

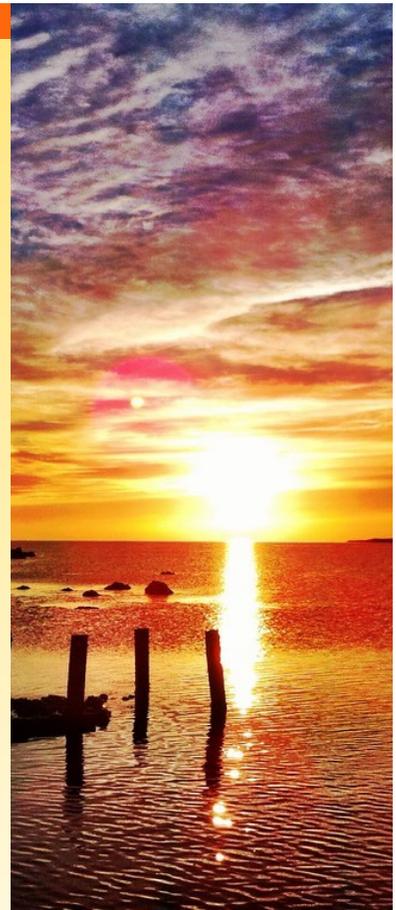
Chief & Council Update

First Nations Financial Management Certification

In December 2019 Acadia First Nation met all required standards under the First Nations Financial Management System Certification. This certification process has been realized by only a few Aboriginal communities in all of Canada. The certification process creates complete transparency through all aspects of day to day operations. The strict audited process accompanied with a new financial laws, allow Acadia First Nation to be completely accountable to all band members in the area of finance.

This journey started in 2018 when AFN received Level 1 certification under the First Nations Management Board. Over a period of 18 months, countless hours were invested by the Finance and Audit committee as well as Chief and Council. This journey included the development of new financial law for the band. The FAC committee worked diligently to re-view policies such as HR, Finance and Governance. The result was a level 2 certification allowing Acadia to finance larger projects for the betterment of community members.

Presently AFN has just completed the Hammonds Plains Administration office and gaming center has been built using this ability to long term finance projects. The Yarmouth Hilton Tru hotel is 35% through completion and is also financed through FMB.



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Band Council

- Deborah Robinson, Chief
- Jeff Purdy, Deputy Chief
- Avis Johnson, Councillor
- Charmaine Stevens, Councillor
- Darlene Coulton, Councillor
- Mike Paul, Councillor
- Rachel Falls, Councillor
- Tom Pictou, Councillor
- Andrew Francis, Councillor



Kespuwick Resources Inc Report

Kespuwick Resources Inc. is our Commercial fishing operation. It is managed by our Fishing Director who works with our Fishery Advisory Committee to make decisions. The Committee consists of the Fishing Director, 3 Elders, 2 of our fishermen, 2 staff members and 2 Councillors. The Committee meets on a regular monthly basis in Liverpool. Committee members receive mileage to attend meetings but are not paid any other form of remuneration.

Kespuwick Resources Inc. is in a strong financial position. All profits from Kespuwick remain in the fishing operation. Funds have been invested and used to expand and diversify our fishery. Our annual financials are audited and posted on the AFN website.

Acadia First Nation has had a long history in the commercial fishery and was included in the application of the Marshall decision that provided Aboriginal peoples with a right to fish as opposed to the privilege of fishing. Acadia First Nation and other Aboriginal communities in Atlantic Canada negotiated with the federal government to make provision for communal Aboriginal access to the commercial fishery. Immediately following the court decision there was tremendous pressure to both provide and acquire the access identified in the court decision.

During the process, there was insufficient time for most bands to develop the governance, financial, administrative and management structures and procedures that would allow the bands to sustainably maintain, while acquiring as much value as possible from this new community resource. While Acadia First Nation has fisheries experience, they too have encountered a number of these challenges.

With a long-term plan, Acadia First Nation feels they are taking a positive step forward by identifying short- and long-term goals as well as identifying steps to take to achieve these goals. Under the direction the Fisheries Advisory Committee, operating with a vision of what and where the Band would like to see Kespuwick Resources go in the future gives Kespuwick more confidence in conducting day to day operations.

Election Update

The Acadia First Nation election for Chief and Council will be held June 13, 2020. Nominations will take place May 5. The Electoral Officer has not yet been confirmed. Once the Electoral Officer is confirmed all necessary information will be shared.

Please be advised that from May 5 to June 13, 2020 band member requests will not be considered. Any emergency requests will be handled by the Band Manager, Lloyd MacDougall. This has been the practice for the last few elections and will continue for the 2020 election.

Since 2011 KRI has purchased several fishing assets with funds acquired through the Atlantic Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative and profit generated from the fisheries. The fisheries have acquired these assets without having any outstanding debt.

- 4 - Fishing Vessels
- 1 - LFA 34 lobster Licenses
- 6 - LFA 33 Lobster licenses
- 1 - Full Bay Scallop License
- 2 - East of Baccaro Scallop Licenses
- 1 - SWNS Bluefin Tuna License
- 1 - Bloodworm License
- 1 - Clam license
- 1 - Longline Groundfish Licenses
- 1 - Swordfish Harpoon Licenses

The Commercial Fishing Enterprise (CFE) is currently considering making lateral investments to further solidify its place in the industry and capture a greater proportion of profit from its fishery activities (i.e. owning their own lobster pound, looking at operating their own repair or boat building facilities, supplying their own bait). However, the review a development of these business ideas is still in the conceptualization phase and the CFE is not able to speak to them formally.

In recent years KRI has aimed at increasing the number of licenses and quota fished in house by adding gear and equipment to increase fishing capacity in the lobster, snow crab and scallop sectors. The Kespwick Advisory committee with direction of a KRI leasing policy lease out a licenses or quota. This policy aids the advisory committee in the bid selection process and outlines fair guidelines to follow when reviewing/selecting qualifying bids.

While the primary investment plan deals with lobster access, it does not exclude the possibility of purchasing other access. While this other access is not identified, it is the nature of the fishing industry that strategic and opportunistic access purchases arise seemingly out of the blue (at times) and it may be the desire of the Chief and Council to take advantage of an opportunistic situation.

The CFE has identified the lobster fishery is the most viable fishery to expand. The CFE has a wealth of experience in the lobster fishery and it hopes to invest in the fishery while the markets are good, the stocks are healthy and while the access is affordable. Also, it is important to mention that we should capitalize on buying lobster licenses while lobster license ownership policies are in our favor. The outlook of the lobster fishery is bright and the purchase of much lobster access as possible is crucial the growth of the CFE. The goal is to have the fisheries be the community's largest economic contributor.

CANNABIS UPDATE

In November of 2019, the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs adopted a province-wide Mi'kmaq Cannabis Regime. The Mi'kmaq Cannabis Regime provides for a single cannabis retail system for each reserve in Nova Scotia.

On February 11, 2020, the Acadia First Nation Chief and Council passed a BCR adopting the Mi'kmaq Cannabis Regime. A copy of that BCR, and the Mi'kmaq Cannabis Regime itself, can be found on our website.

The Mi'kmaq Cannabis Regime is an exercise of inherent self-government. The right of “inherent self-government” reflects that the Mi'kmaq Nation was a sovereign nation prior to contact with Europeans, and self-governed since time immemorial. We did not give up our self-government rights at any time. We do not have to have that right delegated to us by some other level of government.

We are on un-ceded Mi'kmaq Title territory. Our right to self-govern is protected as being implicit in the Treaties. All Aboriginal and Treaty Rights are “communal rights” in that they belong to the Nation as a group. The exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights is intended to benefit the Mi'kmaq communities as a whole.

The advice we have received is that the retail sale of cannabis would be difficult to protect as an Aboriginal Right or as a Treaty Right, since retail sale of similar products in the 1700's would be very difficult to prove.

However, the Mi'kmaq have the inherent right to be self-governing over health, safety and welfare in our communities, and this extends to the regulation of retail cannabis on reserve. In addition, Chief and Council have the right to control intoxicants on reserve under section 85.1 of the Indian Act.

Mi'kmaq Aboriginal and Treaty Rights are subject to regulation by the Mi'kmaq themselves, acting as a collective. Some of this regulation will be done at the local community level. Some regulation is best done through the broader collective, such as through the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaw Chiefs.

Canada and the Province of Nova Scotia may take the position that our Mi'kmaq Rights are subject to regulation by them. We will dispute this position, but recognize that the law on this subject is not well developed, and there may be disputes in court about it.

The main features of the province-wide Mi'kmaq Cannabis Regime are that:

- a) There will be a central Cannabis Control Office which will review applications, issue Mi'kmaq Cannabis Licenses, employ inspectors, etc.
- b) Each community will work under the province-wide regime, but will maintain autonomy over many practical aspects.
- c) Retail stores must be owned either by the First Nation community or by individual Mi'kmaq retailers approved by Chief and Council.
- d) The Cannabis Control Office will designate certain Cannabis Wholesalers. Retailers will have to buy from those designated Wholesalers. Cannabis will be tested to ensure it is not contaminated.
- e) Stores must be in proper retail locations (not homes or sheds).

An online survey done by the Assembly shows the majority of respondents prefer band run stores that benefit all community members. The Acadia Chief and Council agrees, and feels that well-controlled community-operated cannabis dispensaries are the best way to enhance safety and to provide profits that can help the community provide for the health needs of its citizens.

In the future, any sale or distribution of cannabis contrary to our Bylaw will be illegal and an offence. We will be meeting with RCMP officials to ask that Mi'kmaq Cannabis Licenses are respected, and that non-licensed drug dealers in our communities are closed down.

We do not have a date when a cannabis dispensary might be operational at Acadia. We will keep our Band members updated as developments occur.

MODERATE LIVELIHOOD FISHING

The Acadia First Nation implemented its own Food, Social and Ceremonial ("FSC") Fish Harvest Plan beginning in 2017. We did that after extensive consultations with harvesters, elders and other community members. Our community has harvested under an FSC Plan for three years.

We have now begun work on a Harvest Plan for our Moderate Livelihood (Treaty) Fishery. We plan to follow the same basic process as was used for the FSC Plan.

The Moderate Livelihood Fishery is a complex issue with no easy "off the shelf" solution. What works for one Mi'kmaq community in one place may not work for another community in another place. This is going to take a lot of work from a number of people. Moderate Livelihood fisheries are distinct and separate from FSC fisheries, with their own rules and regulations.

Other Mi'kmaq communities have similar interests and are working on their own plans. We consider that Acadia First Nation has a special responsibility for the waters off our area.

The KMKNO office recently did a series of consultations on Moderate Livelihood fish harvesting and have developed a series of guiding principles for consideration. The suggested guiding principles include:

- a) Each Mi'kmaw Community should have a Moderate Livelihood fish harvesting management plan, covering a number of species, based on the Mi'kmaq concept of Netukulimk.
- b) Moderate Livelihood fish harvesting management plans will emphasize resource conservation, environmental standards, and safety.
- c) Harvesting is to be done only by designated Band Members. Harvesting can not be contracted out to others.
- d) Livelihood fish may be sold, traded, bartered or donated.
- e) There will be compliance systems. Gear will be tagged. Catch will be reported.

There will not be time to complete a Moderate Livelihood Fishing Plan for the 2020 season. Chief and Council will be considering these issues over the next months and we expect to be having community consultations, open to all members, starting in the fall.

We will keep the community updated as this work evolves.

Lands & Economic Development Report



Rachel Stevenson, Director of
Economic Development

This report contains a brief summary of the Lands &
Economic Development initiatives set forth by Acadia First
Nation.

Acadia First Nation

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3/2/2020

Economic Development

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Acadia has always engaged a holistic approach to development using a sustainability model that includes social, cultural, environmental and economic development aspects that together will create growth of strong, integrated, healthy communities.

“Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”



VISION¹

- ❖ Acadia First Nation is a welcoming, inclusive multigenerational Mi'kmaw Nation that is unique, self-sufficient, sustainable and successful protecting its waterways and lands, and values the traditions, people, culture and spirituality, carefully utilizing its assets and strengths for sustainability, jobs, culture and recreation.
- ❖ Acadia First Nation is economically strategic, innovative and partnership focused, striving towards unity with a land base of no geographical boundaries, compelling leadership, good governance, accountability and transparency through consistent communication and equality of services for the health and well-being of the nation carried forward to future generations.

MISSION²

“Enhancing the quality of life for Acadia First Nation and their families through community and social development while creating cultural awareness.”

¹ Acadia First Nation – Corporate Strategy 2013

² Acadia First Nation – Strategic Economic Development Strategy 2009, page 3



GUIDING PRINCIPALS³



The Corporate and Economic Development Strategy is built upon the cultural and traditional roots of Acadia First Nation, respecting and honoring its sacred spaces and heritage.



The Strategic Economic Development Strategy fosters the development of responsible transparent and accountable governance principles, consistent communication initiatives across communities, and resilient policy and procedure practices.



The Corporate and Economic Development Strategy is built on the assets and strengths of Acadia First Nation and its people.



Initiatives developed from the Corporate and Economic Development Strategy will continue to draw on knowledge and guidance from the Elders.



The Corporate and Economic Development Strategy fosters development through viable partnerships in economic development and employment opportunities.



The Corporate and Economic Development Strategy promotes reinvestment into the communities through education programs, employment opportunities, housing and health care initiatives.



The Corporate and Economic Development Strategy is built upon research and best practices in First Nation and Aboriginal economic development.



The Corporate and Economic Development Strategy fosters development, promotion of our communities, skills and knowledge of community members, businesses, culture and success



The Corporate and Economic Development Strategy is based on a sustainable approach that takes into consideration all the factors that influence the well-being of a community including economic, social, cultural and spiritual aspects in building a strong economy.



The Corporate and Economic Development Strategy is built on Acadia First Nation's value of protecting, maintaining and sustaining the socioeconomic progress and growth of its communities to ensure stability for now and the future generations.



The Strategic Economic Development Strategy will be adaptable, reflecting changing circumstances and reviewed as required by the Economic Development Department.

^{3 3} Acadia First Nation – Corporate Strategy 2013



STRATEGIC GOALS⁴

-  To preserve and protect the Mi'kmaw culture and heritage of Acadia First Nation
-  To work collaboratively and build relationships and partnerships with agencies and organizations outside Acadia First nation for the betterment of its communities
-  To increase tourism opportunities for the communities of Acadia First Nation
-  To preserve and protect the Mi'kmaw culture and heritage of Acadia First Nation
-  To enhance the commercial, business and industrial development for the communities of Acadia First Nation
-  To increase the skills and capacities of the members of Acadia First Nation
-  To strengthen the governance and organization of Acadia First Nation's social and economic development initiatives
-  To increase Acadia First Nation land ownership
-  To improve the physical infrastructure of the communities of Acadia First Nation

⁴ Acadia First Nation – Strategic Development Strategy 2009, page 6



Capital Projects

- Fuel Stations Re-Branding

In the fall of 2017 all three fuel stations (Yarmouth, Medway & Gold River) transitioned over from Wilson's to Shell branded sites. The transition included new Shell branding on the pump canopies along with new signage and gas pumps at all locations. The transition also brought airmiles which are awarded on fuel and c-store purchases.

- Gold Nugget & Gold Bean Cafe

In December 2017 the new Gold Nugget opened its doors. The 6,000 sq. ft. building was a much needed expansion of the old Gold Nugget and is located in the Gold River community. This also allowed the opportunity to consolidate Gold Reserves into the new building as well. The facility includes fuel, expanded convenience store, gaming (VLT's), Band quota tobacco and the Gold Bean Café. The expansion has created an increased volume in sales and employment opportunities.

The Gold Bean Café is a new business that is managed by AFN. The café serves a variety of coffee & teas as well as having a full menu. The café seats 40+ and has outdoor seating in the warmer months. The cafe has also brought new employment opportunities.

Our partners for this project include Lindsay Construction, Shell/Sobeys Atlantic and Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada.

The total budget for this project was \$3.5M with \$800,000 received from Indigenous Services Canada through the Community Opportunity Readiness program.





Gold Nugget & Gold Bean Cafe – Gold River



Gold Nugget Convenience Store



Gold Bean Cafe

March 2, 2020



- **Your Winner’s World & Winner’s One Stop Restaurant**

In 2018, plans for the Your Winner’s World expansion took place. This involved completing a new business plan and finding a new lot for the new build – the lot on the corner of Highway #3 and Robinson Rd. was identified. This would allow the existing site to operate until the new building was complete. A similar footprint to the Gold Nugget - In November 2018 the new “Your Winner’s World” opened offering expanded options in the convenience store, gaming (VLT’s) & tobacco drive thru.

In January 2019 Winner’s One Stop Restaurant opened, creating new employment positions, full and part time. The restaurant provides a family dining experience with a focus on using fresh, locally sourced ingredients. The restaurant seats approx. 45 with an additional 20 seats outdoors seasonally.

Our partners for this project include Dora Construction, Shell/Sobeys Atlantic and Indigenous Services Canada.

The total budget for this project was \$3.8M with \$1.0M received from Indigenous Services Canada through the Community Opportunity Readiness program.



Your Winner’s World & Winner’s One Stop Restaurant



- Solar Projects

In 2017 the province launched The Solar Electricity for Community Buildings Pilot Program. The program ran from 2017 – 2019 and allowed eligible community entities such as Municipalities, First Nations, and Universities and Not for Profit organizations to secure long-term (20 year) power purchase agreements with Nova Scotia Power.

YARMOUTH

In 2018, Acadia partnered with Natural Forces, a maritime owned renewable energy company, and was successful in bidding a 75 kW photovoltaic solar system project with a 20 year power purchase agreement with Nova Scotia Power Inc.

The panels will be a ground mounted system located behind the Yarmouth Band Office. The project will provide up to 115,000 kWh of clean, emission free power and will displace up to 88,700 pounds of coal annually.

The project is owned entirely by AFN and will be constructed and commissioned by Natural Forces.

Capital funds have recently been secured through the Low Carbon Economy Fund covering approximately 53% of the capital costs and technical design is well under way with construction taking place in 2020.

HAMMONDS PLAINS

In 2019, AFN partnered once again with Natural Forces and was successful a second time in bidding another 75 kW photovoltaic solar system project with a 20 year power purchase agreement with Nova Scotia Power Inc.

Technical planning is in the early stages with exact placement, costing and project timelines to still be determined.



- Tru by Hilton Hotel

A “Tru by Hilton” hotel is currently under construction on the Yarmouth Reserve. Business planning for the Hotel project began in 2018. Tru by Hilton brand falls under the umbrella of Hilton Hotel franchises – Hilton is one of the premiere brands in North America. The hotel will have 89 rooms, 1,000 square feet of meeting space, and will have a pool and water slide.

Not only will this hotel create income for our First Nation and employment for our Band members, it will also contribute to the general economy of the County of Yarmouth and the Province of Nova Scotia. It will create employment and training opportunities. It will provide contract opportunities during construction and during operation. It will also foster tourism for the area, and bring in guests from all over the world into our community to experience our Mi’kmaq culture.



The above graphic is of a standard ‘Tru by Hilton’ design. Our hotel will be slightly different than as shown.

Ground work on the hotel started in the fall of 2019 with construction slated to be complete by early Fall 2020. Once in operation the hotel will employ approximately 35 full and part time staff in the various departments.



- Hammonds Plains Business Centre

Our first new development on the Hammonds Plains Reserve was recently completed. The Hammonds Plains Band Office and Entertainment facility is the first commercial development to be constructed on the property since receiving ‘reserve land’ status in 2017. The property was purchased with the intent to develop and expand the commercial holdings of the Band.

The building consists of a new Band Office, gaming (VLT’s), retail and Band tobacco. The new facility will generate new revenue streams and will create employment opportunities. The building is a high quality commercial facility with an emphasis placed on durability, long life, with low operation and maintenance costs.



Hammonds Plains Business Centre – Hammonds Plains Reserve

Future planning is taking place to develop a master concept plan aimed at maximizing the land’s potential. The 12 acre lot sits in the centre of Hammonds Plains, known for its vast growing sub-divisions and population due to its close proximity to Halifax. It holds great potential for AFN and provides the opportunity for AFN to increase participation in the local economy.



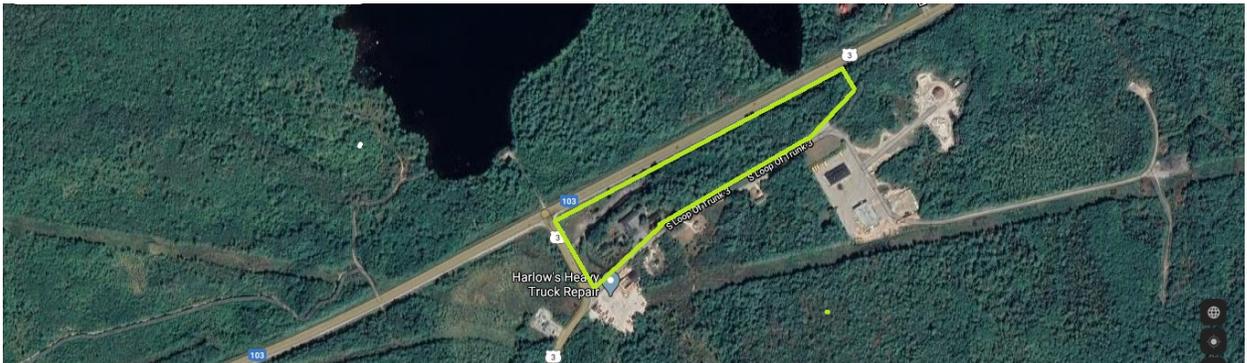
Land Initiatives

SHELBURNE

- In 2017 AFN purchased, through the Ponhook Trust, the 12 acre “Ox Bow Motel” site located in Shelburne County. The lot is adjacent to Highway #103 with a highway exit next to the parcel.
- The following year the buildings on the lot were evaluated and determined to be in very poor condition. A tender for demolition was released and Harlow Construction was contracted to remove the buildings on site, allowing us a clean canvas for future development. A SWOTT analysis was completed which included a traffic impact statement, servicing capacity report, boundary review, governmental regulatory report and a Phase 1 environmental assessment. An application for *Addition to Reserve* is currently being developed along with future planning initiatives.



Old Ox Bow Site – Shelburne County



Shelburne Property – Satellite View



HAMMONDS PLAINS

- On June 20, 2017 Reserve Status was formally granted to the Hammonds Plains property (12.04 acres) which was purchased in 2006 by Acadia First Nation. An application to add this parcel as an *Addition to Reserve* was made in early 2007 to Indigenous Services Canada.

Future planning is on-going to address economic development opportunities, land planning and environmental management.

GARDNER'S MILL

- Gardner's Mill property – located in Yarmouth County – is approximately 2,700 acres. An application for *Addition to Reserve* is currently being finalized. There have been many obstacles throughout this property due to the vast size and waterways throughout the property. Many of these issues have now been resolved which allows us to apply for Reserve status under the new ATR policy that was developed in 2016. Updates will be made available once the process is complete and accepted by Indigenous Services Canada.





Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn Negotiation Office
Mi'kmaq Rights Initiative

Our Rights. Our Future.

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Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn Negotiation Office Updates March 2020

Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn Negotiation Office (KMKNO) continues to work under the direction of the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaw Chiefs (Assembly) and on behalf of our communities. Below is an update on some of our major files and as always, if you would like more information on any of these items, please feel free to contact the us by phone, email or visit us at www.mikmaqrightrights.com.

Negotiations

The Assembly's Negotiation team meets monthly to bring items of concern or the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia forward to Nova Scotia and Canada through the *Made-In-Nova Scotia Process*. KMKNO negotiated an Interim Arrangement for Mi'kmaq to have free access to all National Parks and Historic Sites in NS and for the creation of a Mi'kmaw Advisory Committee, made up of community members, to provide input and advice on Park Canada's planning and operations. Work continues with Park Canada to figure out our Rights in National Parks. Additional examples of discussions that are happening at the negotiations table can be found in the archaeology, Children and Family and Fisheries sections of this update.

Consultation

Consultation team actively working on approximately 600 files under the *Terms of Reference for a Mi'kmaq-Nova Scotia Canada Consultation Process* (TOR). Under the rules of the TOR, when the Federal or Provincial government is planning to make a decision that could potentially impact Mi'kmaq Rights and Title, they are required to formally notify the Assembly. They do so by writing a letter to the Chiefs and Councils and a copy of this letter is sent to KMKNO. The communities can then decide to either take the lead on the file on behalf of the Assembly, they can proceed with consultation on their own, or they can have consultations run through KMKNO, with the Lead Chief overseeing the discussions.

Consultation is currently happening on files that are throughout the KMKNO team and can focus on energy, mining, archaeology, fisheries and transportation issues, as examples.

Archaeology

KMKNO's Archaeology Research Division (ARD) was given the mandate to protect archaeological resources and burials by the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaw Chiefs. The ARD supports the negotiations department doing a variety of research including archaeological, landscape and archaeological policy-related initiatives and is also heavily involved with the consultation process to ensure that the archaeological resources and burials left by Mi'kmaw ancestors are equitably and appropriately protected.

In 2018 and 2019, Acadia First Nation hosted Community Archaeology Gatherings to look at work being done along the Mersey River and at Tusket Falls by Nova Scotia Power (NSP), as well as at Kejimikujik National Park by Parks Canada. KMKNO was honoured to be invited

to listen in on those sessions. After discussions with Elders, Community Members, and Chiefs and Councils of the district, our technical staff put the discussion outcomes into a document to guide archaeological works. This document was made up of Principles; Protocols for Communication, Mi'kmaw Participation, and Reporting, and Standards for Projects, Methods, and including Mi'kmaw Cultural Practices into archaeological projects. The work and focus of the community were so detailed and well thought out that the document developed was adopted by the Assembly in December 2019 for all of the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia.

Also, under archaeology, Working Groups have been set up for the NSP projects with community members in your district, and again, KMKNO team members were honoured to be invited to listen and participate in those discussions. Working Group discussions have been very informative, but recently, these meetings have been halted to allow time for consultation to take place with the province and NSP was unwilling to share archaeology plans with the working group. Is it expected that our working group meetings will recommence in March.

Cannabis

KMKNO supports the Assembly in their work on the cannabis file. While Ulnooweg Development Group Inc. has taken the lead on this work for the Assembly, KMKNO has continued to provide support where needed.

AMI Facility - The Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia are majority owners (51%) of a Health Canada Licensed Cannabis Production facility in Lower Sackville called Atlanticann Medical Inc. (AMI). Production at AMI has exceeded our expectations in terms of both the quantity and quality of our products. AMI has already succeeded in securing an international supply contract for medical cannabis for the German market, and we have been awarded our sales license from Health Canada. In January of this year, AMI added 20,000 square feet to the facility making the expanded facility 68,000 square feet.

Sales - The Province's approach to cannabis has created a flood of individually owned Cannabis retail stores in our communities. Some of our communities have stores operating in residential neighbourhoods, with lax security and no oversight and the Assembly understand that community members have concerns of where the products that are being sold are coming from.

The Assembly has been having discussions with the Province for years as we know that there are remedies in Provincial legislation that can address these concerns but the Province will not pass them. We understand that the Provincial government controls the cannabis retail industry in Nova Scotia, and the Assembly has been clear in each of their meetings with Premier McNeil that we want to work within the Province's legislation. Yet, if we continue not to see flexibility from their government, then we will move forward on our own. Because of this, the Assembly has begun to develop their own cannabis regime for the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia.

Children and Family

Since 2015, the Mi'kmaw of Nova Scotia have engaged in a Mi'kmaw Child Welfare Reform, which resulted in over 25 legislative amendments to the Nova Scotia *Children and Family Services Act* that directly affect the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia. These amendments have changed the way child welfare services are provided to Mi'kmaw children and families in Nova Scotia.

In 2017, the Assembly developed a long-term strategic approach to the Mi'kmaq assuming complete jurisdiction and governance over matters affecting the welfare of all Mi'kmaw children within Nova Scotia. In this approach, the Assembly created the Maw-Kleyu'kik Knijannaq Initiative - which means "Keeping our Children Together". The work of the Maw-Kleyu'kik Knijannaq is housed out of KMKNO and their role is to develop our own Mi'kmaw child welfare law where the Mi'kmaq resume jurisdiction and decision-making authority over our own children. Our goal is to have this work completed by March 2023.

Corporate Structure

The Assembly passed a resolution at their February 28, 2019 meeting to create a new corporate entity for smaller scale economic development opportunities. The new multi-purpose business corporate structure continues to be developed with the Assembly having passed several resolutions and will help to manage and oversee the funds from the Assembly's wind projects, lands company and cannabis company. Most recently, the Board of Wskijinu'k Mtmo'taquinow Agency Ltd. has received presentations from several potential joint venture partners.

Communications

KMKNO is always working to keep our community members, Chiefs and Councils informed on what we are doing and working on. We have a Communications Team that supports the Assembly's Portfolio Leads and all the departments at KMKNO. We develop videos, media releases, speaking notes and articles for the Mi'kmaq Maliseet Nations News, as well as post on KMKNO and the Assembly's Facebook pages and on Twitter, to help get information out. Assembly Highlights are also developed following each meeting and posted on the KMKNO website so that community members can keep up to date on what is discussed at the Assembly table. To join the KMKNO list to receive updates, please let us know at info@mikmaqrights.com

Energy

At KMKNO we have an Energy Advisor working with the Assembly's Lead Chief on Energy to examine opportunities available to communities, this includes in the solar, wind, and the energy efficiency fields, as examples.

In the Summer of 2019, the federal and provincial government announced \$14 million in energy efficiency funding for Mi'kmaw communities over the next four years. The KMKNO Energy Advisor has been working to see what that will mean for communities and how it can result in employment opportunities for community members. To date, work has begun in communities like Annapolis Valley and Bear River on their community buildings to make them more energy efficient. We look forward to this work continuing in all the Nova Scotia Mi'kmaw communities.

Fisheries

We understand how important Livelihood Fisheries are to the Mi'kmaq. There are differing opinions of what a Moderate Livelihood Fishery can look like. We all agree that we want the Mi'kmaq to have a legitimate livelihood fishery that ensures the safety of our people, the conservation of the resources and is governed and managed by the Mi'kmaq.

To ensure Mi'kmaw fishers can safely exercise their rights without fear of persecution from DFO, the Assembly's Negotiation Team would like to explore an interim Netukulimk Moderate Livelihood Arrangement to be in place this Spring, only for a limited period of time, so that we can fully develop a Netukulimk Moderate Livelihood Fishery Regime, with the support and guidance of all of our communities.

While we are exploring interim methods to permit the harvest and sale of fish under our Treaty Right with Canada and Nova Scotia, discussions will also continue with communities on the long-term plans and goals. This is an act of self-governance for the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia.

Any interim arrangement developed will not define moderate livelihood, nor will it take away or impact the rights of the Mi'kmaq. Discussions with Canada and Nova Scotia are in early stages and nothing has been agreed to by the Negotiation Team or the Chiefs.

Governance

Our governance department at KMKNO is always conducting research and engaging the communities to support the Assembly in their various projects. Most recently, our Governance team has hosted sessions with the Mi'kmaw Grand Council and held an Elder and Youth Gathering to talk about many of the important governance issues the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia are looking at and discussing. The goal of the Assembly is that one day, the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia will have their own government where we can deliver our own services and programs, according to our own laws, policies, standards and understandings.

Because of the relationship that has progressed here in Nova Scotia through our Negotiations and Consultation processes, we are proud to say that we were able to see our Chiefs and the Provincial Cabinet meet on an annual basis on a Nation-to-Nation level. This is an opportunity for the Assembly to discuss with the Provincial leaders items of importance to both parties and to work to create ways to continue to work together.

Lands and Forestry

KMKNO continues to look at Crown lands, surplus lands to try to build the lands portfolio for all Mi'kmaq in Nova Scotia through our consultation and negotiations processes. These lands are being looked at and considered for social, economic, cultural and/or environmental purposes. Research also continues on the development of a Mi'kmaq Forestry Initiative, and on how the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia can be fully recognized as co-managers of the lands and resources in National Parks and Historic Sites.

Research

As it is very important to the work of KMKNO and what is being done on behalf of the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia by the Assembly, research continues on the protection of Aboriginal Rights and Title throughout Nova Scotia, and on Mi'kmaq historical use and occupation of the lands and waters of our traditional territory since time immemorial

Social

Work on income assistance rates (social) started in 2011, when the Government of Canada advised our region that they were expecting all Band Councils to implement the Provincial income assistance rates (welfare) in our communities by April 1st, 2012 based upon a 1964 Treasury Board of Canada order.

We knew that the provincial rates in our communities would not work for our people. The Assembly passed a resolution advising the Federal government that we would not implement provincial programs and rates in our communities. We then decided to join the New Brunswick Chiefs in their claim against Canada on this issue in the Federal court. After going through various levels of court, the Supreme Court denied us leave to appeal and we were faced with some scary changes for our communities and our Social recipients. Fortunately, there was also a change in government so, we immediately we called on the new Liberal government and they agreed that they would take a different approach and work with us to support our people.

Since that time, we formalized an agreement with Canada to allow us to research the gaps and differences between our programs and the provincial system. We wanted to ensure that we had a social program that meets our cultural and financial needs, and one that is built in partnership with our community Social Development Administrators. In September 2018, the Assembly signed a second Terms of Reference with Canada. This one focused on the work that was required to plan, develop, negotiate and implement a Mi'kmaq-governed Social system. We are now preparing for negotiations through the *Made-In-Nova Scotia Process* to secure fiscal arrangement with Canada and Nova Scotia for the delivery of a new social program for our people.