	275,842
CMHC/OSR	CMHC Houses	318,254	250,000	568,254
OSR/ISC	Pennell Road extension	83,693	100,000	183,693
CMHC/ISC	Women's Shelter	382,976	3,500,000	3,882,976
ISC	Infrastructure	1,126,615	-	1,126,615
OSR	Land purchase	777,832	150,000	927,832
OSR	Commercial buildings	1,950	1,000,000	1,001,950
OSR = own source revenues from General Fund (unrestricted)		6,333,476	8,580,000	14,913,476

FINANCIAL REPORT

REPORT ON RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk management is a key component to the financial health of a First Nation. It is a high level review of possible risks that may impede our ability to provide programs and services. Our risk register includes information about the known risks and uncertainties that may affect our financial position.

By reviewing this document annually both through the Finance and Audit Committee and then again at the Chief and Council level, we are prepared to shift resources to mitigate risks that have a high likelihood and high impact to our operations.

Risk Category	Event	Impact	Risk Management Plan
Health & Safety	Medical outbreak on reserve	Reduced health of members / potential loss of members	Emergency Preparedness Plan, Offer vaccines at health centres to keep up to date
Service Delivery	Services required in six different communities	Run 3.5 mm deficit each year on base funding provided by federal government	Increase own source revenue to fund programs/services. Diversify investments / business holdings.
Skills and Capacity	High number of key employees retiring in the next ten years	Loss of knowledge	Identify key positions that require a succession plan, create and implement succession plan. (Housing (2), Social, Education, Native Employment Officer, Fisheries finance, Membership Clerk)
Service Delivery	Six reserves - competing needs in each location	Fractured resources. Duplication of services, lot of time spent in transit. Difficult to staff employees in different locations. Difficult to get services to all members. High cost to deliver services/programs to all communities, or programs/services can only be offered to some communities due to cost. Some staff in different locations have never met each other. Staff feel unsupported.	Comprehensive community plan. Research options for improved internet / cell service
Land Protection and Environment	Run out of land base in Yarmouth	Limits the number of new houses / businesses in that community	Discussions with ISC for potential of using ISC funds to purchase fee simple lands adjacent to community, place into

Summary of Audited Financial Statements

For a full copy of the audited financials and schedule of remuneration for Chief and Council, please see our website:

<https://www.acadiafirstnation.ca/835-acadia-first-nation-consolidated-fs-2023-signed/file.html>

Highlights

Total revenues of over \$55 Million across all operations (2022 - \$53M). Own source revenue represents 76.4% of the total (2022 – 74.3%).

Incorporated entities \$31.2 M (2022 - \$26.8M)

Fisheries \$4.5M (2022 - \$6.2M)

Net surplus of \$6.6M (2022 - \$8.7M)

Tangible capital assets totalled \$46.1M by the end of the year (2022 - \$42.4M). The total value of assets insured is nearing \$70M. This value has been affected by the rise in construction costs as we try to insure assets at their replacement costs.

Total cash and cash equivalents \$15.8M (2022 - \$17.6M).

Total Long term debt is \$19M (2022 - \$19.8M). FNFA accounts for \$15.1M (2022 - \$15.6M) and CMHC Housing loans account for the remainder \$3.9M (2022 - \$4.2M)

HST debt is decreasing on schedule with approximately \$800,000 remaining to be paid.

Government support payments are broken down into the following:

Band Support	\$ 566,135	(2022 - \$ 480,790)	Health	\$ 816,777	(2022 - \$ 696,771)
Contribution to proposal driven projects	\$ 1,679,660	(2022 - \$ 5,699,213)	CMHC Subsidy	\$ 210,862	(2022 - \$ 203,107)
Education	\$ 1,313,610	(2022 - \$ 1,082,787)	Fisheries	\$ 43,850	(2022 - \$ 208,995)
Capital/Maintenance	\$ 1,044,090	(2022 - \$ 301,682)	Training	\$ 494,920	(2022 - \$ 463,010)
Social	\$ 1,495,296	(2022 - \$ 1,565,364)			

FINANCIAL REPORT

Key expenses:

Profit sharing paid out to members	\$ 1,109,000	(2022 - \$ 1,058,600)
Post secondary tuition and allowances	\$ 747,208	(2022 - \$ 609,687)
Repairs to band owned buildings	\$ 405,409	(2022 - \$ 297,985)
Crew share paid to fishermen	\$ 1,779,105	(2022 - \$ 2,755,927)
Salaries	\$ 3,801,808	(2022 - \$ 3,358,645)
Retail operation expenditures	\$ 26,393,772	(2022 - \$23,017,439)
Elder payments	\$ 518,600	(2022 - \$ 490,000)



Acadia First Nation and its entities paid out approximately \$9.3M in payroll during the fiscal year (2022 - \$8.4M) supporting over 250 jobs at its annual peak in December.

The Band supports its November profit sharing allocation through funds taken from the five gas bars/gaming establishments -\$1,558,000 (2022- \$1,339,000), the fisheries - \$222,500 (2022 - \$ 301,000) and the sale of quota tobacco – \$328,500 (2022 - \$ 338,000). A percentage is set aside from their gross revenues each year for this allocation. This year an additional allocation was set aside to assist with the development of future economic activities for the communities. The amounts set aside are as follows:

Profit allocation	\$1,265,000	(2022 - \$ 1,187,000)
Economic development	\$ 844,000	(2022 - \$ 791,000)

HEALTH

Marla Robinson-Pyne	Health Director	902-742-4337
Chelsea Sawyer	Community Health Nurse	902-627-1245
Kolby Blair	NADACA, Mental Health and Addictions Coordinator	902-742-8883
Jessica Bannon	Clinical Social Worker and Mental Health Clinician	902-627-1245
Nova Scotia Health Visiting Clinicians		
Mike Ross	Clinical Therapist, Mental Health and Addictions	902-627-1245
Terry Zaichkowski	Clinical Therapist, Mental Health and Addictions (902)742-4337	
Matt Mahoney	Family Nurse Practitioner	902-627-1245

Completed Projects/ Highlights

Covid Vaccination Clinics in Yarmouth and Gold River (Booster dose)

COHI (Children's Oral Health Initiative)

WFN Mental Health Clinician

Well Child days in Yarmouth, Liverpool, Gold River and HRM. Services in each area participated such as; Dieticians, Jordans Principle, Mental Health, Hearing and Speech, Vision screenings, Early Intervention, COHI (Dental screenings), Sports and Recreation and Occupational Therapy.

Footcare and VON resumed in community; Yarmouth, Medway, Gold River.

Laugh and Learn Play group, Gold River Health Centre.

Diabetes Self Management Journey in Liverpool. A 3 day journey with discussion, support and education for those managing diabetes. Topics covered, Nutrition, movement, medication, mental wellness.

Healthy Habits Program. Weekly virtual workshops included Goal Setting, sleep, movement, nutrition, self care, Mental Health and basic budgeting. One on one health counselling/coaching.

Naloxone Training in Medway and Gold River Coping with Anxiety session in Gold River

Nutrition Workshops via ZOOM Virtual Health Care Hub, YRH Information Session

CHN certification for Naloxone training.

NADACA has sponsored numerous events throughout our communities, some including: Youth Basic First Aid, PRIDE, Sisters in Spirit Awareness Walk, Truth and Reconciliation events and workshops with The Steeper Climb.

NADACA recognized Addictions Awareness Week with a series of in-person and online workshops and activities, some including: Opioids Awareness, Recognizing an Overdose, Harm Reduction, Self-Care, and addictions awareness Bingo.

Hosted a series of medicine bundle workshops in; Yarmouth, Shelburne, Medway, Wildcat, Gold River and HRM for Mi'kmaw History Month and Family Violence Awareness Week.

Tobacco prevention workshops in; Yarmouth, Shelburne, Medway, Wildcat, Gold River and HRM

Hosted multiple online wellness activities for adults, youth and families on the Facebook page "NADACA Programming (AFN)".

Ongoing Programming

Covid Vaccination Clinics in Yarmouth and Gold River

Development of the Health Centre Occupational Health and Safety System

Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselling Assoc. Information Sessions

Cancer Care NS PAP certification for CHN

HEALTH

Upcoming Projects/Future plans for your Department

Pfizer booster vaccine clinics in Yarmouth and Gold River

Flu Shot clinics offering a standard dose and high dose for 65+ in Yarmouth, Wildcat, Medway, Gold River and Shelburne.

Drug Awareness Week 2023 will be hosted in November. Programming will be offered in-person in communities, as well as online programming.

Health Fair (Fall 2024)

Tajikeimik (Mikmaw Health and Wellness Mawio'mi'ji'ji')

Wellness Event

Foot Care clinics in Shelburne

Ongoing education workshops in person throughout all WFN communities.

The health team is committed to continuing to partnering with organizations in providing programming throughout our communities.

Continued Medicine Bundle workshops

Traditional Healing workshops



HOUSING

Housing Director Jim Pictou 902 742 0257

Housing Manager Marie Falls 902 742 0257

Housing has finished the 14 homes that we received from applying for the Rapid Housing Initiative.

The retrofit of the old wildcat store has been finished, we turned it into a 2 bedroom, duplex.

The women's shelter that Housing received funding for has started in Hammonds Plains.

New generators were installed at Medway office/store also at the fish pound in Yarmouth.

Housing staff built a comfort station on Gold River reserve 95 percent complete.

A new mini home was delivered to Wildcat to replace a current home.

Two new homes are currently being built in Yarmouth, one will be finished by the end of November the other later in the new year.

One retrofit in Yarmouth was finished.

Two duplex's at Gold River are receiving new metal roofs and will be finished by the end of November.

There were 5 decks replaced and also 6 steps replaced. There were 12 Hot water heaters replaced.

6 wells and pumps repaired and/or replaced. And also many everyday repairs such as, taps ,toilets,

sinks, tubs, ramps, flooring ,drains. driveways ect. are just a few of the many.

Human Resources

Lisa Francis Beaver, Director of Human Resources
hrmanager@acadiaband.ca (902) 422-5918



The AFN Human Resources Department aims to establish and deliver a HR High Performance System (HPWS) that provides a combination of HR structures, practices, policies and procedures interconnected to deliver an HR system that is flexible, adaptable and meets the needs of the employer and provides a positive work environment for all employees. Building and implementing an HR high performance work system brings emphasis to employee involvement, and reflection of commitment to Acadia First Nation's organizational culture.

As a First Nation, the foundation and principles, along with the core values of the organizational culture within this high performance work system are built upon our Seven Sacred Teachings. Our Mi'kmaq culture is an intrinsic and interwoven part of how AFN Human Resources operates from HR policies to practices to employee relations. The HPWS, as it is established and grows, is to be aligned with the AFN Strategic Plan and its associated vision, mission, goals and objectives established.

Activities & Accomplishments

CULTURE	EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION	RECRUITMENT, RETENTION AND RECOGNITION	HEALTH AND SAFETY	TRAINING AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT	EMPLOYEE RELATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted a Chief and Council Retreat Reviewed the HR Manuals for administration and business operations Reviewed the HR Policies and Procedures Initiated the foundational work to prepare the HR Strategic Plan Reviewed and streamlined employee processes Initiated the development of the Technology and Social Media Policy Developed and executed an HR strategy and workplan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted an Indigenous Women's Elder's Circle Conducted a Women's Staff Retreat Prepared and conducted employee engagement sessions Drafted a Respectful Workplace Policy, protocols and signage Initiated the development of the Breastfeeding Policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Started the review of Job Descriptions and revised the Job Posting templates Recruitment process for twenty-four (24) positions Performance Review Process for Managers, Business Operations Seventeen (17) new and revised Job Descriptions Provided advice, guidance, tools and resources to Managers with employee matters including progressive discipline, probationary terms and dismissals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established, with a Consultant Health and Safety Proposal for the development of an Occupational Health and Safety Plan Received \$60,000 in funding from Indigenous Services Canada to develop a Health and Safety Plan Established and administered Occupational Health and Safety Training, as needed, across administration and business operations Updated the employee health and safety database Monitored and ensured compliance with all legal standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established training budget for safety training and employee skills development Obtained the CIHRP Certification with AFOA Canada 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redeveloped the Employee Orientation Checklist Streamlined the new employee orientation process Developed and streamlined the new employee orientation package Grievance Investigations Staff Meetings to support Managers as requested AFN Sunlife Group Benefits and Defined Contribution Pension Plan administration AFN Sunlife Group Benefits Employee Sessions Conducted a senior management session Modified the HR Filing System Maintained the HR Database for administration and business operations

Human Resources 2023-2024 LOOK AHEAD



INVENTORY DEPARTMENT

Sherry Anthony – Inventory Control Manager sherryA@acadiaband.ca

Wendy LeJeune- Inventory Clerk wllejeune@acadiaband.ca

Josephine Falls – Inventory Clerk jwfalls@acadiaband.ca

We maintain accurate Inventory Counts for designated store locations, while providing point of sale support for all locations, Yarmouth to Halifax.

We maintain an accurate Database, for all Quota tobacco. Constantly updating the system, permissions, allowances as well as dealing with suppliers to try to effectively maintain the best pricing for our members.

We provide support for our Restaurants, Ice Cream Hut and Races, tracking purchases and sales to provide monthly Sales and Profit Reports, Stock Variance and Valuation Reports.

We are closely following Quota Control, regulating pricing, carrying out full store counts, as well as monthly Inventory on tobacco depts., prepare reports and send to finance dept., carry an ongoing clean-up of our database, as well as attend regular Inventory Meetings, Mgrs. Meeting and others when needed.

We also Support other activities such as GR Powwow, Harvest Feast and The Jadon Robinson Memorial Golf Tournament.

Our daily aim, is to collectively bring all areas of the inventory department together to be of the greatest benefit to our businesses, band members and customers. We work very closely, ensuring that we are always at the front of the line with the Convenience Industry Standards.

Kespuwick Resources Inc.

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Curtis Falls – Director of Operations

curtisfalls@acadiaband.ca

Rena Falls - Financial Comptroller

rfalls@acadiaband.ca

Michelle White - Administrative Assistant

fms@acadiaband.ca

Darlene Coulton – Livelihood Fisheries Liaison

mlf@acadiaband.ca

Food, Social and Ceremonial

Since 2017 Acadia First Nation has been fishing under the Food, Social and Ceremonial Netukulimk Fish harvesting plan that was created from multiple community engagement meetings that started in 2016.

This Fishing Plan deals with food, social and ceremonial (“FSC”) fishing harvest by members of the Acadia First Nation as an aspect of Netukulimk and as an exercise of Mi’kmaq self-government protected by section 35 of the *Constitution Act*, Canada.

Access for the exercise of the FSC rights of the Mi’kmaq are priority in the fishery, after the needs of conservation have been met.

KESPUWICK RESOURCES INC.

This Netukulimk Fishing Plan is an evolving document and will be updated or amended by Chief and Council as required. It does not exhaustively define our Aboriginal right to fish or its scope; however, for the 2022/2023 fishing season, it is intended to provide a mechanism for the exercise of those rights within a system of proper management of the fisheries and the conservation and protection of fish.

The Food, Social and Ceremonial Netukulimk Fishing Plan does not apply to or define our "moderate livelihood" Treaty fishery.

Acadia First Nation does not accept a DFO issued license. The DFO imposed license is not valid or enforceable.

Acadia First Nation has its own food, social and ceremonial management process. When DFO has valid conservation or management objectives our community will be open to discussing them.

Access for the exercise of the FSC rights of the Mi'kmaq are priority in the fishery, after the needs of conservation have been met.

Annually, Lobster and scallops are distributed throughout the community. Last year 8000lbs pound of scallops and over 16000 lbs of lobster were distributed through the entire community.

Approximately 200 members receive lobster tags for LFA 33, 34 and 35 to provide lobsters for FSC purpose.

Communal Commercial

Highlights

11 vessels are in KRI communal commercial Fleet.

7 Vessel fish 7 Lobster license in LFA 34

4 vessel fish 4 lobster license in LFA 33

13 Lobster licenses are leased on an annual basis.

1 Vessel fish 4x Snow crab

1 Vessel fish Full Bay Scallop

2 Vessels fish 2 SWNS Bluefin Tuna licenses

11 clam licenses were harvested by Acadia First Nation Members

4 Marine licenses were harvested by Acadia First Nation Members

5 Gaspereau licenses were fished be Acadia First Nation Members

1 Used vessel was purchased for Lobster fishing in LFA 33, and it was captained by an AFN band member.

Upcoming Projects/Future for your department

It is KRI objective to keep growing by continuing to gain more assets in the form of vessels and licenses to expand it fish harvesting capabilities.

Over the years our harvesters have obtained marine training and certifications and continue to acquire training sponsored by KRI.

It is KRI's intention to expand its operations into fish buying, processing, and marketing. In addition, it wants to integrate into other divisions of the fisheries such as boat building and boat repair. It has a desire to evolve into a self-reliant entity.

MODERATE LIVELIHOOD

Darlene Coulton 902-774-2980 MLF@acadiaband.ca

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Completed Projects / Highlights:

District 35 – We currently have 17 harvesters fishing; 45 traps were issued to each harvester with a limit of 4 harvesters per vessel. Limited access to the area leaves Kespuwitk District well below the commercial fishers, who are fishing 300 traps per vessel.

District 33 – 34 – We are currently in preparation for the opening of district 33-34. Expected number of harvesters for these areas to increase from last year in which 13 vessels were registered. For the upcoming season we expect these numbers to be between 17 and 20 vessels.

Harvester meetings are currently taking place to ensure all harvesters will be fishing in compliance of the NLFP.

2023 Elver Fisheries – Large increase from 2022, in which we had 42 participants with a tac (quota) of 6.25kg. Last year the numbers tripled which a tac of 450kg, the harvesters agreed to a competitive fishery. The team will be in discussion very soon regarding the 2024 season. We will discuss with DFO the concern with the allocated tac not being enough to accommodate our harvesters.

Elver meetings will continue to be held for harvesters.

Ongoing Goals and Future Plans:

Regular meetings with DFO

Regular meetings with Leadership

Technical team meetings to review current activity within the fisheries.

Discussion on other fisheries that can benefit our harvesters.

Regular contact with harvesters to enquire about how things are going and to remind them how important it is to fulfill our plan for fisheries to the best of their ability.

Our goal is to see our harvesters with the opportunity to fish other species other than lobster and elver. We will continue to invest our time into giving Indigenous people access to the right to fish for a moderate livelihood.

Membership

DEBRA GLOADE, INDIAN REGISTRATION ADMINISTRATOR

dgloade@acadia band.ca

902-742-0257

Total number of band members : **1994**

Secure Certificate of Indian Status (SCIS) Card : I recommend you apply for a renewal of your status card **6 months** prior to the expiration date on your current card .

A person's registration under the Indian act does not expire. The 10 digit registration number can be used to access certain services. However, registered persons with an expired card may find it difficult to access some services and programs.

For the application to renew your SCIS card , or any questions regarding registration I can be reached at the Yarmouth office or via email.

SOCIAL

Crystal Croff Social Development Administrator
email: crystalcroff@acadiaband.ca Phone: 902-682-2421

Ta'n Etli-tpi'tmk – Mi'kmaq Social Governance Association is still working on the new social assistance policy and its approval. They are currently working to insure all 13 communities have social case workers and have started training in September for those communities that do.

In May a social caseworker was hired to do case management as part of the new social policy.

In September the social program held a basic home maintenance info session in both Yarmouth and Wildcat communities with two members in Yarmouth attending and five in Wildcat. There will be another session held for Gold River in November.

Cathy Gehue retired in October from the social program and the social caseworker was moved into her position. The hiring process for a new social caseworker is ongoing.

The social program has continued with the hot lunch program for children whose families are receiving assistance which is a great benefit to these families.

ISC has provided the social program with additional funding to help alleviate the rising cost of living under the income assistance program.

Unfinished Projects/Ongoing Programming

Social Policy will be ongoing for the next fiscal year

Hot lunch program will be ongoing

I hope to have more community gathering sessions hope to see more members attend.

Jacklyn Cameron – Youth Center Coordinator

afnyouthcenter@acadiaband.ca 902-742-6928 Stephanie Tuplin – Assistant Youth Center Coordinator
Vanessa Doucette – Early Childhood Educator Sandra Lane, Stacey Purdy, Morgan Muise, Loretta Jarvis, Janessa Jarvis – Afterschool/Drop-in workers

The Wasoqopa'q First Nation Head Start program offers a cultural and small group learning experience for First Nations children and community members ages 2-5 years. The program ran from September 2022 – June 2023 with five students. Three students graduated, moving on to pre-primary in public school.

March Break Day Camp was successful with 15 participants and daily activities. To end March Break, we spent a night at Tru Hilton Yarmouth.

Summer day camp runs for eight weeks in the summer. The camp has approximately 20 participants, with weekly themes and beach trips. SuperNova science camp attended for a week, teaching our participants about STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math). In July, we took a day trip to Oaklawn Farm Zoo. In August we did an overnight camp out at the Rose Purdy Community Center field.

The After School Program continues to run daily from 230pm-530pm with 15-20 participants, providing after school care, daily snacks, and activities throughout the school year for students in grades primary – six.

The Drop-in program runs daily from 6pm-8pm. It gives children and youth in the community a safe, supervised space to meet with their peers, access computers and games, work on homework, etc.

We have hosted workshops such as “2Bboys” and “Girl Power” which focuses on healthy relationships, anger, and goal setting. Some other workshops include Wetlands Protection, Wildfires, Language, Cooking, etc.

We have started a Teen Night for youth ages 11 – 17. We have two per month and the turnout has been great. Some of our teen night activities include paint night, trivia night, beaded keychains, and cooking.

Youth Center staff continue to update skills and knowledge through professional development opportunities. Some of the most recent PD includes “Autism PD”, “Jordan's Principle”, “Cultural PD”.



www.acadiafirstnation.ca Toll Free 1-866-670-8086

Gold River Health Centre (902) 627-1245

Hammonds Plains (902) 422-5918

Medway (902) 685-2956

Shelburne (902) 875-2812

Wildcat (902) 682-2421

Yarmouth (902) 742-0257

Yarmouth Health Centre (902) 742-4337

WASOQOPA'Q FIRST NATION