



All Our Relations: Emerging Stronger Together

Assembly of First Nations • Annual Report 2019–2020



The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) is the national body representing First Nations governments and approximately one million people living on reserve and in urban and rural areas. The National Chief is elected every three years and receives direction from the Chiefs-in-Assembly. The AFN is dedicated to advancing the priorities of First Nations through review, study, response and advocacy on a broad range of issues and policy matters.

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*AFN Annual General Assembly artwork by Loretta Gould
This piece is entitled, "All Our Relations."*

Loretta Gould is a Mi'kmaq Quilter and Painter known for her love of bright, vibrant, and beautiful colours. Born in 1976, Loretta was raised in Waycobah First Nation by her parents, Annie Catherine (Katie) and Joseph Googoo. At the age of seventeen, Loretta married Elliot Gould and together they raised five children: Dakota, Shianne, Sipu, Phoenix, and Ivy Blue.

Loretta was inspired to begin her quilting journey after spotting a quilt at a mall. Unfortunately, she could not afford to purchase the quilt, so she decided to try her shot at making one herself. She worked in this medium for ten years and since 2010, she has made a living off her beautiful art quilts. Loretta's quilts are hung in the art gallery, Friends United, owned by Rolf Bouman. It was Rolf's insistence coupled with the unfortunate breaking of her sewing machine that first drove Loretta to try her hand at painting in 2013. She has been painting ever since.

Loretta's work has been admired and sold internationally in countries such as Germany and Finland. She hopes that her art will be shared and loved around the world. Through her art, she expresses her spiritual feelings.

Painting is a family practice as she and her husband, Elliot, will work on pieces together that demonstrate their care, commitment, and family unity.

Loretta is entirely self-taught. She uses cotton fabrics for her quilts and acrylic paints on canvas.



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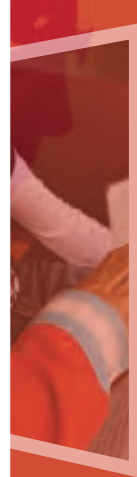


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National Chief Report



Report from National Chief Perry Bellegarde Assembly of First Nations

Chiefs, Councillors, friends, relatives, Elders and Knowledge Keepers, I hope that you are safe, surrounded by loved ones, and in good spirits.

The health and safety of our people is always paramount. In July, we normally hold our Annual General Assembly, but this year the considerable public health risks posed by the COVID-19 pandemic led us to cancel the summer assembly. Instead, I look forward to meeting with Chiefs and delegates again at the December 2020 Special Chiefs Assembly, assuming the public health concerns have been somewhat reduced by then.

This past year saw several significant developments that impact all First Nations:

- A federal election in October 2019 that resulted in a minority Liberal government;
- The swift emergence of a global pandemic that has presented enormous public health and economic challenges; and,
- An explosion of activism and public focus on anti-Indigenous racism, and the excessive use of force by policing services.

AFN's elections priorities document, Honouring Promises, supported our advocacy with all federal parties during the election period. Our advocacy helped shape the Speech from the Throne which contained an entire section devoted to reconciliation – for the first time in Canadian History. It contains many important and actionable commitments, including to:

- co-develop and introduce legislation to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in the first year of the new mandate;
- continue the work of eliminating all long-term drinking water advisories on reserve by 2021, and ensure safe drinking water in every First Nations community;
- co-develop new legislation to ensure that Indigenous people have access to high-quality, culturally relevant health care and mental health services;
- continue work to implement the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, and the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls' Calls for Justice, in partnership with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples;
- work with Indigenous communities to close the infrastructure gap by 2030;
- continue to move forward together to ensure that Indigenous Peoples are in control of their own destiny and making decisions about their own communities;
- ensure that Canada's governments are living up to the spirit and intent of treaties, agreements, and other constructive arrangements made with Indigenous Peoples;
- ensure that Indigenous people who were harmed under the discriminatory child welfare system are compensated in a way that is both fair and timely; and
- continue to invest in Indigenous priorities, in collaboration with Indigenous partners.

In addition to pursuing these priorities, the AFN has made progress in other areas through our collective advocacy, such as:

- signing of an implementation protocol with Indigenous Services Canada to support the priorities of First Nations in the implementation of An Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families;
- securing a commitment for the co-development of legislation to support First Nations policing services;
- a push for investments and improvements in pandemic response that ensure that every First Nation can provide for their citizens;
- in the 2019 federal budget, new investments in Indigenous peoples priorities totalled more than \$4.7 Billion. AFN's advocacy for First Nations budget priorities has been key to bringing total investments over the last four budgets for

Indigenous peoples to more than \$21.4 Billion (allocated over 8 years);

- so far this fiscal year, an additional \$1.4 Billion in funding for Indigenous Peoples' response to the COVID-19 pandemic, of which First Nations can expect at least \$890 Million;
- advancing work on AFN Charter Renewal.

We are working everyday on the fight against overt and systemic discrimination in all aspects of society, but especially the entrenched discrimination in the RCMP and other policing services. And we are pressing the federal government to support a First Nations Restorative justice initiative and systemic reforms within the Justice system.

With COVID-19 changing and realigning the world as we know it, I am proud to see, once again, the true resilience of our people. Chiefs across Canada have demonstrated superb leadership to mitigate the impacts





of this unique public health threat and unprecedented economic shutdown. First Nations have exercised inherent jurisdiction to protect people, led in protective measures and public health communications for First Nations. I lift up and thank the many Chiefs, Councillors, First Nations leaders, Elders, and all the diligent and dedicated women and men who work to move us forward. I believe we will emerge from this period of crisis stronger than ever before.

Together we have been successful in ensuring First Nations' priorities are Canada's priorities. We have reached new heights and worked towards a better future for all.

Since we last gathered in Ottawa in December, I have been encouraged by the warmth and generosity of our brothers and sisters, as well as by their ingenuity. While I would dearly love to visit your communities in person, I suspect it will be many more months before we can safely gather in

person again. In the meantime, I welcome the opportunity to discuss not only the issues before you but the solutions that you see. COVID-19 has forced us into thinking of new ways to serve our people. I am hopeful and confident that we will make it through this trial and will emerge stronger for the journey.

It is my sincere hope that we continue on our path of supporting all First Nations for the benefit of all First Nations citizens. I look forward to the day when we can gather our Nations together once more. Until then, stay safe.

*Kinanāskomitin,
National Chief Perry Bellegarde*



Regional Chiefs' Reports



Interim Regional Chief Leroy Denny & Interim Regional Chief Andrea Paul

Nova Scotia and Newfoundland

Kwe'

It has been a year of transition here in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and we are so honoured to have been chosen to act as interim-Co-Regional Chiefs. We would like to take this opportunity to introduce ourselves.

Nova Scotia's Chief Leroy Denny studied Sports and Recreation at Cape Breton University where he received his Bachelor of Arts, Community Studies in 1999. He went on to receive his Bachelor of Education at St. Francis Xavier University in 2002. Prior to politics, Leroy taught Physical Education for a number of years and promoted healthy active lifestyle in the classroom while incorporating Mi'kmaq language and culture through song and dance.

Chief Andrea Paul was first elected as Chief of Pictou Landing in November 2011. Prior to this, Chief Paul held the position of Band Councillor from 2005 to 2009.

In the past, Chief Paul has worked as an Education Counsellor for Pictou Landing and was one of the leaders in the development of Pictou Landing First Nation School which opened in September 1995. Chief Paul was part of the project to host the Atlantic Native Teachers Education Conference in 2004 in Pictou Landing. This conference focused on technology and gave the community school access to new equipment (computers, laptop, smart boards, cameras, and projectors). Chief Paul's educational and work experience includes Native Education Counselling and the Ontario Native

Education Counselling Association. She holds Bachelor's degrees in both Art and Education. It has always been important that we work together outside of our individual First Nations and work regionally on larger scale initiatives that extend beyond our own borders. That commitment continues to be a priority for us as we advance our Mi'kmaq rights. Together, we hope to continue to advocate for the betterment of all citizens of the Atlantic region.

Health Authority

This past year, our region has seen major advancements in the field of health. In particular, the creation of a Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Health and Wellness Authority (MHWA) has been a remarkable achievement.

Like most of our Nations across Canada, we suffer from a lack of access to medical treatments and are too often faced with systemic racism within the existing health system. Creating our own MHWA gives us control of our own health services, while also taking a comprehensive approach to wellness as it influences the health of our Nation and members. The MHWA is one step towards the achievement of First Nations control and jurisdiction over our own affairs.

We have worked hard to staff the MHWA with employees who understand and care about our vision. We look forward to the continued hard work and dedication that will be needed in order to achieve the realization of our own independent Health Authority.



Water Authority

Access to safe and clean water continues to be a serious issue for several of our nations. This issue is both regional and national as many First Nations across Canada also struggle with access to water that is suitable for drinking.

We have been working towards the creation of the Atlantic First Nations Water Authority (the Authority) that will advocate for access to clean water for First Nations across the region. We are aiming to have the Authority fully operational by Spring 2022.

The Authority will give Indigenous control to the management of assets and water systems. We are proud to announce that Chief Wilbert Marshall of Potlotek is the first Chair of the Atlantic First Nations Water Authority. We look forward to the inauguration of this important institution in our region.

Summer Games

The Mi'kmaq Summer Games are an integral part of our identity as Mi'kmaq people. The 2019 Games were held in We'koqma'q this past year and saw the attendance of nearly 2000 athletes from across the Atlantic region. This annual celebration sees our communities come together in friendly competition in a variety of sports and traditional activities including archery, golf, softball, basketball, and many others. The Summer Games present an opportunity for family and friends to connect and visit while enjoying sport, culture, and celebration.

Housing

While access to affordable and reliable housing is an issue faced and felt by all First Nations, the large urban-Indigenous populace in Halifax is often amongst the most vulnerable of our population. Lack of access to safe, affordable, and even emergency housing remains an issue that we, as leadership, continue to work to mitigate and minimize.

Trilateral government support allowed the Mi'kmaq Native Friendship Centre (MNFC) to purchase and renovate housing for Indigenous Women and Children who are victims of domestic violence. Cultural programming will also be a part of the housing initiatives as we try and empower our women and children.

We are also pleased to announce the partnering of the MNFC with the Out of the Cold Emergency Shelter. This partnership has allowed the shelter to be housed in the MNFC. Our people represent a higher percentage of homeless and at-risk populations, so it is of great importance that we create an initiative that tailors specifically to their needs while also remaining considerate of the realities faced by First Nations in this country. It is our hope that this partnership helps those in need to feel safe and comfortable accessing care that is designed with their needs in mind.

Mekite'tm – Lima Peru Pan Am Games, 2019
In the summer of 2019, we were able to send a delegation of 20 people, including eight Indigenous youth, to the Pan Am Games in





Lima, Peru. The group was able to participate in the opening ceremonies of the Games. The trip featured a cultural exchange with the Indigenous people of Peru, a visit to the ancient city of Machu Pichu, and a showcase of Indigenous youth at the Canadian Embassy in Lima. It was an honour to participate in this joint venture that highlights the importance of Indigenous solidarity and support. We are confident that it was a life-enriching experience for all involved.

Surf Clam Licenses

We are proud to announce that 14 of our 15 regional communities have partnered with Clearwater Seafoods to access surf clam licenses. Sharing revenues will create meaningful, direct and indirect benefits for our citizens while also protecting jobs in the fishing industry.

This partnership is the first of its kind in our region and is expected to be a new and stable source of own-source revenue for our communities. The Clearwater partnership will support us as we continue to expand our footprint and participation in commercial fisheries.

COVID-19

The global pandemic has hit our communities hard, as we are sure it has hit all of yours. We have worked with our regional Chief Medical Officer, the AFN Executive and Chiefs Committee on Health, Health Canada, as well as the First Nations and Inuit Health Branch to respond to the pandemic and regional priorities.

The health and welfare of our community members is our highest priority and we remain committed to following the best medical advice to keep our communities safe. This commitment means following the rules and guidelines set by health authorities, such as maintaining physical distance, wearing a non-medical grade mask when needed, and frequent handwashing.

As the infection rates slow, we must turn our sights to the future. We will need to focus on rebuilding and recovering from the enormous economic impact our communities have faced as a result of the pandemic. It is our hope that we will provide for our businesses, both large and small, so that our economy as First Nations will continue to thrive.

Permanent Regional Chief

The appointment of a permanent Regional Chief is a priority. Much work has been done to find a successful candidate, including holding meetings with all Chiefs in our region. At these meetings, we reviewed criteria and expectations, as well as the job posting with legal advice. Interviews were held, but the position has yet to be filled.



due to COVID-19 restrictions on travel and in-person meetings. Once the restrictions are lifted and Chiefs can again gather safely, the hiring process will be completed. We look forward to welcoming a new and permanent Regional Chief when it is safe to do so.

Looking Ahead to the Future

The past year has been filled with many victories and few setbacks for our region. We are proud of the progress we have made for our rights as Mi'kmaq people. And though both the AFN Annual General Assembly and the North American Indigenous games that were to be held in Mi'kma'ki was cancelled due to COVID-19, we hope to host and celebrate our First Nations in 2021 and beyond.

Likewise, we look forward to filling the position of Regional Chief so that we can be fully engaged in the work of the AFN. Once the position is filled, we can be sure that our communities have the representation they need at national tables.

Wela'liq - thank you

*Regional Chief Leroy Denny
Regional Chief Andrea Paul*





Regional Chief Roger Augustine

New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island

In over 10 years with the Assembly of First Nations, I have never witnessed the challenges we are facing as a country as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, I am impressed and proud with how the Executive Committee has responded and shown true commitment to their people. As we work towards what will undoubtedly be a new normal, the struggle to maintain the status quo during this challenging time has brought out the best in us. The arrival at this time and place in history serves as a reminder of our resilience and our destiny.

Key Activities and Accomplishments:

Nationally, I have been actively participating in the AFN Executive Committee, the AFN Management Committee and the National Fisheries Committee meetings. Recently, our office has become involved in the AFN National COVID-19 Task Force. The team assembled is very focused on reacting to this phenomenon, while preparing for similar incidents in the future. Our Elders and youth deserve the best protection we, as leaders, can provide.

This has been a productive year of transition with new leaders and technicians joining the Assembly of First Nations. I am pleased to report on the regional issues our team has been working on over the past year.

Fishermen's Pow Wow

This annual event, coordinated through my office, brings together First Nations and non-First Nations fishermen in a spirit of peace and friendship. This year was dedicated to

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. We are proud to host this annual event to promote healing our communities through culture.

Garry McLean Day School Class Action

I have worked extensively on this file and have politically advocated for the conclusion of this class action suit. It was a pivotal moment for those communities who have experienced loss of culture and language from attending Day Schools. The announcement of the successful class action is a great step towards reconciliation and healing through the Legacy Fund.

Mental Health Project

As I reflect on my personal growth and that of our people across the country, I am pleased to announce that the Mental Health Project, an important project of mine that will impact and benefit mental wellness and healing, has been approved for funding. Over the course of the next year, extensive work will be coordinated to get this project off the ground. The effect COVID-19 has had on our mental and physical health is a testament to the need for such a facility in our region.

Regional First Nations Successes

I am pleased to share with delegates that there have been many successes in our region. The leaders continue to work diligently to advance their Treaty rights and improve relations for their members.

I would like to congratulate the following First Nations for their determination and leadership to work for their members:

- The Eel Ground First Nation's Day of Action – practicing their inherent Treaty right to snow crab fishing.
- The Pabineau and Eel River Bar First Nations signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Port of Belledune regarding a consultation protocol.
- The Metepenagiag, Natoaganeg and Esgeoopetitj First Nations signed a Memorandum of Understanding of a Friendship Accord with the City of Miramichi and the Eel Ground First Nation.
- Metepenagiag has set the bar for our FN Communities by establishing a successful business venture in the City of Moncton, NB. This large gas bar/truck stop will contribute to own-source revenue, enhancing existing social programs and allowing for future planning.
- The Elsipogtog First Nation and the Government of Canada signed a Memorandum of Understanding regarding Self-Government Protocol for Negotiations.

Other Regional activities are as follows;

NB/PEI Regional Leadership Meetings, Assemblies, and Events

April 2, 2019: Atlantic Policy Congress Executive Meeting, Prince Edward Island
 April 6, 2019: Funeral – Grand Council, Elsipogtog, NB
 April 12, 2019: Dredge Regal Shipping, Miramichi

April 13, 2019: Baie Fisheries/Chief Paul
 April 19-20, 2019: Eel Ground Health Conference
 April 23, 2019: All Chiefs Meeting, Moncton
 April 24, 2019: Eel Ground – Men's Wellness
 May 9, 2019: MTI Meeting, Moncton, NB
 May 10-11, 2019: Atlantic Policy Congress Executive Meeting, Cole Harbour, NS
 May 22, 2019: St. Mary's FN, Fredericton, NB – Chief Polchies
 May 24-25, 2019: Atlantic Policy Congress All Chiefs Forum, Cole Harbour, NS
 May 28-29, 2019: Holland College, PEI
 May 31-June 1, 2019: MTI Meeting – NB Museum St. John, NB
 June 2, 2019: CN Rail – AGA 2020, Bathurst, NB
 June 4, 2019: MTI and Premiere Gallant
 June 7, 2019: Ulnooweg board meeting, Millbrook, NS
 June 8, 2019: MTI meeting with Minister Bennett, Moncton, NB
 June 11, 2019: St. Mary's FN, Lori Nicholas meeting – Culture, Fredericton, NB
 June 13, 2019: MTI with Minister Rogers, Moncton, NS
 June 14, 2019: MTI RE Windfarm Project, Sackville, NS
 June 15-16, 2019: Nationhood of Mi'kmaq Chiefs, Membertou, NS
 July 2-6, 2019: Hosted AFN Annual General Assembly, Fredericton, NB





Quarter Two – July 2019 – September 2019

July 12, 2019: MTI Chiefs, NSMD,
Moncton, NB
July 17-20, 2019: Council Retreat, PEI
Sept 21, 2019: MCPEI Fundraiser
Sept 26-28, 2019: Atlantic Policy Congress
All Chiefs Forum, Dartmouth, NS

***Quarter Three – October 2019 –
December 2019***

Oct 2, 2019: Atlantic Policy Congress First
Nations Caucus, Dartmouth, NS
Oct 2-3, 2019: Atlantic First Nations Health
Partnership, Dartmouth, NS
Nov 13-15, 2019: Atlantic Policy Congress
First Nations Health Conference,
Dartmouth, NS
Nov 16, 2019: Atlantic Policy Congress
Executive Committee meeting,
Dartmouth, NS
Nov 23, 2019: Atlantic Policy Congress
Executive Committee meeting,
Dartmouth, NS
Nov 27-29, 2019: First Nations Self
Government Summit, Halifax, NS
Nov 30, 2019: Ulnooweg Board Meeting,
Millbrook, NS

Quarter Four – January 2020 – March 2020

Jan 7, 2020: Atlantic Policy Congress Senior
Committee meeting, Cole Harbour, NS
Jan 9, 2020: Atlantic Policy Congress
Executive Committee meeting, Cole
Harbour, NS
Jan 22, 2020: First Nations Caucus,
Moncton, NB
Jan 23-24, 2020: First Nations Health
Partnership Meeting, Moncton, NB
Feb 19-21, 2020: Atlantic Policy Congress
Housing Forum, Dartmouth, NS

Mar 12, 2020: Atlantic Policy Congress Senior
Committee conference call
Mar 20, 2020: Atlantic Policy Congress
Executive Committee meeting, Cole
Harbour, NS

***Special Portfolio Meetings/Activities
– National Fisheries Committee/
Management Committee/Indian
Day School***

Quarter One – April 2019 – June 2019

June 18, 2019: Gowlings Group – Indian Day
School, Eel Ground, NB
June 30, 2019: Gowlings Group – Indian Day
School, Ottawa, ON

Quarter Two – July 2019 – September 2019

Sept 18, 2019: AFN Management Meeting,
Ottawa, ON

***Quarter Three – October 2019 –
December 2019***

Oct 29-30, 2019: National Fisheries
Committee Meeting, Vancouver, BC

Quarter Four – January 2020 – March 2020

Jan 8-10, 2020: APC Annual Fisheries
Conference, Moncton, NB

AFN Executive Meetings and Other National Activities

April 9-10, 2019: AFN Executive Meeting/
Management Committee Meeting,
Ottawa, ON
April 17-18, 2019: National Indigenous
Diabetes Conference, Halifax, NS
April 30, 2019: AFN Executive meeting,
Ottawa, ON
May 1-3, 2019: Special Chiefs Assembly on
Federal Legislation
July 1, 2019: AFN Executive – Canada Day on
the Hill, Ottawa, ON
July 2-6, 2019: AFN Executive meeting and
Annual General Assembly, Fredericton, NB
Sept 11-12, 2019: AFN Rights Recognition
Framework, Gatineau, QC
Sept 18-20, 2019: AFN Executive meeting,
Ottawa, ON
Oct 29-30, 2019: AFN Executive meeting,
Ottawa, ON
Nov 19, 2019: AFN Executive meeting,
Conference Call
Dec 2-6, 2019: AFN Executive meeting and
Special Chiefs Assembly, Ottawa, ON
Jan 8, 2020: AFN Executive Conference Call
Jan 13-14, 2020: AFN Executive meeting,
Ottawa, ON
Feb 4-6, 2020: AFN Executive meeting,
Ottawa, ON
Feb 12-13, 2020: AFN National Education
Conference, Halifax, NS
Feb 22, 2020: AFN Executive Committee
conference call
Mar 2-5, 2020: AFN National Climate
Change Conference, Yukon
Mar 6-8, 2020: AFN National Housing
Forum, Toronto, ON

Conclusion:

In closing, I would like to thank my colleagues and the staff of the Assembly of First Nations for their commitment to working for the benefit of all First Nations peoples. Together, we will continue to work towards the advancement of First Nations rights and title and Treaty rights across the country.





Regional Chief Ghislain Picard

Quebec-Labrador

Introduction

Regional Chief Ghislain Picard is Innu from the community of Pessamit. Since 1992, he has held the position of Chief of the Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador (AFNQL), a political organization representing 43 Chiefs of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador. RC Picard is the portfolio holder for Justice and Policing and Border Crossing at the AFN.

Key Issues and Activities

Optimizing the AFNQL

Since July 2019, two meetings of the AFNQL Chiefs have been held: one in September and one in November. Processes to optimize the AFNQL are underway in the form of a draft relationship protocol between the First Nations of the AFNQL. This draft protocol addresses the role of the AFNQL Chief and the role of the portfolio chiefs at the regional level. This draft protocol is a living document that aims to provide a framework for political procedures at the regional level.

An ad hoc committee, comprised of four chiefs from four different nations, was formed and mandated by the Assembly to manage the political leadership of this exercise. Proposals were submitted to the Chiefs during various assemblies and many working meetings were held. A document outlining the additions and comments of the Chiefs was finally presented and approved at the February 2020 assembly in Gatineau, QC.


The draft protocol reflects the current context in which the AFNQL operates and it confirms the mandate given to the Regional Chief. This document speaks to how the diversity of languages and cultures of the regrouped nations are represented, as well as where they are expected to work in the two second languages (i.e. French and English).

Though the challenges remain daunting, the solidarity and will of joining forces are even more present than ever amongst the Chiefs.

The Political Relationship with the Federal Government

Following the October 2019 federal election, the Chiefs of Quebec-Labrador expressed their intention of maintaining relationships with the newly elected Parliamentarians. They expressed the wish to hold an assembly in Gatineau, in the National Capital region, in order to facilitate meetings with Parliamentarians.

One of the priorities of the AFNQL Chiefs remains the legislative recognition by the Canadian Parliament and the implementation of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. A bill reflecting this priority did not pass in the Senate in 2019. Though the Chiefs were very disappointed, they clearly indicated their intention to revisit this issue and to take every opportunity to do so. Bill C-92 is of great importance as it seeks to correct major deficiencies in services to First Nations children and families.



These deficiencies continue to have extremely serious consequences. Recognition of First Nations jurisdiction in areas which are under their complete authority is a major step forward. However, the obstacles to the implementation of this important Bill impacts the First Nations relationship with the government of the province of Quebec.

At the federal level, the financial relationship between Canada and First Nations is of the utmost importance. A regional mobilization process was initiated last May with the AFNQL's regional commissions and organizations. Three main areas emerged: improving communications, fostering skills development, and addressing service issues for members living outside the communities. Follow-up actions are being taken and include: improving regional cooperation on all levels and improving cooperation to help nations absorb the amount of transformations undertaken since the division of the federal Department of Indigenous and Northern Affairs into two new departments.

The Political Relationship with the Provincial Government

Since the October 2018 Quebec election, the political positions taken by the Government of Quebec have become major issues facing the AFNQL, particularly with regard to the follow-up on the recommendations from the Viens Commission's report on *Relations between Indigenous Peoples and certain*

public services in Quebec and the report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women. The AFNQL has provided analysis on the recommendations from the two reports.

On October 17, 2019, a meeting was held with the Minister responsible for Indigenous Affairs of Quebec, Sylvie D'Amours, to bring together the parties involved in the follow-up of the two reports. The meeting was focused on determining the priorities at the political level and advancing the Calls to Action and Calls for Justice as determined by the two commissions of the Inquiry. It was proposed that the Indigenous leaders (AFNQL, Inuit, Cree, Naskapi) set up a political table with the intention to hold a meeting in June or July 2020 to review the situation with the Government of Quebec. A second meeting with Minister D'Amours will be held before the end of the year. The implementation of the United Nations Declaration will be on the agenda, as well as the follow-up of actions following the reports of the two Inquiries. The agenda will also address those who are "forgotten" (i.e. the families of missing and murdered women and girls, victims of forced sterilization, etc.).

In the context of ongoing pre-budget consultations with the Government of Quebec, the AFNQL will meet with the Minister of Finance of the Government of Quebec and a strategy will be put in place to improve the conditions of our population.





The Special Commission on Children's Rights and Youth Protection is also an important consideration of the AFNQL. This commission addresses all First Nations facing the serious problem of over-representation of their children in the child protection system in Quebec. We have worked toward the implementation of the Bill C-92. The province of Quebec continues to challenge the validity of the assertion of First Nations rights in federal legislation before the courts. This position of closure and exclusion by Quebec continues to create barriers to the expression of First Nations rights.

A second edition of the Summit of Mayors and Chiefs was held last August with the objective of fostering an understanding with the surrounding municipalities and to identify solutions resulting from mutually-shared issues, such as the First Nations workforce and the promotion of "living together."

COVID-19

The current COVID-19 pandemic has monopolized the energies of First Nations governments and institutions. Their combined efforts appear to have had a positive impact, as the infection rates of the First Nation population have been relatively low. For the time being, our efforts must remain constant. It is important to emphasize that in critical times with significant issues such as these, the relationships – both good and bad – with other governments, play a key role in the betterment of First Nations realities that the AFNQL is trying to achieve.

*Regional Chief Ghislain Picard
Quebec-Labrador*

Regional Chief RoseAnne Archibald

Ontario

Wahcheeyay Misiway,

It is my pleasure to present my 2019-2020 annual report as Ontario Regional Chief.

The start of 2020 has certainly been memorable and will go down in history as a world-altering year where we, as citizens of mother earth, are in the midst of re-creating a new reality where we can all live in peace and safety.

Over my term as Regional Chief, I focused on leading with a heart-centred approach and creating space for our First Nations to advance our priorities. This focus has become more important than ever.

As we move forward in this unprecedented and uncertain time, I will continue to create more space and opportunities for meaningful dialogue with concrete action.

My work in the past year has focused on engagement with the federal and provincial government of Ontario, balancing my regional work with my AFN portfolio responsibilities, establishing healthy relationships between my office and the Chiefs of Ontario (COO) Secretariat and, most recently, responding to the COVID-19 global pandemic.

Extraordinary situations like these test our collective will but can also bring out the best in humanity. With the unpredictable and unclear situation around COVID-19, our communities are navigating through a dangerous time with few precedents, in a world where we need unity like never before.

I am proud to say that we are moving through this cooperatively, while respecting each other's decisions. We will persevere, emerging stronger together.

COVID-19 Global Pandemic

Since COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic on March 11, 2020, it has forever changed our world. First Nation leaders, such as the AFN Regional Chiefs, have been at the forefront of adjusting quickly to fluid situations and doing our part to keep First Nation citizens safe from harm through the development of timely information, tools and resources for First Nations.

The work in my office continues to be guided by the higher purpose of preserving and protecting the health, well-being and lives of First Nation citizens during the COVID-19 pandemic. Some nations, are impacted more severely than others and I ask you to continue sending your prayers to all communities. Together we are working towards finding solutions that will support the specific needs of our nations and citizens.

My office holds several weekly meetings with chiefs and leadership, provincial and federal authorities, cabinet ministers, health care professionals and technicians. COO has a dedicated website page highlighting the meetings, links to support services, and daily updates on news and announcements regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. Lockdowns, checkpoints and curfews have served as a shield of protection in keeping our infection rates low. I want to reiterate my support for the state of emergency





declaration and the motion passed by the AFN Executive Committee. The motion called for increased resources and support for First Nations and that funding be provided on a “needs and equity basis.”

Federal and Provincial Government Engagement

This past year I have worked at strengthening positive relations with both federal and provincial levels of government. In October 2019, the Leadership Council had its first formal meeting with Premier Doug Ford. This meeting resulted in my invitation to the Council of Federations reception in December 2019, where I was able to meet a number of Premiers from across Canada. Over the course of the year, I’ve had calls and meetings with Ontario Cabinet members including Minister Rod Phillips, Minister Vic Fidei, Minister John Yakabuski, Attorney General Doug Downey and Minister Christine Elliott. This relationship-building has resulted in strong ties with the province during the COVID-19 pandemic and ensured that I continue to stay in regular contact with Premier Ford and Minister Greg Rickford. I also maintain good relations with key public servants such as Indigenous Affairs Ontario (IAO) Deputy Minister Shawn Batise and Deputy Solicitor General Deborah Richardson.

On the federal side, I had a one-on-one call with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, during the Wet’suwet’en/Tyendinaga crisis. Along with fellow AFN Executive Committee members, I spoke with Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. I have also been

in regular contact with Indigenous Services Minister (ISC) Minister Marc Miller and his predecessor Seamus O’Regan. I’ve also had interactions and brief meetings with a number of federal ministers over the past year including Minister Carolyn Bennett, Minister Catherine McKenna, Minister Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister Bill Blair and Attorney General and Minister of Justice David Lametti. I also have positive relations with key federal public servants such as ISC Ontario Regional Director General, Anne Scotton. My aim in building relationships is to advocate for individual and collective First Nations needs and to ensure that leadership can connect with government officials as required.

AFN Portfolios

Education

This past spring, I stepped back from the AFN Education portfolio so that I could focus my energies and work on matters within the Ontario Region. Prior to that, I was responsible for K-12 issues nationally and co-chaired the AFN Chiefs Committee on Education (CCOE) with Regional Chief Bobby Cameron. The AFN Education Sector has held two successful K-12 Education Transformation Forums in May and October 2019. The forums provided a platform for sharing information, exchanging best practices and highlighting regional experiences in education transformation. In August 2019, the Education Partnership Program (EPP) made recommendations for minor and major changes to the program and can now work towards regionalizing program dollars.



AFN Women's Council (AFNWC)

I am blessed to work with an amazing group of women nationally in the AFNWC. These women have made the National Inquiry into MMIWG a focus and priority in their work. Sadly, Chief Celia Echum, Ontario's representative on the AFNWC passed away suddenly in April. The AFNWC, in a beautiful gesture, planted trees in her honour. Her replacement, former Nishnawbe Aski Nation Deputy Grand Chief Anna Betty Achneepineskum is a strong leader and will now represent Ontario on the AFNWC. I look forward to our continued work together.

AFN Management Committee

This committee's main function is an interim review step prior to the AFN Executive Committee passing motions on management/administrative matters. Meetings are usually held every other month or as required. I'm proud to serve in this committee with four other Regional Chiefs: RC Roger Augustine, RC Kluane Adamek, RC Marlene Poitras and RC Bobby Cameron.

Water

I am the lead for Water and work closely with Regional Chief Kevin Hart who leads Housing and Infrastructure. Ontario leadership has been participating in the AFN's Chiefs' Committee on Housing and Infrastructure (CCOHI) meetings, including attending the AFN's housing forum in Toronto in March 2020. The AFN CCOHI guides both our work. In 2019-2020 a focus of the AFN Secretariat has been on continuing the co-development process for repeal and replacement of the

Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act (SDWFNA) and the Long-Term Water and Wastewater Strategy.

After several engagements, the AFN presented a preliminary list of concepts to be included as part of the Long-Term Strategy and further refined those concepts at the 3rd Annual National Water Symposium and Tradeshow in November of 2019. At the Special Chiefs Assembly, Resolution 78/2019, *Endorsement of the Preliminary Table of Contents for a First Nations Long-Term Water and Wastewater Strategy Post-2021*, was passed. The AFN Housing, Infrastructure and Emergency Services Sector continues to refine a co-development process with the Department of Indigenous Services Canada.

I continue to support and encourage Autumn Peltier's important work as the Anishinabek Chief Water Commissioner. Autumn shared her strong beliefs on environment and water on

a panel at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland in January 2020, putting more pressure on politicians in Canada to provide clean water for First Nations.



Collaborating with the AFN Women's Council to ensure the 231 Calls for Justice from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Women and Girls are implemented.



The Path Ahead

As we move out of the pandemic, there will be much work ahead. Three things that I will focus on in the year ahead are as follows:

Economic Rebuilding

First Nations will play an important role as the Ontario government proceeds in rebuilding and strengthening the economy. Economic development is not only about growing local economies but also about growing in a manner that benefits greater partnerships. To accomplish this goal, my office is revamping an existing proposal that will be submitted to the Ontario government. The purpose of the proposal is to bring First Nations, government, and industry together in order to create strategic investments, create opportunities for long-term social transformation, and improved education and housing for First Nations.

Revitalizing Traditional Trade/Commerce Between First Nations

First Nation trade routes and agreements have existed between Nations prior to the arrival of settlers. The relationships and systems established many generations ago provided the foundation for a successful economy for First Nations. As we move toward a post-COVID world, First Nations have the opportunity to reimagine or reignite economic systems that could ensure all First Nations have their basic needs met, have food sovereignty and food security, and have

a fair and accessible market to ensure their skills and knowledge can be used to sustain their communities. My office is producing a concept paper on this issue that will be provided to First Nations leaders to consider as we proceed along this path together.

A Strategic Approach to Government Relations

In the fall of 2019, First Nation leadership participated in two strategy sessions from which the documents *Towards a New Relationship* and *Standing Together* were produced. These documents included First Nations priorities at the federal and provincial level respectively. My office will follow a strategic approach that respects the nation-to-nation relationship where First Nations can work in a cooperative and collaborative environment with the federal and provincial government to implement individual and shared priorities.

Celebrating Successes in Ontario

Many successes are happening across our nations but due to COVID-19, it is difficult to celebrate in person with them. Bearing that in mind, here are a few that I want to acknowledge:

- Grassy Narrows First Nation moved closer to its goal of building a care home on reserve for those sickened by industrial mercury poisoning after the Federal Government signed an agreement to cover the entire projected cost of construction. The agreement, reached in April 2020



between Minister Marc Miller and Chief Rudy Turtle, commits Ottawa to spend \$19.5 million to build the home.

- Construction was completed in October 2019 on the Henvey Inlet First Nation wind project – the largest on a First Nation in the country. The landmark project is the largest single-phase wind facility and the largest on-reserve wind installation in Canada.
- Beausoleil First Nation is set to benefit from a combined \$16.5 million in federal and provincial grants that will help fund wharf renovations, a new ferry and will help pave the island's dirt roads.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I want to acknowledge the strength and resiliency of the Leadership, Chiefs and Councils across our region and all leadership across Canada. With a unified approach, we will be emerging stronger together. It is my great honour to serve with you during this historic time.

Wishing you peace beyond all understanding.

Ninanaskamon!

RoseAnne Archibald
AFN Ontario Regional Chief



At the 2019 AFN Special Chiefs Assembly, Youth Council co-chair Rosalie LaBillois spoke about Indigenous youth suicides occurring in First Nations. She stated that more needs to be done to help youth, and that leadership needs to listen, “with an open heart and mind.” As we move forward into a whole new decade, in a new reality, it is my plan to continue to work with the young people from across the country to develop a strategic approach on how we address the issues that affect them.



Regional Chief Kevin Hart

Manitoba

It is with great honour that I present my annual report as Manitoba Regional Chief for the Assembly of First Nations (AFN). This past year has seen investments with many projects underway across the region.

With further investments by the federal government, more work and advocacy are needed to advance the self determination of First Nations in the Manitoba region. Chiefs and Councils' are working diligently with very limited resources to address the increasing demand with one of the fastest growing populations in Canada.

There is hope and prosperity with what we have witnessed in the Manitoba region as Treaty 1 First Nations celebrate the final hurdles of the Kapyong Barracks to make way for the initial phases of residential and retail development in the City of Winnipeg. This is a huge victory for Manitoba First Nations who strive for economic self-sufficiency.

It is important for First Nations to participate in green economies moving forward. Fisher River Cree Nation has been successful in their creation of a seven-acre solar farm with over 3000 solar panels. Chief David Crate states that this is one of the largest solar farms owned by a First Nation in Manitoba. This solar farm will help us lead the way through our participation in the green economy.

We have had our share of emergency events in Manitoba, including a significant weather event that led to the collapse of critical infrastructure and resulted in a loss of over


4400 hydro poles and 22 metal towers. The 22 First Nations directly impacted declared states of emergencies, which resulted in evacuations to urban centres. For impacted First Nations, these evacuations lasted a minimum of 17 days and ranged up to 45 days in total. First Nations are still feeling the negative impacts caused by this natural disaster and continue to work towards reimbursement of funds that used during these states of emergency.

We are in special times and circumstances during the global outbreak of COVID-19, with direct impacts on all 64 First Nations in Manitoba. Bearing witness to the impacts of COVID-19 both internationally and nationally, First Nations have responded by declaring states of emergency to protect their most precious resources: women, children, and our Knowledge Keepers.

It is apparent, as indicated by all leadership in the Manitoba region, that COVID-19 infrastructure stimulus funding is needed to provide critical investments in housing and green infrastructure, as well as repairs, retrofits, and upgrades to aging infrastructure.

Social Development Sector

As the national portfolio holder for Social Development, I am guided by key areas of work that include Child and Family Services, Jordan's Principle, Early Learning and Child Care, Income Assistance, and Poverty Reduction. The Social Development work and mandate has been guided by a vision of First Nations determination, sovereignty,



jurisdiction, control, and partnerships between First Nations and all levels of government, with a respectful, comprehensive, and integrated approach to social development that builds capacity among all First Nations.

Child and Family Services

Guided by AFN Resolution 53/2018, Federal Legislation on First Nations Child Welfare Jurisdiction, the Social Development sector has advocated for the enactment and implementation of federal First Nations child and family services (FNCFS) legislation. On February 28, 2019, Bill C-92, An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families (the Act), was introduced. The Act received Royal Assent on June 21, 2019 and came into force on January 1, 2020.

First Nations-led implementation of the Act, with direction and mandate to create and direct the Chiefs' Committee on Child and Family Services and Self-Determination (Chiefs' Committee), is guided by AFN Resolution 16/2019, An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Metis children, youth and families-Transition and Implementation Planning.

The Chiefs Committee's mandate is to provide input and guidance during the implementation of the Act. The First Nations National Transition Planning Committee on Child and Family Services (FNNTPC) was sanctioned as an advisory body to advise the Chiefs' Committee regarding implementation of the Act. These Committees met several times to advance the implementation of the Act, and negotiated the Protocol regarding An Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families in relation to the Assembly of First Nations (the Protocol),

agreeing to a First Nations distinctions-based approach to implementing the Act between the AFN and Indigenous Services Canada (ISC).

In March of 2020, the Chiefs Committee made a historic motion to support the Protocol. This Protocol will establish a joint working group and a mechanism to ensure the specific needs of First Nations are included and respected during implementation of the Act.

In September 2019, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (CHRT) ordered Canada to pay compensation to victims of Canada's discriminatory conduct in relation to the funding and delivery of the FNCFS Program and Jordan's Principle. The CHRT ordered the maximum allowable compensation under the Canadian Human Rights Act to be paid to survivors and their family members for their suffering. The process to distribute compensation is under discussion with the Parties to the CHRT (the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society, Chiefs of Ontario, Nishnawbe Aski Nation, ISC and the Canadian Human Rights Commission). Canada has filed for judicial review of this ruling.

In January 2020, the AFN filed a monumental \$10 billion federal class action lawsuit against Canada for the pain and suffering endured by survivors of Canada's discriminatory FNCFS Program, seeking compensation for survivors and their family members. The class action expands on the CHRT's order, seeking compensation for all individuals harmed by the FNCFS system, including those who were not covered under the CHRT's decision.





NAC

The National Advisory Committee on First Nations Child and Family Services Program Reform (NAC) was reinstated in 2016 to inform recommendations for medium- and long-term relief related to the CHRT decision and to provide general advice on program reform, including the implementation of Jordan's Principle.

The NAC is a joint committee of FNCFS experts, the AFN, First Nations Family Caring Society, and ISC. The NAC continues to meet on a regular basis to provide ongoing advice to FNCFS reform efforts. The NAC provided feedback to the Institute of Fiscal Studies Democracy (IFSD) study and formation of a funding model for FNCFS. The NAC has also provided input on the Act, its needed amendments, and strategies for implementation. The NAC has further reviewed and provided comments and guidance to ISC on major program area documents including the Program Terms and Conditions, the National Recipients Guide and Prevention Directive.

Jordan's Principle

I continue to fight and advocate for implementation of the CHRT orders through the Jordan's Principle Action Table, the Jordan's Principle Operations Committee (JPOC), the Consultation Committee on Child Welfare (CCCW), and regular bi-lateral engagement with federal departments. Through AFN Resolution 15/2019, Jordan's Principle Operations, we have been able, with our combined efforts and advocacy, to improve coordination between the various bodies advancing Jordan's Principle, including working towards regional representation on the JPOC and beginning an evaluation of the structures that interact with Jordan's


Principle. This is vital work to advancing needs and assessments in First Nations.

The first ever national Jordan's Principle Service Coordinators Gathering was held on Kanien'kehá:ka Territory in Montreal, Quebec on November 13-14, 2019. The Gathering brought together more than 150 Jordan's Principle Service Coordinators, navigators, leaders, technicians, and federal officials.

While Budget 2019 invested up to \$1.2 billion over three years to continue to support First Nations children to access the health, social, education and other products and services they need to thrive, this investment did not support the innovative policy options that the Jordan's Principle Action Table advanced. The AFN continues to advocate for the First Nations vision for the long-term implementation of Jordan's Principle.

Early Learning and Child Care

The Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care (IELCC) Framework commits \$1.7 billion over 10 years to strengthen early learning and childcare programs and services for Indigenous children and families across Canada (starting in 2018-19). A regional funding allocation of \$14,668,178 per year was allocated to Manitoba First Nations for years 1 to 3 (fiscal years 2018-19, 2019-20, and 2020-21). Per the conditions set between First Nations and the Government of Canada, 10% of this funding is to be utilized for partnerships and governance activities (\$1,466,818) and is used each year to further the work in the development and implementation of a First Nation Early Learning Child Care (ELCC) regional structure. The Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre (MFNERC) continues to assist with this development.



For funding to First Nations ELCC Programs in Manitoba First Nations, (90%) 13,219,300 has been available for 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21. The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs has been tasked to distribute the money to Manitoba First Nations.

The ELCC engagement and development work has been performed by the ELCC Unit under the leadership of a manager and a leadership appointed advisory committee. Since August 2019, the ELCC has been administered by MFNERC and the ELCC unit is located at the MFNERC office. This arrangement will conclude at the end of the 2019-20 fiscal year, at which time a Transformation Plan Toward Regional Governance (Transformation Plan) will guide the transition of the current operations of the ELCC Unit into a self-determined regional governance structure. It is recommended that the new regional governance structure will be overseen by a to-be-established leadership-appointed Board of Directors and its operations will be led by a newly appointed First Nations ELCC Secretariat. Working together under the guidance of an Elder and the Board of Directors, the Secretariat will oversee the allocation and distribution of ELCC funds at the regional level and the implementation of the Manitoba First Nations ELCC Strategy which is based on the ELCC engagement sessions.

The ELCC Unit was tasked with developing the Transformation Plan under the direction of the leadership appointed ELCC Advisory Committee. To ensure all recommendations for the Transformation Plan reflect the voice of and respond to the needs of First Nations, the ELCC Unit led an extensive series of local engagement and community consultation work.

Per AFN Resolution 59/2018, First Nations Early Learning and Child Care Regional Funding Allocation Approach, and AFN Resolution 64/2019, Extension of Interim Funding Model for First Nations Early Learning and Child Care, the AFN, the NEWG and its sub-working group on Funding Allocation Formula Development continue to work towards a new funding model for First Nations ELCC. The National Expert Working Group (NEWG) and sub-working group members have provided regionally specific input on considerations for a new funding model. Work towards a new model continues, with a new model expected to be brought forward to the First Nations-in-Assembly for validation by December 2020.

I lift up and am honored to work with, as national portfolio holder, Chiefs and technicians from many First Nations, NEWG on First Nations ELCC and support implementation of the IELCC Framework. The AFN and NEWG have continued to support communications to regions regarding the IELCC Framework and have monitored the implementation of the Framework regionally and nationally.

Income Assistance

The AFN Technical Working Group on Social Development (TWGSD) was established by AFN Resolution 28/2018, Support for the establishment of a Technical Working Group on Social Development, with the mandate to advise ISC on social development program and service reform. The TWGSD met numerous times over the past year and made progress advocating to ISC for important changes to the on-reserve Income Assistance (IA) Program.





An independent study led by the AFN and TWGSD will fill gaps in knowledge which presently hold back efforts to induce change. To this effect, the TWGSD has developed a scope of the project and a proposal to submit to ISC.

Poverty Reduction Strategy

The AFN TWGSD was mandated to work on Poverty Reduction by AFN Resolution 47/2018, First Nations Oversight of Canada's National Poverty Reduction Strategy. This resolution also directed the AFN to advocate for a position on Canada's new National Advisory Council on Poverty. Members of the Council were formally announced on August 21, 2019. Despite the AFN's advocacy, no representative from the AFN was appointed; however, there are two First Nations members bringing lived and professional experience to the Council. The TWGSD has connected with the Council and plans to meet to discuss First Nations-specific poverty issues.

Housing, Infrastructure and Emergency Management Services

Water

First Nations continue to face urgent unsafe drinking water issues, made more important in light of impacts from COVID-19. Long-term drinking water advisories remain in effect in First Nations across the country. The federal government has committed to eliminating all long-term drinking water advisories (DWAs) on community systems on-reserve (there are 1,047 such systems) by 2021 and has allocated resources to achieve that commitment. To date, there exist 61 long-term advisories still in place, to be addressed in less than a year.

Part of achieving and maintaining the elimination of all DWAs is the creation of legislation that adequately, properly, and respectfully fills the regulatory gap regarding safe drinking water on reserves. Budget 2016 provided \$1.8 billion over five years and Budget 2018 provides an additional \$172.6 million over three years, beginning in 2018-19, to improve access to clean and safe drinking water on reserves. Budget 2019 allocated a further \$133 million over 2 years to ensure that DWAs once addressed do not return.

In 2019-2020 the focus of the AFN Water Unit has been on continuing the co-development process for repeal and replacement of the Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act (SDWFNA). The core focus has been national engagement with all First Nations in Canada, led by the AFN Regions, to properly understand and incorporate their needs and aspirations into the co-developed/drafted repeal and replacement legislation. Preliminary regional engagements were held in the summer of 2019 with over 500 First Nations from across the country. The engagements provided a high-level overview of concerns with the Act, and recommendations. A National Roll-up Report Executive Summary was prepared.

Forthcoming activities include follow-up engagements on the Long-Term Strategy and the SDWFNA, arranged through Regional Water Coordinators to continue the National Engagement process and incorporation of the feedback from First Nations into the Joint Working Group tasked with preparing a Draft Framework for the repeal and replacement legislation.

Housing

National First Nations housing and related infrastructure strategy

Implementation Plan

Throughout 2019, AFN Housing facilitated the development of the Strategy's Implementation Plan through the Joint Working Group (JWG), which includes representatives from the First Nations Technical Working Group (regional First Nations housing technicians), Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC). The Implementation Plan will serve as a guide that contains key elements necessary for First Nations to assume control of their housing and related infrastructure while recognizing that the pace, emphasis and order of the steps may be different among individual First Nations and their representative organizations.

Housing and Related Data Needs and Analysis

For the first time, a First Nations-developed, First Nations-led and managed data gathering exercise to determine First Nations housing and related infrastructure needs on-reserve was carried out. Seven of the AFN's ten regions collected a range of information on housing by administering a survey developed with the help of Alberta's Technical Services and Advisory Group (TSAG).

Efforts will continue to gather housing data in the other three AFN regions. The data was analyzed and formed into a report by the First Nations Information Governance Centre (FNIGC) that will inform, along with the Implementation Plan, a Memorandum to Cabinet (MC) either late in 2020 or in early

2021. The MC will significantly change the federal First Nations housing policy and be accompanied by the major, long-term investments needed to implement the Strategy.

ISC's housing services transfer initiative

The AFN's housing unit supported the British Columbia Housing and Infrastructure Council's (HIC) ground-breaking discussions with ISC on the transfer of care, control and management of their housing. Several more First Nations organizations received financial support to explore this initiative. First Nations are rightfully cautious to ensure this initiative is not a repeat of the failed Federal devolution policy of the late 1980s and early 1990s.

Dene nation control of housing

My colleague, Regional Chief Norman Yakeleya, requested on-going support as national portfolio holder for the Dene Nation's goal to control its housing needs. The AFN successfully solicited a commitment from ISC that, despite its unique housing support arrangements provided through the Northwest Territories Government, the Dene Nation is eligible for discussions under ISC's Housing Services Transfer Initiative. The Dene Nation's housing and funding arrangements are unique and not currently administered like First Nations in the provinces.

Chiefs committee on housing and infrastructure, technical working group and joint working group

The AFN Housing, Infrastructure and Emergency Services (HIES) sector regularly convenes meetings with the Chiefs





Committee on Housing and Infrastructure (CCOHI), the First Nations Technical Work Group, and the Joint Working Group throughout the year. The CCOHI provides guidance on implementation of housing and infrastructure resolutions.

Homelessness action plan

Homelessness holds a special place in my heart. I will work to ensure Federal Government programs and services can better meet the unique and specific needs of First Nations on- and off-reserve who are experiencing or are on the brink of homelessness.

The AFN has begun work to identify and advocate on behalf of First Nations experiencing homelessness by focusing on the challenges, barriers, program delivery requirements and approaches to homelessness. These challenges have become even more evident during this pandemic as homelessness and essential services dramatically affected some of our most vulnerable brothers and sisters.

The AFN has secured funding from ESDC to develop a First Nation Homelessness Action Plan and undertake research and coordinate regional engagement on homelessness and co-develop improvements and/or changes to ESDC's Reaching Home program and related activities.

Infrastructure Unit

Operations and Maintenance Policy Reform (O&M)

AFN engaged a consultant to provide advisory services in the development of the new O&M Policy Reform. The O&M Expert meeting held in March 2018 reviewed

existing policies, funding formulas, cost indices, and reporting requirements. In March 2020, results were presented at the AFN Housing & Infrastructure Forum in Toronto, ON. Policy gaps and opportunities for improvement were identified as well as disparities between current cost estimates and actual costs required for infrastructure O&M on reserve where possible.

Recommendations were also provided on how the further reviews of policies, funding level options, remoteness factors, cost indices, and reporting requirements should be undertaken.


Asset Management

As of December 2019, engagements have been completed in Ontario, Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, the Northwest Territories, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Quebec, British Columbia, Atlantic Region, and Alberta.

AFN endeavors to advocate for an Asset Management approach for First Nation Infrastructure community assets. Engagement with First Nations on the recommended approach for full implementation of Asset Management Plans (AMP) and the much-needed capacity development to support an AMP approach will continue.

Asset Management ISO 55000 is a recognized standard to serve as the leading benchmark for First Nations going forward. The AFN will continue to advocate for the piloting of Asset Management Planning in each region over 2020 and 2021.

The AFN and ISC will collaborate and co-develop all Asset Management recommendations to Cabinet for a budget request for additional O&M expenditures. ISC should incorporate the asset



management standard into all future First Nation Infrastructure capital requests.

Emergency Services (ES)

As portfolio holder for Emergency Measures, I continue to be constantly updated by Chiefs, technicians and staff. We work to inform ISC on the monitoring of emergency events in First Nations across Canada, including natural, technological, and anthropogenic (human induced) hazards, as well as business continuity issues. I continue to advocate for ISC's cooperation with the AFN in developing the Emergency Services Unit.

Transport Canada (TC)

In the past year, First Nations were impacted by the alert of a recent train derailment in the Manitoba region that resulted in a crude oil spill that had direct impact on the water and environment. The leadership of Chief Ledoux from Gamblers First Nation is worthy of recognition. He remained in communication with me as he was concerned for the wellbeing of his people as Gamblers First Nations was the most directly impacted First Nation.

As portfolio holder, I have had the opportunity to speak directly with Ministers on Emergency Services and Transportation by helping to create education and awareness around the Fund for Railway Accidents Involving Dangerous Goods (FRAIDG) and the Ship-sourced Oil Pollution Fund (SOPF) programs.

There are 114 known grade-level crossings in First Nations territories across Canada where dangerous goods are transported unbeknownst to First Nations; over 100 First Nations are living on or near Canada's

shipping ports or channels where the risk of pollution caused by transported oil and its by-products are of the greatest risk to First Nations' lives and livelihoods.

More dialogue and participation are needed to ensure First Nations have a voice for advocacy at these Federal, Provincial and Territorial tables.

Natural Resources Canada (NRCan)

Forest Fires and other significant weather events have dramatically impacted First Nations in the Manitoba region historically with many remote and northern First Nations forced to evacuate because of the impacts of forest fires. This has resulted in hardship, displacement, and social and health impacts. For example, loss of power has resulted in food spoilage.

AFN Emergency Services is cooperating and collaborating with NRCan in developing the Indigenous Fire Smart Booklet. This booklet will create awareness and education for First Nations regarding the increasing severity and frequency of wildland fire. AFN Emergency Services is also involved with the development of NRCan's Earthquake tool through the Global Earthquake Modeling program.

Canadian Safety and Securities Program (CSSP)

AFN Emergency Services is the First Nations Advisor in the development of the Fire Risk and Evacuation Capabilities in Isolated Communities project for CSSP. First Nations are 18% more likely to be evacuated due to emergency events than non-First Nations municipalities and suffer greater disruption to their lives and livelihoods.





Next steps - moving forward: issues and expectations for 2020-2021

COVID-19 will continue to challenge us all for the next months and on into 2021. We will continue to respect all safety precautions regarding COVID-19 as we move forward. Safety is our first priority. Moving forward, we will continue to advocate towards the achievement of the following:

- Completion of the National First Nations Housing and Related Infrastructure Strategy's Implementation Plan.
- Co-development of a Memorandum to Cabinet to provide transformative change in Canada's First Nations housing policy to be informed by housing needs data gathered by First Nations.
- The AFN will continue to work with ISC on the co-development of the new O&M policy. The AFN HIEM is planning on providing a status update on this new policy at the AFN 2020 Special Chiefs Assembly.
- The AFN will also refine and complete the analysis of the regional Asset Management Pilots which are currently being carried out by various regional organizations in 2019. This will inform ISC of the new funding requirements of a fully costed Asset management Policy approach for all First Nations and support a Memorandum to Cabinet for a budget ask in early 2021.
- AFN will work with other government partners and national organizations to advance the capacity development in Asset Management groups including, but not limited to: Federal Government, Canadian Network of Asset Managers (CNAM), Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) and Asset Management Canada.
- Continue to advocate and plan, AFN Emergency Services is planning the next AFN Emergency Management Forum in Fall or Winter 2020, date to be confirmed, to bring together First Nations emergency management practitioners and both provincial and federal stakeholders that have an emergency management component to their operations, and on-going or developing relationships with First Nations in their functional areas.
- Continue to work with the NAC and the CCCW to ensure full implementation of all CHRT orders as it relates to reform of the FNCFS Program and Jordan's Principle.
- Work hard and diligently to support the transition and implementation planning of First Nations leadership and FNCFS agencies regarding the Act.
- Continue to advocate for the implementation of a First Nations vision for the long-term implementation of Jordan's Principle.
- Continue to guide, lead and support the NEWG and the implementation of the IELCC Framework and funding, including the development of a new funding model.
- Continue to support the TWGSD to advance its priorities and mandate, including advocating for continued work to reform the on-reserve Income Assistance Program, advocating for all First Nations to have access to Case Management and Pre-Employment Supports, securing funding to conduct the Income Assistance and Poverty Reduction studies, and hosting a National Forum on First Nations Income Assistance.
- Continue the work of the CCOHI and CCEM during the COVID-19 crisis and advance the immediate critical needs of First Nations that have been especially impacted due to shortages in housing, water, and infrastructure.
- Ensure all First Nations are fully protected and ensured proper safety equipment, including access to the proper Personal



Protective Equipment, retrofitting of existing infrastructure and such.

- Work with First Nations leadership to advance and advocate for participation in all economies during the implementation phases of COVID 19.

The AFN Executive Committee moved to establish the AFN COVID-19 National Task Force (C-19 Task Force) on April 21, 2020 to support the mitigation of impacts of COVID-19. The C-19 Task Force is not a decision making body; rather, it engages with experts, leadership and First Nations to provide recommendations and information to the Executive Committee to assist them in their efforts to inform First Nations in their region about current developments and announcements regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and advocate for increased funding and support. The C-19 Task Force identified the need for increased focus on priority areas and established the Pandemic Plan, Re-Opening, and Data Working Groups to support their work and the needs of First Nations. Together with these Working Groups, the C-19 Task Force is developing a discussion paper to utilize as a platform for advocating for increased First Nations pandemic funding and support.

I applaud the collective efforts of all the Manitoba PTO's, Tribal Councils, First Nations Organizations and especially our Chiefs and Councils at the ground level throughout this entire pandemic. Your leadership helped guide your nations by flattening the curve and spread of COVID-19. Asserting and affirming your sovereignty and jurisdiction helped to isolate First Nations and protect their members.

To all the staff, front line and essential workers across the region, I lift you all up and honour you with Creator's blessing for all you have done to protect us and keep the people safe. I honour all the medical drivers, delivery people, security, special needs, medicine pickers and preparers.

*We give Creator's thanks for all you have done and continue to do.
Thank you!*



Regional Chief Bobby Cameron

Saskatchewan

Tansi, ʔedlanet'e, Hau, tonesked yaun?

On behalf of the 74 member First Nations, the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (FSIN) Executive and staff, we would like to acknowledge we are in the Treaty territories of 2, 4, 5, 6, 8 and 10 – the ancestral lands and unceded territory of the Cree, Denesųłiné, Saulteaux, Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota. As a Cree member of Witchehan Lake First Nation located in northern *kisiskâciwan* in Treaty 6 territory, much of my life has been spent maintaining strong ties to the land, community, culture, language and identity.

We extend warm greetings to our Veterans, Elders, Senate, our Chief/Council members, youth and citizens in *kisiskâciwan* as the original peoples of these ancestral and traditional territories. FSIN continues to work diligently to ensure that in regards to our Treaty-Inherent Rights, First Nation jurisdiction is first and foremost, and that these rights continue to be protected and implemented through advocacy. Our due diligence is centered on educating Canada and the world on the significance and contributions of First Nation peoples.

2019 was designated the International Year of Indigenous Languages. After a long history of being prohibited to celebrate our languages, we are happy to see that through revitalization projects, language conferences (such as the one held by the Saskatchewan Indian Cultural College), forums and classrooms, our traditional languages are slowly returning.

The World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic on March 11, 2020. On March 13, 2020, FSIN quickly responded by developing their internal COVID-19 FSIN Response Team. The team continues to work and meet seven days a week to respond in areas such as procuring Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), delivery of food, and other supplies as needed for its 74 member First Nations. FSIN continues to post daily up-to-date information on COVID-19 through media advisories and communiques, plus utilizing media tools such as radio broadcasting and social media through our respective Facebook and Twitter accounts. The COVID-19 FSIN Response Team continues to work alongside their provincial and federal counterparts, regional organizations, health working groups, tribal councils, the 74 member First Nations, and others to ensure a united response to COVID-19.

The FSIN Executive will continue to advocate and remind our federal and provincial counterparts that First Nation jurisdiction includes all the sectors that fall under the umbrella of our Inherent and Treaty rights. FSIN leadership will continue to ensure that these rights are honoured and respected and that our First Nations continue to exercise their sovereignty.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

Treaty Governance Office

The Treaty Governance Office (TGO) is mandated by the Indian Government Commission and First Nations-in-Assembly to work on the enforcement of Treaty and Inherent rights. The TGO is funded by a contribution from CIRNA's Treaties and Aboriginal Government.

The FSIN and TGO continue to work with Canada on furthering the nation-to-nation relationship through a bilateral Treaty Table process facilitated by the Office of the Treaty Commissioner. The Treaty Table meets three times per year and has a mandate to identify options and make recommendations to assist in resolving issues that affect the Treaty relationship. The parties agree on an annual work plan using the work of the Treaty Table as a base.

The Treaty Governance Office work involves:

- coordinating the work of the FSIN Secretariats at the Treaty Table;
- maintaining communication and liaison with First Nations and Tribal Councils on Treaty and Inherent Rights-related issues;
- making recommendations on policies and processes for Treaty and Inherent Rights enforcement to the First Nations and Canada;
- participating in Treaty area discussions and assisting in coordinating and participating in all Treaty-related forums; and
- maintaining awareness of Treaties and the Treaty Relationship by continually reviewing materials developed by all parties on the nation-to-nation relationship.

The TGO continues to be involved in building awareness about Treaty and Inherent Rights protection and enforcement through meetings and workshops with various First Nations. The TGO is also involved in Treaty Gatherings, the Natural Resource Transfer Agreement Summit, and is part of the technical support team for Treaties 1-11. Meetings are held throughout the year to discuss strategy and positions to participate in the nation-to-nation relationship.

On request, the Treaty Governance Office also prepares analysis and briefing notes on emerging issues that may impact Treaty and Inherent Rights. Major initiatives included the Rights Framework and the Collaborative Process on Bill S-3 to examine broader issues relating to Status Indian Registration, band membership and citizenship. Going forward, the Treaty Governance Office will continue to work on the research and developments in the citizenship file, create awareness and understanding in coordination with other nation-building efforts, and monitor and communicate with other organizations and initiatives in the area of citizenship and Treaty and Inherent Rights.

Community/Grassroot Engagement

Each year, the FSIN Executive takes the opportunity to travel throughout the Treaty territories and traditional lands to visit with the over 170,000+ First Nations members in Saskatchewan. This visit promotes relationship-building and maintaining strong ties to each community. We understand and know that maintaining a connection with the 74 member First Nations is powered by culture and tradition and that our path to





self-determination comes with many obstacles. We will continue to maintain these connections, and encourage our First Nations people to convey, advocate, and claim their rightful place as Inherent and Treaty Right holders.

Cultural and traditional practices that allow community membership, invited guests, and those involved in ceremonies to participate and share their combined traditional knowledge has been practiced long before signing of Treaty began. These events happen over the course of Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter depending on the First Nation.

Health and Social Development

Early Learning and Childcare New Investments

The Government of Canada announced new funding for Early Learning and Childcare (ELCC) programs in the amount of \$1.02 billion over a period of 10 years with \$72.5 million being allocated nationally for the 2018/19 and 2019/20 fiscal years. The Chiefs-in-Assembly supported an option developed by the AFN as the most equitable and fair funding formula. This included the motion to flow the funds directly to First Nations in existing agreements and that the new funding be distributed fairly and equitably to all 74 First Nations. On May 6, 2019, the Health and Social Development Commission (HSDC) moved that the ELCC funding for 2019/20 fiscal year will be allocated using the 2018/19 funding formula along with the FSIN coordination dollars. All monies will flow through Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) for distribution to the communities and

Tribal/Agency/Grand Councils and the FSIN funding arrangements.

February 20, 2020 Resolution – Early Learning and Childcare New Investments 2020/21


This Resolution supports the option developed by the AFN as the most equitable and fair funding formula based on the numbers of First Nations communities, population and remoteness factors to distribute the funds fairly and equitably across the 74 First Nations in Saskatchewan. On February 6, 2020 the HSDC approved a revised formula for the ELCC funding based on an overall equal amount per seat for childcare and the supports for regional activities for the ELCC Working Group and to include a regional forum.

First Nations Health Ombudspersons Office

First Nations people in Saskatchewan continue to experience systemic racism and discrimination in the provincial health care system, including unequal access to certain health benefits provided by the First Nations and Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB).

FSIN Resolution 46/2020 identified the need to establish a First Nations Ombudspersons Office with a mandate to assist First Nations patients and families with protecting their Inherent and Treaty Rights to Health.

In the Spring of 2019, five First Nation Ombudspersons Engagement Sessions were held across the province and, based on feedback provided by community members, a business case was developed to actualize a First Nation Health Ombudspersons Office



and was approved by the Indian Government Commission/Joint Executive Council on February 13, 2020. FSIN is working to implement a First Nations Health Ombudspersons Office in accordance with the findings and recommendations of the First Nations Health Ombudspersons Business Case and to request new funding from the federal government for sustainable funding of the Ombudspersons Office.

Regional Education Portfolio

Saskatchewan First Nations Education Leadership Table

We are continuing the work in collaboration with the 74 member First Nations who support the development of a Treaty Rights and Inherent Rights-based Funding Model for Education. This leadership table will oversee, review and direct technicians on all work done to ensure we are addressing all issues in the transformation of First Nations education. This Treaty-Based funding model will support those First Nations who request it and will not negatively impact First Nations negotiating their own arrangements.

First Nations Directors of Education Table

Engagement activities included holding six First Nations Director of Education meetings to facilitate, provide support and develop strategic direction through engagement with the Saskatchewan First Nations. We will invite the directors to engage with ISC Regional Representatives, SK Provincial Government Representatives to share their own best practices and other relevant information to further support First Nations education in Saskatchewan.

K-12 Engagements

Engagements were held in November 2019 in Yorkton, Regina, Prince Albert and North Battleford, SK. Discussions included examining areas of need, education services and resources, language and culture, and current funding issues.

Post-Secondary Education

A PSE Forum was held in partnership with the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon on January 21-22, 2020. Engagements sessions were also held in collaboration with the PSE working group, the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies (SIIT) and the First Nations University of Canada (FNUC) on March 2-5, 2020. The sessions were held in Regina, Saskatoon, and Prince Albert.

Housing

The deficiencies in living conditions for First Nations people have been well documented across the country. The Treaty Right to Shelter has long been contested by the Federal Government. However, First Nations are beginning to move forward in addressing the housing crisis throughout Saskatchewan First Nations. This work will come as an independent entity that will be created through the collaboration of housing and infrastructure experts, professionals and government focused on the development and control by First Nations.





FSIN Resolution 2066, *FSIN Housing Mandate and Political Strategy* and FSIN Resolution 2098, *Establish a Chiefs Task Force on Housing and Infrastructure* provide a mandate for the establishment of a Chiefs Task Force on Housing and Infrastructure. The aim of the Task Force is to explore options and develop models for First Nations governance and jurisdiction over Housing and Infrastructure.

Meetings have taken place with many member First Nations to discuss the design, delivery, administration, and control of First Nations housing. Though COVID-19 stopped many of the community engagement sessions planned for 2020, the work on developing an authority continues with consultations with leadership, legal counsel and economists for the development of interim operation business plans.

Emergency Management

Emergency management continues to engage with First Nations leadership to set priorities and receive mandates from leadership. The department focused on engaging with Chiefs throughout the year on flooding and emergency preparedness around fires. However, the department also took a leadership role in the planning and implementing of a pandemic plan for FSIN and other organizations. As well, the department accessed and distributed food and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to on-and off-reserve First Nations. This work is ongoing.

Lands and Resources

Chiefs Committee on Land, Territories and Resources


There continues to be frustrations with the implementation of the jointly developed Additions-to-Reserve Policy (ATR). While Saskatchewan continues to be the most successful region in the country in transferring land to reserve, First Nations in Saskatchewan still experience difficulty in dealing with third parties and resourcing issues at the regional office. The AFN has called for a bilateral table to deal with ATR issues.

There are several unrecognized or landless First Nations in Saskatchewan that entered into Treaty. In some cases, they were given reserve lands but lost that status and their lands owing to actions of the Crown. The recent decision of *Watson v Canada* will impact how those First Nations are dealt with. The AFN is working to advance a proposal with funding in order to address issues related to landless First Nations.

Joint Technical Working Group Specific Claims (JTWG)

Nine engagement sessions were held in the fall of 2019, allowing regional input on the development of an independent Specific Claims Process. A session was held in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan on November 26, 2019.

Based on the First Nations members of the JTWG, which includes a representative from Saskatchewan, the group has been developing a model for an independent Specific Claims Process. The AFN JTWG is



currently in the final stages of drafting this model and hopes to have it prepared to vet through the CCOLTR shortly. The intent will be to make that model available for public comment.

Assembly of First Nations Chronic Wasting Disease Committee (CWDC)

The CWDC is comprised of Chiefs, Elders and technicians that work to address Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD). The CWDC has only had one meeting to date on March 2, 2020 in Whitehorse, Yukon. Saskatchewan is a hotspot for CWD. The CWDC is working to develop a position paper on CWD and First Nations.

Conclusion

The work discussed in this report covers just some of our top priorities that fall under the umbrella of our Inherent and Treaty Rights. Our leaders and our First Nations look to the Assembly of First Nations to advocate and facilitate when they are needed. It is through our leaders that we take our direction as an Executive. We look forward to continuing to come together, to share concerns, and address issues. In unity, we will be effective in our work for our Nations, our communities, and our future generations.

Hiy Hiy, ekosi

*Regional Chief Bobby Cameron,
AFN Chief – Federation of Sovereign
Indigenous Nations
Witchehen First Nation,
Treaty No. 6 Territory*





Alberta Regional Chief Marlene Poitras

Alberta

Tansi,

It is my pleasure to provide this submission to the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) 2020 Annual Report.

I was honoured to be elected on February 22, 2018, by Alberta Chiefs from Treaty 6, 7, and 8 as the first woman to hold the position of Assembly of First Nations Regional Chief for Alberta. I am a member of Mikisew Cree Nation and a direct descendant of Mikisew who signed the adhesion to Treaty 8 in 1899. I have spent most of my career working with Indigenous communities, organizations, industry, and government across Canada and internationally in areas of management, policy analysis, research, and advocacy with a focus on health and Treaty.

As with previous years, my focus has been on improving communication through meetings with Treaty Chiefs in my region and finding avenues to move their issues forward at federal and provincial levels to support their right to self-determination. The implementation of Treaty according to its true spirit and intent has been my repeated message to the government, as well as the need to meet with First Nation leaders directly in order to develop a true nation-to-nation relationship.

In early March, our office began tracking the spread of COVID-19, and on March 16, our office initiated a work-from-home protocol. Since that time, we have provided daily COVID-19 updates to leadership, technicians, Provincial Territorial Organizations (PTO), and Tribal Councils.

Our office has been closely monitoring COVID-19 issues, including strategies and responses in First Nations communities. We have been fortunate to have open lines of communication with Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), Alberta region First Nations and Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB), as well as First Nations leadership.


Portfolio Updates

I continue to hold the AFN national portfolios for Lands, Territories and Resources (LTR), Charter Renewal, and Treaties. I chair the Chiefs Committee on Charter Renewal and co-chair the Chiefs Committee on LTR with Chief Wilfred King.

Lands, Territories, and Resources (LTR)

The LTR sector advocates for changes to four key policy areas: Specific Claims, Additions to Reserve (ATR), Comprehensive Land Claims (CLCP), and Inherent Right to Self-Government (IRSG). The Chiefs Committee on LTR provides guidance to the AFN on their work. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the AFN's ability to move quickly on the four policies, but the Chiefs Committee and sector are making concerted efforts to adapt their approach and work plans to adjust to the new realities.

In 2019, the AFN led regional engagements across the country to hear from First Nations on what an independent specific claims process should look like. A joint technical working group is finalizing a report that summarizes these engagements and presents options for reform. Once complete, the



report will go to Chiefs-in-Assembly for review and approval. If approved by the Assembly, the draft reform options will form the basis of AFN's advocacy on specific claims at all levels. We were aiming to present this report and recommended changes to specific claims at the 2020 AGA, however, due to the pandemic, the finalized report and proposed recommendations will have to be ratified at a later date.

Canada has indicated a willingness to work with AFN on reforms to ATR, CLCP, and IRSG policies. The Chiefs Committee is providing feedback on this work for 2020, keeping in mind the potential impacts of the pandemic and the need for First Nations to drive the process around developing any new policies.

Charter Renewal

A new process to update the AFN Charter began last year with Chiefs-in-Assembly passing five resolutions to amend the AFN Charter at the 2019 Special Chiefs Assembly. These amendments formalized Chiefs Committees as an AFN body, the National Chief's role in assigning and re-assigning national portfolios to the Regional Chiefs, oaths of offices for the National Chief and Regional Chiefs, and a minor numerical correction. The charter renewal work is being guided by the recommendations of its Chiefs Committee, who met five times last year to develop proposed amendments for Chiefs-in-Assembly to consider.

The lead technical team, Bonnie Leonard and Kasey Gottfriedsen, have done extensive outreach and engagements across the

country, meeting with First Nations leadership to gain a better understanding of the changes they wish to see in the charter. Bonnie and Kasey made 35 community visits last year, which I was pleased to join, in the Yukon, Northwest Territories, Saskatchewan, and in my own region. Thank you to all the leaders and communities who welcomed us so openly last year.

The Chiefs Committee is developing recommendations for further charter amendments that will be tabled as draft resolutions at future AFN assemblies. These amendments will include clarifying quorum for assemblies, changing the name of the Elders' Council to the Knowledge Keepers' councils, updating the roles and responsibilities of the AFN Youth Council, and more. Due to the current pandemic and postponement of the July 2020 AGA, charter amendment resolutions will be brought forward at the next Special Chiefs Assembly planned for December 2020. First Nations will receive a 60-day notice with the proposed resolutions before they are tabled at an AFN Assembly.

Treaties

Several AFN resolutions have called for Canada to honour its Treaty relationship with First Nations and to formally establish Treaty-based policies and funding agreements. Throughout my term, I've advocated to federal officials for such actions to be taken.





Resolution 78/2015 calls on the AFN to work with International Numbered Treaty (1-11) *First Nations to support the development of a Treaty Commissioner's Office* (TCO). Both AFN's Honouring Promises document and Minister Carolyn Bennett's mandate letter speak to the need for creating such a body to ensure Canada meets its Treaty obligations. In March 2020, I met with the Minister to press for progress on a TCO and to advocate for funding that supports AFN dialogue with International Numbered Treaty First Nations on what this office could look like.

Priorities

Communication

Improving communications within the region continues to be a priority. I am honoured to have the opportunity to report to Chiefs periodically at Assembly of Treaty Chiefs meetings. Our office sends regular communication on news and issues to Chiefs, technicians, Provincial Treaty Organizations and Tribal Councils via email. We have a website and an app that are also updated regularly, as well as our social media platforms, which focus on issues of local, regional, and national interest to First Nations. You can find us at:

Website: www.afnab.ca

Facebook: @AlbertaAFNRegionalChief

Twitter: @AFNAlberta

AFN Alberta App available for download for Apple and Android devices:

<https://itunes.apple.com/ca/app/afn/id1382961092?mt=8>

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=ca.communikit.android.afnab>.

Advocacy

Treaty advocacy is a priority for me. I will continue to advocate and push for resources that support the work of Treaty Nations 1-11 as they determine their own path forward, as well as the best treaty-based funding. Advocacy work includes numerous letters and emails to the Ministers as well as face-to-face meetings during annual assemblies or Executive meetings. I have endeavoured to impress the need to meet directly with First Nations in their territories upon the Ministers.

Election 2019

During the 2019 federal election, AFN Alberta encouraged First Nations people to vote for whomever they felt best represented their vision for the future and aligned with their values. We developed a portal on our website with relevant election information to help First Nations know where, when and how to vote, party's platforms, and how best to stay informed about the election.

Our office endeavoured to help First Nations better understand where each of the parties stood on their priorities. As such, we launched a survey asking the region to share questions they had for parties about their platforms. We curated the top questions and posed them to each of the five main federal parties for response. Completed questionnaires were shared via email, website, and social media. This provided First Nations with a better sense of each parties' position on Treaty implementation, reconciliation, and more.



Projects

Iskwewak Mentorship Program

AFN Alberta piloted the Iskwewak Mentorship Program (IMP) last year with the goal of reconnecting, reestablishing, and recognizing First Nation women's leadership roles in our region. Throughout the year, we organized monthly meetings between mentors and mentees. We also organized leadership and governance workshops and created opportunities for participants to learn from our Elders about the traditional leadership roles of women and girls. The education and teachings derived from the program were positively received and widely praised. This program and its launch were a great success.

As the IMP's inaugural year came to a close, organizers and participants explored ways in which more Indigenous women could benefit from the program and decided they would begin planning for a national Indigenous women and girls gathering. The gathering was planned for May 2020, but has been postponed until we can safely come together again.

Climate Change

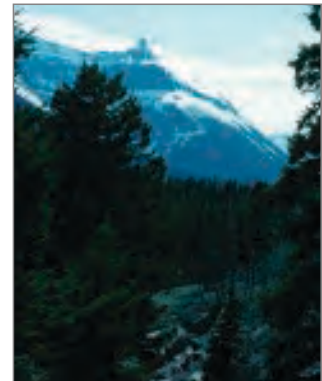
Our office works with First Nations across Alberta to advocate for environmental and climate change issues at a national level. In September 2019, we hired a dedicated regional climate change coordinator, Paul Wilson, to lead environmental advocacy work in our office. The outgoing coordinator, Ann Gladue-Buffalo, now serves as our CEO. AFN Alberta continues to diligently communicate national environment sector

information to the region and raising regional issues at national tables. Our office also assists Nations for support in proposal writing and review, when requested. AFN Alberta was in the early stages of planning a regional climate gathering on the land in partnership with Lubicon Lake, which will resume once the COVID-19 situation has settled.

Conclusion

While the current pandemic has significantly disrupted all our lives, I am optimistic that our Nations will emerge stronger from this crisis. Our people have overcome many difficult challenges and circumstances in the past and we will do so again. I look forward to continuing to work with the Treaty Chiefs of Alberta and colleagues across Turtle Island to keep building a brighter future together.

*Hai Hai, Nanaskomtin,
Regional Chief Marlene Poitras
Assembly of First Nations, Alberta*





Regional Chief Terry Teegee

British Columbia

I am from Takla Lake First Nation and come from a matrilineal Clan System. I belong to the Lax Gibuu clan. I have been married for 15 years to my wife, Rena Zatorski, and we have two children, our daughter Rylie and son Rowan. We live on the Lheidli T'enneh reserve, located 22 kilometers from the city of Prince George.

As the Regional Chief for the British Columbia Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN) and on behalf of the BCAFN First Nations and Board of Directors, it is my pleasure to provide you with this report from the BC region. Our region includes 203 First Nations, some with historic and modern treaties, and most with unceded lands, resources, and territories.

Key Activities and Accomplishments:

I was elected as Regional Chief in 2017 and for the past three years I've committed to working tirelessly for First Nations in BC. I have prioritized four areas of my mandate to include:

1. The BCAFN: Establish Relationships
2. Education: Securing our Future Generations
3. Economic Development
4. Children and Families Matters

Further, I strive to advocate and advance issues on identified AFN portfolios in which I provide leadership on including:

1. Justice
2. Fisheries
3. Economic Development
4. Cannabis
5. Human Resources and Development - Indigenous Skills Employment and Training Strategy (ISETS)

On March 4 and 5, 2020 the Special Chiefs Assembly was held at the Vancouver Island Conference Centre in Snuneymuxw Territory in Nanaimo, BC. The agenda for this two-day meeting included items such as Bill 41 – the provincial legislation on the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, Children and Families, shared Territories and overlap, BCAFN Economic Strategy, COVID-19, cannabis legalization and jurisdiction, and updates from the Fisheries and Justice Councils. We had many guests providing updates on a variety of issues including National Chief Perry Bellegarde, Minister of Indigenous Services Canada Marc Miller, Regional Chief Ghislain Picard and Regional Chief Kluane Adamek. Sixteen resolutions were passed including:

NUMBER	TITLE
01/2020	Federal Legislation to Create a Framework for Implementation of the UN Declaration
02/2020	Call to Action on Historic Low Salmon Returns



03/2020 Transition from Open Net-Pen Fish Farming

04/2020 The Convection of Biological Diversity

05/2020 Support for NVIT's Immediate Entry Bursary for all Grade 12 Indigenous Graduates Across British Columbia

06/2020 Support for Indigenous Intellectual Property Legislation

07/2020 Adoption of Revised Standing Rules of Procedure for Assemblies

08/2020 Action Plan for First Nations Homelessness On- and Off-Reserve

09/2020 Support for Bamfield Road Upgrades

10/2020 Endorsement of First Nations Leadership Council 2019 Appointments of Two Directors of the New Relationship Trust

11/2020 Support for Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQQA+ People Declaration and Strategy

12/2020 Endorsement of the First Nations Justice Strategy

13/2020 Support for First Nations in BC Food Security, Sovereignty and Economic Development

14/2020 Call for Nominations of Technical Advisors to the Tripartite First Nations Children & Families Working Group

15/2020 Immediate Release of Annual Funding and Services by Delegated Aboriginal Authorities Under MCFD to Chiefs of British Columbia

16/2020 Support for the Development of a National First Nations Justice Strategy

UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

The BCAFN is actively engaged in implementing the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) through Bill 41, the BC government's provincial legislation, passed late in 2019 and in advocating for Federal legislation that will uphold those minimum standards. This work includes:

- Increasing jurisdiction, authority and control over our lands and territories
- Free, prior and informed consent over resource development in our lands and territories
- Ensuring the laws of BC are consistent with the UNDRIP

Justice

As co-lead on the Justice portfolio, I have consistently been advocating for decreasing the overrepresentation of First Nations people in Canada's justice system and pressuring governments to address systemic discrimination at all levels of the justice system in Canada. The system does not recognize important differences in culture,





values, languages, laws and traditions that directly impact the experience of First Nations peoples in the justice system. I have been working with my colleague, Regional Chief Ghislain Picard, to move the Federal government to collaboratively develop a National Justice Strategy.

In BC, we worked with the BC First Nations Justice Council to develop the First Nations Justice Strategy and we continue to prioritize many issues from that strategy.

Fisheries

As Co-chair of the AFN National Fisheries Committee, I have been working with Regional Chief Roger Augustine to advance and advocate for several issues including:

- Prioritization, access and exercise of food, social, ceremonial fisheries
- Protection and enhancement of fisheries habitats
- Advocacy on recovery efforts and supports with respect to the Big Bar Landslide
- Food security in light of COVID-19

Economic Development

We have actively been involved in supporting First Nations economic development to advance economic reconciliation. BCAFN's Sustainable Economic Development and Fiscal relations strategy has been moving forward. Deliverables and areas of progress under this strategy include:

- Hosting six First Nations Business Forums
- Providing economic development toolkits for First Nations (the Black Books)

including the coordination of workshops on the subject throughout BC

- Engaging with the Government of BC on economic development initiatives
- Drafting policy papers on tourism, trade, FPIC, and cannabis (in progress)
- Development of a First Nations Economic Development Strategy based on engagement
- An economic impact study to measure the First Nations economy in the province (in progress)
- Partnership via a Memorandum of Understanding with the BC Business Council (BCBC) and creation of the Champions Table*
 - The Indigenous Internship Program – in partnership with BCBC, Vancouver Island University, and others.
 - A pilot project related to forest carbon with Tsilhqot'in and Lheidli T'enneh (in progress)
- Development of a BC First Nations Economic Development Secretariat (*The Centre of Excellence* – in progress)

* *The Champions Table is a committee that combines the expertise of 11 First Nations leaders and 11 industry executives coming together to discuss opportunities to further economic reconciliation, thereby increasing the resiliency and success of the provincial economy. The Champions Table supports the Indigenous Internship Program that matches Indigenous students at all post-secondary institutions in the province with internships at high profile workplaces to complete internships paid for by the employer.*

As Chair for the AFN Chiefs Committee on Economic Development (CCED), I am pleased to report that the CCED continues to provide leadership and guidance to the AFN on the implementation of national resolutions passed by the AFN Chiefs-in-Assembly on economic development, new trade supports, energy and resource development, procurement, agriculture, involvement in the cannabis industry, tourism, sustainability, connectivity, and other economic matters.

Over the past year, some of the CCED's activity has included:

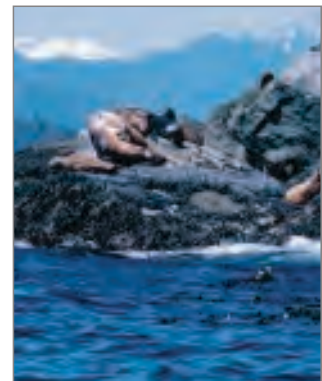
- Advancing a resolution to the Chiefs-in-Assembly at the December 2019 Special Chiefs Assembly on exploring a new economic strategy and approach that would better serve First Nations development needs.
- Monitoring and advocating for federal economic stimulus for First Nations businesses and jobs to survive the downturn caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Providing guidance on an evergreen discussion paper, *Procurement in Canada: Possible Actions to Increase First Nations Opportunities and Benefits*, that considers the improvements needed and options to increase First Nations economic opportunities and benefits through procurement.
- Providing guidance on the drafting for an evergreen paper, *First Nations and the Natural Resource Economy: Developments, Perspectives and Priorities*, that outlines key issues raised by Chiefs-in-Assembly via national resolutions,

recent policy developments, and linkages of other work done to communicate First Nations perspectives on engaging in the natural resource economy.

- Calling for a review of the current situation for First Nations and the Cannabis sector, as an economic opportunity. The CCED provided oversight to the paper on Preliminary Research: Cannabis Legislation and First Nations Economic Considerations. The paper offers an overview on the current state of the cannabis industry and implications for First Nations.
- Advocating for participation of First Nations in international trade. The grounds for the creation of this work was to urge that new/modernized trade agreements respect First Nations. In addition, the CCED will consider how to address the gap for trade services, programs and incentives needed for First Nations businesses. The CCED has advocated for an Indigenous Peoples and Trade Chapter in the Canada United States Mexico Agreement (CUSMA) and other international trade agreements.

Non-Medical Cannabis Legalization and Regulation

As Co-Chair of the AFN Chiefs Committee on Cannabis (CCC), we have been actively engaged and working on this directive as a priority item. The CCC is developing proposed changes to the Cannabis Act that would provide for First Nations jurisdiction in a similar way as *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families*. The CCC has sought to engage various networks and perspectives, including





those representing legal, health, social, and economic development related interests and concerns.

The BCAFN participates in the BC-First Nations Leadership Council Working Group on Cannabis and is represented by Board Director Chief Harvey McLeod. The First Nations Leadership Council effort on the Working Group is informed by the BC First Nations Cannabis Framework and Action Plan that was endorsed via Resolution at BCAFN's Annual General Meeting in September 2019. Some key priority areas of discussion include:

- Section 119 negotiations, which need to shift towards rights-based pathway and requires alignment with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- Jurisdiction and revenue sharing
- Economic Development and capacity for Indigenous Peoples including Indigenous product sourcing, farm-to-gate, direct delivery, and eligibility criteria policies

Human Resources and Development - ISETS

As chair of the Chiefs Committee on Human Resource Development (CCHRD), we have been actively engaged in developing the First Nations Labour Market Strategy as well working on Social Innovation and Social Finance per AFN Resolution. With AFN Resolution 94/2019, the AFN is advocating for additional support and capacity from the Federal Social Innovation and Social Finance Strategy to ensure sustainable benefits for First Nations-led initiatives. The CCHRD continues to review the planning, concept and role of a Labour Market Council and Secretariat to support and guide the transition of authority to First Nations

control for Labour Market Programming and maintain outreach with the First Nations leadership, labour market partners, organizations and agencies.

Conclusion

BCAFN continues to advocate and advance the issues and priorities of First Nations in BC. Along with the BCAFN Board of Directors, the BCAFN Women's Council Representative, BCAFN's youth and Knowledge Keepers representatives, I am working to advance and press our collective interests forward in this new era of reconciliation. We continue to engage with Provincial and Federal governments on the variety of issues impacting our Nations as directed by the Chiefs via resolution at the BCAFN Chiefs Assembly. We will continue to press the importance of moving ahead with Federal legislation to align the laws of Canada with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. We will call on the government to fulfill the Canada Human Rights Tribunal's rulings and fully implement resource jurisdiction and authority as contemplated by Bill C-92: *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Metis children, youth and families*. Further, we will work in partnership to address issues such as COVID-19, climate change, fisheries, forestry, energy, and mining. We are committed to ensuring safe and secure communities, healing and progress on priorities such as health, education and justice. I look forward to continuing our important work in partnership and collaboration with the AFN and First Nations Chiefs and leaders.

Mussi cho
Regional Chief Terry Teegee

Regional Chief Kluane Adamek

Yukon

Dànnch'e!

On behalf of the Assembly of First Nations Yukon Region (AFNYR), I would like to acknowledge the Elders, Veterans, Matriarchs, Chiefs, Leaders, and Youth from across the Yukon who continue to support our work. As we are unable to do so in person this year, I would also like to acknowledge all the Regional Chiefs and the First Nations from coast-to-coast-to-coast who have accomplished so much this year!

My heart is heavy with the weight of the loss of all those who have passed on due to the COVID-19 global pandemic. We extend prayers to the global community and all those who need it during these hard times. As our Elders remind us, it is our teachings and our connections to the land and one another that continue to give us strength. COVID-19 has magnified the many pre-existing issues our people deal with on a daily basis: substandard housing, access to clean drinking water, minimal health supports and services, and access to mental wellness supports. We know that Indigenous and other marginalized groups are those hit the hardest by this virus and we stand strong together with those communities.

It is so critical that we continue to be mindful and aware of our physical and mental health right now, and to check in with loved ones to provide support where possible. We are all experiencing these circumstances in different ways, and I want to urge everyone to take advantage of the supports available in your community.

As Indigenous people, we can seek out our strength and medicine in the connections and reconnections we have and create with the land, our traditional ways, our families, and our ancestors. Please remember that we are all working through this new rhythm, and we will continue to be stronger together. Our history shows us that we are strong and resilient. Despite how hard this year has been, we will continue to show this strength and I am confident that our resilience will carry us through this time as it has before. Even in these difficult times, we have been able to accomplish a great many things this year. Looking back on these accomplishments energizes me into a post COVID-19 future.

Key Activities and Accomplishments:

I am immensely proud of our team at AFNYR and the 14 Yukon First Nations across the territory. This year was filled with a number of milestones that merit recognition and celebration!

First Nations are the fastest growing and youngest communities in the Yukon and across the country. We recognize our young people as our greatest resource and one that will contribute untold amounts to our society as they mature. We also recognize that youth require mentorship opportunities to support their emerging leadership skills. To commemorate that, on January 16, 2020, Yukon First Nations leadership passed a Resolution declaring 2020 the "Year of the Youth." This year is dedicated to lifting up the younger members of our community, celebrating our young leaders and learning what they have to teach us.





Yukon Regional Leadership Awards and Honouring our Leaders

This year marked the first annual AFNYR Leadership Awards, wherein we formally acknowledged the incredible leadership and commitment to Yukon First Nations that our leaders have shown and continue to show in the work they do. These awards were created to celebrate and support community while holding up and acknowledging the contributions and leadership demonstrated by individuals throughout the Yukon. We also acknowledged the incredible contributions made to support Yukon First Nations by former AFN Yukon Regional Chiefs, and former AFN National Chiefs.

Through the annual awards, we will continue to honour those that demonstrate what it means to be “a Yukon that Leads.” We are greatly looking forward to the second annual awards. While we may not meet in person, we hope to recognize the important work of Yukon First Nation citizens throughout the year.

Congratulations to the 2019 Award Winners!

- Emerging Leaders – Luke Campbell & Allison Kormendy
- Women in Leadership – Lorraine Netro & Tosh Southwick
- Language Warrior – Nakhela Hazel Bunbury
- Climate Leader – Norma Kassi
- Lifetime Achievement – Colleen James, Dave Joe, Adeline Webber, Naa Shâde Hêni Richard Sidney and the late Chief Robert Hager
- AFN Yukon Honorary Award – the late Robert Lee Jackson

Northern Nations Summit

In November 2019, we welcomed the AFN Northwest Territories (NWT) Region – Dene Nation – Regional Chief, Dene National Chief Norman Yakeleya, and the NWT Chiefs and leaders to the Yukon for a Northern Nations Leadership Summit.

We discussed joint priorities including housing, education, climate change and the environment. Both Regional Chief Yakeleya and I, and our respective leadership, agreed to co-develop a *Statement of Cooperation* that will solidify our partnership and working relationship. This statement of cooperation will support Northern Nations to advance and continue to build a relationship with the Crown and better outcomes for all First Nations communities and citizens in the North. This work is something we all continue to build upon in the coming year; we look forward to the positive results that will come from it.

Modern Treaties Forum

Following the Northern Nations Summit, the AFNYR Office hosted a national Modern Treaties Forum that welcomed speakers from the Yukon, Northwest Territories, British Columbia and Québec to discuss governance beyond the *Indian Act*. The Forum provided reflections on advancing nation rebuilding and self-determination through Modern Treaty and Self-Government Agreements. The Forum brought together First Nations to exchange their experiences, perspectives, and recommendations with an interest to learn from each other and to advance First Nation rights and interests with the Crown.



Chiefs Summits

Over past two years, AFNYR has been working on strengthening the regional office to support all Yukon First Nations in advancing their priorities at a national level. We want to thank all the Yukon First Nations that have joined us at these summits to identify common focus areas and to advance our priorities nationally.

The purpose of these summits is to foster a sense of unity and shared identity amongst Yukon First Nations, identify and build consensus around priorities for action, and discuss approaches to issues that affect Yukon First Nations regarding national policy initiatives, legislation, and northern considerations.

This year, we hosted two in-person summits, one in October in Carcross and the second in January in Whitehorse. We hosted our first virtual summit on May 28, 2020 and are looking forward to our future summits this month in July, October and November 2020.

Health

I would like to acknowledge the incredible contributions made by the AFN Health Sector and the AFN Chiefs Committee on Health (CCoH). I am honoured to serve as the AFN National Portfolio Holder and Chair of the CCoH. During this new rhythm, our respective offices and teams have continued to work closely together, and with our Federal Partners – Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) and the First Nations and Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB) – to share crucial public health information with communities. In this, we work with experts from across the country to identify recommendations

to support First Nations during the pandemic, and we will continue to share those updates to all Yukon First Nations. Broadly, these discussions include Treaty Rights and health, health transformation, and supports for substance abuse in our communities. Mental health continues to be included in these discussions, including the way it interacts with our physical health, relationships and self-esteem. Along with this work, I am humbled to be working as Co-Chair of the AFN National Taskforce on COVID-19. This taskforce works in partnership with the AFN Health and Emergency Management Sectors and external experts to provide information, updates, analysis and recommendations to First Nations across Canada, as required. This work coincides with the work I am doing as co-chair of the COVID-19 Public Health Working Group on Remote and Isolated Communities. This working group is organized by ISC and addresses gaps around social stigma, food security, and mental wellness in the North.

I would like to formally acknowledge Manitoba Regional Chief Hart, Alberta Regional Chief Poitras and Ontario Regional Chief Archibald for their support on the AFN Taskforce, and to my AFN Executive colleagues for their ongoing support and work to support First Nations across the country during this very unprecedented time.

Environment and Climate Change

2019 marked a true turning point in the global discourse on climate change, evidenced by the global climate strikes as well as some of the lasting effects we are seeing in ecosystems around the world. Indigenous people were and continue to be





leaders in advancing Climate Action, and this year was no different. The AFN Advisory Committee on Climate Action and the Environment (ACE), continues to support and advance a rights-based approach to Climate Action, and includes Elders, Youth, Chiefs, Leaders and Experts in its work.

AFN Executive Committee Members joined in the Global Climate Strike in Montreal, on September 27, 2019, in other regions across the country and around the world. The event in Montreal was led by Indigenous Youth in support of the movement founded by Swedish youth climate activist Greta Thunberg. It was a true honour to participate alongside the Indigenous Youth and Greta, walking together to advance Climate Action. I had the opportunity to remind Greta of our unique experiences with climate change in the North while participating in the 2019 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 25) in Madrid, Spain, and I hope she will bring it to the national and international stage. As is our custom, we honour and acknowledge the important work of others and lift them up. I had the privilege of presenting Greta with a special gift from the North representing protection, strength and perseverance.

Other representatives attending COP 25 included:

- Grand Chief Wilton Littlechild
- AFN National Chief's Office, Dakota Kochie, Deputy Chief of Staff
- AFN Environment, Graeme Reed, Expert and Technician
- ACE Committee, Emily McDougall, Expert and Technician

Climate Declaration

In Spring of 2018, the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation, Old Crow, Yukon, declared a state of climate emergency. Our office was proud to support their declaration and perseverance to bring our northern experience to the national and international stage.

Chief Tizya-Tramm of the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation brought the Yeendoo Diinehdoo Ji'heezrit Nits'oo Ts'o' Nan He'aa Declaration to the 2019 AFN Annual General Assembly, which led to AFN Resolution 05/2019, *Declaring a First Nations Climate Emergency*. The declaration's title comes from the late Elder Sara Abel Chitze (born in 1896) who said "Yeendoo Diinehdoo Ji'heezrit Nits'oo Ts'o' Nan He'aa," which means, "After our time, how will the world be?" The AFN resolution was passed with unanimous support from AFN Chiefs-in-Assembly and became known as the "Declaring a Climate Emergency" resolution.

We all stand together in support of this resolution.

Since this resolution was passed, the AFN Environment Sector has been working closely with the ACE committee members to develop a First Nations Climate Strategy to support the advancement of First Nation led and driven climate solutions. We know that climate change has become one of the singular defining crises of our time. This declaration, and the resolution backing it, is one of the most important pieces of work as we look to the future, and my colleagues and I are committed to the work of advancing First Nations-created climate solutions.



National Gathering

In early March, the AFN Yukon Region was honoured to host the AFN National Climate Gathering in Whitehorse on the shared traditional territory of the Kwanlin Dün and the Ta'an Kwäch'än. This meeting aimed to unite First Nations from across the country on the issue of climate change and to discuss the innovative actions and solutions that are being implemented in First Nations communities from coast-to-coast-to-coast. The event started with a welcome reception including a cultural showcase of local Yukon First Nations talent via the Traditional Inland Tlingit Dance group: the Dakhká Khwáan Dancers.

Gathering topics included:

- Climate change and First Nations' right to self-determination
- Meeting capacity needs to support First Nations as climate leaders
- Fostering Indigenous knowledge systems and free, prior, and informed consent
- Addressing natural and built infrastructure deficits
- Ensuring First Nations' self-sufficiency in the areas of food, water, and clean energy
- Advancing just transitions towards ecologically sustainable and equitable First Nations communities

Inspiring information was shared via keynote and plenary speakers as well as concurrent breakout sessions highlighting and showcasing Indigenous climate action. This gathering brought together participants from across the country. We are so proud of the green event that we hosted and the carbon offsets offered that included planting a culturally appropriate tree for all 350+ participants!

Regional Climate Gathering

The first-ever Yukon First Nation Climate Action Gathering took place mid-February at the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre in Whitehorse and was a powerful three days of collaboration, discussion, learning and connection. We were honoured to host over 100 participants, including representation from each of the 14 Yukon First Nations, and representation from transboundary First Nations from Northern British Columbia and the Northwest Territories.

The voices of Youth and Elders are critical in this work. A pre-gathering was held and dedicated to elevating and connecting the voices of over 50 Youth and Elder participants called "The Shared Heart." While contemplating the challenges of climate change in the north, participants joined in various sessions grounded in ceremony and teachings and worked on a collaborative art piece. Youth participants began drafting the foundation of a youth declaration on climate action, outlining how Yukon First Nations should be responding to the ongoing challenges and impacts presented by climate change.

The Gathering included a keynote address on Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas, provided feedback on the latest draft of Yukon Government's led Climate Change, Energy and Green Economy Strategy, hosted a panel presentation on energy in communities, as well as an Indigenous Knowledge Systems workshop. A series of breakout sessions profiled a broad range of climate action activities currently underway in our communities with each session focused on a different theme.





The last day included a facilitated discussion regarding next steps in the creation of a Yukon First Nations Climate Action Strategy as well as a signing ceremony of the Yukon First Nations Climate Emergency Declaration and the Youth Declaration on Climate Action.

Federal Election

At the 2019 AFNYR Annual Summit in Dawson City, Yukon, First Nation Chiefs and Leaders, Elders, and Youth launched the 2019 YFN Federal Election Strategy, "A Yukon That Votes." To support that strategy, we created a collaborative and proactive approach to inform Yukon First Nation citizens about important election issues and to increase voter turnout amongst Yukon First Nation citizens.

The strategy encouraged First Nations' civil participation in the federal election and served as an opportunity to create a public awareness campaign with a goal of getting out the First Nations vote in an exciting, positive, and non-partisan manner. We developed Federal Election Strategy tools that included information on the various Federal Party platforms, and Yukon First Nation issues were front and center during the federal campaign.

On October 7, we hosted an all-candidates forum in partnership with the Council of Yukon First Nations. Over 300 Yukon First Nation Leaders, citizens and the general public participated in this event both in person and through livestreaming. This forum provided an excellent opportunity for YFN to hear directly from the candidates regarding their views and commitments to Yukon First Nations priorities and interests.

The strategy was an important way in which we supported our First Nations members in the territory during an election that has, in the past, ignored the needs of rural and Indigenous communities. We felt proud to work collaboratively with all Yukon First Nations to provide non-partisan information to Yukon First Nations citizens and help inform their vote. It is important to also acknowledge, the 61 Indigenous candidates who put their names forward to serve as Members of Parliament in this election, a record-high number.

Once the election was decided, we published the Advancing Yukon First Nations Priorities discussion paper, which was designed to clearly set out YFN's priorities and identify upcoming engagement opportunities over the first year of the new administration. The paper provides immediate, concrete next steps to the incoming Cabinet in relation to Yukon First Nations: environment and climate change, advancing transboundary interests, implementing modern treaty agreements, loan forgiveness and repayment, funding transfer agreements, housing, preserving and revitalizing Indigenous languages, and child welfare jurisdiction. We continue to support Yukon First Nations in their policy discussions with the federal government.

AFN Special Chiefs Assembly

AFN Yukon was happy to take part in the 2019 Special Chiefs Assembly in Ottawa from December 3-5. This resulted in a Yukon First Nation Discussion Document, which outlined shared priorities held by Yukon First Nations with respect to their Modern Treaty, Inherent, and Aboriginal rights, as well as



their interests and concerns with respect to promoting and protecting the wellbeing of their citizens and communities. This document is a valuable resource we can use as a foundation for discussions between Ministers and other government officials. AFN Assemblies are important gatherings that allow us to learn from our counterparts across the country and to share the important work being done by Yukon First Nations. This year, we were especially honored to host the ACE reception, in which we were able to host Regional Chiefs and Chiefs from across the country as we recognized the important work of climate change leaders. We look forward to the opportunity to gather in person once again but carry this memory with us as an example of the power we have as a collective to make change.

Looking Ahead

We know that the year ahead will continue to challenge us in its changing rhythms. Typically, we would be making plans to support Yukon First Nations in advancing their governance priorities and while that continues to be of utmost importance, the reality is that so much of our time and attention in the next year will be spent protecting the safety and security of our communities. I am committed to this work as Regional Chief, and I know that we will rely on each other to learn and adapt to the ever-changing rhythm.

Once again, I want to thank Yukon First Nations and the AFN Yukon Regional Executive for their continued support and guidance, our team at AFN Yukon for their hard work, and each and every Yukon First Nation citizen for their continued hope and perseverance.

*Gunalcheesh (Thank you) and
Dak'anutà jè' (take care)!*





Regional Chief Norman Yakeleya

Northwest Territories

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I began my term with the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) elected as both Dene National Chief and as AFN Regional Chief in August of 2018. I have been truly humbled to serve both roles throughout my term. There is a saying that 'fate is simply preparedness meeting opportunity.' This sentiment holds true in my case. As a former negotiator for the Sahtu, Chief and Councillor in Tulita, and a former MLA for the Sahtu in the Northwest Territories Legislature, I am honoured to bring my experiences to serve the Dene Grand Chiefs across Denendeh and thank my predecessor, Bill Erasmus, who left his role after nearly three decades of service.

I thank the Dene people for bestowing this honour on me. It is a privilege to work with and for you. I am honoured to work for those affected by my AFN portfolios across Canada. We are many heartbeats, one Dene drum.

The Northwest Territories is a unique region in Canada. Dene communities do not receive the adequate funding and resources required to meet the basic socioeconomic standards of average Canadians. This disparity is due to the fact that these resources go to either the Territorial Government or they simply bypass the northern territories all together. As Dene National Chief, I will continue to work with all levels of government, partners, and stakeholders to enhance the livelihood of Dene communities.

Regional Highlights

"Upholding and Protecting the Rights and Interests of the Dene Nation"

Over the past year, one of our regions expressed concerns and frustrations with the Teck Mine project, which had originally been planned near Smiths Landing First Nation. Though the project has since been withdrawn, the frustration with how this process was undertaken continues to be problematic. The interests and the concerns of our community members and First Nations were not well received by the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) – an issue that we intend to continue to resolve with government stakeholders and partners, with an eye to creating better processes for the future. Additionally, the Dene Nation is working to coordinate the first Northern Leaders' Water Summit in Smith's Landing First Nation in 2020, so that the Dene Nation and allies can develop a strategy to work together to protect our most valuable resource in the face of proposed and future energy projects across Denendeh.

Specific to the Dene Nation, this fiscal year has marked three very important milestones. On February 1, 2020, Dene Nation's Head Office on K'atl'odeeche First Nation was opened. Dene Nation will now have two office locations: its sub-office in Yellowknife and its headquarters at K'atl'odeeche First Nation. A reception and official opening of the K'atl'odeeche office was hosted on



March 17, 2020 which was originally meant to coincide with the Dene Nation Education Summit. The Summit has been rescheduled to July 2020 and will be held virtually. The Dene Nation Education Summit will engage Dene leadership to develop a shared vision for Dene Education going forward.

On February 4, the Dene Nation hosted a second successful relationship-building breakfast meeting with thirteen Members of the Legislative Assembly of the GNWT and various Chiefs across Denendeh. The discussion focused on how we can better work together going forward, the capacity challenge many First Nations are facing, and the need for a co-drafting agreements for upcoming key legislation of our critical interest in upholding and protecting the rights and interests of the Dene Nation from the standpoint of Nationhood and self-determination.

The Dene Nation hosted a meeting of the Constitutional Reform Committee (CRC) from January 23-24, 2020, with the Chiefs Working Group (CWG) in Edmonton. After that session, CRC Chair Georges Erasmus provided a report to the Chiefs, which they proceeded to give direction to regarding the

common goal of Dene unity, and reviewed the current status of the Dene initiative to update the Dene Nation corporate constitution.

Finally, this year marks the 50th Anniversary of the founding of the Dene Nation as a political body. This milestone was planned to be celebrated alongside the Dene people at our Annual General Assembly in Fort Good Hope on July 27 – 31, 2020. However, due to current COVID-19 circumstances, we will be postponing this assembly and celebration until a time when it is safe for us to gather as Dene people. Our theme will be “Honouring our People.” The Dene Nation is looking at this very important Assembly to officially honour our elders, youth, leaders, and professionals.

As part of my role on the AFN Executive National Committee, I currently hold the following portfolios:

- Indigenous Veterans
- Residential Schools, 60s Scoop, Federal Day Schools
- Knowledge Keepers (Elders)
- Alternate to AFN Charter Renewal with Regional Chief Poitras (Alberta).



I am committed to advancing these important issues on the national level and for the Dene Nation as well.

On February 4th, 2020, the Dene Nation presented the Federal Indian Day School Claims Process to all Dene Band Managers and SAOs. Many communities have raised concerns regarding the limited resources and skilled people to assist survivors and their families with the process and require additional funding to support trauma counselling. The Dene Nation is actively pursuing mechanisms for support to address these needs, and as National Portfolio Holder, I will continue to pursue these issues on the national level as more support is needed.


In December 2019, the Dene Nation put forth a resolution at the AFN Special Chiefs Assembly to address the lack of funding for housing in the North. This resolution received unanimous support from across the country, and our staff are currently formulating a strategy to ensure long-term housing and funding for First Nation communities across Canada. Further updates will be provided as the process ensues. Input on this developing issue is welcome from all leadership.

The First Nations Veterans of Canada (FNVC) are a group I am honoured to work with. The mission of the FNVC is to address the needs and concerns of First Nation Veterans and their families. Greater communication, provision of information, and delivery of services to rural and remote First Nation communities are the most prevalent issues that are regularly mentioned during witness presentations regarding First Nations veterans in Canada. Additionally, research

is required to clearly establish the historical record of First Nations soldiers who fought in all the international wars and conflicts on behalf of Canada.

Moving forward, First Nation veterans have stated that their conditions can improve if outreach to all veterans, families, and First Nations Communities occur in order to gain a better understanding of the post-service benefits for former service members, families, and their communities. This improvement can only occur if we, as First Nations peoples, are committed to becoming engaged, aware, and are able to understand the current health benefits potentially accessible to this aged population.

The Dene Leadership elected me in 2018 based on my platform of twelve priorities. As Dene National Chief, I am continuing my commitment to achieving these twelve priorities during my term, and for a legacy to leave beyond. The key priority continues to be Dene unity and rebuilding of the Dene Nation Corporation. The rebuilding efforts are broad and include revising the Dene Nation Corporate Constitution, evaluating all Dene Nation affiliates (Dene Cultural Institute, Native Communication, and the Denendeh Development Corporation) in order to assess how well they are serving the needs of the Dene and areas of improvement. The achievement of this goal is a long-term and on-going project.



More specifically, the Dene Nation twelve priorities are:

1. Unite the Dene Nation through a new protocol agreement.
2. Establish new councils of elders, women, youth, and advisors.
3. Establish the Dene Nation Executive Caucus through Grand Chiefs Councils.
4. Conduct a self-assessment of the Dene National Office and affiliated organizations.
5. Examine the current Constitution and by-laws of the Dene Nation and adapt both to meet current realities.
6. Create working arrangements with business, cultural, and communication agencies that meet the overall mission of the Dene Nation.
7. Carry the Dene Nation mandate to the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) and work with their leadership.
8. Develop a communication strategy that keeps the communities regularly informed.
9. Develop youth initiatives in sports, leadership, and career planning.
10. Establish programs that honor the ancestors and past elders for their contribution to the work of our Nation and Canada.

11. Determine types of proper compensation and benefits for our leaders, their families, and our staff.

12. Develop sacred ceremonies and traditional workshops that revisit drum dances, hand games, and Dene songs.

Throughout my mandate, I am humbled by the collective strength and the unity we have displayed as both AFN Leadership and as Dene people. Many Dene heartbeats, one Dene drum.

*National Chief
Norman Yakeleya (yak'e? ula)*







Council Reports



Knowledge Keepers Council

Since the inception of the National Indian Brotherhood and transition to the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), there has always been a place of honour and distinction for Elders that is evident within the Charter of the Assembly of First Nations. The AFN Knowledge Keepers Council (Council) provides both spiritual and political guidance to the AFN. During the past 38 years, the AFN's leadership has relied upon the historical and cultural knowledge of the Council, especially in matters relating to Treaty rights and First Nations governance and this role continues today.

The Council includes representatives from each of AFN's 10 regions. The Council continues to play an important role in all facets of the AFN and its operations.

The Knowledge Keepers are:

- British Columbia representative: Dr. Gwendolyn Point, Kowkale First Nation
- Yukon representative: Charles Hume, Champagne and Aishihik First Nation
- Northwest Territories representative: John Bekale, Gameti
- Alberta representative: Bruce Starlight, Tsuu'tina Nation
- Saskatchewan representative: Joseph Quewezance
- Manitoba representative: Ernie Daniels, Long Plain First Nation
- Ontario representative: Edmond Sackaney, Fort Albany First Nation
- Quebec/Labrador representative: William Sunday, Akwesasne Reserve


- New Brunswick/Prince Edward Island representative: Eldon Bernard, Tobique First Nation
- Nova Scotia/Newfoundland representative: Phyllis Googoo Waycobah First Nation.

Key Activities and Accomplishments:

In the past year, the Council met at the AFN Annual General Assembly and the AFN Special Chiefs Assembly to discuss issues and challenges facing the Council and to bring together new ideas.

The Council are the keepers of our traditions, values, languages and history. They are guides to our leadership and future leaders. They speak with honour and with a great deal of pride. The Council will always encourage First Nation leaders and champions through continuing to enlighten and inform forums, such as Chiefs Assemblies, through their experiences, issues, successes and challenges. It is all of our responsibilities to ensure prosperity and the safety of the little ones, just as our ancestors did for us. The Council continues to engage with other Elders in their regions to share information and to communicate national messages to the grassroots.

The Council participated in the National Gathering of Elders that was held in Winnipeg, Manitoba on September 9-13, 2019. Members of the Council actively participated on several discussion panels throughout the three-day gathering, which included ceremony, reconciliation, language and culture, MMIWG, climate change, and children and family.



Throughout the year, the Council has continued to focus their work on the development of their Terms of Reference (TOR) and participated in the AFN's Charter Renewal process. The Council has also participated in various Chiefs' Committees in advisory roles and by providing Elder services.

In regions across Canada, First Nations are revitalizing traditions and ceremonies through gatherings. The Council continues to advocate that First Nations' traditions, languages, and ceremonies are shared and kept alive as it is the foundation to building stronger Nations.

AFN Knowledge Keepers Terms of Reference

The Knowledge Keepers Council continued to meet at Assemblies to discuss, review, and update the "AFN Knowledge Keepers Terms of Reference." Through hard work and perseverance, the document was finalized and brought forward to the Executive Committee.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

- The AFN will continue to seek additional funding for the Council from federal and alternative sources. The additional funding is to ensure that First Nations cultures and perspectives are reflected in the work conducted regionally and nationally, and to fully integrate the input and participation of the Council into all work. AFN staff will continue to provide administrative support.
- The Council will continue to provide guidance to the AFN Executive Committee, staff and support the activities of the Tri-Council.
- The Council will continue to provide guidance and vision to the AFN Tri-Council meetings with the Women and Youth Councils. The Council will continue their collaboration with the Tri-Council with a focus on finalizing and advancing their collective strategic plan.
- The Council continues to meet on Council protocol, roles and responsibilities.





AFN Women's Council

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Women's Council seeks to unify and create healthy, happy, and harmonious communities through cultural identity and teachings based on the values of respect, love, courage, wisdom, honesty, humility and truth. The AFN Women's Council also establishes a gender-balanced perspective within the AFN that honours the rights and aspirations of First Nations women. The objective of the Women's Council is to ensure that the concerns and perspectives of First Nations women inform the work of the AFN. Specifically, Council Members fulfill their portfolio responsibilities and participate in a wide range of panels, presentations and forums that are relevant to First Nations women and the issues that affect them. In 2019, the Women's Council supported the following resolutions: Resolution 59/2019, *Strengthening and Supporting the AFN Women's Council*; Resolution 67/2019, *Development and Implementation of a National action Plan on Violence Against Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA*; and Resolution 119/2019, *Healing Programs for MMIWG2S Families*.

Key Activities and Accomplishments:

On December 3, 2019, the AFN Women's Council participated in the Federal, Provincial and Territorial meeting of the Ministers of Status of Women held in Victoria, B.C. This is the third time that the Ministers of Status of Women have invited the Women's Council to participate in this meeting. The meeting provided an excellent opportunity for the Women's Council to discuss its priorities and explore building partnerships. The agenda

for the meeting included discussions of AFN priority areas such as the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Final Report's *Calls for Justice* and the development of a National Action Plan to end violence against First Nations women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA (National Action Plan).

AFN Women's Council members participated in AFN-led focus groups on *First Nations Women's Economic Security and Prosperity*. The purpose of the focus groups was to discuss the many barriers First Nations women encounter in obtaining higher levels of education, establishing themselves as successful entrepreneurs, and finding employment in management or executive positions. The focus groups also addressed the challenges First Nations women face in establishing themselves in leadership roles, particularly within First Nations governments. The input from these focus groups will ultimately be included in a Comprehensive Strategic Framework for action to advance socio-economic issues and increase the participation in First Nations governance for First Nations women across Canada.

Members of the AFN Women's Council participated in the *Initiatives and Options for Enhanced & Sustainable GBA+ Capacity Forum* on February 4-5, 2020 in Ottawa, Ontario. This Forum provided insights from vulnerable groups including First Nations, low-income persons, immigrants, refugees, persons with disabilities, and minority communities affected by new policies, legislation, regulations, projects and other

initiatives. It provided a road map for empowering women from diverse backgrounds to have a voice in improving policy and program delivery and examined how different communities are impacted in different ways. It also provided examples where local, provincial or federal governments have developed policy without input from diverse communities. Throughout the Fall and Winter of 2019, the AFN Women's Council was in discussions with representatives from Crown/Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) regarding engagement for the development of a First Nations National Action Plan.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

The AFN Women's Council will continue to advocate for the establishment of gender-balanced perspectives within the AFN and within all entities dealing with First Nations, that honours the rights and aspirations of First Nations women. Looking ahead to 2020 and 2021, the Women's Council anticipates much of its work will be devoted to advocating for the implementation of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Final Report's *Calls for Justice* and the development of a National Action Plan.





National Youth Council

The Assembly of First Nations National Youth Council (NYC) is united in exercising their inherent rights and strives to influence the direction of the AFN through promoting equality. The NYC works with all levels of leadership to create opportunities for personal development and empowerment for future generations.

The NYC is a key organ of the AFN, as established in the Charter, and represents First Nations youth across the country on issues that impact them on a daily basis. The NYC acts as an advisory body to the AFN Chiefs Committees, AFN Secretariat and the AFN Executive Committee on various youth-related and non-youth-related issues. The NYC also works to promote youth perspectives to the committees it advises.

The NYC operates as a 20-member council of First Nations youth from each of the 10 AFN regions. Each region appoints one male and one female representative who are selected by regional youth councils or their Regional Chief. The Council elects two co-chairs and two executives each year at the Annual General Assembly (AGA). The AFN NYC 2019-2020 Co-chairs are Rosalie Labilloy-Wysote and Rollin Baldhead. The two 2019-2020 Executive Members are Ashley Daniels and Cedric Gray-Lehoux.

Key Activities and Accomplishments:

The NYC members are involved in various AFN files. Each youth member holds a portfolio to stay up to date on their assigned sector's work. NYC members continue to update the Council on their portfolios at

both the Annual General and Special Chiefs' Assemblies and through virtual meetings.

Following the Special Chiefs' Assembly in December 2019, the NYC sent a letter to the Prime Minister's Office proposing that the AFN NYC co-chairs be invited to participate in the Prime Minister's Youth Council and that the Prime Minister attend one AFN NYC meeting per year.

AFN Secretariat and Executive Committee

The AFN NYC continues to participate in and advise various AFN Sector Chiefs' Committees, working groups and forums coordinated by the AFN Secretariat. In particular, the NYC continues to prioritize the protection of the lands, waters, and all living creatures through environmental advocacy.

AFN Youth Gatherings on the Environment and Climate

In March 2020, members of the NYC met for a youth specific meeting ahead of the National Gathering on Climate in Whitehorse, Yukon. At the gathering, the NYC discussed how they can push forward climate action recommendations from the National Youth Summit on Environment in April 2019. They also presented to the plenary on their priorities in environmental advocacy.



In April 2019, the NYC along with more than 80 youth made the following recommendations at the National Youth Summit on Environment in Wendake, Quebec:

1. Decolonize and reconnect to all living things including the lands, waters, non-human beings, medicines, and spirits;
2. Ensure lands, waters, non-human beings, medicines, and sacred sites are protected and accessible now and for the seven generations to come;
3. Support youth in developing sustainable green-infrastructure and transportation solutions in their First Nations;
4. Prioritize community wellbeing over profit;
5. Practice sustainable consumption; and
6. Support youth in developing education and training for creating scalable, local, and land-based solutions.

AFN Youth Water Collective

The NYC continues to prioritize water justice in their advocacy work and recommended that members of the NYC take part in the AFN National Indigenous Youth Water Collective. AFN Resolution 78/2019, *Endorsement of the Preliminary Table of Contents for a First Nations Long-Term Water*

and Wastewater Strategy Post- 2021, directs the AFN to allocate resources to support the implementation of a National Indigenous Youth Water Collective. The AFN Water Collective met in August and November 2019.

At the August gathering, the youth delegates explored goals and objectives in water law reform, established key action items that lift youth voices and created a movement challenge to bring awareness, gather support, and connect Indigenous youth who are working on water issues. This opportunity provided funding for capacity-building, training, and projects to strengthen youth leaders to ensure environmental protection for future generations.

COVID-19

AFN NYC members are undertaking work in their communities to assist during the pandemic by communicating national updates to the youth in their regions and by promoting learning and communication materials regarding COVID-19. The NYC is invested in staying up to date on work being done at a national level by attending AFN Chiefs Committees and working groups. The NYC members are working to amplify youth



voices in these national meetings and share information back to their communities. The Youth COVID-19 Task Team, made up of four AFN-NYC members, is advocating to create youth-friendly ways to convey the importance of social distancing on and outside of social media. The Task Team is working with the AFN Health Sector, We Matter, Canadian Roots Exchange, and Thunderbird Partnership Foundation to engage youth.

Youth Hope Fund – Interim Youth Steering Committee

The Youth Hope Fund is a funding program administered by the First Nations and Inuit Health Branch to support First Nations organization in life promotion activities. Members of the AFN-NYC sit on the Interim Youth Steering Committee (IYSC) to support decisions on funding. So far, the NYC, through the IYSC, has supported the We Matter organization, Thunderbird Partnerships, the National Youth Sexual Health Network, Aboriginal Sports Circle, 4RS Movement, and the First Peoples Wellness Circle.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

The AFN NYC, in the 2020-2021 year, will continue to:

- Advocate for all First Nations youth involvement in all aspects of the environment (i.e. protection of lands and waters);
 - Support national and local initiatives on mental wellness and life promotion activities;
 - Update the AFN-NYC work plan, Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct to better reflect the importance and responsibilities of the Council Members, foster a system of internal support, and better empower space for youth voices.
 - The AFN-NYC will virtually meet in July 2020, where they will elect their new Executive Members and Co-Chairs.
-
- Collaborate with the AFN Knowledge Keepers Council and Women's Council;
 - Work to maintain a visible and substantial presence within the activities, meetings, and conferences of the AFN Secretariat and its various sub-committees and working groups;

First Nations Veterans of Canada

FNVC Overview

The Assembly of First Nations First Nations Veterans of Canada (FNVC) is comprised of First Nations Veterans who have fought in a collection of the major global conflicts. The FNVC as a group is striving to assist and provide help to First Nations Veterans, their families and communities. The specific objectives of the FNVC is “to provide formal organization through which all First Nations Veterans of Canada may voice their concerns fully and contribute to the planning and development of policy” which will have a positive impact on Veterans, their families and communities at large.

The FNVC has held a place of recognition within the AFN since the development of the National Indian Brotherhood (NIB) and eventual transition to the Assembly of First Nations (AFN). The FNVC helped to shape the development of the NIB/AFN by providing guidance and direction that continues to the current day. Efforts are being considered whether to formalize the role in the AFN Charter, to be approved by Chiefs-in-Assembly.

The FNVC is led by Veterans and features support from the AFN Executive Committee through the portfolio holder, Northwest Territories Regional Chief Norman Yakeleya. Appointment to the FNVC is done through a nomination process. Each region is represented by a nominated Veteran that participates in the work of the FNVC to ensure regional needs are met.

It is with great sadness that the FNVC marks the passing of the representative for Quebec, Veteran Luc Obomsawin, who passed in early 2020.

First Nations Veterans Representatives by Region

The FNVC members include AFN portfolio holder, Regional Chief Norman Yakeleya; Ontario representative, Veteran Tom Bressette; urban representative, Veteran James Eagle; British Columbia representative, Veteran Percy Joe; Nova Scotia representative, Veteran Allan Knockwood; Yukon representative, Northern Ranger Charles Hume; Manitoba representative, Veteran-Chief Christian Sinclair; Saskatchewan representative, Veteran Emile Highway; Alberta representative, Veteran Henry Raine; New Brunswick/ PEI representative, Veteran Eldon Bernard; Northwest Territories representative, Veteran Tim O’Loan; and AFN Veterans’ technician, Larry Whiteduck.

The Quebec regional position is currently vacant.

Key Activities and accomplishments:

To date the primary focus of the FNVC has been to develop strategic partnerships and secure resources to address the needs of FNVC and families.

The FNVC aims to participate in the creation of a historical record of First Nations soldiers who fought in all international wars and conflicts on behalf of Canada. This project





would likely entail a great deal of research in order to establish an accurate and all-encompassing list.

In order to advance the objectives of the FNVC and the needs of First Nations veterans' nationwide, further outreach and annual recognition is needed.

The FNVC continues to advocate for better communication on behalf of Veterans, families and communities, as the current outreach activities administered by Veterans affairs Canada has failed to reach the entire membership. The flow of information to all those residing in rural areas needs to be improved to ensure they are properly informed. To accomplish this feat, the FNVC suggests the following course of action:

- 1) An environmental scan of all First Nations and Aboriginal veterans who have fought in all major world conflicts (World War I, II, Korea, recent-day conflicts in Afghanistan, Canada's U.N. Peacekeeping efforts worldwide, etc.) including many undocumented First Nations veterans who fought in pre- and post-confederation conflicts on behalf of the Dominion of Canada.
- 2) Assessment of current outreach to all Veterans, families and First Nations Communities to gain a better understanding of post-service benefits for former service members, families and communities.

- 3) Create a dialogue with Veterans Affairs Canada to develop a plan towards ensuring consistent outreach activities on services and benefits for Veterans and families.
- 4) Ensuring FNVC and families are made aware of the current available health, housing, and memorial services.

To date members of the FNVC have participated in 5 commemoration activities in foreign battlefields, including:

- Veteran Thomas Bressette – Vimy Ridge
- Veteran Percy Joe – Juno Beach
- Veteran Luc Obomsawin – Passchendaele
- Veteran Eldon Bernard – Dieppe
- Veteran Henry Raine – Juno Beach
- Northern Ranger Charles Hume – Italian Campaign



Key Meetings

The FNVC had the opportunity to host several meetings over the last year including a joint meeting with the Saskatchewan First Nation Veterans in Calgary, Alberta on March 27-29. During this meeting, the following was accomplished:

- Planning, identifying and coordination of First Nations Veterans participation in international ceremonies;
- First Nations Veterans working sessions to plan key priorities and activities during March 27, 28, 2019;
- The start of working relationships with National Veterans organizations, such as the Veterans Ombudsmen, Dominion Command – The Royal Canadian Legion, Veterans Emergency Transition Services (VETS), Veterans Affairs Canada – (Meeting April 29, 2020), and Respect Canada (May 14, 2020).

Next Steps – Moving Forward

The AFN will continue to:

- seek funding for the FNVC from the Federal Government and other possible funding sources;
- work to ensure that perspectives from Veterans are reflected in the work conducted regionally and nationally; and
- Fully integrate the participation of the FNVC as is appropriate in assemblies, including the Special Chief Assemblies.

The FNVC will continue to:

- provide guidance to the AFN;
- partner with the Knowledge Keepers, Women's and Youth Councils;
- maintain collaboration efforts with the Tri-Councils with the goal of the finalization and advancement of their collective strategic plans.



ASSEMBLY
OF FIRST
NATIONS



CEO Report



Chief Executive Officer

Aaaniin, Pjil'asi, OKI, Kwe kwe, Boozhoo, Tan'si, Gilakas'la, She:kon

Firstly, I want to thank the former CEO, Dr. Paulette Tremblay, for her diligent leadership and work in guiding the AFN over the last 2 years – you led the AFN through unprecedented changes and we are ever grateful for your guidance. Also, thank you to interim CEO, Jonathan Thompson, for his stewardship in our uncertain times.

This year has been a remarkable challenge, not only for us as First Nations people, but for the entire global community. COVID-19 has asked us to put our lives on pause while we await a vaccine and a return to some sense of normalcy. For many, this means missing milestones like birthdays, graduations, weddings, and traditional ceremonies. The strain and tension that the pandemic has put on us all has been monumental but also serves as a reminder of the resiliency of our spirit.


We at the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) have been working tirelessly throughout this strange and trying time, finding new ways to adapt and grow so that we can continue to provide First Nations with services and programs tailored to their specific needs. This has meant tireless advocacy from our team to ensure First Nations are included in Canada's response. In spite of this adjustment to what is quickly becoming a new normal, the AFN has also felt the effects of the country-wide shutdown. With heavy hearts, we announced that we have had to cancel our Annual General Assembly (AGA) that was to be held in Halifax, Nova Scotia on the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People. This decision was not one made lightly as we greatly value the input and connections made during the AGA.

Ultimately, it was clear that cancellation was the best choice for the safety of our people.

The AGA is a time for both work and celebration of the triumphs of First Nations people. It is an opportunity to connect through politics, dialogue, ceremony, art, music, dance, and cuisine that many look forward to with excitement each year. While it is disappointing that we will not be able to host an event this summer, it is important, now more than ever, to acknowledge the continued work and advocacy for the betterment of all Nations that our organization has done during 2019-2020 fiscal period.

This past year has seen yet another unprecedented amount of activity. The many events held this year showcased the hard work and dedication of the AFN staff, but also served as a way to connect with the many First Nations that the AFN services. The events planned and implemented by the Office of the Chief Executive Officer included the following:

May 1 and 2, 2019	4 Policies & Nation Building Forum, Edmonton AB
July 22-25, 2019	Annual General Assembly, Fredericton NB
September 4 & 5, 2019	Cannabis Summit, Vancouver BC
September 18-20, 2019	Director's Retreat, Wakefield QC
December 2-5, 2019	Special Chiefs Assembly, Ottawa ON



The work that is undertaken by the AFN is mandated by resolutions passed by the Chiefs-in-Assembly. In 2019 Chiefs-in-Assembly passed 120 resolutions, all of which were actioned or continue to be in motion by technical experts and AFN elected leaders in the areas of climate change, education, fisheries, lands, economic development, social programs, health, rights, housing, water, changes to the AFN Charter and more. All of these resolutions call on the AFN to take action to advance First Nations rights, advocate for funding to effectively implement these rights and support effective organization to take action.

In the months following our last AGA in July 2019 we experienced a slowdown in advancing our work with the federal government. The government was in “caretaker mode” leading up to the federal election which took place on October 21, 2019. This does not mean that First Nations

priorities were not being advanced elsewhere. In September, 2019 the National Chief released “Honouring Promises,” a document to inform the electorate on First Nation priorities. The election platforms of all federal parties included First Nations issues. On December 5th 2019, we heard the Governor General of Canada deliver the Speech from the Throne. For the first time in history, First Nations priorities were an entire chapter of the speech. This was the result of the advocacy and leadership from the AFN’s National Chief and Executive members as directed by Chiefs-in-Assembly.

I began my tenure as CEO earlier this year and it is truly an honour to serve the Chiefs and First Nations of Canada. With the cooperation, commitment, and confident leadership of the National Chief, Executive Committee, and Chiefs-in-Assembly, the AFN will continue to succeed in its mandate to improve the lives of all First Nations





peoples. We have accomplished so much in recent history but we will need to work hard to keep this momentum going. The challenges that COVID-19 recovery, a minority government, and other externalities bring will be tough but the AFN and our communities will need to work together to overcome and we will.

As First Nations People we are no strangers to hardship. Throughout our eons-long history, we have had to endure all manner of difficult times that threatened our way of life. The COVID-19 pandemic and the resultant economic shutdown serves as a reminder of the resilience and bravery of our Nations. Our daily lives may have changed, but the strength of each and every one of us continues to burn brightly in spite of the trials we are facing.

It is true that times are tough and that they may seem to be unending and uncertain, but we must hold tight to the knowledge that we will get through this trial and that we will emerge stronger together. I hope that you and your loved ones are in good health, physically, mentally, and spiritually. I look forward to joining you all at the Special Chiefs Assembly this coming winter when it is safe for our Nations to gather once more.

Miigwetch, Wela'lin, Nai:wen, Mahsi'Cho, Hiy Hiy, Guneshcheesh, Howa'a, Kinanaskomitin,

Janice Ciavaglia
Chief Executive Officer





Sector Reports



Communications Sector

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Communications Sector is mandated to ensure that all First Nations receive timely and relevant information on the AFN and international, national, provincial, regional and local issues, priorities, policies and decisions that impact First Nations. The Sector is responsible for a number of communications functions within the AFN, including strategic communications, planning, media and public relations, social media, public awareness, and producing and coordinating publications, videos and translation. The Sector provides communications support to all policy areas within the AFN and assists the National Chief's Office.

The Communications Sector distributes information in a wide variety of formats and delivery services including print, broadcast fax, video and audio messages, e-mail blasts, web-based content, Indigenous and non-Indigenous media and social media.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

Media and Public Relations

The Communications Sector advises, prepares, and implements strategic communications policy and planning for the AFN based on direction and mandates from First Nations and strategies to advance specific initiatives, issues, gatherings and activities. The Sector works to develop materials and provide information to First Nations, governments, the media, and general public about the AFN, its activities and its advocacy, including the National Chief's agenda and priorities.

Press releases, media advisories and statements are prepared and distributed nationally (in English and French) to Indigenous and non-Indigenous media, with regional distribution as applicable, and international media where relevant. More than 60 press releases, statements, and media advisories were prepared and distributed during the 2019-20 fiscal year. Communications also prepares media lines and talking points, backgrounders, op-eds, letters to the editor, and editorials on current and priority issues.

The Sector assists in preparing speaking notes for the National Chief and AFN spokesperson for a variety of events for wide-ranging audiences, including First Nation governments, groups and organizations, professional associations, national and international organizations, and federal and provincial governments. Communications seeks to raise and maintain the profile of First Nation peoples and priorities through a variety of media, including print, broadcast, social media and web-based media. The Communications Sector is active in media outreach and media relations and sets up background briefings, interviews and editorial boards to advance understanding and awareness of the AFN's activities and First Nations issues.

The Communications Sector oversees daily media monitoring to track, assess, and evaluate coverage of First Nations and Indigenous issues, activities and announcements by federal, provincial, territorial and municipal governments that impact First Nations people and their governments. Over the past year, there have been numerous developments that have resulted in widespread national and



international media coverage for the AFN, including the passing of Bill C-91 (the Indigenous Languages Act), Bill C-92 (An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families), the International Decade of Indigenous Languages, and advocacy to promote and build support for implementation of the AFN document *Honouring Promises: 2019 Federal Election Priorities for First Nations and Canada*.

Public Awareness

The Communications Sector works to raise awareness and understanding of First Nations issues, as well as the AFN's role, responsibilities, and activities. The AFN recognizes that First Nations have different communications needs and different ways of accessing information. For this reason, the AFN uses a mix of traditional and new media to disseminate information as widely as possible, including broadcast fax, e-mail and e-mail blasts, the AFN website, and social media.

The AFN issues regular updates on the AFN's activities and work underway at the national office. Communiqués are distributed by fax and e-mail to all First Nations, provincial/territorial organizations (PTOs) and tribal councils, and distributed via social media and web posting.

Public information is also distributed to more than 1,750 subscribers through the AFN e-mail subscription service (listserv). Users can sign up on the AFN website. All subscribers and Chiefs who provide an email address now receive an AFN Weekly e-Newsletter providing information and highlights from the past week and

information on upcoming events. This is a new initiative this year that is being well-received by subscribers.

AFN Communications also supports the IT Sector in maintaining and updating information to the AFN App, which is available for download to any and all mobile users.

While the IT Sector oversees website management, Communications supports the AFN website (www.afn.ca) through regular updates to provide current information on AFN activities and priorities.

The AFN continues to expand its social media outreach with more than 55,300 followers on Facebook ([Assembly of First Nations/Assemblée des Premières Nations](#)) and 47,800 on Twitter ([@AFN_Updates](#)). The AFN also launched an Instagram account ([@assemblyoffirstnations](#)) for images and sharegraphics, which currently has more than 3,555 followers and is building daily. The AFN is expanding its use of [LinkedIn](#) and has seen an increase in followers from 7,000 since the last reporting period to more than 12,220.

The AFN initiates and implements campaigns for events like Indigenous History Month. The #IndigenousHistoryMonth social media campaign, highlighting important events and notable individuals in the Indigenous community throughout the month of June, was successful and well received. Videos are also posted on social media, including the Assembly of First Nations [YouTube](#) channel, which has more than 740 subscribers. The National Chief has his own Facebook page and Twitter account which are managed





separately from the AFN accounts and are administered by the National Chief's Office.

The AFN continues to provide live webcasting for all Assemblies and key gatherings, some of which are interactive and accessible to the online audience. The AFN uses Facebook Live for live coverage of events like press conferences.

Communications Strategies

The Communications Sector develops and implements global AFN communications strategies as well as targeted strategies and communications plans for specific events, issues and initiatives. The Sector provides advice, recommendations and communications support to the AFN Secretariat, inclusive of all policy areas and to the National Chief's Office. Communications advice and recommendations are also provided to First Nations upon request whenever possible.

As of 2018, AFN Communications is engaging in research projects on the prioritization of First Nations issues within the general public to inform communications work.

Translation

The Communications Sector coordinates all French/English translation requirements to ensure that the general public and First Nations are able to access all public materials produced by the AFN in both French and English. As per AFN policy, all public documents (including those posted on the AFN website) are available in French and English. Translation in other languages is coordinated as required. Translation projects

during the 2018-19 fiscal year totaled 1,030,053 words.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

- Ongoing media and public relations efforts and initiatives.
- The development of enhanced and streamlined approaches to AFN Fact Sheets (one-pagers and public briefing material to First Nations leaders, citizens and the general public).
- Publication of Bulletins and other public information materials.
- Investigation and identification of new useful social media channels to amplify and expand the AFN's messaging.
- Increased training for all Communications staff in new and emerging social media tools and mobile applications.
- Ongoing use and refinement of the AFN App to provide information and updates directly to mobile devices.
- Enhanced monitoring of print, broadcast and social media using new analytics tools.
- Public opinion polling initiatives to inform strategic communications activities.
- Increased use of in-house webcasting and video production ability.

Economic Sector

The Economic Sector focuses on policy topics that promote economic development, trade, resource development, human resources development, procurement, agriculture, connectivity, and other economic policy matters. This Sector also coordinates policy activity regarding First Nations persons with disabilities and social innovation. The Chiefs Committee on Economic Development (CCED) and the Chiefs Committee on Human Resources Development (CCHRD) provide recommendations to the AFN on each of these portfolios and national resolutions.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

New Investments and the Economy

Resolution 100/2019, New Investments for First Nations Involvement in the Economy, directs the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) to call for federal investments into a new economic strategy and framework that prioritizes funding directly to First Nations. It also allows the AFN to conduct the research necessary to advance the aims of the Sector. In 2019-20, both before and during the pandemic, the AFN had made progress on this policy work. However, the economic downturn that resulted in COVID-19 closures is having serious impacts on First Nations that will need to be considered.

The AFN National Chief and the BCAFN Regional Chief advocated to the Minister of Indigenous Affairs that new investments and more supports were needed for First Nations businesses, along with changes to Canada's Emergency Wage Subsidy. The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the economy; it is not yet clear how Canada's economic recovery will proceed nor what the impacts of the pandemic will be on First Nations. It is

certain however that AFN's research up to this point will need to factor in the economic downturn. With the guidance of the CCED, the AFN continues to study the need for new policy approaches and measures to help overcome previous and additional barriers faced by First Nations. The considerations include:

- examining new investments/economic stimulus and incentives;
- putting more control and economic supports in the hands of First Nations by exploring a First Nations-mandated and led economic organization (e.g. an enhanced centre of excellence with platforms for First Nations business projects);
- navigating resources

The AFN has initiated an Interim Technical Committee to assist in this work.

Trade

The AFN's work on trade has been in support of several Chiefs-in-Assembly resolutions, with the most recent being Resolution 37/2019, *Continued Advocacy on Canada's International Trade Agreements to achieve Economic Reconciliation*. The emphasis has been on respecting the rights of Indigenous peoples, advocating for a Trade and Indigenous Peoples chapter in all trade agreements, and trade programs and processes to include space for First Nations. In support of a stronger foundation for First Nations trade, the National Chief has





advocated that the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA) include the need for an Indigenous Peoples chapter in the new trade agreement, engagement with First Nations for such a chapter, and that a new trade agreement must protect inherent and Treaty rights of First Nations as recognized and affirmed by the *Constitution* of Canada and international law.

The CCED has provided guidance on advocacy opportunities for involvement in Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and inter-nation trade. In Canada, legislation implementing the CUSMA received Royal Assent on March 13, 2020. While there is more work to do, the provisions addressing Indigenous peoples in the CUSMA have made it the most inclusive international trade agreement for Indigenous peoples to date. At a technical level, the AFN has participated in the federal Indigenous Peoples and Trade Working Group. AFN is also monitoring committees, such as the House of Commons Committee on International Trade.

Procurement Opportunities and Benefits

The Chiefs-in-Assembly have acknowledged the importance of First Nations economic participation through national resolutions, including Resolution 38/2019 *Increasing First Nations Procurement Opportunities and Benefits*. With the guidance of the CCED, the AFN has developed an evergreen discussion paper entitled *Procurement in Canada: Possible Actions to Increase First Nations Opportunities and Benefits*. This paper outlines recommendations to increase First Nation procurement opportunities.

The AFN participated on the Indigenous COVID-19 Economic Response Task Force. The Task Force focused on the supply chain for much needed medical supplies, equipment and services, and analysis of how the COVID-19 crisis is impacting First Nations and Indigenous businesses. This analysis is essential to ensure the Government of Canada can provide adequate support measures. The National Chief has communicated the importance of First Nations businesses inclusion in federal supply chains in response to the current pandemic. The AFN is seeking resources to continue coordination and development of communications platforms on procurement opportunities and benefits.

Energy Development and Natural Resources

First Nations across Canada are involved in or are considering the ownership of major energy and resource projects on their lands. Respecting First Nations inherent rights and title, as well as treaty rights is essential for inclusive economic strategies and increased economic certainty. The AFN's advocacy efforts include follow Resolution 55/2017, *First Nations Energy Strategy*, which calls for the development of a strategy along with full engagement from the Prime Minister and provincial and territorial Premiers to meaningfully include First Nations in regional, national, and international energy strategies and planning processes.

With the guidance from the CCED, the AFN has prepared three evergreen papers on economic development issues, one of which was on *First Nations and the Natural Resource Economy: Developments, Perspectives and Priorities*. The purpose of the paper is to



combine instructions from Chiefs-in-Assembly resolutions, past work on energy development, clean growth, and natural resource projects. The AFN is continuing dialogue with Natural Resources Canada officials to support First Nations and their development objectives and to work with officials on a preliminary work plan to serve as an agenda for work and as a tool to track progress on building relationships, capacity development and better engagement processes.

Agriculture

Passed in July 2016, Resolution 47/2016, First Nations to Access Economic Opportunities Through a *First Nations Agricultural Strategy* mandated the AFN to engage with the Department of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC). AAFC recognized the importance of facilitating a First Nations agricultural discussion, including greater First Nations participation within all aspects of the agriculture and agri-foods sector. The AFN is examining methods for engaging with First Nations leadership and AAFC in a post-COVID-19 environment. The AFN has successfully secured funding to continue work towards a First Nations agriculture strategy and has drafted a gap analysis that highlights disparity for First Nations within the agriculture agri-foods sector.

Resolution 68/2019, *Establishing Support and Industry Platform for First Nations Food Security, Sovereignty and Economic Development* calls for the development of a First Nations food security working group. With the guidance of the CCED and its technicians, the AFN is exploring funding options within AAFC that can support the creation of such a working group.

Connectivity and e-Strategy

National Resolution 32/2018, *Strengthening On-Reserve Connectivity*, seeks to address the lack of broadband access for First Nations. It calls on Innovation, Science, and Economic Development (ISED) Canada to work with First Nations to develop a comprehensive rural broadband strategy. The AFN has met with ISED to propose working jointly on issues such as examining the ways in which federal program investments in the technology sector can meet the needs of First Nations. The 2019 federal budget allocated \$1.7 billion for a Universal Broadband Fund (UBF) and for highspeed connectivity across Canada to be achieved by 2030. The gaps in First Nations connectivity has been further emphasized and highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic. There is an immediate demand for services that support First Nations connectivity needs.

Human Resources Development

The CCHRD is mandated to provide leadership on human resources development matters. This includes the First Nations Labour Market Strategy (FNLMS) which is now part of the Employment and Social Development (ESDC) Indigenous Skills and Employment Training (ISET) Program. Resolution 25/18, *Next Steps on a Distinct First Nations Labour Market Strategy*, directed the CCHRD to call on the Government of Canada to work with First Nations on a new approach for human capital development. The resolution





states that the approach should be centered on a government-to-government relationship that recognizes First Nations jurisdiction and authority to govern and provide services. Though the resolution stated that the 2018 federal budget offered much needed incremental investments, it did not take into consideration inflation and population increases. The AFN is gathering information for a discussion paper that reaffirms the need for a First Nations approach focused on the jurisdiction and authority of First Nations over labour market programming and updating inflation and population growth data. The AFN continues to seek the guidance of the CCHRD and the advice of the First Nations Technical Working Group (TWG) on Human Resources Development and the Sub-TWG. The AFN continues to work with ESDC to identify joint areas of policy collaboration.

Disabilities (Accessibility)

The CCHRD provides ongoing guidance on disability (accessibility) related work. Among other instructive resolutions, Chiefs-in-Assembly passed Resolution 10/2018, *Resources for Engagement on Distinct First Nations Accessibility Legislation and Resolution 98/2017, Distinct First Nations Accessibility Legislation*. The AFN has gathered First Nations views on accessibility and disability related issues to support the unique needs of First Nations persons with disabilities (FNPWD) and First Nations governments. The AFN has held national engagement sessions about Bill C-81 and the rights of FNPWD. The global pandemic has amplified historic barriers faced by vulnerable First Nations populations including FNPWD. The AFN has developed a policy paper that will continue to be

foundational in building accessible and sustainable First Nations governments. Bill C-81, the Accessible Canada Act, became law in Canada on June 21, 2019. As a result of the Act, the government created an Accessibility Commissioner, a Canadian Accessibility Standards Development Organization (CASDO), and other approaches. The AFN continues to monitor the implementation of Bill C-81, and Canada's obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Social Innovation and Social Finance

Along with guidance led by the CCED, the CCHRD provides AFN with guidance for the work on First Nations social innovation and social finance (SI-SF). Resolution 92/2018, *Social Innovation-Social Finance Framework - Leaving No One Behind*, directed the AFN to develop a framework/policy paper. Resolution 117/ 2019, *Support for First Nations Social Innovation and Social Finance Strategy* called for interim funding of \$150 million for 3 years from the federal SI-SF Fund to support First Nations-led projects followed by appropriate funding for a 10-year strategy. In 2018, Canada committed up to \$755 million over 10 years, starting in 2020-2021, and \$50 million over 2 years to SI-SF. Canada has also committed to implement Investment and Readiness Program pilots across the country. The AFN collected input from First Nations leadership, regional tables and local First Nations, and incorporated dialogue from First Nations technical tables as well as an AFN roundtable to inform a SI-SF policy paper and summary report. This work has important linkages to Agenda 2030 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



Next Steps – Moving Forward

With the guidance of the CCED and the CCHRD, the AFN will focus on:

- First Nations economic recovery and priorities, to include a new national strategy that includes areas such as trade, investment, procurement, and energy.
- Advocate for a solid foundation for First Nations trade opportunities and access to markets.
- Continue to work toward a First Nations Agriculture Strategy and to advocate for First Nations priorities in the Food Policy for Canada.
- Work to close the connectivity gap experienced by First Nations.
- Continue to advocate for increased First Nations procurement opportunities, benefits and monitor implementation of relevant changes to policies.
- Work with ESDC to develop performance measures and planning tools, develop a paper on First Nations jurisdiction and authorities for labour market programming.
- Advocate to build accessible First Nations governments and culturally strengthened policies and protocols for FNPWD.
- Advocate for funding/programs for First Nations-led and delivered SI-SF initiatives.
- Work with Natural Resources Canada to track progress on building relationships, capacity development and improvements on engagement.



Education Sector

Education Overview

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN), Chiefs Committee on Education (CCOE) and the National Indian Education Council (NIEC) are guided by Resolution 16/2016, *Honourable Process to Develop Recommendations to Support First Nations Education Reform*. This Resolution calls for full and meaningful regional First Nations participation on First Nations education reform, requires any draft federal legislation on First Nations education to be ratified by Chiefs-in-Assembly and demands that Canada honour and uphold their constitutional obligation for Inherent and Treaty rights to education. The work of the AFN, CCOE and NIEC are also guided by the Transforming First Nations Elementary and Secondary Education Policy Proposal (2017).

First Nations students have the Inherent and Treaty right to receive education that is in accordance with their culture, values, traditions and languages, and one that is free of prejudice and discrimination. Quality and culturally appropriate education is a cornerstone to the preservation and vitality of First Nation societies and to the realization of other fundamental human rights of First Nation students. First Nation students require special measures in order to enjoy their right to education on an equal footing with other Canadian students. This includes the right to equitable funding that meets their specific needs and circumstances, while considering First Nation children's cultural, linguistic and geographical needs and historical realities.

First Nations K-12 Education Transformation

Budget 2016 allocated \$2.6 billion over five years for improving primary and secondary education for First Nation children. On December 5, 2017, Chiefs-in-Assembly resolved to support AFN Resolution 65/2017, *New Interim Funding Approach for First Nation Education*. This Resolution resulted in the co-development of a Policy Proposal for a new funding approach to First Nations on-reserve education to support students, schools, and communities. The new approach to funding replaces Indigenous Services Canada (ISC)'s outdated, inefficient, and inadequate proposal-based education programs with regional education approaches and funding models that provide sufficient, predictable, and sustainable funding

As of April 1, 2019, the series of new interim regional funding models for elementary and secondary education have been implemented. As a result, First Nations across the country are at various stages of implementation, experiencing diverse challenges and successes. Many First Nations are engaging in regional technical table meetings to further examine their interim formulas to determine next steps as the provincial comparability standards are inadequate to achieving substantive equality and improved outcomes. In addition, several First Nations across the country are in the process or have concluded negotiations of their local, Treaty and/or regional education agreements.

In July 2019, Chiefs-in-Assembly passed AFN Resolution 35/2019, *Additional Funding for First Nations Elementary and Secondary*



Education, calling on the Government of Canada to provide additional investments in 2020 for First Nations elementary and secondary education. This investment would allow for the completion of local, Treaty and/or regional education agreements that accurately and adequately reflect the diverse needs and circumstances of First Nations learners, schools, communities and education organizations.

Regional Education Agreements (By Region)

The table below represents the national roll-up of First Nations that are negotiating and/or concluding a local, regional or Treaty based education agreement, as of March 2020.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

Post-Secondary Education (PSE)

In December 2018, Chiefs-in-Assembly passed AFN Resolution 48/2018, *First Nations Post-Secondary Education Policy Proposal* that would be the First Nations option for policy change in an ISC Memorandum to Cabinet (MC) on Indigenous Post-Secondary Education, set to go to Cabinet in 2019. With an overall budget of \$1.7 billion, the policy proposal focused on three priority areas: 1) Immediate investments to support First Nations post-secondary education, 2) modernization of existing ISC PSE programs, and 3) the opportunity for the development of Treaty based, self-government based, and/or

Region	Category				
	Expressed Interest	Activities Underway	Near Completion	No longer interested	Finalized/ Signed
British Columbia					1
Alberta	7	13		3	2
Saskatchewan	15	3	4		1
Manitoba		1			
Ontario		19			
Quebec	1	1			
Atlantic	3	4	1		
Yukon		1			
Northwest Territories	1				



regional PSE models. The proposed changes reaffirmed First Nation jurisdiction over First Nation education and ensured that students and First Nation Institutes of Higher Learning would be better supported to close the attainment gap in post-secondary education and First Nations students as they pursue their life-long learning aspirations.

In response to the proposal and through Budget 2019, the Government of Canada provided \$327.5M over five years to renew and expand funding for the Post-Secondary Student Support Program while the Government engages with First Nations on the development of long-term First Nations-led PSE models. The funding profile for this investment is: \$50 million in 2019-2020; \$60 million in 2020-2021; and \$70 million in each of the three following years. Following Budget 2019, the NIEC and CCOE have continued to work towards modernizing PSE programs for students and institutions, including how First Nations-led PSE model engagement will begin.

In 2020-2021, First Nations are carrying on the second of three years of engagements on the development of PSE models. The AFN will continue to support First Nations and advocate for further policy change for First Nations post-secondary education as outlined in the *First Nations Post-Secondary Education Policy Proposal (2018)*.

In April 2020, the federal government announced \$65.5M to support First Nations PSE students negatively affected by COVID-19. AFN Education continues to advocate for quick responses from the federal government to ensure current and prospective First Nations students are supported to safely participate in their


continued education despite the challenges arising from COVID-19.

Education Infrastructure

In July 2019, Chiefs-in-Assembly resolved to support AFN Resolution 34/2019, *First Nations Education Infrastructure Review*, which supports policy or program changes to First Nations education infrastructure, led by the AFN, CCOE and NIEC. In August 2019, the AFN and ISC began to develop a short-term critical path to make changes in the School Space Accommodation Standards (SSAS) which determines the amount of space First Nations receive for school builds. This short-term approach is to seek changes in education infrastructure policy that align with First Nation education transformation while also identifying long term funding needs.

In October 2019, the CCOE passed a recommendation to support changes in the SSAS that include adding language and culture rooms, Elders offices/traditional rooms, outdoor learning spaces, counselling/first aid/itinerant rooms, minimum classroom sizes, kindergarten updates and improved overall flexibility in the policy. Since this recommendation, the AFN has formed an Education Infrastructure Working Group and has been working with ISC to amend the existing policy and implement the recommendation made by the CCOE. Due to COVID-19, ISC has indicated that the timeline to complete these policy changes will extend to September 2020.

In May 2020, the AFN Education sector received a preliminary draft of the First Nations Education Infrastructure Capital Needs Assessment, which is a national



assessment report on the short, medium, and long-term capital needs of First Nations schools and teacherages. This report will be foundational to providing accurate and true costs for First Nations education infrastructure in the future.

Education Partnerships Program (EPP)

In April 2019, the CCOE motioned that the NIEC and ISC form a working group to review and recommend necessary changes to the Educational Partnership Program. In August 2019, the EPP Working Group made recommendations for minor and major changes to the program to reflect First Nations control of First Nations education.

In January 2020, the CCOE supported the amended EPP Guidelines: *Partnership Establishment and Partnership Advancement* components and the Structural Readiness component with all minor changes for fiscal year 2020-2021. Minor changes to the EPP included: less prescriptive language in eligible activities, inclusion of flexible partnerships, inclusion of territories, flexible work plan submissions, mutual accountability, and less detailed reporting requirements. The EPP working group is now working towards amending the 2021-2022 program guidelines to support regionalization of the program. This process requires amendments to the *Amended Grants and Contributions to Support First Nation and Secondary Educational Advancement* and a Treasury Board Submission (TBS) to implement the regionalization of the program dollars.

Due to COVID-19, ISC has communicated that the TBS timeline has been delayed. AFN continues to advocate for prioritization of First Nations education during this time.

Research and Learning and Innovation Program

As of 2019-2020, the Research and Innovation Program has been regionalized. First Nations can determine their implementation approach and adjudication process, thus eliminating the national-selection committee.

High Cost Special Education Program Review

In 2017, the ISC MC on Transforming First Nation Education and the First Nations policy proposal outlined that a review must be conducted on the High Cost Special Education Program (HCSEP). The HCSEP administered through ISC provides additional investment to recipients who provide services for students who ordinarily live on-reserve and whose special education needs cannot be met within the current resources that are made available for the general student population.

Since the MC, the HCSEP is one of the last remaining programs to undergo policy review. In February 2020, the AFN Education sector retained INDsight Consulting to begin a national review on the HCSEP. While the review is ongoing, this work will provide a comprehensive research report, including costing gaps under the current program and new models for high-cost special education on-reserve and recommendations for policy to support the true needs of high-cost special education. The proposed report will have a national scope but will include specific regional consultation to identify the needs, challenges, and solutions for the future.





The review was originally scheduled to coincide with the AFN Symposium on First Nations High Cost Special Education on April 28-29, 2020, in Gatineau, Quebec. Due to COVID-19, the symposium was cancelled and, as such, the review will now proceed with online discussion groups via Zoom videoconference. This conferencing will be done with Directors of Education, special education service providers, special education teachers, and other delegates; it is scheduled to occur May 25-29, 2020. Further to this work, the review will also include interviewing key informants in each region and a survey for those First Nations unable to attend the Zoom videoconference discussion groups. The HCSEP Review is scheduled to be complete by September 2020.

K-12 Funding Forums

The AFN Education Sector held two successful K-12 Education Transformation Forums in 2019. The first forum was held in Toronto, Ontario on May 22-23, 2019, and the second forum was held October 8-9, 2019, in Calgary, Alberta. These two forums hosted approximately 230 delegates, including principals, Directors of Education, and education analysts. The forums provided a platform for sharing information, exchanging best practices and highlighting regional experiences.

Raised Voices: Carriers of Hope – Youth Calls to Action

The AFN Education Sector held a second Raised Voices: Carriers of Hope event in Enoch First Nation in Alberta. Ten youth (Carriers of Hope) were brought back together to build an implementation plan for the five Youth Calls to Action on First

Nations Education (Calls to Action) created last year. The AFN interviewed the Carriers of Hope on each Call to Action to create promotional videos that speak to the importance of each Call to Action to be released during the week of Orange Shirt Day along with a How-to-Guide.

Next Steps - Moving Forward

- Continue to support the First Nations vision of lifelong learning and the engagement/development of local, Treaty and Regional post-secondary education models and the implementation of the First Nations Post-Secondary Education Policy Proposal.
- As prioritized by Resolution 34/2019: *First Nations Education Infrastructure Review*, the work in education infrastructure will continue with a focus on amending existing enrollment projections, classroom sizes, teacherages standards, and addressing the deficiencies in the School Priority Ranking Framework.
- The EPP Working Group will continue to amend the K-12 Terms and Conditions to incorporate language that supports the regionalization of program dollars to be implemented for the 2021-2022 Call for Proposals.
- The Report on the HCSEP will provide costing gaps and recommendations for policy change. The AFN will work with ISC to identify Budget Asks and Treasury Board Submissions needed to support a need-based approach to high cost special education.
- Release the *Raised Voices: Carriers of Hope – Youth Calls to Action* on Education promotional videos.



Environment Sector

The Environment Sector focuses on all environmentally-based issues affecting First Nations. The Sector works directly with and is supported by the Advisory Committee on Climate Action and the Environment (ACE). The Environment Sector is active on a range of key environmental issues while also maintaining a broad focus on additional issues that evolve over time. This includes supporting the exercise of First Nations' self-determination and jurisdiction within the context of climate change, species-at-risk, environmental health, Indigenous-led conservation, and environmental policy and legislation, among other things.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

Climate Change

Declaring a First Nations Climate Emergency

Since the passing of Resolution 05/2019, *Declaring a First Nations Climate Emergency*, in July 2019, the Environment Sector has:

- Begun to advance the development of a First Nations-led National Climate Strategy;
- Hosted a National Climate Gathering on March 3-4, 2020, in Whitehorse, YT.

The National Climate Gathering was an overwhelming success with over 380 participants attending. At the Gathering, an outline of the First Nations Climate Lens – three concentric circles representing i) context, ii) impacts, and iii) action – was introduced and guided a diverse selection of panel presentations, workshops, video screenings, and outdoor activities. Topics ranged from health and wellness, youth engagement, emergency management and

direct action. The AFN is working on plans for follow-up from the Gathering and the planning of another gathering in Fall 2021.

Joint Committee on Climate Action

With the support of the ACE, the Environment Sector has participated in the Federal Government's Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Action (PCF) process. This process commenced in 2016 and led to the establishment of a bilateral First Nation/Canada technical table on climate change: the Joint Committee on Climate Action (JCCA). The JCCA is a co-development table between First Nations and federal officials focused on climate policy. The JCCA, with First Nations technical representation from across the country, has been working with Canada for the past 18 months, advancing First Nations interests and priorities alongside Canada's own approach. Its first Annual Report was issued to the Prime Minister and National Chief in early 2019.

The Environment Sector has also provided funding to enable each region to hire a Regional Climate Change Coordinator to better coordinate climate information sharing and action with First Nations. A National Climate Change Coordinator is now also in place to support this work in the national office.





Environmental and Regulatory Reviews (Bill C-69)

On August 28, 2019, Bill C-69, An Act to enact the *Impact Assessment Act* and the *Canadian Energy Regulator Act*, to amend the *Navigation Protection Act* and to make consequential amendments to other Acts (the Act), came into force after a two and a half year process with unprecedented input from First Nations.

While First Nations have expressed concerns over the Government's approach to the Project List, in particular, and the exclusion of oil sands projects, the Act brings the Impact Assessment process into alignment with Canadian law. This includes:

- the inclusion of First Nations rights;
- consideration of Indigenous knowledge; and
- enhanced First Nations participation throughout the process.

This Act is unique in that it makes explicit reference to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Regulatory development is now starting on the Indigenous Cooperation Agreement (Cooperation Agreement) as part of the Impact Assessment Act. The Cooperation Agreement is one of several new opportunities for First Nations within the Act, enabling Indigenous Governing Bodies (i.e. First Nations) to enter into agreements with the Minister of Environment and Climate Change to exercise powers, duties and functions under the Act.

The Environment Sector, with guidance from the ACE, has facilitated a variety of

information sessions and technical meetings across the country in an effort to support First Nations in their direct engagement with the Crown.

Conservation & Stewardship

Species at Risk

The *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) was jointly developed with First Nations in the 1990s to prevent wildlife from becoming extinct and to determine actions for their recovery in accordance with Canada's international commitments under the Convention on Biological Diversity. The SARA is also the only piece of federal legislation that explicitly recognizes the critical role of Indigenous Peoples in its administration and implementation, through the establishment of the National Aboriginal Council on Species at Risk (NACOSAR), an advisory committee to the Minister.

In 2017, the federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change agreed to establish a First Nations-specific technical advisory body on species at risk, known as the First Nations Advisory Committee on Species at Risk (FNACSAR). The FNACSAR is comprised of First Nations' technical representation from across Canada (one technical representative from each region). The FNACSAR has met on a number of occasions, most notably with former Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Catherine McKenna, and former Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Jonathan Wilkinson, via a Ministerial roundtable in April 2019. The roundtable was focused on improving the application and implementation of the SARA in addition to strategic planning and priority



identification with First Nations. The ACE provides ongoing oversight to support engagement on Species at Risk issues. In December 2019, Prime Minister Trudeau released new Cabinet directives directing the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada to evaluate the effectiveness of the SARA and assess the need for modernization. The recent work of the FNACSAR has focused on responding to this new mandate in the midst of its own process of renewal.

Pathway to Target 1

Canada established the Pathway to Target 1 initiative in 2016 based on an international commitment arising from the Convention on Biological Diversity. This target calls for the conservation of 17% of terrestrial areas and 10% of coastal and marine areas by December 31, 2020, through the establishment of networks of protected areas and other conservation measures, including Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs).

In March 2019, the Pathway shifted into its second phase (the “implementation” phase) with the goal of identifying real and practical ways of achieving Canada Target 1 by implementing many of the recommendations received during Phase 1, in particular through the establishment of IPCAs. To address this important conversation, the AFN Environment Sector has established an IPCA sub-working group of the ACE.

In December 2019, Canada announced its commitment to introduce a new ambitious plan to conserve 25% of Canada’s land and 25% of Canada’s oceans by 2025, working toward 30% of each by 2030. The AFN

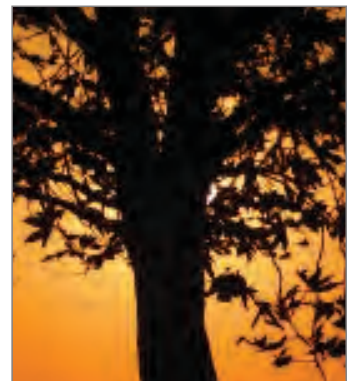
remains engaged in ongoing dialogue with federal officials to ensure the continued recognition of First Nations leadership in achieving positive conservation outcomes, including a strong emphasis on the creation of IPCAs.

Biodiversity

Convention on Biological Diversity

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) was signed at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992, and came into force in 1993. It is the first global agreement to cover all aspects of biological diversity: the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources. Canada’s development of the Species at Risk Act and the Pathway to Canada Target 1 initiative are examples of national level action meant to achieve these commitments domestically.

The AFN participates in the CBD process both domestically and internationally through regular engagement with Canada, as well as through the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB). Since 2018, the primary focus of this work has been on the development of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. This Framework will set out a new series of goals and targets to be achieved by 2030 and will be negotiated at COP15 in Kunming, China, at a yet to be determined date. The AFN Environment and Fisheries Sectors are working collaboratively to ensure that Canada supports an enhanced role for Indigenous Peoples in the ongoing implementation of the Convention.





Environmental Health

First Nations Food Nutrition and Environment Study (FNFNES) National Forum

After more than 10 years of research, a 2-day national forum was held in Ottawa on November 5-6, 2019, to celebrate and wrap-up the FNFNES project. The Forum brought all stakeholders together, including First Nations, youth, leadership and partners, to discuss the study findings and recommendations. A major new research project – the Food, Environment, Health, and Nutrition of First Nations Children and Youth (FEHNCY) Study – was officially launched at the Forum.

Food, Environment, Health and Nutrition of First Nations Children and Youth (FEHNCY)

FEHNCY was initiated by way of Resolution 04/2019, *Support for the Food, Environment, Health and Nutrition of Children and Youth (FEHNCY) Study*, to address the knowledge gap relating to the impact of built, social and natural environments on the nutrition and health of First Nations children and youth. This new study was officially launched in November 2019.

The initial stage of FEHNCY involves conducting two pilot studies. Two First Nations, Fort Albany and Kanesatake, expressed interest in participating in the pilots. The pilot study began in Fort Albany on February 26, 2020 with an opening celebration. Data collection began in March 2020 but is currently on hold due to COVID-19. The FEHNCY research

team has been in regular contact with the Community Research Managers (CRMs) and the leadership of both pilot communities to continue work on fine tuning project instruments.

There is ongoing consultation with the two pilot study communities to discuss plans to add a COVID-19 component to FEHNCY, to explore the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the food environment, food security and food systems in First Nations. Further, Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) recently confirmed a new commitment to support the inclusion of the Yukon and Northwest Territories in the FEHNCY study, thus extending the study to all 10 AFN regions.

Chemicals and Toxins

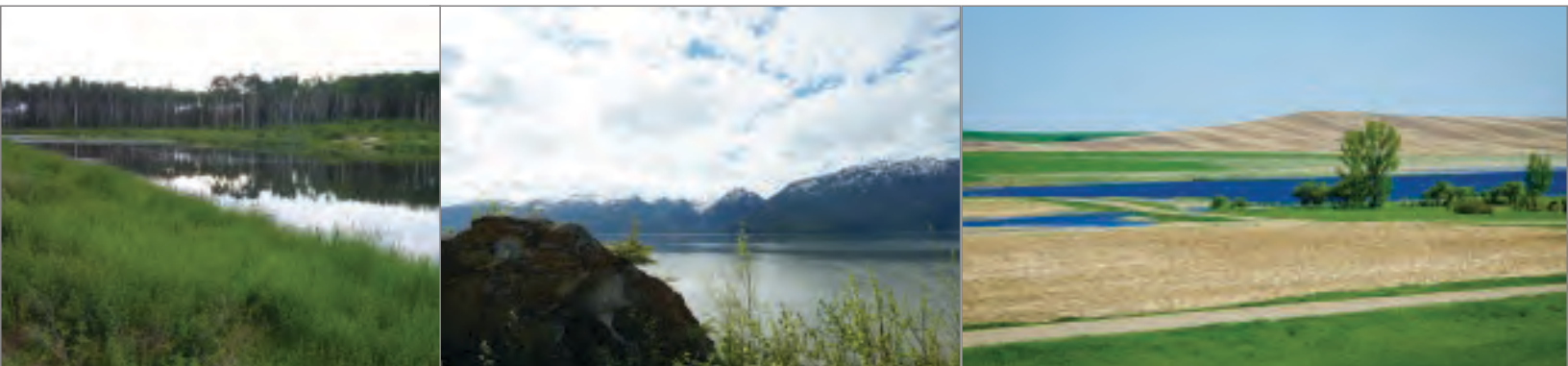
The AFN is a member of Chemicals Management Plan (CMP) Stakeholder Advisory Council (SAC) and continues to provide First Nations perspectives to inform CMP decision-making, while also advancing work on environmental health in First Nations. This work includes increased awareness of the effects of chemical substances on human health and the environment, as well as enhanced capacity for meaningful First Nations participation within the CMP process.

Following the April 2019 submission of a statement to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on toxic waste, the Environment Sector will continue to build capacity to support an enhanced focus on chemicals and toxins as a key area of work moving forward.



Next Steps – Moving Forward

- Further advancement of climate-related issues in coordination with the ACE, the JCCA, and Regional Climate Change Coordinators, including the planning of another Climate Gathering in the Fall of 2021.
- Ongoing engagement with Canada and in the international context to support First Nations as leaders in conservation, stewardship, and biodiversity preservation.
- Enhanced focus on building greater capacity with respect to environmental health, chemicals, and the advancement of the Food, Environment, Health and Nutrition of First Nations Children and Youth (FEHNCY) study.





Fisheries Sector

The goal of the Assembly of First Nations's (AFN) Fisheries Sector is to rebuild Fish Nations – to restore First Nations' rightful management over their fisheries, fish habitats, and other aquatic resources in their territories through the revitalization of laws and knowledge systems. These sustainable acts will serve as a promise to uphold these same responsibilities to future generations. To that end, the AFN Fisheries sector advocates for the inherent and Treaty rights of First Nations on legislation, policies, and programs related to fisheries, oceans, aquaculture, aquatic habitat, and marine waterways.

The sector's work is guided by the AFN's National Fisheries Committee (NFC), which is co-chaired by Fisheries portfolio holders Regional Chief Roger Augustine (NB/PEI) and Regional Chief Terry Teegee (BC). The NFC has four technical sub-committees that advise them on various fisheries-related issues. These sub-committees are the National Aquaculture Working Group, Inland Working Group, Oceans Working Group, and the Indigenous Knowledge Advisory Group.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

In 2019-20, Chiefs-in-Assembly passed Resolutions 07/2019, 08/2019, 09/2019, 10/2019, 11/2019, 12/2019, 52/2019, 69/2019, 70/2019, 113/2019 and 115/2019 that mandate the AFN Fisheries Sector and NFC to work on the priority areas identified below. The following are key initiatives and outcomes achieved over the 2019-2020 fiscal year:


The AFN National Fisheries Committee

Directed by the Chiefs-in-Assembly, the NFC is made up of appointed Chiefs and technical representatives chosen by the 10 AFN Regional Chiefs who advise and support the collective interests of First Nations in Canada on priorities related to fisheries, aquaculture and oceans. AFN Resolution 10/2019 directs the AFN and the National Fisheries Committee to immediately initiate work on a renewed and strengthened First Nations-led Fisheries Reconciliation Strategy to advocate for priorities of First Nations in Canada.

Over the past year, the NFC had many productive discussions and provided recommendations to the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans, and the Canadian Coast Guard on priorities such as the honourable implementation of First Nation fishing rights, sustainable commercial inland and marine fisheries, aquaculture, ocean governance and conservation, Species-at-Risk, and Fisheries Act amendments, including the use of Indigenous knowledge systems.

Modernized Fisheries Act and Regulations

Bill C-68, *Amendments to the Fisheries Act* received Royal Assent on June 21, 2019. Among potential impacts on First Nations inherent and Treaty rights, changes to the legislation included provisions on the safeguarding of fish habitat, agreements with Indigenous governing and treaty bodies, the rebuilding of fish stocks, and incorporating Indigenous knowledge in decision making. As such, the AFN Fisheries Sector worked with DFO officials to host two technical workshops in Halifax and Winnipeg to bring together chiefs, technicians, elders, Knowledge Keepers, researchers, and



representatives from First Nations organizations. The purpose of these workshops was to share information with First Nations on the legislative amendments and facilitate discussion and input on the development of accompanying regulations. A technical workshop for the Pacific Region was postponed until further notice due to the evolving COVID-19 situation.

Indigenous Knowledge Systems in Fisheries

Amendments passed in the *Fisheries Act* also included provisions on the consideration of Indigenous Knowledge in certain aspects of work administered by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) under the Act. First Nations have expressed concerns about the ways in which Indigenous Knowledge will be collected, used, stored, and protected. The AFN Fisheries Sector recognizes that First Nations need to take the lead on work related to the development of protocols, guidelines, policies, and related regulations connected to First Nations Indigenous Knowledge Systems. This work includes protections for the Intellectual Property Rights on Indigenous Knowledge of First Nations.

As such, the Fisheries sector facilitated regional technical workshops for the purpose of sharing information, developing regional and local protocols, and seeking guidance on drafting interim guidelines to assist First Nations in Halifax and Winnipeg. A technical workshop for the Pacific Region was postponed until further notice due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Chiefs-in-Assembly also passed Resolution 11/2019, which directs the AFN to continue advocacy work concerning Indigenous Knowledge Systems with the DFO and to develop an advisory group to properly advise the AFN's work related to

Indigenous Knowledge Systems. The AFN has initiated the development of an Indigenous Knowledge Advisory Group (IKAG) to receive guidance and advice from Indigenous Knowledge experts. As a sub-committee of the NFC, the IKAG will work with the AFN to implement Indigenous Knowledge Systems into new processes coming from changes to the *Fisheries Act* (s. 34.1, s. 61.2) in critical areas such as resource management and habitat protection

Oceans Governance and Conservation

As a sub-committee of the NFC, the Oceans Working Group facilitates the exchange and sharing of information relating to First Nations' oceans management issues at the national and regional levels to advance the collective interests of First Nations. The working group is made up of technical representatives from the Atlantic, BC, and Quebec Regions. Over the past year, the group had productive discussions with officials from the Parks Canada Agency and the DFO on various initiatives driven by Canada's new marine conservation targets (i.e. to protect 25% of marine and coastal areas by 2025 and 30% by 2030). The group is in the process of developing a joint scoping paper with the DFO on the potential for establishing marine Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs) in Canada. This paper could act as a tool for engagement with First Nations in Canada regarding Indigenous-led marine conservation efforts and set the stage for future policy development.

Canada's marine conservation targets are largely driven by international commitments to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The Parties to the CBD are currently in the process of drafting a new Global Biodiversity Framework. With the support of NFC Fisheries co-chair BC Regional Chief





Terry Teegee, AFN Fisheries staff have provided technical support to Chiefs at CBD meetings over the past year to ensure that the priorities of First Nations are well reflected in the development of the new biodiversity framework.

First Nations in Aquaculture

The National Aquaculture Working Group (NAWG) consists of technical First Nations representatives from BC and the Atlantic regions. This NFC sub-committee began discussions over the past year with DFO officials to co-develop and co-design a new *Aquaculture Act*, as well as new draft regulations under the *Fisheries Act*. Recent work by the AFN Fisheries sector has determined that 225 First Nations across Canada (168 in BC) are involved in aquaculture. This is more than four times the number reported by the DFO in 2011. This network will become an important resource for engagement in the creation of the new act.

While this inventory shows a growing First Nations interest in the industry, the NAWG wants to ensure that First Nations' priorities such as Indigenous governance, decision-making, protection of wild species, incorporation of Indigenous Knowledge systems and use of clean technology are reflected in the upcoming development of the *Aquaculture Act* and subsequent regulations.

First Nations' Inland Fisheries

Another sub-committee of the National Fisheries Committee, the Inland Working Group facilitates the exchange of information between inland First Nations representatives from Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Northwest Territories on priorities regarding their fisheries. Over the

past year, the working group continued ongoing discussions on ways to address long-standing issues such as the lack of recognition of constitutional rights to harvest and manage inland fisheries in their territories. Additionally, the Inland Working Group met with a DFO-appointed interlocutor to voice First Nations' concerns on the Freshwater Fisheries Marketing Corporation (FFMC), a crown-owned corporation responsible for collecting, processing, and marketing freshwater fish. The monopoly of the FFMC has historically disempowered local communities and decreased profitability for First Nations fishers. This fact is especially significant given that 80% of the communities represented in the FFMC's mandate regions are First Nations and Métis.

First Nations Priorities on Aquatic Species-at-Risk

There are over 140 aquatic species listed under the Species at Risk Act, many of which are of great significance to First Nations in Canada. Over the past year, the Fisheries Sector took steps to establish an Aquatics SAR working group that is dedicated to the purpose of dealing with First Nations' priorities such as the socio-economic, cultural, and legal impacts on First Nations associated with the potential loss of an aquatic species as well as the legal and policy barriers to rebuilding habitat. This aquatic SAR working group was a sub-committee of the First Nations Advisory Committee on Species-at-Risk (FNACSAR) co-chaired by AFN Environment Sector and Environment Climate Change.

The DFO is not offering support for aquatic discussions in FNACSAR. The department is proposing that members of FNACSAR work with the Species-at-Risk Advisory Committee (SARAC, a committee made up of NGOs and



Industry members) and the National Aboriginal Council on Species-at-Risk (NACOSAR). This proposal is problematic as policy discussions unique to First Nations cannot be made in this open forum. The Fisheries Sector is seeking dedicated funding from the DFO to create a forum where First Nations SAR experts can discuss their unique challenges related to the legislation and provide recommendations on ways these challenges can be addressed. This initiative is especially important as the Prime Minister has mandated the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada and the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and Canadian Coast Guard to “modernize” the Species-at-Risk Act.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

- Over the 2020-21 fiscal year, the AFN Fisheries Sector will organize the AFN’s National Fisheries Forum, which will be the largest First Nations conference in Canada on fisheries-related themes in over two decades. The event will bring together First Nations leaders, policy and technical advisors, government officials, industry experts, and the environmental non-profit sector. Discussions will focus on priority areas such as implementing Aboriginal Rights and Title, commercial inland and marine fisheries, aquaculture, ocean governance, marine spatial planning, Species-at-Risk, and Indigenous Knowledge Systems. Originally scheduled for June 2020 in Fredericton, NB, the forum has been postponed for later in the 2020-21 fiscal year.
- Under the guidance of the National Fisheries Committee, the sector will continue development of a Reconciliation Fisheries Strategy as mandated in Resolution 10/2019. This strategy will guide continued collaborative work with federal agencies such as the DFO, the Parks Canada Agency, and, potentially, Transport Canada to ensure that First Nations inherent and Treaty rights and interests are well-reflected in the priority areas identified above. Legislative work will be focused on the co-development of the *Aquaculture Act*, its accompanying regulations, and the implementation of provisions related to the 2019 amendment of the *Fisheries Act*, which include the consideration of Indigenous Knowledge Systems in fisheries-related initiatives.
- Mandated by AFN Resolution 07/2019 First Nations Oceans Priorities at the Convention on Biological Diversity, the AFN Fisheries sector will continue to ensure that First Nations priorities are reflected in the development of a new Global Biodiversity Framework. In line with the National Chief’s Honouring Promises priorities, ongoing work will also prioritize the recognition and development of Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs) in the marine environment in the context of Marine Spatial Planning. The fisheries sector will continue to seek partnerships with relevant federal agencies on Canada’s Oceans Protection Plan.
- Lastly, the Fisheries Sector will continue to seek long-term funding from federal agencies such as the DFO, the Parks Canada Agency, and Transport Canada, to ensure First Nations perspectives are considered in priority areas such as aquatic Species-at-Risk and Inland First Nations fisheries. In particular, the recent layoffs of processing plant employees of the Freshwater Fisheries Marketing Corporation have created an opportunity for inland First Nations to assert their rightful management authority over their own fisheries, including economic aspects such as processing and marketing.





Health Sector

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Health Sector is mandated to protect, maintain, promote, support and advocate for First Nations inherent, Treaty, and international legal rights towards ensuring the (w)holistic health and the well-being of First Nations. This is achieved through policy analysis, communications, and most importantly, advocacy on behalf of and supporting First Nations communities and individuals. A central goal of the AFN Health team is First Nations' control of the development and delivery of all health services and programs.

Key Activities and Accomplishments:

In 2019/2020, the AFN Health Sector continued to pursue a long-term vision of First Nations control of First Nations health systems with sustainable and adequate investments that result in better health outcomes.

Key Issues and Activities:

Building on "Honouring Promises," the AFN Health Sector continues to advocate for the improvement of health and wellbeing for First Nations. In order to accomplish this goal, the Health Sector has drawn upon First Nations traditional health and healing practices. In keeping with the United Nations Declaration, the AFN advocates that Canada must work diligently to ensure First Nations enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.

The First Nations Health Transformation Agenda (FNHTA) outlines eighty-five recommendations for Federal-Provincial-Territorial governments across a wide spectrum of priority policy areas. The AFN Health Sector utilizes these recommendations in our day to day work.

The three pillars of the FNHTA are:

- Getting the Relationships Right – for all of those within the healthcare world (with special emphasis on federal, provincial and territorial governments) to work with First Nations in a way that respects First Nations right to self-determination, as part of Treaty, inherent and international rights. The FNHTA seeks to push federal/provincial/territorial actors to engage with First Nations rights-holders in building these vital relationships.
- Meaningful Investments in First Nations Health – speaks to the need for significant and immediate investments in program areas across the board. First Nations health systems are profoundly underfunded, a fact which contributes significantly to the overall poor health outcomes of First Nations people.
- Support First Nations Capacity First – speaks to the need to support First Nations people, communities and organizations in building capacity in the area of health and wellness, rather than turning to mainstream organizations to do work on behalf of First Nations. First Nations have the right and the knowledge to develop our own healthcare and health systems solutions. The missing link continues to be capacity support.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

- Work to ensure proper engagement occurs with rights-holders around the move and potential transformation of the First Nations and Inuit Health Branch.

- Continue to advance the priorities within Honouring Promises and the First Nations Health Transformation Agenda.
- Work to ensure AFN health activities align with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, as well as the Treaty and Inherent right to health.

First Nations Health Legislation

On December 13, 2019, the federal government announced its support for distinctions based Indigenous Health Legislation in the mandate letter from the Prime Minister to the Minister of Indigenous Services Canada, Marc Miller. Minister Miller has been mandated to co-develop distinctions-based Indigenous health legislation, backed with the investments needed to deliver high-quality health care for all Indigenous Peoples. In addition, he has been tasked to continue to work with First Nations communities to ensure First Nations control over the development and delivery of services.

Key Issues and Activities

A discussion paper has been developed for consideration by the Chiefs Committee on Health and will be used as a foundation for future discussions with First Nations. It is important to consider the impact of health legislation in the area of Treaty rights. The AFN will keep this consideration in mind as it continues to engage with First Nations.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

- Identify, in collaboration with the Chiefs Committee on Health, the AFN Policy Sector and other sectors potentially impacted by health legislation, how best

to proceed with engagements on two potential questions:

- How do First Nations see themselves in potential health legislation?
- What will a process for health legislation entail?
- Define how best to engage with First Nations post pandemic.

Non-Insured Health Benefits

The Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) Program provides coverage for registered Indians and recognized Inuit on a limited range of medically necessary health-related goods and services that include pharmaceuticals (i.e., prescription and over the counter drugs), medical supplies/equipment, vision care, dental services, medical transportation and mental health crisis counseling. The NIHB program is consistently identified as an irritant for First Nations and a high priority area for AFN advocacy and transformation. The AFN continues to make progress in addressing Resolution 56/2012, which called for a moratorium on cuts to the NIHB program until such time as the AFN and First Nations and Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB) can conduct a joint review of NIHB in order to articulate shortcomings and identify potential efficiencies.

Key Issues and Activities

AFN work on NIHB has centered on the AFN-FNIHB NIHB Joint Review called for in Resolution 56/2012. The established objectives of the Joint Review are to enhance client access to benefits, identify and address gaps in benefits, streamline service delivery to be more responsive to client needs, and increase program efficiencies. The Joint Review is guided by the Joint Review Steering Committee (JRSC), made up of equal representation of First Nations and FNIHB





staff including two Indigenous Services Canada Deputy Ministers. A renewed mandate for equitable access to NIHB services has been provided to the AFN, and the NIHB-FNIHB Joint Review will continue to advocate for policy changes that respect this mandate.

The AFN also continues to coordinate the National Navigators Network, comprised of NIHB Client Navigators from across the country. The aim is to create a supportive network that allows for the sharing of best practices in order to aid the Navigators in helping clients' access NIHB services.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

- Ongoing communication with FNIHB's Senior Officials/Committees and the NIHB benefits management team.
- Continued coordination role of the National Navigators Network.
- Continued progress on the AFN/FNIHB Joint Review and advocacy towards commitment to Joint Review Implementation.
- The ongoing implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the Joint Review recommendation and implementation plans.
- Utilizing the work of the JRSC to inform options for health care transition and transformation.

Mental Health and Wellness

Mental wellness continues to be a priority for the AFN and First Nations leadership. This file includes the following priority areas: Mental Wellness, Life Promotion, Substance Use, as well as Intergenerational Trauma and Indian Residential Schools Resolution Health Supports Program (IRS RHSP).

The AFN Mental Wellness Committee (MWC) was established in April 2010 and guides this work with technical expertise and knowledge of the national, regional and community level issues. The committee meets twice a year, participates in monthly teleconferences and develops strategic direction.

Key Issues and Activities

The AFN, FNIHB, and Indigenous mental health leaders developed the First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum Framework, launched in January 2015, which includes a mental wellness service continuum and outlines opportunities to strengthen existing mental wellness programming for First Nations communities. The AFN continues to utilize this document to guide the activities related to mental wellness.

The establishment of the First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum (FNMWC) Implementation Team has been a key component to implementation of the framework from a social determinant of health approach and is an important step in supporting Resolution 22/2014 – Support for the FNMWC. The team, co-chaired by the AFN, the Thunderbird Partnership Foundation, First People's Wellness Circle and FNIHB, is comprised of First Nations regional representatives, and Indigenous organizations focused on mental health and addictions, along with key federal departments. The team will support the ongoing implementation of the framework and ensure transition in the system to support the provision of culturally based, culturally relevant, and effective mental wellness services to First Nations in the coming years.



Next Steps – Moving Forward

- The AFN will continue to participate in various knowledge exchange activities to increase awareness of First Nations priorities, issues and promising practices around mental wellness.
- Continue to advance the FNMWC through the Implementation Team workplan.
- Continue to advocate for the inclusion of provinces and territories in the First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum work and implementation activities.
- Ensure FNIHB is respecting First Nations processes and protocols on all mental wellness initiatives.

Life Promotion

The AFN continues to advocate for more community-based approaches to “Life Promotion” (suicide prevention) activities and programming that create opportunities for First Nation youth to enjoy all the same safeguards that Canadian youth take for granted including holistic and cultural approaches to wellness.

In December 2019, the AFN received a mandate from Chiefs-in-Assembly to develop a framework for Life Promotion. This, in addition to the work of the Project Advisory Group for the Wise Practices for Preventing Youth Suicide in First Nations Communities project, results in useful, culturally relevant, accessible, and hopeful resources that will bring together inspirational stories and wise practices from First Nations communities as well as findings from recently published research.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

- Continue to participate in the Wise Practices for Preventing Youth Suicide in First Nations Communities Project Advisory Group.
- Collaborate with First Nations partners in the development of a Life Promotion Strategy for First Nations Youth as mandated by Chiefs-in-Assembly.
- Advocate with the federal government to implement the Calls to Action developed by the AFN National Youth Council (NYC).
- Continue to work with partners and the National Collaborative on Suicide Prevention.

Moving Forward – Generally

The AFH Health Sector will support a continuum of care approach to health and wellbeing, where the focus is on supporting individuals, families and communities, and move away from approaches that only treat diseases. In this fashion, First Nations can be better prepared to protect their people from crises such as the current COVID-19 pandemic.

We will continue to advocate for First Nations control of the development and delivery of First Nations health and wellbeing services as outlined in Honouring Promises.

Priorities include, but are not limited to:

- Public Health
- Long Term Care
- Continuum of Care Approach to Health and Wellbeing for First Nations
- Potential Distinctions Based Health Legislation





Housing, Infrastructure, Emergency Management Services Sector

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Housing, Infrastructure and Emergency Services (HIES) Sector covers four important sectors: Water, Housing, Infrastructure and Emergency Services. A summary of the 2019-2020 activities for each of the sector areas is provided below.

Water

First Nations continue to face urgent unsafe drinking water issues, which are particularly important in light of impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic. Long-term drinking water advisories remain in effect in First Nations across the country. The federal government has committed to eliminating all long-term drinking water advisories (DWAs) and to establish a Long-Term Drinking Water Strategy. In addition, the repeal and replacement of the Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act (SDWFNA) remains a priority for both HIES, and Indigenous Services Canada (ISC).

The AFN has continued support from the Chiefs-in-Assembly, dating back to Resolution 26/2015, calling for the repeal of the Act. Resolution 88/2017: *First Nations led Engagement Process for Safe Drinking Water Legislation*, Resolution 01/2018: *First Nations Led Process to Develop New Federal Safe Drinking Water Legislation*, and Resolution 26/2018 *Support for a First Nations Preliminary Concepts* guide the work of HIES on the SDWFNA. In 2019-2020, the focus of the AFN Water Unit has been on continuing the co-development process for repeal and replacement of the SDWFNA. The core focus has been national engagement with all First Nations in Canada, led by the AFN Regions,

to properly understand and incorporate their needs and aspirations into the co-developed/ drafted repeal and replacement legislation. In the summer of 2019, preliminary regional engagements were held with over 500 First Nations from across the country. The engagements provided a high-level overview of concerns with the Act and resulted in a variety of recommendations. A National Roll-up Report Executive Summary was prepared. Resolution 14/2019: *Endorsement of the Refined Preliminary Concepts for Repeal and Replacement of the Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act* called for the AFN to proceed with follow-up engagements on key issues and concerns with the repeal and replacement of the SDWFNA.

The AFN Water Unit was informed by ISC that they were required to table a 'Long Term Strategy' for First Nations water and wastewater post-2021. This strategy was to be presented to Cabinet. After engagement with the Chiefs Committee on Housing and Infrastructure (CCoHI) and detailed review with the Technicians Committee, the AFN informed ISC that such a strategy must be developed with First Nations. Late in 2019, the AFN Water Unit worked on rapid engagement with First Nations to assess preferred options for the First Nations Long-Term Strategy and presented a preliminary list of concepts to be included as part of the Long-Term Strategy at the Special Chiefs Assembly (SCA) under Resolution 78/2019 *Endorsement of the Preliminary Table of Contents for a First Nations Long-Term Water and Wastewater Strategy Post-2021*. A draft Long-Term Strategy was prepared by ISC and presented to the AFN in March 2020. HIES responded to ISC on the Long-Term



Strategy, indicating that it would not be part of a top-down driven process, and reiterated the commitment to co-developing a new Strategy. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the deadline has been extended and the AFN Water Unit is working towards a refined co-development process with ISC.

Other unit activities included hosting the 3rd Annual National Water Symposium and Tradeshow in November of 2019 in Toronto, ON. The Symposium was used as an engagement activity to further refine the Preliminary Table of Contents for a First Nations Long-Term Water and Wastewater Strategy Post-2021.

Forthcoming activities include follow-up engagements on the Long-Term Strategy and the SDWFNA, coordinated through Regional Water Coordinators to continue the National Engagement process and incorporation of the feedback from First Nations into the Joint Working Group tasked with preparing a Draft Framework for the repeal and replacement legislation.

Housing

The period since the July 2019 Annual General Assembly has seen progress on the four resolutions that provide the housing mandates currently being pursued. The priority has been on Resolution 57/2018, National First Nations Housing and Related Infrastructure Strategy, Resolution 80/2019, *Federal Consultation and Transparency in First Nations Housing Program and Funding Change*, Resolution 79/2019, *Action Plan for First Nations Homelessness On and Off Reserve*, and Resolution 81/2019, *Dene Nation Control of Housing in Northwest Territories*.

In addition to those priorities, the housing unit monitors Federal Government changes in its housing programs and supports Chiefs' advocacy for information, changes in federal programs and policies, troubleshooting and additional investments.

The 10 Year First Nations National Housing and Infrastructure Strategy (the Strategy) was adopted by the Chiefs-in-Assembly in 2018 as a collaborative effort between the AFN and various Federal Government departments. Throughout 2019, AFN Housing facilitated the development of the Strategy's Implementation Plan through the Joint Working Group (JWG), which includes representatives from the First Nations Technical Working Group (regional First Nations housing technicians), Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC). The Implementation Plan will serve as a guide that contains key elements necessary for First Nations to assume control of their housing and related infrastructure while recognizing that the pace, emphasis, and order of the steps may be different among individual First Nations and their representative organizations. A key component of the Strategy was to undertake, for the first time, a First Nations-developed, First Nations-led and managed data gathering exercise to determine First Nations housing and related infrastructure needs on-reserve. Seven of the AFN's ten regions collected a range of information on housing by administering a survey developed with the help of Alberta's Technical Services and Advisory Group (TSAG).





Efforts continue to gather housing data in the other three AFN regions. The data was analyzed and formed into a report by the First Nations Information Governance Centre (FNIGC) that will inform, along with the Implementation Plan, a Memorandum to Cabinet (MC) either late in 2020 or in early 2021. The MC will significantly change the Federal First Nations housing policy and will need to be accompanied by the long-term investments needed to implement the Strategy.

AFN's housing unit is providing on-going support to the Dene Nation's goal to control its housing. The AFN successfully solicited a commitment from ISC that, despite its unique housing support arrangements provided through the Northwest Territories Government, the Dene Nation is eligible for discussions under ISC's Housing Services Transfer Initiative. The Dene Nation's housing is not currently administered like First Nations in the provinces.

The AFN will work, for the first time in recent history, to ensure Federal Government programs and services can better meet the unique and specific needs of First Nations on and off reserve who are experiencing homelessness or are on the brink of homelessness. AFN's HIES sector secured funding from ESDC to develop a First Nation Homelessness Action Plan, undertake research, coordinate regional engagement on homelessness, and co-develop improvements and/or changes to ESDC's Reaching Home program and related activities. The multiple facets of homelessness require that the project lead assumed by HIES be transferred to the AFN Policy sector in 2020, which

will coordinate all appropriate AFN sector involvement going forward.

Other unit activities included hosting the 4th National First Nations Housing and Infrastructure Forum and Tradeshow from March 10-12, 2020, with 350 people in attendance. The Forum and Tradeshow featured a keynote address by the National Chief and included over twenty workshops and a concentrated focus on homelessness and urban housing providers.

Forthcoming activities include further meeting with the CCoHI, and the JWG towards the completion of the National First Nation Housing and Related Infrastructure Strategy's Implementation Plan, and co-development of a Memorandum to Cabinet to provide transformative change in Canada's First Nations housing policy. Additional national forums, think tanks and meetings are planned through the coming fiscal year.

Infrastructure

HIES is guided by Resolution 80/2017, *Support for the Review of Canada's Operational and Maintenance Policy*. At the 2019 Special Chiefs Assembly (SCA), HIES successfully presented Resolution 82/2019, *Support for Continuing Development of Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) revised Operations and Maintenance Policy and Full Funding of First Nations Operations and Maintenance Needs* to the Chiefs-in-Assembly.

HIES engaged advisory services in the development of the new Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Policy Reform, which included a review of existing policies,



funding formulas, cost indices, and reporting requirements. Policy gaps and opportunities for improvement were identified as well as disparities between current cost estimates and actual costs required for infrastructure O&M on reserve where possible.

Recommendations were also provided on how the further reviews of policies, funding level options, remoteness factors, cost indices, and reporting requirements should be undertaken. Engagements on an Asset Management approach for First Nations were held in Ontario; Whitehorse, Yukon Territory; Yellowknife, NWT; Manitoba; Saskatoon, Saskatchewan; Quebec and British Columbia; Atlantic Region and Alberta. In addition, the AFN also funded Asset Management Pilots in each region which highlighted inaccurate and inadequate funding formulas, as well as a significant backlog of operations and maintenance projects across the country. The engagement and policy review formed the basis of the development of Resolution 82/2019, following advice and guidance from the CCoHI. Results of all activities were presented at the 4th National First Nations Housing and Infrastructure Forum and Tradeshow in March 2020.

Forthcoming activities include pushing forward policy reform and collaborating with ISC on asset management recommendations for future budget considerations, including the development of a working committee to help guide the work of HIES' Infrastructure unit. Regional engagements, a National Asset Management Forum and other meetings will guide HIES activities. In addition, the Asset Management pilots are ongoing, and further results of these pilots will help inform the development of new policy.

Due to COVID-19, many initiatives have stalled. However, given the level of infrastructure stimulus funding anticipated post COVID-19, HIES will endeavour to ensure a dedicated First Nations stream of funding is pursued, in partnership with First Nations, and will present findings at the 2020 SCA.

Emergency Services

HIES, guided by the direction of the Chiefs Committee on Emergency Management (CCEM), continues to collaborate with several federal departments in ensuring and advocating for funding, policies, and programs to support First Nations. HIES collaborates with Public Safety Canada (PSC) in examining the potential inclusion and participation of First Nations in several strategies. The AFN and PSC have also cooperated and collaborated on the completed Inventory of Emergency Management Capabilities in Indigenous Communities. The intent of this initiative was to develop an inventory of emergency management capabilities in Indigenous communities and to better inform First Nations on their emergency management needs and deficiencies in an effort to bring them to the attention of the appropriate agencies, build cooperative and collaborative relationships, and strengthen and increase community resilience.

HIES continues to cooperate with ISC in monitoring emergency events in First Nations across Canada, including natural, technological, and anthropogenic (human induced) hazards, as well as business continuity issues. They are also cooperating with the AFN in developing the Emergency Services Unit. HIES also works with Transport Canada (TC) to create education and





awareness around the Fund for Railway Accidents Involving Dangerous Goods (FRAIDG) and the Ship-sourced Oil Pollution Fund (SOPF) programs. There are 114 grade-level crossings in First Nations territories across Canada where dangerous goods are transported unbeknownst to First Nations, and over 100 First Nations living on or near Canada's shipping ports or channels where the risk of transported oil and its by-products pollution are of the greatest risk to First Nations lives and livelihoods. HIES is also cooperating and collaborating with Natural Resources Canada in developing the Indigenous FireSmart Booklet to create awareness and education for First Nations regarding the increasing severity and frequency of wildland fire. In addition, HIES is involved with the development of Natural Resources Canada's earthquake tool through the Global Earthquake Modeling program. HIES, through the Emergency Services

group, is also the First Nations Advisor in the development of the Fire Risk and Evacuation Capabilities in Isolated Communities project for CSSP.

Forthcoming activities include an Emergency Management Forum in the Fall or Winter of 2020. This forum is dependent on COVID-19 restrictions. Should it be able to proceed, this forum will bring together First Nations emergency management practitioners and both provincial and federal stakeholders that have an emergency management component to their operations, and on-going or developing relationships with First Nations in their functional areas. Other planned activities include holding a Strategic Planning Session with the CCEM to devise and develop a First Nations Emergency Management Strategy aimed at First Nations to drive the care and control of their emergency management regimes.



Lands, Territories and Resources Sector

The Lands, Territories and Resources Sector (LTR) is focused on supporting the inherent Rights, Title and jurisdiction of First Nations through focused advocacy and joint policy initiatives.

Over the years, LTR has been pushing for changes to four key policies: Additions to Reserves (ATR), Specific Claims, Comprehensive Land Claims (CLCP), and the Inherent Right to Self-Government (IRSG). The LTR sector also looks for opportunities to support Treaty First Nations seeking the full implementation and recognition of their Treaty rights.

The key Resolutions that mandate the AFN to work on these issues include:

- 47/2015 – *Develop a Federal Comprehensive Land Claims Policy Based on the Full Recognition of Aboriginal Title*
- 78/2015 – *Establishing a Treaty Commissioner's Office*
- 17/2016 – *Call on Canada to update the Additions to Reserve Policy*
- 91/2017 – *Support for a Fully Independent Specific Claims Process*
- 25/2019 – *Support for a First Nations Led Engagement Process on Nation Building*

In addition to AFN resolutions, *Honouring Promises* calls on Canada to redesign the four key policies and to create a federal Treaty Commissioner's Office. Each of these AFN priorities are echoed in Minister Bennett's 2019 Mandate Letter from the Prime Minister.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

Additions to Reserve (ATR)

Efforts to improve the Additions to Reserve (ATR) policy were the subject of a joint AFN-Canada technical working group (JWG) process initiated in late 2009. Progress with this working group was based on regular engagement with the Chiefs Committee on Lands, Territories and Resources (CCoLTR), and ultimately resulted in the release of a new ATR policy in 2016.

While the 2016 ATR policy was a positive step forward, policy changes alone cannot address all the issues inherent in the ATR process. Furthermore, Canada chose not to include the AFN in joint implementation and oversight of the policy as was agreed and, as a result, First Nations continue to indicate that the ATR process is slow, costly and in need of reform.

Bill C-97 and the split of the Department of Indian Affairs Canada creates potential challenges for ATR because it divides authority across both the Department of Indigenous Services (ISC) and the Department of Crown Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs (CIRNAC). While the specific details have not been resolved, the AFN learned in 2019 that ISC would be responsible for managing the ATR process, while CIRNAC would be responsible for the policy. In addition, both Ministers are required to sign off on any ATR before it is approved as final.





Specific Claims

In late 2016, the AFN and Canada formed a Joint Technical Working Group (JTWG) with a mandate to examine the specific claims process and develop joint recommendations for change. The JTWG has been meeting consistently over the past three and half years.

In 2017, the AFN hosted two dialogue sessions with First Nations in Ottawa and Vancouver. The message emerging from these sessions reflected what First Nations have said consistently over time: Canada's ongoing management and control of the specific claims process constitutes a conflict of interest which can only be addressed through independent oversight. During the Fall of 2017, the AFN Chiefs-in-Assembly passed Resolution 91/2017, *Support for a Fully Independent Specific Claims Process*, calling for the creation of an independent specific claims process and support for the work of the JTWG.

In 2018, the AFN advocated for the development of a national engagement process with First Nations on a hypothetical independent specific claims process. These efforts resulted in a dialogue that took place with First Nations over the Fall of 2019. The AFN held focused dialogue sessions across Canada and accepted submissions from First Nations regarding their vision for a fully independent specific claims process. The AFN is currently developing a draft report and options paper outlining feedback and concerns from First Nations. Once complete, the report will be made public and will go on to the Chiefs-in-Assembly for review and approval in 2020. The draft options will form the basis for AFN advocacy

on specific claims at all levels. Once finalized and approved, the JTWG will review and discuss the draft options with the goal of seeking Cabinet approval to form a joint AFN–Canada implementation process in either 2020 or 2021.

Comprehensive Land Claims and Inherent Right to Self-Government

Canada has committed to develop a joint AFN–Canada working table to discuss ways to address the Comprehensive Land Claims (CLCP) and Inherent Right to Self-Government policies (IRSG).

First Nations have passed several Resolutions rejecting the CLCP and IRSG. These Resolutions include AFN Resolution 47/2015 *Develop a Federal Comprehensive Land Claims Policy Based on the Full Recognition of Aboriginal Title* and Resolution 08/2018 *Implementing Canada's Recognition and Implementation of Indigenous Rights Framework and clarifying the role of the AFN*. In addition, there are numerous resolutions calling for the development of a First Nations led process to help clarify the Crown's role in respecting the implementation of First Nations Inherent Rights, Title and Jurisdiction. Such resolutions also work towards further clarification of the Crown's role in supporting First Nations self-determination and Nation re-building efforts, while exploring new approaches to support First Nations in exercising their inherent Rights, Title and Jurisdiction.

Following First Nations' rejection of Canada's Recognition and Implementation of Indigenous Rights Framework through AFN Resolution 67/2018, Minister Bennett and Prime Minister Trudeau committed to



working with the AFN and Indigenous partners to replace the CLCP and the IRSG.

In January 2019, Canada proposed a joint AFN–Canada engagement process that would result in new policies by June 2019. In response, the National Chief wrote Minister Bennett outlining concerns with the proposed approach stating that the AFN could not support their process because it did not allow First Nations to fully participate in or approve of the outcomes.

Responding to the criticism, Minister Bennett told First Nations that Canada would not develop new policies in the absence of a First Nations led process. Instead, Minister Bennett proposed the development of an 'interim' directive for federal officials that would solidify the current approach to negotiation. This includes co-developing mandates with First Nations based on the recognition of rights and First Nations' priorities. The AFN and others strongly rejected this approach and the interim directive was not approved.

CIRNAC has accepted an AFN funding proposal to support the development of a joint table on CLCP and IRSG reform in 2020. The AFN is currently working with the Chiefs Committee on Lands, Territories and Resources to determine the scope and ambition of work for 2020 while keeping in mind the potential impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic and the need for a First Nations driven process prior to the development of any new policies.

Treaty Commissioner's Office

AFN Resolution 78-2015 calls on the AFN to work with International Numbered Treaty (1-11) First Nations to support the development of a Treaty Commissioner's Office (TCO). In addition, both Honouring Promises and Minister Bennett's 2019 Mandate letter speak to the need for a Treaty Commissioner's Office to ensure Canada is meeting its Treaty obligations.

The AFN is advocating for funding to support an AFN dialogue process with the International Numbered Treaty First Nations on the structure of an ideal Treaty Commissioner's Office, including its powers, duties, and functions.

Next Steps - Moving Forward

- Continue advocacy efforts at all joint working groups and tables to advance the full recognition of Indigenous Rights, Title and Jurisdiction.
- Form a joint table on ATR reform.
- Develop a draft report and options paper on a fully independent specific claims process for review and approval by First Nations-in-Assembly.
- Form a joint table on CLCP and IRSG with CIRNAC and discuss possible draft topics for joint review to be approved by First Nations-in-Assembly.
- Secure funding to support the development of a Treaty Commissioner's Office.





Languages and Culture Sector

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) has been a longstanding advocate for the affirmation and protection of First Nations language rights. Operating under the National Chief's direction in the 2015 document, *Closing the Gap*, strong advocacy ultimately led to the Royal Assent of the *Indigenous Languages Act*. The joint development of implementation activities has been the focus of the Languages and Culture Sector for 2019-20. In June 2019, the AFN expanded the Languages Sector's activities to include culture, thus leading to it to a change in title to the Languages and Culture Sector.

Working jointly with the Department of Canadian Heritage (DCH), Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), and the Métis National Council (MNC), the AFN's directives on languages have been guided by: Resolution 01/2015, *Support for the Full Implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada's Calls to Action*; Resolution 06/2015, *Revitalization of Indigenous Languages: Concrete Actions to Support Indigenous Language Teachers and Cultural Centres*; Resolution 77/2017, *Support for continued co-development work on the Indigenous Languages Act*; Resolution 46/2018, *United Nations International Decade of Indigenous Languages*; and Resolution 42/2019, *Demarcation of Indigenous Language Signs on Traditional and Ancestral Lands*.

Key Activities and Accomplishments:

Passing of the Indigenous Languages Act

The AFN actively engaged in the Parliamentary legislative process to secure the support of the political parties, Members of Parliament, and Senators in the passage of the *Indigenous Languages Act*. The AFN also continued to advocate for the Act through the dissemination of communications materials on the importance of First Nations languages and by supporting an Advocacy Day on Parliament Hill. The Act was passed on June 21, 2019 and through joint work with DCH, ITK, MNC focus on the implementation of the Act has been shifted.

Joint Implementation of the Indigenous Languages Act

As part of advocacy efforts and the legislation development, the AFN sought a commitment from the federal government for the inclusion of First Nations in the implementation of the legislation. Based on previous experience, the AFN sought First Nations participation in the legislation implementation to ensure the intentions and gains set out in the Act would not be lost through unilateral actualization of the legislation by the federal government. In February 2019, the Minister of Canadian Heritage announced a commitment for the continuation of the co-development process into the implementation phase.

The co-development parties (AFN, ITK, MNC and DCH) developed a Terms of Reference in Fall 2019, including an agenda, setting out implementation areas to guide joint work.



The AFN has been actively involved in the implementation of the *Indigenous Languages Act* by contributing at the Joint Implementation Steering Committee (JISC). The JISC Terms of Reference outlined the following implementation areas for joint work:

- funding mechanisms;
- establishing the Office of the Commissioner of Indigenous Languages, including appointments processes;
- supporting education and lifelong learning/multifaceted approaches;
- strengthening Indigenous language entities;
- advancing a Whole-of-Government conformance to the intent of the Act;
- advancing Federal/Provincial/Territorial cooperation;
- examining translation and interpretation approaches;
- communications planning;
- developing regulations;
- planning for the International Decade of Indigenous Languages; and
- supporting evaluation and monitoring approaches for the three-year Independent Review and five-year Parliamentary Review.

The AFN is providing ongoing input on these issues. The JISC agreed that priority implementation issues include funding mechanisms, program guidelines, and the appointment process for both the Commissioner and Directors. Key activities over 2019-20 included: the transition from the Aboriginal Languages Initiative (ALI) to the Indigenous Languages and Cultures Program (ILCP), including advising on the Treasury Board Submission and Program Guidelines, as well as providing input on

the appointment of the Commissioner and Directors.

Two JISC working groups were also initiated in 2020 to further progress in: (1) organizing a National Symposium on Indigenous Languages, and (2) developing joint communications.

Beginning in March 2020, the AFN has provided input into the proposed DCH consultation process, as required by the Act, on adequate, sustainable and long-term funding (Indigenous Languages Investment Framework) and the appointment of the Indigenous Languages Commissioner and Directors.

As of March 2020, the AFN is continuing to support these processes while considering the limitations of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Funding

The AFN has consistently advocated for increases in funding for language revitalization and for improvements to the flow of funding. Budget 2019 announced \$334 million over five years for Indigenous languages.

The AFN continued to advocate for more funding and for changes to the funding mechanisms for the preservation, revitalization, maintenance, and strengthening of First Nations languages. The AFN provided advice on the development of the ILCP, which replaced ALI. The funding mechanisms for the new program will be further reviewed as 2020-21 is considered a transition year in terms of the ILCP and moving towards a new Indigenous Languages Investment Framework.





The AFN also advocated for a decrease of federal decision-making in the funding process through the establishment of a First Nations Review Committee for 2020-21 ILCP applications.

First Nations Languages Strategy

The AFN initiated work to develop a First Nations Languages Strategy with the Technical Committee on Languages in response to: (1) the feedback heard throughout the First Nations engagement sessions relating to the development of the legislation; and, (2) Resolution 06/2015, *Revitalization of Indigenous Languages: Concrete Actions to Support Indigenous Language Teachers and Cultural Centres*. Further work will take place in 2020-21 to finalize a draft for consideration and engagement.

International Decade of Indigenous Languages

The AFN advocated for a United Nations International Decade of Indigenous Languages throughout 2019 (the International Year of Indigenous Languages) to support legacy work, as related to the preservation, revitalization, and normalization of Indigenous languages. In December 2019, the United Nations declared 2022-32 the International Decade of Indigenous Languages.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

Implementing the Indigenous Languages Act

- Supporting the consultation process to inform joint work with DCH, ITK, and MNC on an Indigenous Languages Investment Framework and supporting the establishment of the Office of the Commissioner of Indigenous Languages within 2020-21.
- Supporting the establishment and assessment of a First Nations Review Committee for ILCP applications.
- Disseminating a Guide (developed in 2019-20) to the Indigenous Languages Act to support local and regional initiatives for First Nations language revitalization.
- Co-organizing a National Indigenous Languages Symposium with DCH, ITK, and MNC.
- Developing and engaging on a First Nations Languages Strategy and contributing to the development of a federal action plan in relation to the International Decade of Indigenous Languages 2022-2032 to further support the revitalization of First Nations languages.
- Holding a Youth Gathering/Working Group on First Nations language revitalization to develop key recommendations on youth mobilization.

Legal Affairs & Justice

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Legal Affairs and Justice Sector consists of five First Nations lawyers who provide advice on all legal issues arising in the AFN's work. The Legal Affairs and Justice Sector carries out two essential functions. First, Legal Affairs provides policy advice on matters involving the Canadian justice system, public safety, corrections, border security, Indian Act reforms and gender issues. Secondly, Legal Affairs supports broader legal change through legal activism and litigation. The provision of legal advice ensures that the organization's activities are conducted in accordance with the AFN Charter, governing policies and any federal corporation regulations. The Legal Affairs and Justice Sector has been assigned responsibility for monitoring, analyzing and interpreting federal legislation and regulations. Further, the Sector supports the Executive Committee in providing evidence before Parliamentary Standing Committees on any draft legislation under consideration. Finally, the Legal Affairs and Justice Sector directs any litigation that the AFN is involved in.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

1. Litigation

During the 2019-2020 fiscal year, the AFN intervened and provided submissions to the Courts of Appeal of Saskatchewan, Ontario and Alberta on their respective references regarding the federal governments *Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act* ("GGPPA"), publicly referred to as the federal carbon tax, as directed by Resolution 61/2019. The AFN argued that the constitutional authorities exercised by the federal or provincial governments must

give due regard for section 35 of the Constitution, ensuring that First Nations' Aboriginal and Treaty Rights are respected, especially given the disproportionate impacts First Nations across Canada are experiencing as a result of climate change. The AFN further sought and was granted leave to intervene in Manitoba's judicial review of the GGPPA. All three GGPPA references were appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada and the AFN was granted leave to intervene in these appeals. The AFN's submissions will support First Nations and advocate for the constraint of provincial and federal constitutional authority by virtue of section 35 of the Constitution. The Supreme Court of Canada's hearing of the provincial appeals was delayed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic but is now tentatively rescheduled for September of 2020.

The AFN also sought and was granted intervenor status in *Restoule v. Canada* (AG) which will be heard by the Ontario Court of Appeal in the 2020-2021 fiscal year, a seminal case dealing with interpretation of the augmentation clause in the Robinson Huron-Superior Treaties. The AFN also intends to make submissions supporting the First Nations Respondents on the matter. This work will include advocating that full consideration be given for the nation-nation relationship in treaty interpretation, the need for section 35 of the Constitution be given full effect and the role of United Nations Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP) in the domestic Canadian context with respect to treaty interpretation.





The AFN is also intervening in the *R. v. Desautel* which is being heard by the Supreme Court of Canada. This case raises important questions about the appropriate interpretation and meaning of “Aboriginal Peoples of Canada” for the purposes of s.35(1) of the *Constitution*. The AFN will argue that the purpose of s.35(1) is to recognize and affirm “existing” Aboriginal rights, which include all rights, activities and jurisdictions practiced by First Nations prior to contact with white settlers. It is contrary to s.35(1) to impose modern day presumptions, such as international borders and citizenship, on rights which existed prior to contact. The AFN will argue that the Crown’s assertion that the interpretation of s. 35(1) of the *Constitution* includes a presumption that the constitution is intended to apply only to First Nations in Canada is incorrect and, as such, is an inappropriate interpretation, which is not grounded in the law nor the wording of s.35(1).

The AFN additionally sought and was granted intervenor status in Quebec’s reference regarding the constitutionality of the *Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families* (the Act). Quebec is challenging the federal government’s constitutional authority to pass this historic piece of legislation. Although the hearing date has yet to be scheduled, the AFN intends to make submissions supporting the constitutionality of the Act, including addressing First Nations inherent authority over child and family matters, the role of the impugned legislation in addressing reconciliation, and the role of s. 35 and international law in the courts constitutional analysis.

Finally, as a Party to the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (IRSSA), the Legal Affairs and Justice Sector regularly participates in court proceedings that deal with matters regarding the IRSSA, such as privacy concerns, document disposition and procedural fairness. This year, the Legal Affairs and Justice Sector continues to participate in matters regarding the sunset of the Independent Assessment Process (IAP) and the disposition of non-claims records, which are related to the operations, management, and oversight of the IAP.

2. Policing & Public Safety

The AFN continues to advocate for First Nations police services to be identified as an essential service. The Minister of Public Safety Canada’s December 13, 2019 mandate letter has created an opportunity to attain this goal. The Minister is directed to “co-develop a legislative framework for First Nations policing, which recognizes First Nations policing as an essential service, and work with interested communities to expand the number of communities served by First Nations policing.”

The First Nations Policing Program (FNPP) needs to expand beyond its current footprint and be available to First Nations seeking to establish their own police agencies. As directed by AFN Resolutions 107/2017 and 44/2018, the AFN is advocating for enhancement to the FNPP and fund First Nations police services equitably when compared to other police agencies. Over the 2019-20 fiscal year, the AFN has identified program gaps and highlighted best practices to help advance public safety in First Nations. In addition, the AFN is working with Public Safety Canada to address a broad



range of concerns that includes the overall bias in the Canadian criminal justice system and the underfunding of First Nations police services. The AFN continues to engage with the RCMP on developing responses to the issues of racism and discrimination.

3. Bill S-3 – Indian Act

In 2016, the Quebec Superior Court ruled in *Descheneaux* that the Indian Registration provisions of the *Indian Act* were unconstitutional. The Court directed Canada to remove all sex-based discrimination from the *Indian Act*. In addition, the Court directed Canada to address all other forms of discrimination contained within the registration provisions. *Bill S-3: An Act to amend the Indian Act* was Canada's Response. As a result of the amendments, between 28,000 and 35,000 individuals became eligible for Indian status. The amended legislation also requires the Minister of Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) to initiate consultations on issues related to registration and band membership, as well as participate in a "collaborative consultation process" to address the efficacy of existing reforms and guide the direction of future reforms.

As part of the Federal Government's Collaborative Consultation Process, the Legal Affairs and Justice Sector participated in multiple engagement sessions across Canada with First Nations to provide updates and information on Indian Registration, Band Membership and First Nation Citizenship. This outreach began in February 2020 and is currently on hold due to COVID-19. The Legal Affairs and Justice Sector ensured that First Nations were provided with culturally appropriate, accessible, and independent

information on Canada's reforms to Indian registration. The Legal Affairs and Justice Sector further addressed the nature of citizenship as an expression of First Nations inherent right to self-determination, as recognized by the *United Nations Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, and the need for First Nations to proactively advocate for further reforms to the *Indian Act* which remove Canada from the citizenship/membership equation.

4. Intellectual Property Reforms

In 2018, the Government of Canada announced proposed legislative changes to intellectual property laws and the Copyright Board's legislative framework. The rich and vibrant cultural expressions and traditional knowledge of First Nations peoples have not been afforded sufficient protection by Canadian intellectual property laws. First Nations' Cultural expressions, medicines, and knowledge of genetic resources are frequently appropriated, reproduced, copied, and adapted by others. The current copyright and intellectual property regime in Canada fosters unauthorized reproduction, adaptation and commercialization of First Nation knowledge and innovations with no sharing of benefits, economic or otherwise, with First Nations. In addition, the intellectual property regime in Canada allows the continued counterfeit manufacturing of First Nations cultural expressions by third parties.

The Legal Affairs and Justice Sector has developed guides and fact sheets for First Nation communities on copyright, trademark, and patents as it relates to the full range of: cultural expressions (song, dance, stories, legends, art, etc.), First Nation





designs (baskets, beadwork, clothing, etc.), and traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources and medicines. They also outline critical issues regarding the Canadian intellectual property regime and information First Nations should know about protecting their traditional knowledge. Further, a guide on contract agreement clauses was created to serve First Nations providers and users of traditional knowledge, traditional cultural expressions and genetic medicines and resources when negotiating, developing and drafting clauses to protect this knowledge in agreements.

5. Independent Assessment Process

The Legal Affairs and Justice Sector was tasked by the Supreme Court of Canada, by way of the Notice Plan, to provide culturally appropriate support to First Nations individuals across Canada who made a claim under either the Independent Assessment Process (IAP) or Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) as part of the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement (IRSSA). As part of these processes, certain records were created which included the Claimants' applications, transcripts of testimony and the final decision with respect to their claims. The Supreme Court of Canada ultimately ordered the records to be destroyed in September of 2027 unless Claimants provide their express consent to the retention of their records at the National Center for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR). The AFN was tasked by the court to disseminate information to Claimants on their rights in relation to their records created as part of the IAP or ADR processes as per the Notice Plan until August 31, 2020.

6. Cannabis

Non-medical cannabis was legalized in Canada on October 17, 2018. In 2018, the First Nations-in-Assembly passed resolutions to address jurisdictional issues, which have become more apparent since legalization. In 2019, the First Nations-in-Assembly established the Chiefs Committee on Cannabis and directed the AFN to pursue necessary amendments or recommendations to any regulations related to the *Cannabis Act*. The direction from First Nations-in-Assembly also involves developing the necessary First Nations institutional framework to implement a comprehensive First Nations cannabis jurisdiction option. The AFN legal team has been communicating with the Health, Social Development and Economic Development sectors to make progress on these initiatives.

In September 2019, the AFN hosted a National Cannabis Summit, bringing together First Nations leadership, community members, businesses, and organizations to discuss the impact of legalized cannabis on First Nations and the work being undertaken by the AFN to address jurisdictional, health, and economic challenges. Over two days, legal and health experts and entrepreneurs shared their experiences navigating the new cannabis economy.

The AFN has hosted five meetings of the Chiefs Committee on Cannabis between September 2019 and March 2020. The Committee is chaired by the executive portfolio holder for cannabis, Regional Chief Terry Teegee. Leadership, youth, elders and community representatives attended the meetings. The federal government

contributed to the October meeting in the form of participation of public servants from Health Canada, Indigenous Services Canada, Public Safety Canada, and Finance Canada. In March 2020, the Committee asked AFN staff to prepare draft terms of reference for a technical subcommittee that would include experts appointed by the AFN's Chiefs Committees on Cannabis, Health, and Economic Development. When faced with the COVID-19 pandemic, the AFN published fact sheets on cannabis use and COVID-19 for First Nations cannabis users.

7. Nuclear Waste

The Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) had provided funding to the Legal Affairs and Justice Sector to host an experts committee on nuclear waste and regulatory processes, as well as support research, policy development, priority identification and engagement on nuclear waste and related issues. With respect to AFN's work, a reconciliation policy framework was prepared following engagement with First Nations experts, and ultimately delivered to the NWMO during the 2019-20 fiscal year. Remaining activities included the development of technical tools in relation to the assessment and licensing processes associated Adaptive Phase Management (APM), the development of materials on Indigenous Traditional Knowledge and its application to APM and the creation of a discussion paper on emergencies related to the construction of a deep geological repository for the storage of used fuel.

These works are focused on ensuring that the NWMO fully informs potentially affected First Nations communities with respect to the APM process and the search for an acceptable site for the storage of spent nuclear materials in a deep geological repository. These works shall ensure that the NWMO obtains the free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) of First Nations who could be in proximity to or affected by the installation of a deep geological repository, further to the requirement that FPIC be obtained for the storage of hazardous materials on First Nations lands as identified within Resolution 48/2017.

8. Murdered, Missing, Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG)

On June 3, 2019 the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls released its Final Report. The Final Report explores the many intersectional issues which contribute to the problem missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls and includes over 230 Calls for Justice. Following the release of the Final Report, the federal government committed to developing a National Action Plan to end violence against Indigenous women and girls. The AFN Women's Council has called upon the federal government to ensure that all engagement on the National Action Plan is carried out using a "Families First" approach. The AFN Women's Council expects to play a key role in the development of an engagement process for National Action Plan. For more information, please refer to the AFN Women's Council section.





Next Steps – Moving Forward

- The Legal Affairs and Justice Sector will engage in discussions with Public Safety Canada and explore possible avenues to contribute to First Nations policing essential services legislation.
- The Legal Affairs and Justice Sector will continue to advocate for changes in the Canadian criminal justice system to eliminate issues such as racism, overcharging First Nation offenders, and inequitable funding for First Nation Police services.
- A key activity moving forward is the establishment and enhancement of restorative justice initiatives which will begin to address overrepresentation of First Nation individuals in the criminal justice system.
- The AFN will continue to pursue legal actions to uphold and implement inherent, Aboriginal and Treaty Rights and Title.



Research and Policy Coordination Sector

The Research and Policy Coordination Sector provides corporate support through managing the resolutions process, research, horizontal policy issues, initiatives and processes. The sector supports AFN's participation in processes such as the AFN-Canada Memorandum of Understanding on Joint Priorities, the Council of the Federation and other intergovernmental fora. These meetings provide opportunities to advocate for First Nations inherent and Treaty Rights, title and jurisdiction. Through its work on parliamentary relations, the Research and Policy Coordination Sector provides timely monitoring of legislative priorities to advance the interests of First Nations. The AFN seeks increased funding for First Nations governments to support improved implementation of First Nations rights, title and jurisdiction through the work on The New Fiscal Relationship. The Sector provides support and coordination on horizontal initiatives such as implementing the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action and the creation of a space for Indigenous Peoples within Ottawa (100 Wellington St.)

The New Fiscal Relationship

First Nations know that funding transfers do not keep pace with inflation or the needs of the fastest growing population in the country, forcing our governments to try and do more and more with less and less. The result is a growing gap in the quality of life between First Nations people and Canada. This is the driver behind the Sector's work to establish a new fiscal relationship between First Nations and Canada.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

On June 10, 2019, the Joint Advisory Committee on Fiscal Relations (JACFR) submitted its Interim Report for Engagement, *Honouring our Ancestors by Trailblazing a Path to the Future*, to the National Chief of the AFN and the Minister of Indigenous Services (ISC). The report was also distributed to all who attended the Annual General Assembly (AGA) in Fredericton, New Brunswick and can be found on the AFN website.

Resolution 24/2019, passed during the 2019 AGA, calls on members of the JACFR, the AFN and ISC to engage extensively with First Nations about this interim report, and bring their findings back to Chiefs-in-Assembly at the next opportunity. To date, some regional engagement activities have been conducted, focusing on the recommendation for a statutory funding transfer to First Nations and the support structure needed to put it in place.

Carrying on from earlier work, 85 First Nations received funding through the 10-year Transfer (formerly known as the 10-year grant) in 2019-20 and an additional 25 to 40 will begin to do so in 2020-21. The 10-year Transfer is an alternative to contribution agreements for First Nations. It increases predictability by guaranteeing ten years of funding. Any unspent funds can be carried forward into the next fiscal year and all funds received can be applied to the priorities set by the First Nation.





This allowance will help First Nations plan their own futures and apply funding to the greatest needs or best opportunities for that First Nation. The 10-year Transfer also increases First Nations control by eliminating program terms and conditions, recipient audits, and compliance reviews, as set and conducted by Canada. It also decreases the reporting burden on First Nations governments, with 92% less data to be provided to Canada than is currently required under contribution agreements.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

Plans for continued engagement on the JACFR report are being adjusted to accommodate restrictions in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic, while research and analysis continue.

Work is also continuing on direction provided in Resolution 66/2017, *AFN-Canada Joint Report on Fiscal Relations, toward repeal of the Default Prevention and Management Program and the First Nations Financial Transparency Act*.

First Nations not currently receiving the 10-year Transfer will receive a letter asking for expressions of interest to participate for the 2021-2022 fiscal year in the coming weeks.

The Indigenous Peoples Space (100 Wellington St.)

In 2017, the AFN began working with Canada, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), the Métis National Council (MNC) and the duly recognized 11 Algonquin First Nations (Algonquin Nation) to develop a vision for a space for First Nations and their

Governments at 100 Wellington Street and 119 Sparks Street. These locations are directly across from the Parliament Buildings and on the traditional and unceded territory of the Algonquin Nation.

The project has been guided by Resolution 29/2017, which directs the AFN to initiate a process to determine the most effective use of 100 Wellington Street while respecting Algonquin protocols. To accomplish this feat, the AFN developed an All Algonquin Common Table with leadership from the 11 duly recognized Algonquin First Nations to ensure the project was initiated in the right way. With support from the Algonquin, National Chief Perry Bellegarde successfully advocated for early use of 100 Wellington St. to be used by all First Nations for meetings and public exhibitions and education.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

In July 2019, a demonstration by the Algonquin Nation resulted in commitment from Canada to create a dedicated space for the Algonquin Nation between 100 Wellington St. and 119 Sparks St. At the 2019 Annual General Assembly in Fredericton, New Brunswick, the AFN honoured Grand Chief Verna Polson for her leadership during the demonstration. This coincided with Chiefs-in-Assembly passing Resolution 29/2019, supporting the Algonquin Nation in representing their own interests, rights and title to develop a dedicated Algonquin space within the project. The resolution also called on the AFN to ensure 100 Wellington St. does not open until Algonquin protocols are met by all partners.

Since that time, the AFN remains committed to supporting the Algonquin Nation in their



negotiations with Canada and other partners. Early or long-term use of 100 Wellington St. is yet to be finalized. In 2019, the AFN contracted a group of Indigenous architects to develop a sketch of what a space for First Nations could look like at 100 Wellington St. Inspired by Algonquin elements, the design was created to support engagement with First Nations on a vision for the future. You can view this work at <https://www.afn.ca/indigenous-peoples-space-building-the-future-together/>.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

The AFN will continue to support the Algonquin Nation in advocating for the full recognition of their rights, title and jurisdiction. The AFN seeks to begin a larger First Nations engagement on the future long-term vision of the Indigenous Peoples' Space when appropriate.

Research

The AFN has had success in developing partnerships with academic institutions and non-governmental organizations to develop research initiatives that support AFN's advocacy. The AFN is a leader in developing and publishing research and ensuring respect for the principles of OCAP® (Ownership, Control, Access and Privilege).

Key Activities and Accomplishments

Towards Justice: Tackling Indigenous Child Poverty in Canada, developed by the Research and Policy Coordination Sector in collaboration with the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives and the Upstream Institute, was critical in advocating for support for C-92, – *An Act respecting First*

Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families at the meeting of premiers at the Council of the Federation hosted in Big River First Nation, Saskatchewan.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

The Sector is currently working to develop an AFN Research Strategy to outline the coordinated actions required to improve how research can advance First Nations priorities.

Resolutions

Resolutions are the essential mechanism by which First Nations provide specific mandates and direction to the AFN. The Research and Policy Coordination Sector, through its leadership on the Resolutions Committee, manages the resolutions process that effectively fosters and captures national consensus on significant policy matters.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

The Resolutions Committee manages all administrative aspects of the resolutions process from the time draft resolutions are first submitted in draft format until they are finalized and posted on the AFN website. The Sector also manages the Resolutions Updates, which provides detail on actions taken to implement resolutions.

Parliamentary Relations

The sector continued to support the organization's Parliamentary outreach in the 43rd Parliament. To date, the AFN has had representatives appear in committee at least 5 times, including appearances in both the House Standing Committee on Finance and the House Standing Committee on





Indigenous and Northern Affairs. The majority of these meetings have been focused on the government response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on First Nations.

The Sector will continue to provide support for committee appearances and looks forward to supporting the AFN's legislative advocacy, ensuring the government follows through on the commitment to First Nations. The Sector provides a weekly update regarding legislative and governmental developments with a focus on monitoring legislation that impacts First Nations.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

- Continue to regularly monitor and provide updates to the organization on legislative and governmental developments.
- Continue to support the organization's advocacy in House and Senate committees.

Intergovernmental Relations

Earlier this year, the Sector provided support in preparation for the ultimately postponed First Ministers Meeting with national Indigenous leaders, originally scheduled for March 13, 2020. Despite the postponement of the meeting, the AFN was still able to engage with the Prime Minister and Premiers via conference call to advance our priorities. There is a commitment from the Government of Canada for a First Minister's Meeting specifically on Indigenous issues within this mandate. The Sector will continue to assist in the preparation and organization of the next First Ministers Meeting on Indigenous issues as necessary.

The Sector usually provides support for participation in the annual Council of the Federation meetings. However, this year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Council of the Federation meeting scheduled to take place in Québec City from July 22-24, 2020 has been postponed until Autumn.

The Sector will aid with the organization's participation at the Council of the Federation meetings as necessary.

AFN-Canada Memorandum of Understanding on Joint Priorities

On February 28, 2020, a Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) was held; it was the most recent meeting under the Canada-AFN Memorandum of Understanding on Joint Priorities (MOU). The meeting reflected on the progress made and steps for the future on a number of joint priority files including:

- implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;
- the recommendations of The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and of the recently passed *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Children, Youth and Families* and *An Act respecting Indigenous Languages*;
- next steps on priority joint work in infrastructure and health legislation; and
- how to improve the MOU process itself.

Currently, the Sector is in discussions with Canada to schedule another SOM in the coming months to update progress on the previously discussed files, plan for the future, and discuss the scheduling of a Leaders Meeting before the end of 2020.



Next Steps – Moving Forward

- Prepare and plan for a second MOU Senior Officials Meeting to follow-up on progress made on items discussed during the February 2020 Senior Officials Meeting.
- Prepare and plan for a MOU Leaders Meeting to reflect on previous MOU Joint Priorities and explore possibilities for new Joint Priorities.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

- Release final report on the Elections Canada – AFN 43rd General Election outreach campaign.
- Continue to support Elections Canada in proactively enabling First Nations' participation in federal elections should they choose to do so.



43rd General Election Outreach

In the build-up to the 43rd Federal General Election that took place on October 21, 2019, the AFN led a comprehensive outreach campaign under contract with Elections Canada to share information about efforts to remove barriers for First Nations participation in federal elections.

This campaign included a call centre, social media outreach, traditional media sources, and face-to-face interactions at events across Canada. In total, between July and October 2019, over 175 First Nations were reached through our call centre. Those reached were given information on how to vote, ID requirements, election employment opportunities, and how the Elections Modernization Act introduced changes that better facilitate First Nations' participation in federal elections should they choose to do so.

The drafting of a final report on the partnered project is currently underway.

The report will highlight the work done on this project while also providing recommendations to Elections Canada on how to further reduce barriers to First Nations' participation in future general elections.



Social Development Sector

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Social Development sector seeks to create healthy, safe and sustainable First Nations through an inclusive, holistic and culturally based social development system that promotes First Nations control and jurisdiction. Key areas of work include Child and Family Services, Jordan's Principle, Early Learning and Child Care, Income Assistance, and Poverty Reduction. The Social Development sector is guided by a vision of First Nations determination, jurisdiction and control, partnerships between First Nations and all levels of government, and a comprehensive and integrated approach to social development that builds capacity amongst First Nations.


Taken together, recent AFN Resolutions that capture the overall spirit and mandate of the Social Development sector's ongoing advocacy efforts include: AFN Resolution 27/2018, *Support for the long-term implementation of Jordan's Principle*; AFN Resolution 16/2019, *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Metis children, youth and families—Transition and Implementation Planning*; AFN Resolution 19/2019, *Developing a Seven Generations Continuum of Care for First Nations, by First Nations of Health, Economic and Social Services*; and AFN Resolution 98/2019, *Poverty Reduction for All First Nations in Canada*. These Resolutions call for greater First Nations control and determination over child and family wellbeing, for the coordination of a continuum of services that better supports First Nations, and to address poverty amongst First Nations.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

Child and Family Services

Guided by AFN Resolution 53/2018, *Federal Legislation on First Nations Child Welfare Jurisdiction*, the Social Development sector has advocated for the enactment and implementation of federal First Nations child and family services (FNCFS) legislation. On February 28, 2019, Bill C-92, *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families* (the Act), was introduced. The Act received Royal Assent on June 21, 2019 and came into force on January 1, 2020.

To support First Nations-led implementation of the Act, the Chiefs Committee on Child and Family Services and Self-Determination (Chiefs Committee) was established by AFN Resolution 16/2019, *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Metis children, youth and families—Transition and Implementation Planning*. The Chiefs Committee's mandate is to provide input and guidance during the implementation of the Act. The First Nations National Transition Planning Committee on Child and Family Services (FNNTPC) was sanctioned as an advisory body to advise the Chiefs Committee regarding implementation of the Act. These Committees met several times to advance the implementation of the Act and negotiated the Protocol regarding *An Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families in relation to the Assembly of First Nations* (the Protocol). The Committees agreed to a First Nations distinctions-based approach to implementing the Act between the AFN and Indigenous Services Canada (ISC). In March 2020, the Chiefs Committee made a motion to support the Protocol. This Protocol will



establish a joint working group and a mechanism to ensure the specific needs of First Nations included in implementing the Act.

To support the rulings of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (CHRT), the Consultation Committee on Child Welfare (CCCW) was formed. The CCCW met monthly in 2019-20 and provided significant input into the following:

- implementation of the Act;
- the new Capital Directive from ISC;
- the draft cultural competency training and evaluation guide for ISC employees; and
- the National Recipient Guides and Prevention Directive.

In addition to these directives, the CCCW also monitored issues on Jordan's Principle, the compensation orders from the CHRT, the appeals from Band Representatives and Jordan's Principle recipients, and the ongoing Institute of Fiscal Studies and Democracy (IFSD) study.

The National Advisory Committee on First Nations Child and Family Services Program Reform (NAC) was reinstated in 2016 to inform recommendations for medium- and long-term relief related to the CHRT decision and to provide general advice on program reform, including the implementation of Jordan's Principle. The NAC is a joint committee made up of FNCFS experts, the AFN, Caring Society, and ISC. The NAC continues to meet on a regular basis to provide ongoing advice to the reform efforts made by FNCFS. The NAC provided feedback to the IFSD study and formation of a funding model for FNCFS. The NAC has also provided input on the Act and its needed amendments

and strategies for implementation. The NAC has further reviewed and provided comment and guidance to ISC on major program area documents including the Program Terms and Conditions, the National Recipients Guide and Prevention Directive.

Jordan's Principle

Several AFN Resolutions provide First Nations vision for Jordan's Principle, including AFN Resolution 62/2016, *Full and Proper Implementation of the historic Canadian Human Rights Tribunal decisions in the provision for child welfare services and Jordan's Principle*; AFN Resolution 40/2017, *Call on Canada to Comply with the 2016 Canadian Human Rights Tribunal Orders*; and AFN Resolution 27/2018, *Support for the long-term implementation of Jordan's Principle*.

The Social Development sector works to advance this vision to Canada and advocate for implementation of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal orders through the Jordan's Principle Action Table, the Jordan's Principle Operations Committee (JPOC), the Consultation Committee on Child Welfare (CCCW), and regular bi-lateral engagement with federal departments. Through AFN Resolution 15/2019, *Jordan's Principle Operations*, the Social Development sector has improved coordination between the various bodies advancing Jordan's Principle, including working towards regional representation on the JPOC and initiating an evaluation of the structures that interact with Jordan's Principle.

To support improved relationships and communication between those involved with Jordan's Principle, the Social Development





sector hosted the first ever national Jordan's Principle Service Coordinators Gathering on November 13-14, 2019. The Gathering was held on Kanien'kehá:ka Territory in Montreal, Quebec, and brought together more than 150 Jordan's Principle Service Coordinators, navigators, leaders, technicians, and federal officials. Participants gathered under the theme of "Building Connections." The Gathering was an opportunity for those working on Jordan's Principle at all levels to come together to learn from each other and build connections. Service Coordinators from across the country shared innovative practices, provided input on Jordan's Principle policies, procedures and communications, and considered the creation of a national network of Jordan's Principle Service Coordinators to continue building on the relationships established at the Gathering. The Service Coordinators learned about self-care for caring professionals and returned to their First Nations with tools to help them continue to serve First Nations children and families.

While Budget 2019 invested up to \$1.2 billion over three years to continue to support First Nations children to access the health, social, education and other products and services they need to thrive, this investment did not support the innovative policy options that the Jordan's Principle Action Table advanced. The AFN continues to advocate for the First Nations vision of the long-term implementation of Jordan's Principle.

Early Learning and Child Care

The Social Development sector continues to support the National Expert Working Group (NEWG) on First Nations Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) and support implementation of the Indigenous Early

Learning and Child Care (IELCC) Framework. The AFN and NEWG have continued to support communications to regions regarding the IELCC Framework and have monitored the implementation of the Framework regionally and nationally. Per AFN Resolution 59/2018, *First Nations Early Learning and Child Care Regional Funding Allocation Approach*, and AFN Resolution 64/2019, *Extension of Interim Funding Model for First Nations Early Learning and Child Care*, the AFN, the NEWG and its sub-working group on Funding Allocation Formula Development continue to work towards a new funding model for First Nations ELCC. NEWG and sub-working group members have provided regionally specific input on considerations for a new funding model. Work towards a new model continues. A new model is expected to be brought forward to the First Nations-in-Assembly for validation by December 2020.

Income Assistance

The AFN Technical Working Group on Social Development (TWGSD) was established by AFN Resolution 28/2018, *Support for the establishment of a Technical Working Group on Social Development*, with the mandate to advise Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) on social development program and service reform. The TWGSD met numerous times over the past year and made progress advocating to ISC for important changes to the on-reserve Income Assistance (IA) Program.

The AFN also received mandate at the December 2019 Special Chiefs Assembly by AFN Resolution 89/2019, *Continuing First Nations Income Assistance Program Reform*. This resolution directs the AFN to advocate for continued reform of the IA Program as well as access to the Case Management and



Pre-Employment Supports for all First Nations. It also directs the AFN to support the TWGSD to pursue a study examining the on-reserve Income Assistance Program, particularly with regards to insufficient rates, services, and data availability. An independent study led by the AFN and TWGSD will fill gaps in knowledge which presently hold back efforts to induce change. To this effect, the TWGSD has developed a scope of the project and a proposal to submit to ISC.

Poverty Reduction Strategy

The AFN TWGSD was mandated to work on Poverty Reduction by AFN Resolution 47/2018, *First Nations Oversight of Canada's National Poverty Reduction Strategy*. This resolution also directed the AFN to advocate for a position on Canada's new National Advisory Council on Poverty. Members of the Council were formally announced on August 21, 2019. Despite the AFN's advocacy, no representative from the AFN was appointed. However, there are two First Nations members bringing lived and professional experience to the Council. The TWGSD has connected with the Council and plans to meet to discuss First Nations-specific poverty issues.

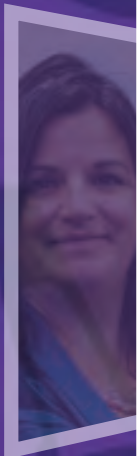
Further mandate was given to the AFN and TWGSD at the December 2019 Special Chiefs Assembly by AFN Resolution 98/2019, *Poverty Reduction for All First Nations in Canada*. This resolution directs the AFN to support the TWGSD to pursue a study on First Nation-specific indicators and measures of poverty. This study is an important step to fill the gaps for First Nations left by *Opportunity for All: Canada's First Poverty Reduction Strategy*. A proposal has been prepared for submission to ISC.

Next Steps - Moving Forward

- The Social Development sector will continue to work with the NAC and the CCCW to ensure full implementation of all CHRT orders as it relates to reform of the FNCFS Program and Jordan's Principle.
- The Social Development sector will support the transition and implementation planning of First Nations leadership and FNCFS agencies regarding the Act.
- The Social Development sector will assist the Chiefs Committee and the FNNTPC on establishing a joint working group to implement the Act that is in alignment with the Protocol between the AFN and ISC.
- The Social Development sector will continue to advocate for the implementation of a First Nations' vision for the long-term implementation of Jordan's Principle.
- The Social Development sector will continue to support the NEWG and the implementation of the IELCC Framework and funding, including the development of a new funding model.
- The Social Development sector will continue to support the TWGSD to advance its priorities and mandate, including advocating for continued work to reform the on-reserve Income Assistance (IA) Program, advocating for all First Nations to have access to Case Management and Pre-Employment Supports, securing funding to conduct the Income Assistance and Poverty Reduction studies, and hosting a National Forum on First Nations Income Assistance.







**Financial Statements
of the National Indian
Brotherhood**

March 31, 2020

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Independent Auditor's Report

To the Executive Committee of
National Indian Brotherhood

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of National Indian Brotherhood (the "Corporation"), which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2020, and the statements of operations, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies (collectively referred to as the "financial statements").

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Corporation as at March 31, 2020, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards ("Canadian GAAS"). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of our report. We are independent of the Corporation in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Other Information

Management is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon, in the Annual Report.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information identified above and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

We obtained the Annual Report prior to the date of this auditor's report. If, based on the work we have performed on this other information, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact in this auditor's report. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Responsibilities of Management and those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Corporation's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Corporation or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Corporation's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian GAAS will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian GAAS, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Corporation's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Corporation's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Corporation to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Deloitte LLP

Chartered Professional Accountants
Licensed Public Accountants
July 14, 2020

National Indian Brotherhood

Statement of operations

Year ended March 31, 2020

	Schedules	2020 \$	2019 \$
Revenue			
Indigenous Services Canada	A	30,839,466	26,892,080
Health Canada	A	4,264,992	5,118,501
Environment and Climate Change Canada	C	1,675,397	855,000
Canadian Heritage	C	1,594,402	1,700,000
Fisheries and Oceans Canada	C	1,527,100	947,547
Employment and Social Development Canada	B and C	1,150,632	1,258,010
Public Health Agency of Canada	C	809,428	453,702
Nuclear Waste Management Organization	C	542,454	72,175
Parks Canada	C	275,000	189,135
Status of Women Canada	C	210,602	36,898
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada	C	124,038	—
Natural Resources Canada	C	100,000	70,000
University of Ottawa	C	88,000	51,298
Public Safety Canada	C	87,116	395,606
Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency	C	—	500,000
Privy Council Office	C	—	249,572
Transport Canada	C	—	75,197
Other departments	C	2,890,785	3,020,785
		46,179,412	41,885,506
Expenses			
Advertising, promotion and publications		241,052	198,680
Amortization of capital assets		176,279	110,452
Insurance		27,112	27,418
Miscellaneous		54,459	21,517
Office expenses		863,228	1,167,487
Professional fees		10,632,933	9,568,063
Regional service delivery		4,898,459	3,426,142
Rent		1,364,957	1,207,926
Salaries and benefits		15,175,203	13,576,993
Travel and meetings		12,444,190	11,190,478
		45,877,872	40,495,156
Excess of revenue over expenses		301,540	1,390,350

The accompanying notes and supporting schedules are an integral part of the financial statements

National Indian Brotherhood
Statement of financial position
As at March 31, 2020

	Notes	2020 \$	2019 \$
Assets			
Current assets			
Cash		13,049,922	12,256,703
Grants and contributions receivable	4	3,725,710	3,684,609
Other accounts receivable		427,270	190,925
Due from National Indian Brotherhood Trust Fund	11	67,760	85,859
Sales tax recoverable		810,712	615,516
Inventory		171,306	185,508
Prepaid expenses		437,302	464,146
		18,689,982	17,483,266
Asset held in trust	3	15,911	15,281
Prepaid expenses		158,854	232,171
Capital assets	5	507,547	247,628
		19,372,294	17,978,346
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities		7,979,676	7,584,005
Government remittances payable		209,155	119,353
Deferred contributions	6	8,560,383	7,925,406
Excess contributions	7	874,986	823,658
Current portion of long-term debt		—	80,000
		17,624,200	16,532,422
Liability held in trust	3	15,911	15,281
		17,640,111	16,547,703
Contingencies and commitments	8 and 9		
Net assets			
Invested in capital assets		507,547	247,628
Internally restricted		1,200,000	1,100,000
Unrestricted		24,636	83,015
		1,732,183	1,430,643
		19,372,294	17,978,346

The accompanying notes and supporting schedules are an integral part of the financial statements.

On behalf of the Executive Committee

_____, Perry Bellegarde, National Chief

_____, Roger Augustine, Regional Chief, Management Committee

National Indian Brotherhood
Statement of changes in net assets
Year ended March 31, 2020

	Invested in capital assets	Internally restricted	Unrestricted general operations	2020 Total	2019 Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Net assets, beginning of year	247,628	1,100,000	83,015	1,430,643	40,293
Excess of revenue over expenses	—	—	301,540	301,540	1,390,350
Internal transfer	—	100,000	(100,000)	—	—
Acquisition of capital assets	436,198	—	(436,198)	—	—
Amortization of capital assets	(176,279)	—	176,279	—	—
Net assets, end of year	507,547	1,200,000	24,636	1,732,183	1,430,643

Notes

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The accompanying notes and supporting schedules are an integral part of the financial statements.

National Indian Brotherhood**Statement of cash flows**

Year ended March 31, 2020

	Notes	2020 \$	2019 \$
Operating activities			
Excess of revenue over expenses		301,540	1,390,350
Items not affecting cash			
Amortization of capital assets		176,279	110,452
		477,819	1,500,802
Changes in non-cash operating working capital items	10	813,499	6,468,054
		1,291,318	7,968,856
Investing activities			
Decrease (increase) in due from National Indian Brotherhood Trust Fund		18,099	(27,979)
Acquisition of capital assets		(436,198)	(64,726)
		(418,099)	(92,705)
Financing activity			
Repayment of long-term debt		(80,000)	(96,000)
Net increase in cash		793,219	7,780,151
Cash, beginning of year		12,256,703	4,476,552
Cash, end of year		13,049,922	12,256,703

The accompanying notes and supporting schedules are an integral part of the financial statements.

1. Description of the organization

National Indian Brotherhood (the "Corporation") was incorporated under Part II of the *Canada Corporations Act* on September 29, 1970. In June 2014, the Corporation received a certificate of continuance under the *Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act*. The Corporation has the following objectives:

- To assist and to work toward solutions for problems facing the First Nations people;
- To operate as a national body to both represent the First Nations people and to disseminate information to them;
- To study, in conjunction with First Nations representatives across Canada, the problems confronting First Nations and to make representations to the government and other organizations on their behalf;
- To assist in retaining the First Nations culture and values; and
- To act as the national spokesperson for First Nations throughout Canada.

The Corporation acts as the secretariat to the Assembly of First Nations (AFN).

The Corporation is a not-for-profit organization and, as such, is not subject to income taxes.

2. Accounting policies

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations and include the following significant accounting policies:

Basis of presentation

The financial statements do not include the accounts of those of the National Indian Brotherhood Trust Fund (the "Trust Fund"), which is controlled by the Corporation. Summarized financial statements of the Trust Fund are disclosed in Note 11 of the financial statements.

Revenue recognition

The Corporation follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions.

Unrestricted contributions are recognized as revenue of the appropriate program when received or receivable if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured.

Restricted contributions are recognized as revenue of the appropriate program in the year in which the related expenses are incurred.

Contributions received toward the acquisition of capital assets are deferred and amortized to revenue on the same basis as the related depreciable capital assets are amortized.

Financial instruments

The Corporation initially measures its financial assets and financial liabilities at fair value. The Corporation subsequently measures all its financial assets and financial liabilities at amortized cost except for cash which is measured at fair value.

National Indian Brotherhood
Notes to the financial statements

March 31, 2020

2. Accounting policies (continued)

Capital assets

Capital assets are recorded at cost. Contributed capital assets are recorded at estimated fair value at the date of contribution.

Amortization is provided on a straight-line basis over the estimated useful lives of the assets as follows:

Computer equipment	3 years
Office equipment	3 years
Leasehold improvements	10 years

Excess contributions

The excess of revenue over expenses of some programs may require repayment and is recorded as a liability. When approval to retain the funds has been received, the excess is then recorded as revenue.

Allocation of expenses

Allocation of administrative expenses between the programs or funding agencies is done in accordance with the stipulated basis of allocation and maximum amounts or percentages mentioned in each of the different contribution agreements entered into by the Corporation.

Use of estimates

The preparation of these financial statements in conformity with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported in the financial statements and the accompanying notes. In the opinion of management, these financial statements reflect, within reasonable limits of materiality, all adjustments necessary to present fairly the results for the years presented. Assumptions are used in estimating the collectability of grants and contributions receivable, other accounts receivable, the amount of inventory reserves, the useful life of capital assets, the amount of certain accrued liabilities and the allocation of expenses. Actual results could differ from these estimates.

3. Asset held in trust

The Corporation is holding in trust an education fund totaling \$15,911 (\$15,281 in 2019) for Kelly Morrisseau's children. These funds were donated by individuals and organizations.

National Indian Brotherhood
Notes to the financial statements

March 31, 2020

4. Grants and contributions receivable

Grants and contributions receivable are as follows:

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
Fisheries and Oceans Canada	1,031,000	487,722
Environment and Climate Change Canada	1,004,500	301,000
Public Health Agency of Canada	432,690	274,569
Indigenous Services Canada	399,827	480,700
Parks Canada	275,000	—
Public Safety Canada	200,000	390,476
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada	112,762	154,218
Natural Resources Canada	100,000	70,000
Status of Women Canada	87,500	—
Transport Canada	75,197	75,197
Employment and Social Development Canada	7,234	856,114
Privy Council Office	—	253,575
Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency	—	236,038
Heritage Canada	—	85,000
University of Ottawa	—	20,000
	3,725,710	3,684,609

5. Capital assets

	Cost	Accumulated amortization	2020 Net book value	2019 Net book value
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Computer equipment	224,663	139,747	84,916	55,914
Office equipment	376,134	222,207	153,927	84,155
Leasehold improvements	421,983	153,279	268,704	107,559
	1,022,780	515,233	507,547	247,628

6. Deferred contributions

Changes in the deferred contributions balance are as follows:

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
Balance, beginning of year	7,925,406	1,028,542
Revenue received during the year	46,855,600	48,782,371
Revenue recognized during the year	(46,220,623)	(41,885,507)
Balance, end of year	8,560,383	7,925,406

National Indian Brotherhood
Notes to the financial statements

March 31, 2020

6. Deferred contributions (continued)

The balance, end of year is composed of the following:

	2020 \$	2019 \$
Indigenous Services Canada	6,149,715	6,268,020
Employment and Social Development Canada	2,344,538	—
Environment and Climate Change Canada	31,603	—
Heritage Canada	22,430	—
Nuclear Waste Management Organization	12,098	135,450
Health Canada	—	667,212
Registration fees – forums/assemblies	—	347,591
Court Order – Government of Canada	—	294,823
Status of Women Canada	—	123,102
Elections Canada	—	89,208
	8,560,383	7,925,406

7. Excess contributions

Excess contributions are as follows:

	2020 \$	2019 \$
Indigenous Services Canada	768,102	768,102
Public Safety Canada	106,884	55,556
	874,986	823,658

8. Contingencies

The Corporation receives funding from various government agencies based on specific program needs and budgets and allocates certain expenses to the various programs. In many cases, the funding agency has the right to review the accounting records to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of their programs. At this time, no estimate of the requirements, if any, to reimburse the agencies can be made. Management of the Corporation believes that its allocations of expenses are fair and appropriate in the circumstances. Adjustments to the financial statements as a result of these reviews, if any, will be recorded in the period in which they become known.

9. Commitments

The Corporation is committed to future minimum lease payments under operating leases for office space and equipment maturing in 2024, for which minimum annual payments for each year are as follows:

	\$
2021	1,488,907
2022	1,453,023
2023	1,400,734
2024	302,676
	4,645,340

10. Changes in non-cash operating working capital items

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
Grants and contributions receivable	(41,101)	(1,800,589)
Other accounts receivable	(236,345)	56,747
Sales tax recoverable	(195,196)	37,419
Inventory	14,202	(2,982)
Prepaid expenses	100,161	(247,742)
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	395,671	1,515,951
Government remittances payable	89,802	(49,677)
Deferred contributions	634,977	6,896,864
Excess contributions	51,328	62,063
	813,499	6,468,054

11. Controlled entity

The Corporation appoints the trustees of the Trust Fund, a registered charity under paragraph 149(l)(f) of the *Income Tax Act*, to administer the Language and Literacy Fund, the Youth Healing Fund, the Research Sponsor Fund, the Heroes of Our Time Fund, the Education Fund, the Métis Fund, and the Education Legacy Fund. The Trust Fund is deemed a non-profit organization under the *Income Tax Act* (Canada), and accordingly is not subject to income taxes.

The summarized financial statements of the Trust Fund are as follows:

Summarized statement of financial position

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
Assets	194,948,494	205,054,831
Liabilities	1,624,210	1,463,867
Fund balances	193,324,284	203,590,964
	194,948,494	205,054,831

Summarized statement of operations

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
Revenue	873,663	70,418,188
Expenses	11,140,343	11,461,115
(Deficiency) excess of revenue over expenses	(10,266,680)	58,957,073

Summarized statement of cash flows

11. Controlled entity (continued)

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
Operating activities	(1,969,922)	55,889,719
Investing activities	3,525,364	(55,956,461)
Net increase (decrease) in cash	1,555,442	(66,742)
Cash, beginning of year	347,666	414,408
Cash, end of year	1,903,108	347,666

As at March 31, 2020, the balance due from the Trust Fund was \$67,760 (\$82,959 in 2019).

For the year ended March 31, 2020, the Corporation received \$36,066 (\$60,000 in 2019) from the Trust Fund for services relating to the administration and management of the Trust Fund and \$57,065 for the rental of office space (\$48,117 in 2019). The Trust Fund moved its head office in Akwesasne, and a new rental agreement is in place as of the 1st day of September 2019. The total annual cost of the rental space is \$11,212.

The transactions with the Trust Fund have been recorded at their exchange amount which is the amount in accordance with the agreements signed between the parties.

12. Executive salaries

By virtue of an annual general assembly resolution (62/98), the National Chief of the AFN receives a salary which is adjusted annually in connection with the consumer price index. Similarly, by virtue of a Confederacy of Nations resolution and an Executive Committee resolution, each Regional Chief is allocated a director's fee. Management and unelected officials are compensated within average industry remuneration levels for their positions.

13. Pension plan

The Corporation contributes to a defined contribution pension plan for its employees and Regional Chiefs. Contributions are up to 8% of an employee's salary. The employer's contributions for the year were \$801,657 (\$685,236 in 2019).

14. Credit facility

The Corporation has a banking agreement which establishes a demand credit facility for general business purposes up to a maximum of \$2,500,000, bearing interest at prime plus 1%, renewable annually. The credit facility is secured by a general security agreement representing a first charge over all of the Corporation's assets. The balance outstanding at year-end is nil (nil in 2019).

15. Financial instruments

Credit risk

The risk arises from the potential that one party to a financial instrument will fail to discharge an obligation and cause the other party to incur a financial loss.

The Corporation's various receivables represent credit provided for the Corporation's programs. The credit is provided mainly to the federal government and accordingly presents minimal credit risk to the Corporation.

The maximum credit exposure of the Corporation is represented by the fair value of various grants and contributions receivable as presented in the statement of financial position.

Interest rate risk

Interest rate risk refers to the adverse consequences of interest rate changes on the Corporation's cash flows, financial position and interest expenses.

The Corporation's cash is exposed to interest rate changes. Consequently, the cash flow exposure is not significant and the impact of adverse changes in rates is not considered material.

16. Capital Management

The Corporation considers its capital to consist of net assets. The Corporation's overall objective is to effectively use resources to maximize the ability to achieve its vision, fund tangible capital assets, future projects and ongoing operations. The Corporation manages net assets by establishing internally restricted funds and appropriating amounts to the restricted funds for anticipated future projects, contingencies and other capital requirements. These allocations are disclosed in the statement of changes in net assets.

The Corporation is not subject to externally imposed capital requirements.

Internally restricted net assets

Net assets are internally restricted for specific operating purposes as authorized by the Board of Directors from time to time. Internally restricted balances are supported by a clear statement of purpose, and an anticipated time frame for the accumulation and draw down of the balance at the time established.

The purpose of any internally restricted balance is consistent with the objectives of the Corporation's strategic initiatives and operating plans, as well as identified risks to the achievement of these objectives.

During the year ended March 31, 2020, an amount of \$100,000 was internally restricted (\$1,100,000 in 2019) for the above mention purposes.

17. COVID-19

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization characterized the outbreak of a strain of the novel coronavirus ("COVID-19") as a pandemic, which has resulted in a series of public health and emergency measures that have been put in place to combat the spread of the virus. The duration and impact of COVID-19 are unknown at this time and it is not possible to reliably estimate the impact that the length and severity of these developments will have on the financial results and condition of the Corporation in future periods.

National Indian Brotherhood
Schedules - Statement of operations
Year ended March 31, 2020

Schedule A – Indigenous Services Canada and Health Canada

	O&M, Housing and Infrastructure Project	Basic Organizational Capacity	FN Education Mgmt and Capacity Development	Core Like	Implementing the AFN-Canada MOU on Joint Priorities	FN Capacity Engagement in the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change	Analyzing FNCFS Agency Needs Project	Specific Claims Joint Technical Committee
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Revenue								
Contributions/grants	2,692,927	5,545,726	2,844,501	3,500,000	3,000,000	2,300,000	1,015,752	957,753
Contributions/grants - prior years	3,832,598	—	1,023,058	—	34,440	102,896	—	—
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Registration fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Trade show fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	6,525,525	5,545,726	3,867,559	3,500,000	3,034,440	2,402,896	1,015,752	957,753
Expenses								
Advertising, promotion and publication	20,770	72,859	5,804	—	14,984	3,850	—	—
Allocation of administrative expenses	—	—	—	—	124,432	247,700	20,756	172,396
Amortization of capital assets	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	244
Insurance	1,652	8,885	2,062	1,050	936	734	—	—
Miscellaneous	4,135	6,654	1,368	—	—	—	—	—
Office expenses	74,246	202,033	125,710	18,192	52,125	27,695	—	—
Professional fees	3,400,561	236,832	1,569,273	74,533	968,438	1,108,001	994,996	68,673
Regional service delivery	—	353,964	—	2,390,897	—	—	—	—
Rent	68,726	349,950	106,694	—	137,243	41,095	—	26,428
Salaries and benefits	1,021,428	3,642,250	1,129,618	414,617	1,080,173	385,582	—	330,507
Travel and meetings	1,934,007	672,431	927,030	600,711	658,208	588,239	—	359,505
	6,525,525	5,545,858	3,867,559	3,500,000	3,036,539	2,402,896	1,015,752	957,753
Deficiency of revenue over expense	—	(132)	—	—	(2,099)	—	—	—

National Indian Brotherhood
Schedules - Statement of operations
Year ended March 31, 2020

Schedule A – Indigenous Services Canada and Health Canada (continued)

	Social Development Work Plan	AFN/CIRC Policy Tables	Family Services	Child and Services	Bill S-3 Indian Act Registration Reform	IRSSA Order of Perell J.	FN Trade and Economic Policy and Programs to Support FN	AFN Emergency Services Project
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Revenue								
Contributions/grants	677,444	—	669,416	372,752	77,327	114,597	250,000	
Contributions/grants - prior years	38,309	683,955	—	15,004	294,823	211,685	—	—
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Registration fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Trade show fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	715,753	683,955	669,416	387,756	372,150	326,282	250,000	
Expenses								
Advertising, promotion and publications	2,365	1,884	1,351	8,341	1,399	1,939	343	
Allocation of administrative expenses	61,586	—	60,856	33,887	49,348	—	30,000	
Amortization of capital assets	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Insurance	1,193	630	—	135	514	300	—	—
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Office expenses	31,236	19,889	21,326	14,302	22,167	16,177	4,338	
Professional fees	24,768	14,247	119,289	41,496	2,558	88,913	3,521	
Regional service delivery	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Rent	36,978	12,504	9,722	15,103	42,146	13,887	16,212	
Salaries and benefits	386,753	265,851	240,952	188,608	229,543	90,818	129,694	
Travel and meetings	171,309	369,032	215,920	85,884	24,475	114,312	65,896	
	716,188	684,037	669,416	387,756	372,150	326,346	250,004	
Deficiency of revenue over expenses	(435)	(82)	—	—	—	(64)	(4)	

National Indian Brotherhood
Schedules - Statement of operations
 Year ended March 31, 2020

Schedule A – Indigenous Services Canada and Health Canada (continued)

	Building a Vision for an Indigenous Peoples House	Child Welfare Legislation Working Group Funding Proposal	NFR Research Project Video Shoot	Support of FN to attend the 2019 Wildland Fire Canada Conference	First Nation Auditor General (Scope of Work)	Indigenous Summer Work Experience Project	Indigenous Resilience Stand Alone Report
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Revenue							
Contributions/grants	184,360	160,000	60,000	30,607	—	26,611	20,000
Contributions/grants - prior years	—	60,101	—	—	26,847	—	—
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Registration fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Trade show fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	184,360	160,000	60,101	30,607	26,847	26,611	20,000
Expenses							
Advertising, promotion and publications	601	633	—	—	—	—	—
Allocation of administrative expenses	—	—	—	10,247	—	2,419	1,818
Amortization of capital assets	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Insurance	236	38	—	—	—	—	—
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Office expenses	3,148	7,896	—	—	—	—	2,170
Professional fees	54,103	25,870	60,101	1,120	—	—	—
Regional service delivery	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Rent	18,998	8,177	—	—	—	—	—
Salaries and benefits	85,369	103,023	—	—	26,847	24,201	—
Travel and meetings	21,905	14,363	—	19,240	—	—	16,012
	184,360	160,000	60,101	30,607	26,847	26,620	20,000
Deficiency of revenue over expenses	—	—	(9)	(9)	—	(9)	—

National Indian Brotherhood
Schedules - Statement of operations
Year ended March 31, 2020

Schedule A – Indigenous Services Canada and Health Canada (continued)

	Funding to host a National gathering on FNCFS	Comprehensive Claims	Engagement on NAP to end Violence	Health Block Contribution Funding	Health Jordan's Principle	Jordans Principle Development Oversight	Health Policy	Health IRHSP	2020 Total	2019 Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Revenue										
Contributions/grants	11,315	2,960	1,702	3,166,318	166,486	197,780	124,200	28,170,534	26,793,936	
Contributions/grants - prior years	—	—	—	481,546	128,662	—	—	6,933,924	98,144	
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Registration fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Trade show fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
	11,315	2,960	1,702	3,647,864	295,148	197,780	124,200	35,104,458	26,892,080	
Expenses										
Advertising, promotion and publications	—	—	1,268	10,935	465	—	—	149,791	85,743	
Allocation of administrative expenses	—	—	—	312,975	22,199	17,980	11,291	1,179,890	449,724	
Amortization of capital assets	—	—	—	14,493	—	—	—	14,493	—	
Insurance	—	—	—	2,516	235	—	—	21,360	15,087	
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	12,157	5,866	
Office expenses	15	235	—	80,300	3,970	226	3	727,399	893,452	
Professional fees	—	2,725	—	213,540	1,890	13,276	1,269	9,121,173	6,576,943	
Regional service delivery	—	—	—	100,000	—	—	—	2,844,861	3,026,446	
Rent	—	—	—	131,406	12,528	—	—	1,047,797	787,604	
Salaries and benefits	—	—	—	1,402,552	228,478	—	9,831	11,445,524	8,806,723	
Travel and meetings	11,300	—	434	1,380,273	25,383	166,649	101,806	8,544,324	6,247,350	
	11,315	2,960	1,702	3,648,990	295,148	198,131	124,200	35,108,769	26,894,938	
Deficiency of revenue over expenses	—	—	—	(1,126)	—	(351)	—	(4,311)	(2,858)	

National Indian Brotherhood
Schedules - Statement of operations
Year ended March 31, 2020

Schedule B – Employment and Social Development Canada

	Employment and Social Development Canada - AFN Strategic Partnership Agreement	Employment and Social Development Canada - Early Learning and Child Care	Employment and Social Development Canada - FN Government, Citizens and Accessibility Legislation	Employment and Social Development Canada - Labour Market Information	Employment and Social Development Canada - Leaving No one Behind	Employment and Social Development Canada - Summer Student	Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Revenue							
Contributions/grants	268,513	31,418	312,955	204,528	324,760	8,459	1,150,633
Contributions/grants - prior years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Registration fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Trade show fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	268,513	31,418	312,955	204,528	324,760	8,459	1,150,633
Expenses							
Advertising, promotion and public relations	1,053	—	748	1,261	1,679	—	4,741
Allocation of administrative expenses	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Amortization of capital assets	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Insurance	358	46	105	368	87	—	964
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Office expenses	7,279	—	2,159	5,699	20,770	—	35,907
Professional fees	582	2,920	156,422	41,886	119,084	—	320,894
Regional service delivery	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Rent	12,687	2,165	6,767	15,249	3,776	—	40,644
Salaries and benefits	192,803	2,715	130,308	101,263	92,894	8,459	528,442
Travel and meetings	53,751	23,628	16,445	38,803	86,470	—	219,097
	268,513	31,474	312,954	204,529	324,760	8,459	1,150,689
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	—	(56)	1	(1)	—	—	(56)

National Indian Brotherhood
Schedules - Statement of operations
Year ended March 31, 2020

Schedule C – Other funding agencies

	Environment and Climate Change Canada - Participation in the National Steering Committee	Environment and Climate Change Canada - Elders Council Indigenous Knowledge System Advisory Committee	Environment and Climate Change Canada - First Nations Species at Risk Advisory Committee	Environment and Climate Change Canada - Yukon FN as Climate Action Leaders	Environment and Climate Change Canada - Engaging FN in Implementing the Pan-Canadian Approach to Transforming Species at Risk Conservation	Environment and Climate Change Canada - AFN Chronic Wasting Disease Working Group	Environment and Climate Change Canada - Building Relationships by Working together - Side Session at the National Climate Gathering
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Revenue							
Contributions/grants	452,000	408,397	290,000	250,000	100,000	75,000	50,000
Contributions/grants - prior years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Registration fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Trade show fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	452,000	408,397	290,000	250,000	100,000	75,000	50,000
Expenses							
Advertising, promotion and public relations	—	—	1,000	—	—	—	—
Allocation of administrative expenses	45,455	32,850	—	—	9,092	5,880	4,545
Amortization of capital assets	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Insurance	520	—	161	—	287	—	—
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Office expenses	4,247	1,050	11,044	—	74	680	75
Professional fees	96,598	312,678	27,141	—	3,214	758	714
Regional service delivery	—	—	—	250,000	—	—	—
Rent	7,295	—	13,682	—	4,550	2,600	—
Salaries and benefits	173,685	7,357	114,899	—	32,442	16,942	—
Travel and meetings	124,200	54,462	122,134	—	50,409	48,140	44,960
	452,000	408,397	290,061	250,000	100,068	75,000	50,294
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	—	—	(61)	—	(68)	—	(294)

National Indian Brotherhood
Schedules – Statement of operations
Year ended March 31, 2020

Schedule C – Other funding agencies (continued)

	Environment and Climate Change Canada - Supporting Capacity of National Indigenous Organization to Engage in Conservation	Heritage Canada	Fisheries and Oceans Canada - AAROM	Fisheries and Oceans Canada - Oceans Management	Employment and Social Development Canada	Public Health Agency Canada - Planning & Engaging with FN Child Welfare	Nuclear Waste Management Organization - Foster Positive Dialogue
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Revenue					(Schedule B)		
Contributions/grants	50,000	1,592,570	1,177,100	350,000	1,150,632	809,428	407,004
Contributions/grants - prior years	—	—	—	—	—	—	135,450
Miscellaneous	—	1,832	—	—	—	—	—
Registration fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Trade show fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	50,000	1,594,402	1,177,100	350,000	1,150,632	809,428	542,454
Expenses							
Advertising, promotion and publications	155	10,775	3,932	220	4,740	—	2,635
Allocation of administrative expenses	—	145,122	67,105	16,615	—	10,000	47,686
Amortization of capital assets	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Insurance	74	1,086	929	103	965	—	510
Miscellaneous	—	462	—	—	—	—	—
Office expenses	513	40,608	22,730	3,655	35,906	—	12,079
Professional fees	3,126	228,890	79,266	42,005	320,894	—	10,447
Regional service delivery	—	—	—	—	—	799,428	—
Rent	6,416	58,338	47,437	13,452	40,643	—	24,990
Salaries and benefits	15,000	624,184	456,897	125,800	528,443	—	331,908
Travel and meetings	24,716	484,937	551,540	149,457	219,097	—	113,436
	50,000	1,594,402	1,229,836	351,307	1,150,688	809,428	543,691
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	—	—	(52,736)	(1,307)	(56)	—	(1,237)

National Indian Brotherhood
Schedules - Statement of operations
Year ended March 31, 2020

Schedule C – Other funding agencies (continued)

	Parks Canada	Status of Women Canada	Agriculture Canada - FN Agricultural Strategy	Natural Resources Canada - Indigenous Engagement Strategy	University of Ottawa - First Nations Food, Nutrition and Environment Study	Public Safety Canada - Emergency and Legal Services Project	Other	2020 Total	2019 Total
\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Revenue									
Contributions/grants	275,000	87,500	112,762	100,000	88,000	87,116	35,539	7,948,048	11,209,358
Contributions/grants - prior years	—	123,102	—	—	—	—	348	258,900	871,460
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,530,384	1,532,216	1,023,751
Registration fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,054,832	1,054,832	1,516,143
Trade show fees	—	—	11,276	—	—	—	269,682	280,958	372,714
	275,000	210,602	124,038	100,000	88,000	87,116	2,890,785	11,074,954	14,993,426
Expenses									
Advertising, promotion and publications	—	—	—	36	—	—	67,768	91,261	112,937
Allocation of administrative expenses	27,963	2,253	11,276	—	8,000	—	(1,613,732)	(1,179,890)	(449,724)
Amortization of capital assets	—	—	—	—	—	—	161,786	161,786	110,452
Insurance	—	442	—	17	—	—	658	5,752	12,331
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—	41,840	42,302	15,651
Office expenses	10,174	2,308	—	3,155	1,993	1,184	(15,646)	135,829	274,035
Professional fees	19,171	16,142	14,950	1	5,225	189	330,351	1,511,760	2,991,120
Regional service delivery	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,004,170	2,053,598	399,696
Rent	7,740	22,324	—	10,903	6,000	9,128	41,662	317,160	420,322
Salaries and benefits	105,566	90,150	97,812	83,873	31,774	69,445	823,502	3,729,679	4,770,270
Travel and meetings	104,469	76,983	—	2,019	35,082	7,170	1,686,655	3,899,866	4,943,128
	275,083	210,602	124,038	100,004	88,074	87,116	2,529,014	10,769,103	13,600,218
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	(83)	—	—	(4)	(74)	—	361,771	305,851	1,393,208



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