

YEAR IN REVIEW

MNO 3rd AGA / MNO Annual Report 2025-26

Name of PCMNO Councillor	Region / Position
Theresa Stenlund	Regional Councillor for the Northwestern Ontario Métis Community Region 1

Introductory Message about work within the Region in 2025/26

The Northwestern Ontario Métis Community “NWOMC” – (Region One), represents and serves Métis citizens in Northwestern Ontario. We are comprised of four community council areas in Northwestern Ontario (the Atikokan Métis Council, the Kenora Métis Council, the Northwest Métis Council, and the Sunset Country Métis Council) within the territory of Treaty 3 in addition to the North East corner outside of the Treaty 3 area.

The NWOMC is a distinct regional rights-bearing community with a unique history, identity, relationship to the land, and self-government structures. This history includes both historic and ongoing collective assertions as a distinct Métis collectivity, including the negotiation of the “Adhesion by Halfbreeds of Rainy River and Lake” to Treaty No. 3 in 1875.

Today, the NWOMC comprises over 3,600 Métis citizens, descendants of the Halfbreed Adhesion to Treaty No. 3, as well as other Métis who have formed part of the historic Métis community or have made Northwestern Ontario their home.

Much has been achieved since the 2025 Annual General Assembly. Northwestern Ontario is a hub for both the mining and forestry industries. As such, there is a significant amount of mining and forestry activity in the Region. Over the past few years there has also been heightened activity in energy sector development as well as the initiation of important projects such as the highway twinning between Kenora and the Manitoba border (phase 1) and the twinning of the Hydro line from Thunder Bay to Atikokan to Dryden (The Waasigan Transmission Line project) which is currently under construction. A new project for a new transmission line was announced and will be from Dryden to Red Lake for which we will start consultation in the near future. The Township of Ignace and Wabigoon First Nation in Northwestern Ontario, have been selected as the host site for the Deep Geological Repository “DGR” storage site for spent nuclear fuel and we are currently learning more about this project from Nuclear Waste Management Organization.

The Northwestern Ontario Métis Community is continuing to undergo conversations with the MNO regarding the self-government. Engagement on the MNO Constitution has started and a regional Constitution is also committed to for the NWOMC. Our Constitution work will be done in parallel to the MNO’s. The Northwestern Ontario Métis Community Regional Implementation Agreement and work plan ensure that the rights and interests of the Northwestern Ontario Métis Community are not forgotten.

September 12, 2025 marked the 150th anniversary to the *Halfbreed Adhesion to Treaty No. 3*. Through this adhesion, the NWOMC became the only Métis community in the Homeland to col-

lectively adhere to one of the historic treaties. Please refer to the next section for a summary of activities that occurred around this historical anniversary.

All of these activities, coupled with the work associated with the sub-table to the Framework Agreement's Negotiation Process in relation to the Northwestern Ontario Métis Community and the Treaty 3 Half-breed adhesion for advancing reconciliation with the Northwestern Ontario Métis community, makes the Northwestern Ontario Métis Community a very active and busy region for engagement with industry, government and other proponents.

The Northwestern Ontario Métis Community is proud to have the first Métis Child and Family Services agency in Ontario with a focus on prevention services. The Northwestern Ontario Métis Child and Family Services "NWOMCFS" has offices in Kenora, Dryden, Atikokan and Fort Frances.

For additional activities being conducted in Region 1 please refer to the last page of this report – **Ongoing and Other Activities.**

Highlights and Key Achievements

- The **NWOMC website has been launched and is operational. (NWOMC.CA)** The Northwestern Ontario Métis Community The site was developed to act as a resource hub for citizens and the general public to access information about the NWOMC's history, programs, and governance. The site is regularly updated. The website has a history section which is solely dedicated to the history of the NWOMC and includes an interactive Story Map with primary documents, photos, and other historic information.
- The Northwestern Ontario Métis Community Atlas (book) is in the process up being updated with current information and continues to be under review.
- The regions Children's book "**Under the Stars at Rainy River**" went to print and is available to purchase from Friesen Press and other locations online.
- A second Children's book has been commissioned with a target age range of 6-12 years old. The narrative is currently under developed.
- The NWOMC sash and bookmark with the meaning of the colours was released on September 12th, 2025 and distributed at the 150th anniversary event and the remaining sashes to the local community Councils. The bookmark can be found on the regional website.
- Implemented a regional southern Michif language project for the region that is hosted by NWOMCFS and is in year four.
- Negotiated funding for the last several years to advance the Treaty 3 Half-breed adhesion Claim at the Framework Agreement sub-table.
- Continued to represent the NWOMC in discussions related to moving forward with the implementation of the Métis Government Recognition and Self Government Agreement (MGRSA) work plan. This work is continuing to progress slower than anticipated.

- Participated in negotiation of the Learn More Agreement/capacity agreement with NWMO so the NWOMC can learn more about the project.
- Negotiated a relationship agreement with Hydro One.
- Commissioned a NWOMC government booklet as a short introduction to the Métis of Northwestern Ontario. The booklet was released in February 2026 and sent to print and can also be found on the regional website under resources.
- Two more videos were released since the last report – *Living off the Land* and *Family Ties*; both videos can be found on the regional website under resources.
- Work was done with Library and Archives Canada to make it possible to have the Crown's copy of Treaty No. 3 and the *Halfbreed Adhesion to Treaty No. 3* available in our region. An exhibit was created to accompany the treaty to each of the museums. The exhibit and copy of Treaty No. 3 and the *Halfbreed Adhesion to Treaty No. 3* was showcased within our four Community Council areas and displayed at each of the local museums on the following dates:
 - June 26 - July 3, 2025, (Dryden Museum)
 - July 14-19, 2025, (Kenora Museum)
 - August 15-29, 2025, (Atikokan Museum)
 - September 12-26, 2025, (Fort Frances Museum)
- As part of the 150th celebrations, we hosted a regional Art Crawl/Vendor market on September 12, 2025, in Fort Frances at the Council hall where NWOMC artists/vendors came together and showcased their art and wares in one location.
- A video was released on September 12, 2025 to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the *Halfbreed Adhesion to Treaty No. 3's* signing and it is located on the regional website under resources, along with an additional video with a recap of that day.
- As an important update that will highlight the NWOMC's history, I am excited to share that work is underway to install a series of interpretive signs in each Community Council area and includes a QR code that visitors can scan to learn more about the NWOMC and they will provide an overview on the history of Métis within the Community Council areas. Currently signs have been installed in Fort Frances and Kenora with planned installation for Atikokan, Dryden, Eagle Lake and Rainy River this summer. These signs have been designed with graffiti proof materials and are expected to last 15-20 years. Engagement took place with municipalities about location and placement of the interpretive signs. These signs are an opportunity to show how the Métis have had a longstanding presence and rich history in the region. Maps of where the signs are located or will be located can be found on the regional website under the History tab/interpretative signs.
- Commissioned a series of short educational videos on the history of different aspects of the region. Upriver Media has started the work on these. Several of the videos in the series has been released and we are currently working on some additional ones; they can be viewed on the regional website.

Note: Minor or one-off consultation engagements have not been listed in the briefing below.

Mining

NexGold (formerly Treasury Metals – Goliath Gold Complex (Goliath, Goldlund and Miller)

- The Goliath Gold Project is a proposed gold mine near Dryden.
- 2019 – MOU Amended to include additional funding for technical review and meetings for the Environmental Impact Statement.
- The federal EA was approved in August 2019.
- Treasury Metals has applied for additional early exploration permits, and met with LRC staff in March 2022 to state that the rest of the project is on hold due to financial constraints.
- Treasury Metals continues with its early exploration activities, including a drill program for Goliath and Goldlund from October 2022 to February 2023.
- The Preliminary Feasibility Study was completed in February 2023 with ‘positive’ results reported, the company is now moving forward on a Feasibility Study.
- Treasury Metals has acquired the Goldlund and Miller Properties, located near the Goliath Gold Project. Treasury Metals plans to co-develop these projects alongside the Goliath Project.
- The NWOMC met with Treasury Metals in July 2023. NWOMC made clear that the community will require additional capacity for engagement, and requests to resume CBA negotiations.
- Due to NWOMC time constraints, a site visit/tour did not take place in fall 2023. Treasury Metals was willing to postpone until the spring 2024 which did not occur as Treasury Metals refused to fund the tour according to MNO policies and procedures at that time.
- NWOMC last met with the proponent on Nov 29th, 2023 for a project update, which included a exploration permit update, additional lease applications, feasibility study progress, and to discuss Environmental Assessment Requirements and Permitting.
 - TM plans to complete the feasibility study early 2025, with a construction decision late 2025 or 2026. TM planned to submit a Project Change Notice in Q1 2024 required to summarize the changes to the project design/footprint as a result of the addition of Goldlund and Miller deposits. This will require revisiting the original En-

vironmental Assessment and decision statement conditions for adequacy. (i.e. triggers consultation) To date, the Project Change Notice has not been submitted.

- Should the Project advance, an amendment to the existing MOU will be required to provide additional capacity for consultation activities, given the changes to the project footprint. This will include a recommendation for an updated TKLUS (over 5 years since the last study, and must include the expanded project footprint). It will also include an updated CBA negotiations budget. Previously the NWOMC had engaged BLG as legal counsel on this project, however they are no longer retained. If/when this project moves forward, new legal counsel will need to be retained.
- In June 2024 following receipt of a MINES notification that Treasury Metals had applied for additional mining leases for the Project, the NWOMC submitted a formal letter which outlined its concerns about the expanded project footprint, the outstanding amounts owed to the MNO by TM, and a request for an update from MINES on the project status.
- In July 2024, Treasury Metals changed its name to NexGold Mining Corp.
- MINES responded to the NWOMC's June letter in December 2024 but it did not address the concerns. An additional email was sent to MINES by LRC in January 2025 which was not responded to.
- NexGold applied for additional mining and surface rights lease in March 2025, to which the NWOMC responded again, reiterating the same concerns as previous applications and that "...the NWOMC would appreciate a response from MINES addressing its concerns prior to initiating consultations on further authorizations related to this Project."
- MINES (now MEM) responded to the 2025 lease application comments in September 2025. MEM noted that it did not consider perception-based avoidance impacts as sufficient and requested additional evidence regarding impacts to rights. Due to the legal language used, the LRC request assistance from internal legal counsel. No assistance or follow-up was provided and LRC was unable to pursue the matter or submit additional comments.
- NexGold announced a management change in September 2025 with Jeremy Wyeth, Chief Operating Officer, and Rachel Pineault, Executive Vice President of Governance and Corporate Affairs stepping down from their roles.
- No other developments have occurred to date on this project.

First Mining Gold (FMG) – Springpole Project

- Springpole is a proposed gold mine in the Red Lake area that is going through a coordinated federal and provincial environmental assessment.

- A Consultation Agreement which provides funding for the consultation process has been secured.
- A Valued Components (VC) workshop was held on May 20th, 2021 with NWOMC Citizens to gather information around Métis-specific values. The information gathered in the workshop has formed a report which will help the NWOMC in the consultation process. The VC information was provided to First Mining Gold together with the Traditional Knowledge and Land Use Study (TKLUS).
- The Provincial EA Terms of Reference were approved by the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP), in November 2021 (with amendments to address concerns identified through consultation).
- The MNO has retained consulting firm Know History to assist with the Traditional Knowledge and Land Use Study (TKLUS). The work on the TKLUS began in July 2021. The TKLUS was completed as of February 2022 and provided to First Mining Gold in March 2022.
- Federal environmental assessment under IAAC began in April 2022.
- First Mining Gold submitted its draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in June 2022. MNO retained a consultant (MNP) to review and provide comments (July 2022). FMG's responses to MNO's comments were received by December 2022. Additional review of FMG's response package was completed in March 2023 by MNP.
- First Mining Gold is currently completing baselines studies for incorporation into the Final EIS, and plans to submit by Q2 2024. In order to ensure the NWOMC's concerns are adequately addressed, and that Metis s.35 are appropriately contextualized and incorporated in the Final EIS, extensive additional engagement with FMG is required.
- Continuing the IAAC process & IBA/CBA negotiations
- 2nd TKLUS completed and presented to NWOMC and FMG in January 2024. An information sharing agreement was updated by legal prior to sharing the 2nd TKLUS with FMG.
- First Mining Gold and NWOMC held a Caribou Habitat Workshop on May 2, 2024.
- First Mining Gold and NWOMC held a Fish Habitat Workshop on September 9, 2024.
- FMG submitted the required Environmental Impact Statement for the project in November 2024, which was followed by a formal comment period ending January 17th, 2025. The NWOMC submitted detailed comments with respect to potential impacts to rights to FMG, IAAC and the Province. FMG responded to the NWOMC comments on February 6th, 2025.
- MNO's application for IAAC Participant Funding Program to support NWOMC's participation in the federal environmental assessment was approved for approximately \$95,000.

- NWOMC and FMG executed a Collaboration Agreement on February 20th 2025 intended to address the impacts of the project and establish a formal relationship with the Proponent for the life of the Project. NWOMC issued letters to IAAC and MECP acknowledging that its outstanding concerns on the project impacts had been mitigated and/or accommodated through this agreement.
- Next steps in the environmental assessment process include IAAC and MECP drafting reports to be used in the decision making on the Project later in 2025. NWOMC intends to continue its active participation in the upcoming steps of the assessment process through review of the draft reports. Both IAAC and MECP committed to providing opportunities for the NWOMC to review and comment on potential EA conditions.
- On February 27 through March 29, 2026, IAAC held a 30-day comment period on its draft EA Report and Potential EA Conditions. NWOMC retained MNP to prepare comments, which were reviewed by legal counsel and submitted to IAAC. While additional characterization of the NWOMC rights was requested, no major concerns with respect to impacts to those rights were identified.
- On April 22, 2026 IAAC paused the timeline for the federal EA at the request of FMG in order for it to provide additional information regarding recent consent agreements with Cat Lake and Lac Seul First Nations. Once the information is submitted, the federal timeline will restart. This will include IAAC finalizing the EA Report and Conditions by incorporating comments that were submitted. Once finalized it will be sent to the federal Minister to make a decision on the Project.
- No updates from MECP on the Provincial EA have been provided.

New Gold – Rainy River Gold Mine

- New Gold owns and operates the Rainy River gold mine (“the Project”) located 65km north-west of Fort Frances. The mine began operating in 2017.
- A participation agreement was signed with New Gold Inc in November 2014.
- The NWOMC participates in the Joint Implementation Committee (JIC) and the Environmental Monitoring Board (EMB) for the Project. The mandate of the JIC is to provide a collaborative forum for the NWOMC and New Gold to discuss environmental aspects of the Project, hiring, training and contracting opportunities, and general issues of concern. The Regional Councilor holds the JIC seat for the NWOMC and a Lands Resources and Consultations (LRC) staff liaises with New Gold and participates on the environment committee. The EMB consists of representatives from various communities who discuss aspects of environmental monitoring for the Project and provide recommendations to New Gold for further testing,

studies or research for example.

- The LRC Mineral Development Advisor continues to participate in quarterly EMB meetings. New Gold is reminded regularly that the NWOMC must be engaged on any material changes to the mine plan, including additional authorizations.
- New Gold completed the following authorization applications in 2025:
 - Notice of Material Change submitted to Ministry of Mines for Stage 7 TMA Dam Raise (an annual approval until TMA dam height is at final elevation). (Received)
 - Schedule 2 Compensation Plan Amendment submitted to Environment Canada and Department of Fisheries and Oceans to add additional compensation habitat. (with DFO)
 - Lakes and Rivers Improvement Act Authorization for additional fisheries compensation habitat notes in item 2. (Received)
 - Environmental Compliance Approval Industrial Sewage Works Amendment submitted to Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks for water treatment and discharge capacity increases. (Received)
 - Lakes and Rivers Improvement Act Authorization for water discharge capacity increases (if further infrastructure is required to be placed within Pinewood River). (Received)
 - Permit to Take Water submitted to Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks for additional Open Pit dewatering wells. (Received)
 - Closure Plan Amendment submitted to Ministry of Mines for changes in Open Pit and Underground development, water treatment, and additional site infrastructure. (Filed)
- New Gold announced additional investment in its exploration program (after a several year hiatus) within the approved Project Development Area, in efforts to expand the mineral resource.
- New Gold was acquired by Couer Mining Inc. in March 2026. Couer is a mining company based in the U.S., however has stated that this “...*transaction will not result in any changes to site operations, existing commitments, or our Impact Benefit Agreement (IBA).*”
- Below is a list of amendments and authorizations that Couer Rainy River Mine intends to apply for in 2026.
 - Notice of Material Change submitted to Ministry of Mines for Stage 8 TMA Dam Raise (an annual approval until TMA dam height is at final elevation). Expected to receive approval from Stage 8 in first half of 2026. (Filed as of March 31, 2026) Notice of Material Change submitted to Ministry of Mines for Stage 9 TMA Dam Raise end of 2026.

- Closure Plan Amendment submitted to Ministry of Mines for Northwest Trend Open Pit Expansion in Q3 2026. Expected to receive approval end of 2026.
- Environmental Compliance Approval Industrial Sewage Works Amendment to be submitted to Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks for water treatment design change Q2 2026. Approval expected end of 2026.
- LRC and Couer will continue to discuss during the quarterly Environmental Monitoring Board Meetings.

Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR) – Steep Rock Rehabilitation Project

- The Steep Rock site, located approximately three (3) km. north of Atikokan, is an abandoned mining site initially developed in 1943, now owned by the province.
- President Marlene Davidson is representing the Region 1 Consultation Committee (R1CC) at meetings on the Steep Rock Advisory Panel.
- Working on continuing the conversation about an agreement (MOU) between the Ministry and the NWOMC. This task has been stalled due to LRC staff turnover and the vacant position until recently.
- Currently working on developing a Consultation Agreement to enable further engagement on the project, however there has been resistance from the MNR due to gaps in the legislative framework which do not require consultation for remediation projects.
- A new Transfer Payment Agreement (TPA) which provides capacity for meetings, site visits and updates, for 2024-2025 was signed in August 2024. It included capacity for a site tour which was held in October 2024. The R1CC and LRC support staff attended the site tour which was hosted by MNR.
- No new TPA's have been signed for the 2025-26 fiscal.
- The MNR began the Caland Area Soil Remediation Project and intends to complete in November 2026. The MNR also made progress on the West Arm Dam #1 Rehabilitation Project in the fall 2025.

Agnico Eagle – Hammond Reef Project

- 2012 MOU signed with previous holder Osisko Hammond Reef Gold Corp.
- 2015 signed a Shared Interest Agreement with NWOMC.
- The project environmental assessment was federally and provincially approved (2018). The project would require additional permitting from relevant regulators to begin construction activities.
- Agnico Eagle renewed their early exploration permit in June 2022. It continues to advance the resource through exploration activities and technical research.
- The main Project is currently in care and maintenance (hold), with expectations of start-up if the price of gold increases. From Agnico Eagle's website "The Company requires additional federal and provincial permits to begin construction activities and requires a 2.5-year construction timeline. At present, the project has not been approved by Agnico Eagle for development."
- Agnico Eagle continues to conduct ongoing exploration activities and technical research on the property and in adjacent claims, but does not intend to move to construction at this time. Agnico Eagle continues to offer annual exploration updates for the Atikokan Métis Council and/or site visits to the exploration site at its own expense.
- At a recent exploration update to the Atikokan Métis Council, Agnico Eagle noted that it is increasing its exploration activities for the next several years, and hiring a Community Relations staff stationed year-round in Atikokan with the intent on making a "business case" to its Board for proceeding to a construction decision for the Project. In other words Agnico Eagle is focussing on both strengthening the economics and social license in order to make the Project more attractive to investors.
- NWOMC and Agnico Eagle met in December 2025 for a project update:
 - Agnico Eagle continued its ramp up of exploration activities within the project area in 2025. Additionally, it applied and received permitting for a variety of "ground-truthing" studies including geotechnical and aggregate investigations. These investigations are planned for spring to summer 2026 following archaeological assessments for the proposed sites.

- Agnico Eagle conducted field studies to update its baseline data in 2025 including for Species at Risk, surface water, groundwater, sediment quality, and aquatics.
- The Proponent noted that there are some changes intended to the proposed mine plan from the original environmental assessment including relocation of some infrastructure, reduction in the processing capacity (60000 tonnes per day to 30000 tonnes per day), a change to the shape of the tailings management area, and a smaller waste rock storage facility footprint as a result of the tonnage reduction. There are no planned changes to the mine life. These changes would not trigger a requirement for a new environmental assessment or a Traditional Knowledge and Land Use Study update because they are still planning to operate within the approved Project area.
- Agnico Eagle plans to engage with NWOMC in 2026 on the development of its Fish Habitat Offsetting Plan required to obtain the Fisheries Act Authorization and the Schedule 2 Metal and Diamond Mining Effluent Regulations Amendment, as well as to engage on other key permitting applications.
- Agnico Eagle hired a new Community Relations Coordinator, Cara Balla in April 2026.
- Agnico Eagle hopes to make a construction decision some time in 2026.

Sibelco (previously owned by Avalon Advanced Materials (AAM) – Separation Rapids Lithium Project

- The Separation Rapids Project is an early exploration stage lithium project located approximately 70 km north of Kenora.
- R1CC last met with Avalon in 2019, to discuss required updates to their Closure Plan (1990), MINES requires the Closure Plan to be updated to comply with 2022 standards.
- Avalon provided a Closure Plan for bulk sampling only in June 2020. A bulk sampling program was completed in 2021. Under the Closure Plan, AAM provided financial assurance for rehabilitation of the bulk sampling area.
- May 2022 – To the knowledge of the Ministry, the bulk sample has not been tested, and is sitting in storage. Extra permissions are required to export the material to Europe.
- If AAM plans to advance the project to construction and production, they would be required to submit a new Closure Plan, and all the other necessary permitting. This and apply to con-

vert their claims to lease. This would trigger MINES to identify and consult with potentially affected Indigenous communities.

- AAM formed a new joint venture with Sibelco called Separation Rapids Ltd (60% Sibelco; 40% AAM).
- In June 2023, AAM purchased an industrial property in Thunder Bay with the intent on developing a processing facility for lithium concentrate (100% AAM owned).
- Separation Rapids continues with desktop study and a small exploration program to expand the resource estimate and possibly redesign the originally proposed project.
- There has been no consultation or engagement with Separation Rapids since the last meeting.
- In April 2026, AAM announced that it had transferred its 40% share in Separation Rapids to Sibelco, who now holds 100% ownership of the Separation Rapids Lithium Project. The MNO was not notified of the change.
 - There is no available information on Sibelco's plans for development of the project or engagement activities.

Gold X2 (previously Goldshore) – Moss Lake Gold Project

- The Moss Lake Project is an early exploration stage gold project located approximately 35 km southeast of Kashabowie.
- Stage 1 Archaeological Assessment was completed by Goldshore Resources. LRC staff met with Goldshore's team and archaeological consultant to discuss Metis inclusion (or lack thereof) in the assessment, and future Stage 2 archaeological assessments. Goldshore also indicated it was willing to begin discussions on a future consultation agreement with the NWOMC.
- Goldshore completed a mineral resource estimate in November 2022.
- October 2023 - Goldshore had to shut down all site operations and moved to a smaller staff until able to raise money.
- Goldshore continues early exploration activities and has increased focus on environmental baseline studies. Goldshore is currently developing a Preliminary Economic Assessment which would include more details of proposed site layout and project design. The PEA is expected in October/November 2025.

- It provided a draft engineering site layout with options for the future mine site for discussion.
- LRC Staff met with Goldshore for a project update in May 2025. Goldshore completed an extensive winter drilling program in 2025, with good results. It plans to conduct small exploration activities in summer 2025 then restart its drill program in the winter 2026.
- During clean-up of a small oil spill on site, Goldshore discovered an historic dump from the 1980's. It has hired an environmental consultant to study the area, determine the historic dump extent, and make a remediation plan.
- Goldshore continues with its baseline studies, including a Stage 2 Archaeological Assessment with fieldwork to be completed summer 2025.
- Goldshore invited the NWOMC to the site for a site visit in summer or fall 2025 and is open to discussing a capacity funding agreement. Goldshore did not agree to the meeting budget for the entire RCC site visit, and it was postponed until a capacity agreement can be put in place (Gold X2 has changed consultants as of 2026, following this incident).
- September 2025 – Goldshore announced its name change to **Gold X2** as part of a rebranding initiative.
- Gold X2 and NWOMC met in February 2026 for Introductions and a Project Update:
 - Baseline studies continue through 2026-27 (archaeology, geochemistry, aquatic biology, hydrology, terrestrial wildlife, etc.)
 - Gold X2 offered to provide opportunity for NWOMC participation in the Stage 2 Archaeological Assessment during the 2026 field season
 - Planning to enter Environmental Assessment (Federal) process in mid-2027. No plans for Provincial EA to date.
 - Continued exploration activities to better define the mineral resource.
 - Preliminary Economic Assessment indicates an open pit mine will be economical, similar in size to the Rainy River Gold Mine.
 - NWOMC noted that a TKLUS would be required, funding through a capacity funding agreement.

Kinross - Great Bear Gold Project

- Great Bear is proposing the construction, operation, closure, and rehabilitation of an open-pit and underground gold mine from a deposit located approximately 23 kilometers south-east of Red Lake, Ontario.
- The Great Bear Gold Project is undergoing a federal impact assessment, led by the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC). This assessment commenced in August 2024 following submission by Great Bear of a Detailed Project Description. Great Bear has three (3) years to develop an impact statement, which is a comprehensive document(s) that uses scientific data and Indigenous knowledge to assess the impacts of the Great Bear Gold Project.
- Great Bear, MNO and NWOMC executed a Relationship Building & Capacity Funding Agreement on November 1, 2024. This agreement provides capacity for the NWOMC to meaningfully participate in the federal impact assessment process for the Great Bear Gold Project. As part of this participation the NWOMC will be undertaking a Traditional Knowledge and Land Use Study (TKLUS) to collect data from Citizens through a combination of one-on-one interviews and Community meetings. The data collected by the TKLUS will be used by the NWOMC to show how the Great Bear Gold Project will impact the rights of Citizens.
- The NWOMC and its consultant provided an Interim TKLUS Report in June 2025 at the request of Great Bear, with the Final TKLUS Report and Presentation delivered to Great Bear in October 2025.
- Great Bear approached the federal impact assessment through submission of the required Impact Statement in phases, beginning in September 2025. The Final IS was submitted end of March 2026. NWOMC retained a consultant to review the IS and will submit comments to IAAC within the comment period ending on May 29, 2026.
- Great Bear applied to Ontario Ministry of Energy and Mines for the project to undergo the new One Project, One Process (1P1P) which will coordinate the Provincial Permitting.
- The Parties have also made significant progress towards an accommodation agreement to address the impacts that are identified. As of May 2026, the accommodation agreement is very close to being finalized.
- Next steps in the federal impact assessment include IAAC review of IS comments which Great Bear will be required to respond and address. If IAAC determines adequate information has been provided, the IS phase will end and the Impact Assessment phase will begin. IAAC will then prepare its Environmental Assessment Report and draft Potential Conditions, with an opportunity for review and comments. Once finalized the EA Report and Conditions will be provided to the Minister to make a decision on the Project. The timeline for a decision is late

summer or fall 2026.

Evolution Mining - Red Lake Expansion Project

- On Feb 15th 2024, the NWOMC received an invitation from Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) to consult on the proposed authorization for mine waste disposal under the Metal and Diamond Mining Effluent Regulations (MDMER) for the Red Lake Expansion Project.
- Evolution Mining is proposing to expand the tailings management facility at their Red Lake Operation (RLO), near Red Lake, Ontario. The proposed authorization would allow the use of six waterbodies at the RLO frequented by fish for mine waste disposal. Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) and ECCC are consulting on the Fish Habitat Offset and Compensation Plan.
- As DFO has received a Fisheries Act Application from Evolution Mining, the Métis Nation of Ontario is eligible for grant funding through DFO's Indigenous Habitat Participation Program, (IHPP), up to \$21,000 per grant. This was received.
- An introductory meeting with NWOMC, ECCC, DFO and Evolution Mining will be coordinated once the IHPP funding is secured.
- NWOMC retained MNP consultants to complete a technical review of the Fish Habitat Offset and Compensation Plan and held a technical meeting with Evolution, ECCC and DFO in January 2025.
- Several rounds of follow-up responses and comments were provided by all Parties as of April 2025.
- NWOMC does not yet consider its concerns resolved, however this is pending DFO's incorporation of appropriate mitigation measures into the Fisheries Act Authorization. DFO approved the FAA in July 2025, concluding consultation on the project. The authorization incorporated mitigation measures for the NWOMC including future engagement requirements on the Balmer Lake Study Plan.
- MNO-NWOMC provided a capacity funding proposal to Evolution in April 2025 and the parties work towards formalizing a relationship agreement. An updated agreement was provided to Evolution in October 2025, which has not yet been responded to.

Transmission Lines

Hydro One Networks Inc. (HONI) – Waasigan Transmission Line

- The Hydro One Northwest Bulk Transmission Line Project (later renamed the Waasigan Transmission Line Project) is a proposed double-circuit 230 kilovolt (kV) line between Lakehead Transmission Station (TS) within the Municipality of Shuniah and Mackenzie TS within the Township of Atikokan and a new single-circuit 230 kV line from Mackenzie TS to the Dryden TS with 80% of the project being in the NWOMC (region 1) and 20% of the project in region 2.
- The NWOMC Consultation Committee and the Region 2 Consultation Committees signed internal agreement stipulating how the RCCs will engage in consultation on the project.
- Community Information Sessions were held in Dryden & Thunder Bay in January 2023. The purpose of the session was to hear about Hydro One's proposed preliminary preferred route for the transmission line. A memo reflecting citizen's concerns with the proposed route from Atikokan to Dryden was then submitted to Hydro One.
- A Traditional Knowledge and Land Use Study (TKLUS) has been submitted to Hydro One in late April 2023. The TKLUS reflects citizen input from citizen's input into a survey from early 2020 and information from approximately 30 interviews with citizens who use the proposed land for their Metis way of life.
- Hydro One released their draft Environmental Assessment for a 7-week review period which ended July 7, 2023. The draft EA does not contain information relating to impacts to any Indigenous community. Instead, Hydro One has sent the NWOMC and Region 2 a copy of the document assessing impacts to Metis rights for review before it became a public document. We requested an extension to the 7-week review period so that we had sufficient time to review the information and correspond with Citizens.
- Community Information Sessions were held in Dryden & Thunder Bay in August 2023. The purpose of the session was to hear about Hydro One's draft Environmental Assessment for the transmission line. A memo reflecting citizen's concerns with the proposed route from Atikokan to Dryden was then submitted to Hydro One.
- Hydro One released their Final Environmental Assessment in November 2023 for a 7-week review period which ended January 19. We submitted comments to the regulator, the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks outlining concerns we have had with the process so far.

- Hydro One has signed a contract with Valard Construction for the construction of the line. The project will have employment, training and subcontracting opportunities. We are in correspondence with Valard to better understand what the opportunities are so they can be made available to Metis citizens.
- A Community Benefit Agreement was signed in April 2024 between Hydro One, the Northwestern Ontario Métis Community and the Northern Lake Superior Métis Community.
- In October 2024, Hydro One's final Environmental Assessment was approved by the MECP.
- Construction on Phase 1 began in late December 2024 with right-of-way clearing and the establishment of the Sapawe Work Camp, which was completed as of March 2025.
- Work on Phase 1 is expected to be completed by the end of 2026.
- Construction on Phase 2 of the Project began in December 2025, with right-of-way clearing activities.
- Work on Phase 2 is expected to be completed by the end of 2027.
- Formal consultations on the Project have been completed but Regional Leadership continues to participate in regular update meetings with Hydro One and Valard, which will continue throughout the construction of the line.
- Training opportunities for Métis citizens will be ongoing throughout the life of the Project with several citizens having received First Aid Training in the fall of 2025.
- We have offered NWOMC citizens and citizens from region 2 upcoming Environmental Monitoring citizen training in June 2026.

Nuclear Power and Radioactive Waste Management

At this time Region 1 has only agreed to learn more about this potential project and has not indicated a position on this project.

Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO)

- In November 2024, the NWMO announced that Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation and the Township of Ignace have been selected as the host communities for the future site for Canada's deep geological repository (DGR).

- A new consultation and capacity agreement with the NWMO was signed in late 2025, which will help support further engagement activities and events for 2026.
- The NWMO submitted its Initial Project Description (IPD) in December 2025. Following this submission, a 30-day public comment period took place, during which the R1CC had the opportunity to provide their feedback and comments. This process led to a Summary of Issues from IAAC.
- The next step in the regulatory process is for the Crown to determine whether or not an Impact Assessment will be required.
- R1 is currently working with legal counsel (Aird & Berlis) to engage in ongoing negotiations for a long-term relationship with the NWMO.
- The NWMO Mobile Learn More Trailers visited the Northwestern Ontario Métis Community again in 2025, with stops in Kenora (August 18th), Fort Frances (September 6th), Atikokan (September 7th), and Dryden (Sunday September 21st)
- Learn-More Trailer Community Events are scheduled to take place again this summer 2026 (specific dates TBD), as well as community information sessions, so that citizens can continue to learn more about the project and ask questions.
- A virtual Community Information Session was held on March 12, 2026 with the NWOMC. The NWMO delivered a presentation highlighting the confidence in the long-term safety of the DGR.
- A virtual Community Information Session was held on May 7th, 2026 with the NWOMC. The NWMO delivered a presentation regarding “NWMO’s Safe Transportation of Canada’s Used Nuclear Fuel”.
- A community-mail out with NWMO project updates, developments, and events is scheduled to go out in the near future.

Forestry

Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR)-Forest Management Plans

- Ontario’s Crown Forest is divided into 39 Forests, also known as Forest Management Units (FMUs), and each FMU is required to prepare a 10-year forest management plan (FMP). There are 14 FMUs in Region 1- Caribou, Boundary Waters (used to be Sapawe and

Crossroute), Dog River-Matawin, Dryden, English River, Kenora, Lac Seul, Red Lake, Trout Lake, Wabigoon, Whiskey Jack, Whitefeather. The Black Spruce and Lakehead Forests are partly in region 1, but have region 2 taking the lead on these forests.

- Boundary Waters Forest Management Corp was established in 2019 to provide forest management of the Boundary Waters Forest Management Unit (formerly the Crossroute & Sapawe forests). In April 2020, the Sapawe Forest and the Crossroute Forest amalgamated to become the Boundary Waters Forest. The Boundary Waters Forest is under control of the Boundary Water Forest Management Corporation, which is under an enhanced Sustainable Forestry License (eSFL). Under the eSFL, there is an increased number of representatives from various municipalities, business and Indigenous Communities that have a voice and work together to decide how the forest is used. The corporation consists of 16 shareholders, in which there are 4 First Nation shareholders and 1 Métis shareholder which is the MNO. The corporation also has a Board of Directors that consists of 12 people; 4 are from First Nations in Treaty 3, and 1 is from the NWOMC.
- The Northwestern Ontario Métis Community (NWOMC) is proud to have Senator Brian Gouliquer representing the NWOMC as one of the 12 Board Members on the Board of Directors of the Boundary Waters Forest Management Corporation. All 12 Board Members have an equal say in how wood supply from the Boundary Waters Forest is being used, along with other Forest Management duties.

Planning Teams

- The preparation of the 10-year forest management plan commences 3 years prior to its implementation.
- Preparation of the forest management plans require consultation with the MNO. Consultations on each plan involves engagement and document reviews.
- All 14 Forest Management Units' Forest Management Plans will be up for renewal over the next six years, which may challenge the RCC with capacity issues to participate as contributors to each Forest Management Plan. This trend is not unique to the Region as all 39 Forest Management Plans will be up for renewal over the next five years with most starting within the next two years.
- The Forestry team of MNO's Lands, Resources and Consultations Branch (LRC) is working with the MNR on strategic ways to overcome this future challenge of capacity to participate in all of the Forest Management plans within the Region and is negotiating with the Ministry of Natural Resources for additional capacity and supports.

- NWOMC has started to receive some invitations to participate in Forest Management Planning. Currently, both the Wabigoon Forest and English River Forests are looking for participation.

Customized Consultation Approach (CCA)

- The Regional Consultation Committee (RCC) completed a Customized Consultation Approach for the Lac Seul Forest, in where the RCC met with the MNR six times during this process.
- The RCC with the Forestry team of the MNO's LRC Branch is currently exploring potential customized consultation approaches for the Forest Management Plan renewals that are upcoming, with 2 Forest Management Plan renewals scheduled to start in 2026 (English River & Wabigoon) with 4 more to start in 2027 (Boundary Waters, Caribou, Red Lake, Lakehead), and an additional 4 to begin in 2028 (Black Spruce, Dog River-Matawin, Dryden, Trout Lake).

Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) – Relationship Table

- LRC and Region 1 Consultation Committee has begun working with the MNR in the establishment of a relationship table. The table is intended to improve consultations, as well as provide training in Ministry processes such as Crown Land dispositions.
- The MNR has committed to 3 years of funding to the NWOMC to for this initiative.
- MNR staff submitted a budget proposal to the Government of Ontario to support the establishment and implementation of the Regional Relationship table. In early October 2025, the MNRF responded to LRC's proposal with a 3-year Transfer Payment Agreement that had a budget of a much less amount. After much internal discussion, the TPA was approved in late November, with the first Regional Relationships Table meeting held in March 2026 in Kenora.

Annual Forestry Workshop

- A NWOMC citizen Open House to review Forestry Annual Work Schedules occurred in April 2025 in Kenora. This was open to all members of the NWOMC to attend. Forest industry organizations such as Dryden Fiber Canada, Miisun, Domtar (formerly Resolute), Boundary Waters Forest Management Corp, Resolute and Dryden Forest Management along with Ministry of Natural Resources. This was an opportunity for citizens to learn about ongoing forestry operations occurring in the region as well as have the opportunity to build relation-

ships within the region between RCC members, citizens, LRC Forestry, MNR and Forest Industry.

- Boundary Water Forest Management Corp and Obishikokaang Resources Corp. both did not respond to repeated invitation attempts to participate, whereas the MNR stepped in their place to answer any questions or information requests regarding Boundary waters and Lac Seul Forest Management Units.
- The 2026 Forestry Open House is scheduled for early April, in Kenora. This Forestry Open House is open to all NWOMC Citizens who would like to attend. Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR), Domtar (formally Resolute), Dryden Fibre Canada, Miisun, Boundary Waters Forest Management Corp., Obishikokaang Resources Corp., and Red Lake Forest Management have been invited to attend. The Open House is an opportunity for citizens to learn about ongoing and upcoming forest operations occurring in the region and an opportunity to build relationships with representatives from government, industry, NWOMC elected leaders, MNO LRC Forestry Staff, and other community members.
- New in 2026, LRC Forestry proposed engagement through “Shared Roots: Leadership Dinner”. This is a dinner between NWOMC elected leaders, MNR District Managers, Forest Company Representatives, and MNO LRC Forestry Staff. This dinner is to support ongoing relationships in the forest sector and encourage meaningful dialogue about different forest topics such as; wildfire management, forest renewal and tending, Deer and Moose management, road building, forest health and wildlife and biodiversity conservation.

Natural Resource Canada- Regional Forestry Economic Report

- In January of 2024, LRC Forestry presented the results of the regional Forestry Economic Survey that was distributed to MNO citizens in December 2023. The regional results were compiled and presented to the NWOMC’s RCC and a strategic plan to engage the community is currently being adapted.
- The LRC Forestry Team received funding from NRCan – Indigenous Forestry Initiative which will assist in the development of a Regional Strategic and Engagement Plan for Forestry which will be designed to meet the needs of the Region. This proposal was submitted in Spring of 2020. Currently the project is near completion of Stage 7 of the 7 stage project with a draft NWOMC Regional Strategic and Engagement Plan for Forestry to be completed by May 2026.
- LRC Forestry Team has recently secured “next stage” project funding from Natural Resources Canada’s Indigenous Forestry Initiative. This funding will support the development of a

comprehensive Forestry Toolkit and Opportunities Plan, with the project commenced in November 2025.

- Upon completion, the Toolkit and Plan will unlock a range of funding and participation opportunities for the Northwestern Ontario Métis Community (NWOMC) and its citizens in the forestry sector. These opportunities may include: Influencing government forest policy development; Identifying and evaluating opportunities in forestry; and Identifying relevant forest-related tools, technologies, products, and services;
- As a key component of this project, LRC Forestry has established a Forestry Working Group within the Métis Nation of Ontario. The Working Group will serve as a forum to examine challenges and opportunities in the forestry sector, including forthcoming policy changes, effective engagement strategies, and Forest Management Plan (FMP) processes. It will identify potential areas for involvement, suggest area of improvements and provide strategic guidance to LRC staff, who will in turn prepare reports and recommendations for presentation to the Regional Consultation Committees (RCCs). The Working Group is comprised of MNO citizens appointed by the rights-bearing RCCs who possess relevant interest and experience in forestry. Senator Brian Gouliquer of the Atikokan Métis Council, represents the NWOMC on this working group. He has extensive knowledge and experience in Forestry and Forest Management Planning and has served as NWOMC's representative on planning teams for major Crown Forest management plans including the Boundary Waters, Whiskey Jack and Lac Seul Forest Management Plans. Additionally, he has represented the NWOMC as one of the 12 Board Members of the Boundary Waters Forest Management Corporation.

Engagements – Mills

GreenFirst Products

- GreenFirst's announcement in 2022 to build a new mill in Kenora has not progressed since the demolition of the old sawmill that used to be Kenora Forest Products. On December 16, 2024, GreenFirst Forest Products Inc. announced that it has entered into an agreement to sell its interest in approximately 118 acres of the site of the former mill to Kenora Chiefs Advisory for \$5 million. This land purchase by KCA is designated for future development as the site of the All Nations Hospital (also referred to as a health campus or similar facility), providing long-term community health infrastructure for Indigenous-led healthcare in the region.

Dryden Fibre Canada & Resolute/Paper Excellence (Formerly - Domtar/Resolute)

- When Domtar and Resolute were purchased by Paper Excellence the Competition Bureau of Canada imposed that this company cannot own both mills and recommended the selling of one. Paper Excellence sold the Thunder Bay Resolute Pulp mill to Atlas Holdings, a private equity group from the US, with the mill being renamed

as 'Thunder Bay Pulp and Paper Inc.'. Paper Excellence also sold the Dryden mill to First Quality Enterprises, a multi-national manufacturing company from the US, with the mill being renamed 'Dryden Fibre Canada, ULC'.

- Paper Excellence has retained the regions sawmills under the Resolute name, which is under Domtar, the primary SFL holder in the region.
- Development of Memorandums of Agreements with the former companies have ceased; the Regional Consultation Committee has not indicated a need for an agreement with the new companies at this time.
- Resolute and Dryden Fibre were both active participants with information booths at the NWOMC Forestry Open House in April 2025 and have committed to participate in the April 2026 open house. They are also in regular communication with the Forestry team of the MNO's LRC branch, in which that share proposed forestry operation maps for the team to review to protect areas identified with Métis values.
- The company maintains steady operations with no reports of closures or major disruptions. Their forestry operations continue with regular planning updates and commitments to planting millions of trees annually, emphasizing carbon-neutral energy use (about 85.5% of operations).
- In January 2026, Domtar announced a temporary reduction in lumber production by 150 million board feet across its facilities in Quebec, Ontario, and the U.S. for the first quarter of 2026, citing ongoing market pressures. Domtar confirmed that the Ignace sawmill will be idled indefinitely once existing log inventory is processed. No reopening timeline has been provided.
- The Thunder Bay and Atikokan sawmills appear to remain operational with no similar indefinite shutdown announcements.

Engagements – Meetings

- Met with the Ministry of Natural Resources – Regional Office (MNR) four times regarding capacity funding for the development of for the NWOMC – MNR Relationship Table.
- Met with the Ministry of Natural Resources regarding the planned use of herbicides in an area identified as a plant harvesting site used by NWOMC citizens. The Ministry agreed to remove the area from herbicide use and used manual tending to remove the competing vegetation.
- Met with Ministry of Natural Resources – Wildland Fire Situational Update for Indigenous Partners seven times.
- No highly contentious issues of Forestry-related related industrial development have arisen this year.

Capacity Restraints

- Increased technology capacity of LRC Forestry has improved the Annual Work Schedule Analysis. The Forestry team processed 201 Forestry notifications across the province, with 57 Forestry notifications occurring within the NWOMC, a increase from previous years.
- Also processed were 13 Annual Work Schedules within the NWOMC, which included all planned Forestry Operations in the Region of the 2026/2027 planning year. Further improvements are being explored with the use of computer programs embedded in the mapping analysis software used by the LRC Forestry team.
- LRC Forestry staffing shortages were resolved in September 2025. Two previous attempts at back-filling the position on a short-term contract were not successful due to lack of qualified applicants for both postings

International Joint Commission

- NWOMC citizen Karen Cederwall from the Kenora area brings over 20 years of leadership experience and has been re-appointed by the Region 1 Consultation Committee to represent the NWOMC and bring our Métis voice and interests to the table as a Métis board member of the International Rainy Lake - Lake of the Woods Watershed Board (IRLWWB). She sits on many of the board committees. She is also the Canadian co-chair of the Engagement Com-

mittee, Community Advisory Group (CAG) member, Water Level Committee (WLC) observer, and Adaptive Management Committee (AMC) member. President Brady Hupet from the Sunset Country Métis Council is an advisor on the Adaptive Management Committee.

- The **International Rainy Lake of the Woods Watershed Board** “IRLWWB” has had regular board and committee meetings on the “AMC” Adaptive Management Committee; “CAG” Community Advisory Group, “WLC” Water Levels Committee, “EC” Engagement Committee, and “AEHC” Aquatic Ecosystem Health Committee. They also have advisory meetings by the “CAG” and “IAG” Industry Advisory Group to bring forward concerns about the watershed. **The IRLEEB Board advises the “IJC” International Joint Commission commissioners who report to the Canadian and United States government.**
- The issues the board is currently working on includes: Adaptive Management project for Rainy Lake and Namakan and preparation for review of water levels governed by IRLWWB rule curve; mining concerns in the headwaters; creation of water quality parameter limits; more effective emergency management planning and coordination; reduction in algae blooms, enhancing citizen and indigenous participation and developing an effective water quality monitoring program.
- Recently Karen has been invited to be part of the new International Joint Commission Indigenous Advisory Circle. The NWOMC now has Métis rep(s) to ensure our voice is heard.

Transportation

Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) – Kenora-Manitoba Highway Twinning

- The Ontario Ministry of Transportation is working to four-lane Highway 17 from the Manitoba border to Kenora. The highway project is divided into three sections, with the first section starting at the Manitoba border. Consultation has completed on Section 1.
- This project is important for transportation safety in the region; this section of Highway 17 is well-known for collisions, and highway twinning is a well-documented method of reducing collisions.
- In April 2022, MTO informed the MNO that the contract for the construction of the first section was awarded to Moncrief. The MNO told MTO that we need to start consultations on Section 2.
- In November 2022, MTO informed the MNO that they have identified alternative routes for Section 2 of the highway and they would like to meet the Regional Consultation Committee

in January.

- R1CC met with MTO on January 30th, 2023 to discuss what consultation will look like for the second section of the highway. The MNO proposed a consultation work plan (agreement) to MTO.
- As of June 2023, MTO was still in the process of reviewing the consultation agreement. This task has been stalled due to LRC staff turnover and the vacant position until recently.
- In February 2024, MTO met with LRC R1 manager to discuss consultation with the NWOMC for Phase II of the highway twinning project. A revised draft process agreement for 2024-25 was submitted to MTO for their review/approval.
- In late summer early fall 2024 phase one of the highway twinning opened for use.
- July 2024, MTO and WSP (consultants) met with the NWOMC to discuss route planning and preliminary design. NWOMC provided input regarding route alternatives and development goals. The next steps will be for the MTO to complete impact assessment reports; transportation environmental study report will be prepared to document the existing environmental considerations.
- **Update July 2025:** The environmental assessment and preliminary design for Section 2 (Highway 673 to Rush Bay Road) are still underway. MTO has identified a preferred route and is working on ways to reduce potential impacts before finalizing the Transportation Environmental Study Report (TESR). Everyone on the project contact list will be notified about key updates, including the next public information session and when the TERS is available for public review. A construction timeline will be set after the review period.
- As of April 2026, the July 2025 update still applies.

Environmental Research

Experimental Lakes Area – IISD-ELA

- The Experimental Lakes Area (ELA) is situated just south of Highway 17, between Kenora and Vermilion Bay. The International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) conducts freshwater ecosystem research in this area on 58 lakes of varying sizes. Studies typically take place in sheltered bays or enclosures, so as not to affect the entire water system.
- IISD-ELA exists on a Crown Land lease. The Crown entered into a five-year agreement effective April 1, 2022, which allows IISD to continue to lease the land and operate the ELA.
- A letter was sent to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) and the Ministry

of the Environment Conservation and Parks (MECP) expressing concern over the lack of adequate consultation regarding the leased lands and waters and the experiments held in the area. MNRF and MECP met with the Region One Consultation Committee to discuss concerns, but they have indicated that they are only willing to engage in one-off consultation processes and they are not willing to cover any meeting costs with the MNO.

- Training of 7 NWOMC water monitors by IISD-ELA staff in June 2022 at Aaron Provincial Park in Dryden.
- In January 2023, NWOMC was informed of IISD's plans to construct a "Centre of Climate and Lake Learning" facility on the north shore of Boundary Lake. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) informed R1CC that consultation on this has been delegated to IISD. LRC staff reached out to IISD and IISD has expressed a willingness to provide R1CC with a tour of the facility this summer.
- In March 2023, IISD wrote a letter to the MNO saying that they do not expect any of their activities to impact the traditional practices of the Metis, however they are committed to sharing information about their experiments, which are reviewed by a Research Advisory Board and approved by the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks before proceeding. The letter included a list of 5 new and ongoing experiments that are being planned for the 2023 open water season. In this letter IISD expressed a willingness to meet with R1CC to discuss the research and education.
- In March 2023, MECP sent MNO an email saying that they are willing to meet the Regional Consultation Committee to introduce some new research they are working on but they are (still) not offering any funding to cover meeting costs.
- The NWOMC will continue to fight for a more comprehensive and adequate consultation process.
- In October 2023, R1CC and LRC staff members went to tour the ELA site and had an in person meeting.
- November 2024, ECCC shared their What We Heard Report from the engagement session held on January 27th, 2023.
- November 2024, ELA applies for Memorandum of Agreement Extension and building approval for the "Centre of Climate and Lake Learning".
- August 2025, ELA notified NWOMC of the Memorandum of Agreement Extension.
- IISD-ELA has extended invites for R1CC member to participate in their annual Indigenous gatherings, such as the Spring Nibi Ceremony and Fall Feast in order to keep in contact with

the NWOMC and build better relationships with the local Indigenous communities.

- In November 2025, ELA offered to be the host site for an NWOMC Environmental Monitoring Training program as a part of the relationship-building process between ELA and NWOMC. The training course is being held there in June 2026.
- As of June 2026, construction of ELA's new "Centre of Climate and Lake Learning" is still ongoing and is expected to be completed for the 2027 field season.

Federal Climate Change and Guardians Programs

Community-Based Water Quality Monitoring Program

Water Chemistry & Baitfish

Source of Funding:

- **April 2025-March 2026**
 - Environment and Climate Change Canada – Indigenous Guardians Program
 - Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada – Indigenous Community-Based Climate Monitoring Program
- **April 2026-July 2026**
 - Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada – Indigenous Community-Based Climate Monitoring Program (pending/not confirmed)
 - Ontario Power Generation – Province-Wide Empowerment Grant (not related to a specific OPG project or duty to consult – general grant through their corporate philanthropy)
 - Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council – Indigenous Innovation and Leadership in Research Network (for some water monitoring training and engagement with COTH)

Program Development:

- Water Chemistry and Baitfish monitoring is part of the MNO's Community-Based Water Quality Monitoring Program which was built around specific objectives and Métis values. These include: Facilitating intergenerational transfer of knowledge; encouraging time spent on the lands and waters; providing MNO citizens with additional skills and resources to exercise guardianship of the lands and waters and create a network of Métis Guardians; blending traditional and western science to support a two-eyed seeing approach to conservation; and developing a long-term dataset to monitor the health of waterbodies important to MNO communities and help advocate for better environmental policy and conservation practices.
- The LRC Branch met with the Region 1 Consultation Committee (R1CC), Region One (R1) knowledge holders and youth on February 22, 2020 for a regional engagement session focused on developing the program. After assessing the information gathered, it was determined that an on the land water quality monitoring program would best address the climate change related concerns the NWOMC had.
- A water concerns survey was sent out to all R1 households to gather feedback on what waterbodies the Northwestern Ontario Métis Community would like to see monitored and what concerns they had with those waters.
- Input from the Northwestern Ontario Métis Community (NWOMC) guided Program development. Input was received on several occasions including meetings with the NWOMC Consultation Committee, Knowledge Holders and Youth as well as a Region-wide mail out to gather feedback on waterbodies the NWOMC would like to see monitored as well as what concerns they had with those waters.
- Further input from the NWOMC Consultation Committee and from interviews with Knowledge Holders in the Region informed the development of a specific sampling plan for the Region.

Waterbodies:

- Winnipeg River, Lake of the Woods, Rainy Lake, Marmion Lake, Perch Lake (baitfish only), Revell River (NWMO), Bending Creek (NWMO), Wabigoon River (NWMO), Mennin River (NWMO).

Guardians:

- **Total Number of NWOMC Guardians Trained Since Start of Program:**
 - 24
- **Total Number of New NWOMC Guardians Trained in 2025:**

- 3 (2 still need field training, but received virtual training)

- **Total Number of Active NWOMC Guardians (sampled at least once in the past two seasons):**

- 11 if you count the two still needing field training, if not then 9 active guardians total
- 7 guardians sampled in 2025

Monitoring Frequency:

- Monthly with multimeter probe (Horiba) and baitfish twice a year.

Latest Report - ALS and Flett Results:

- <https://ln5.sync.com/4.0/dl/fa16f2c20#wa7w4cy3-k5eh7iet-ihujqxr-v-uuisxx9k>

If interested in future training opportunities, please email watermonitor@metisnation.org

Ontario Benthos Biomonitoring Network

Source of Funding:

- Environment and Climate Change Canada – Indigenous Guardians Program and Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada – Indigenous Community-Based Climate Monitoring Program

Purpose and Overview:

- OBBN monitoring is another stream of the Community-Based Water Quality Monitoring Program. OBBN monitoring helps to determine water quality and health of aquatic ecosystems by monitoring the bottom dwelling invertebrates in waterbodies. This stream of the monitoring program shares the objectives and values elaborated above for the Water Chemistry & Baitfish monitoring.

Guardians:

- **Total Number of NWOMC Guardians Trained Since Start of Program:**

- 9 trained (4 obtained OBBN certification)

- **Total Number of New NWOMC Guardians Trained in 2025:**

- 1

- **Total Number of Active NWOMC Guardians (within last year; includes new Guardians):**

- 4 sampled in 2025
- 6 active guardians total

Number of Sites:

- 2 (Lake of the Woods – Rideout Bay, Perch Lake)

Waterbodies: N/A

Monitoring Frequency:

- As frequently as seasonally under Spring, Summer and Fall conditions

Native Bee Monitoring Program

Source of Funding:

- Environment and Climate Change Canada – Indigenous Guardians Program, Canada Nature Fund (Species at Risk) and TD Bank Friends of the Environment Fund

Purpose and Overview:

- Program created to support Métis citizens and households in protecting and conserving native bee species. The project allows citizens to host bee hotels, plant native wildflowers, track seasonal changes, and monitor native bee species in their yards.
- As of 2025, there are 110 confirmed MNO citizen monitors.
- The first sighting of an Ontario at-risk bumble bee (Yellow-banded Bumble Bee) occurred in 2024, the second year of the project.
- Twenty-two native bee species (including eleven bumble bee species) and forty-six plant species were identified in 2025 photo submissions.
- Project information is also shared with scientific platforms, such as iNaturalist's Global Pollinator Watch and the Bumble Bee Watch.
- Infographics summarizing data from the annual reports are available at the top of our website here: <https://www.metisnation.org/programs-and-services/lands-resources-consultations/environment-climate-change/>

Total Number of NWOMC Households Participating in Program:

- 15

Monitoring Frequency:

- May to October

Latest Report:

- <https://ln5.sync.com/dl/4e1b81a30#up78e2z7-rbxmcvsu-xpuezvxs-zs7ckqbr>

Native Bat Monitoring Program**Source of Funding:**

- Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources – Species at Risk Consultation, Cooperation and Accommodation Project (2024-2026)

Purpose and Overview:

- The Native Bat Monitoring Program launched in Regions 1-5 in April 2024, in partnership with the Toronto Zoo's Native Bat Conservation Program.
- This program encourages Métis households to support native bat conservation by increasing data collection on bat species across northern Ontario and surveying previously inaccessible areas to better understand bat populations.
- In 2024, a total of 80 Métis citizen households participated, in addition to the pre-existing bat monitoring program in Region 7. The program is running again in 2026.
- The collected data will be shared with other bat monitoring programs to help advance research and conservation efforts for bat species in Ontario.

Total Number of NWOMC Households Participating in Program in 2025:

- 19

Monitoring Frequency:

- Volunteers set up the acoustic monitor outside to record for a period of 4 nights. Monitoring is occurring from June to September this year.

Latest Report:

- <https://ln5.sync.com/4.0/dl/c4dd2b5a0#97f4r6yc-23fmy4cv-urcsa75r-i8vwwmsz>
- <https://ln5.sync.com/4.0/dl/77550add0#icz5bds5-6dm9b26g-cg9tzjze-djj93hgy>

Berry Monitoring Program**Source of Funding:**

- Crown Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada – Climate Change Adaptation Prior-

Purpose and Overview:

- The Berry Monitoring Program shares similar objectives and values to the Community-Based Water Quality Monitoring Program. It is stewardship led by Métis citizens, for Métis citizens. In addition, the program will help develop a better understanding of the health of harvested wild berries across the Traditional Territories and aim to assess the potential impacts of herbicide use by industry on berry plants—a long-standing concern raised by MNO citizens. To begin, the program will focus on blueberry plants which were the most widely identified berry type that MNO citizens harvest.

Total Number of NWOMC Guardians Trained:

- 10

Number of Sites:

- 2 sites to start – one reference site and one in a previously sprayed area (MNO staff are currently working with NWOMC Knowledge Holders to confirm potential sites)

Locations:

- Dryden & Atikokan areas

Monitoring Frequency:

- Twice per site (once during plant flowering and once during berry producing)
- Program will also involve weather and snow cover monitoring (protocols still being developed)

Other Initiatives

Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) - Lake of the Woods Water Quality Engagement

- The purpose of ECCC's Lake of the Woods Science Plan is to conduct research and monitoring on algae and nutrients in the Lake of the Woods watershed.
- The NWOMC has requested additional participant funding for the 2024-25 period to maintain involvement in activities and conditions related to Lake of the Woods watershed. Karen Cederwall will serve as the NWOMC representative for this program.
- The purpose of ECCC's Lake of the Woods Science Plan is to collaborate on research and monitoring of algae and nutrients in the Lake of the Woods watershed, focusing on identifying areas for collaboration and opportunities to address phosphorus issues.

- March 2025, CWA met with the NWOMC to present the Lake of the Woods Freshwater Initiative and discuss causes and extent of algal blooms in LOTW basin; CWA will share their phosphorus offloading study after publication.
- NWOMC representatives attend the annual Rainy-Lake of The Woods Watershed Forum in March 2026.
- NWOMC representatives met with CWA and ECCC staff to discuss the creation of a new multi-year funding agreement aimed at creating a nutrient water monitoring program along the Rainy-Lake of The Woods waterways. This program will be helpful in identifying where nutrients such as phosphorous are entering the watershed in excess and could help create future mitigation measures to control nutrient loading and algal blooms in the future.
- This program is expected to begin in Spring 2026 with citizen-led water monitoring activities.

Treaty Land Entitlements and Additions to Reserve Claims

- The federal and provincial governments are working with several First Nation communities on land claims. These claims take several years to settle. Part of that process is to consult with potentially impacted Indigenous communities.
- Over the years the NWOMC has been asked to consult on **over 20** First Nation land claims.
- There are **17** claims that Ontario is currently negotiating in the Treaty 3 area: **7** Flooding Claims (various LOTW FNs and Couchiching FN); **1** Unsold Surrendered Land (Agency One); **1** Boundary Claim (Washagamis Bay); **4** Treaty Land Entitlement claims (ANA-Grassy Narrows, Wabauskang, Naicatchewenin and Seine River); and **3** Right-of-way/highway/trespass (Rainy River, Ojibways of Onigaming and Naicatchewenin).
- In 2025, Ontario did not settle any claims with First Nations in Treaty 3.
- In 2024, Ontario and Canada reached settlement on the Naicatchewenin Flooding Claim, leaving 12 claims outstanding.
- Last year Ontario and Canada reached settlements on 7 Flooding Claims, leaving 13 claims outstanding.
- As advised by our legal counsel, NWOMC's approach to understanding the impact of these land claims has been to study the lands that are no longer available to the Metis for harvesting purposes in our Traditional Territories because those lands are now towns, privately

owned properties, roads or provincial parks, for example.

- As part of Phase 2 of the land study, MNP hosted Community Information Sessions in Dryden, Atikokan, Fort Frances and Kenora in February 2025, and a mail survey was sent out to learn more about NWOMC's traditional land use and areas we avoid.
- Using the land study as a baseline for analysis, a letter was submitted to Canada about the impacts of the **Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation's Proposed Addition to Reserve** (Stoney Property) in November 2025.
- The land study was also used as a baseline for an analysis of the impact of the **Washagamis Bay FN's Flooding Claim** on NWOMC's ability to exercise traditional land-based activities.
- The NWOMC hopes to receive further funding in 2025-26 to complete the research and meet with Ontario to discuss the impact of these land claims on Metis rights.
- The funding application for this funding is due in October – so we may not get additional funding for this work until December, 2026. That said, we have contracted MNP to support the preparation of memos related to NWOMC's consultations on FN land claims.

Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) – Mercury Contamination - English and Wabigoon Rivers Remediation

- During the 1960s and 1970s, a chlor-alkali plant in Dryden released around 10 metric tonnes of mercury into the Wabigoon River. This affected both the English and Wabigoon Rivers. Domtar Inc. currently owns this mill site.
- In July 2017, Ontario announced a trust of \$85 million in support of the mercury clean-up of this river system.
- In December 2019, a letter was sent to the Federal Minister of Health, the Honourable Patty Hajdu, with a meeting request to discuss potential health impacts to Métis citizens resulting from the mercury contamination in the English and Wabigoon Rivers.
- In October 2020, a letter was sent to the English-Wabigoon River Remediation Board with a request for the MNO to obtain Participant Status for future board meetings. The purpose of the Remediation Board provides direction on the use of funds set aside in a trust for the purposes of remediating the English and Wabigoon Rivers of mercury contamination.
- On June 22, 2021 a meeting with CIRNA, Indigenous Services and Health Canada proved to

be a disappointment – they advised that this issue was within the jurisdiction of the Province of Ontario and that the Region should be contacting the Ontario Mercury Disability Board to further discuss the issue.

- The NWOMC sent a letter to MECP on December 18, 2020 requesting that a Métis representative be granted participant status on the English and Wabigoon Rivers Remediation Panel.
- The NWOMC received a response from the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks on October 1st, 2021, explaining that the ministry will consider the request for participant status as part of a 5-year report on the success of the *English and Wabigoon Rivers Remediation Funding Act, 2017*, which includes consultation on the implementation of the act and that we could expect a response in 2022.
- In May 2022, LRC branch staff followed up with the Ministry to ask for a status update on the 5-year report but as of the drafting of this we have not yet received a response.
- On November 28th, 2022, Regional Councillor Stenlund and LRC staff attended a virtual meeting with MECP's Neil Gervais to discuss the English-Wabigoon Rivers Remediation Funding Act.
- On 16th December 2022, NWOMC sent a letter to Assistant Deputy Minister of the Drinking Water and Environmental Compliance Division of the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks including another request for a seat on the Remediation Board. The Ministry has not been responsive to NWOMC's letters to date.
- On January 23rd, 2023, MECP replied to NWOMC saying that MECP will provide NWOMC with a draft report for review in coming months.
- As of July 2024, MECP continues to work on the draft report and the NWOMC states their continued interest in being part of the consultation and engagement for the remediation.
- December 2024, the Assistant Deputy Minister announced that The Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks has tabled their Five-Year Report. The report is published on Ontario.ca.
- In January 2026 correspondence was sent requesting that the NWOMC receive a concrete update on the status of their request for participant status on the English and Wabigoon Remediation Panel, including a clear timeline for a decision and an explanation of what criteria are being applied in determining their participation status.

I would like to thank ALL of the LRC staff that support the work we do in the region. The support, guidance and work you do to support the R1CC and NWOMC does not go unnoticed.

Economic Development Strategy

- In FY 2023 the Region 1 Consultation Committee contracted Commerce Assessment Group (COMAG) to develop a comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the NWOMC.
- The Draft Report was completed in March 2023 with the main recommendation being that the NWOMC establish an Economic Development Office (EDO) to coordinate delivery of the Economic Development Strategy with a primary focus on programs for Business Development, Community Development and Wealth Creation. The Report also recommended that, given the related and complex policy and programming considerations, a phased approach be taken to development and implementation.
- The Final Report was reviewed with community stakeholders during early FY 2024 and then subsequently approved by the NWOMC Consultation Committee.
- In October 2023 COMAG was engaged to develop a Business Plan for the Business Development Program. Project activities undertaken through March 2024 comprised ongoing consultation with the NWOMC Project Manager; research of relevant policy, programming and funding issues; extensive consultations with community members, key federal and provincial government stakeholders, related service providers; and report preparation.
- The Draft Business Plan was completed in March 2024. It comprises: a comprehensive EDO mandate and mission; governance structure and policy framework; a detailed organization structure; products and services; policies and procedures; operational partnerships; operating systems; communications; and performance metrics. The plan also outlines potential implementation options including a short-term, project-based approach as well as medium term funding considerations.
- In order for the NWOMC to initiate our own Economic Development Corporation the MNO's Self Sufficiency Law will need to be amended via a Special Resolution and the NWOMC will need to incorporate or be self governing.

The Voyageurs National Park

- The Voyageurs Conservancy, in partnership with Voyageurs National Park in Minnesota, located along the Minnesota/Ontario border has been working towards a co-stewardship agreement with all historic stakeholders in the area including all traditional Indigenous users of the lands and waters.
- The project aims to provide opportunities for all interested parties to meet at several workshops and lands-based activities to talk about each party's needs, interests, priorities, and ca-

pacities related to co-stewardship of the protected lands within the park. The outcome of the workshops will ideally be an agreement recognizing the co-steward interests of the parties including the identification of specific co-stewardship programs and projects to pursue.

- The NWOMC is currently working towards finalizing an agreement with VNP and Voyageurs Conservancy.

Other Comments

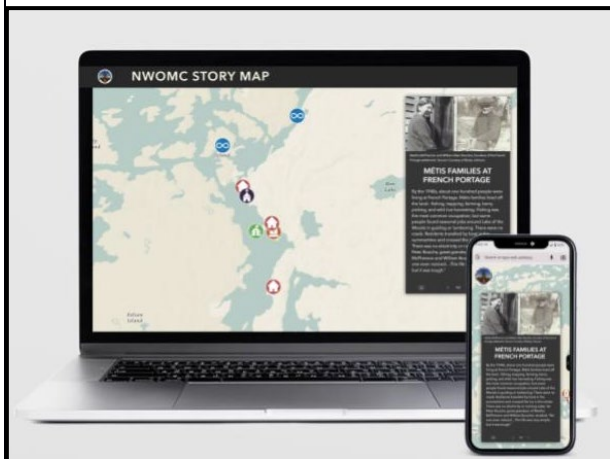
Ongoing and other activities:

- Continued development of educational materials to tell the story of the Half breed adhesion to Treaty Three (brochure, historical atlas/book and videos)
- Continued maintenance of the Region One Business Directory, directing potential business contracts and RFP's to registered Métis Businesses in Region One.
- 50 RFP/Contract opportunities were provided to Region 1 Métis businesses between April 1st, 2025- March 30th, 2026.
- As of March 31st, 2025, there are 130 businesses on the NWOMC Business Directory. A "re-verification" project was completed in April, May, and October 2025 to ensure business owners on the directory are still currently Métis citizens. The number of businesses in the directory changed because of this "re-verification" project. If a business was no longer 51% Métis-owned, no longer operational, or didn't respond to calls/emails about reapplying, they were removed from the directory. Three members who failed to submit receipts for past grant funding have also been removed from the directory list as they are no longer in good standing and are not eligible for future grants.
- There were 50 Employment posting made on the NWOMC website between April 1st 2025 and March 31, 2026 from various organizations and companies.
- The NWOMC awarded several rounds of regional post secondary bursaries this past year in the Winter and Fall to Post Secondary Students. *All bursary applicants are verified through registry.*
- **Fall 2025 Post-Secondary Mining Industry Bursary:** This bursary was sponsored by New Gold Mining, for students taking post-secondary education applicable to a career in the mining industry. The application was posted on November 21st, 2025 & closed December 3rd, 2025. 4 people applied; 4 applicants were successful. A total of \$5500.00 of funds were distributed to the applicants.
- **Winter 2026 Post-Secondary Mining Industry Bursary:** This bursary was sponsored by New Gold Mining, for students taking post-secondary education applicable to a career in the mining industry. The application was posted on January 23rd, 2025 and closed on February 4th, 2026. 5 people applied; 4 applicants were successful. A total of \$7500.00 was distributed to the applicants.

- **Fall 2025 General Post-Secondary NWOMC Bursary:** The application was posted on November 21st, 2025 & closed on December 3rd, 2025. 7 people applied; 7 applicants were successful. A total of \$10,000.00 was distributed to the applicant.
- **Winter 2026 General Post-Secondary NWOMC Bursary:** This bursary application was posted on January 23rd, 2025 and received 11 applicants by the deadline of February 4th, 2026. Totalling \$10,000.00 that was distributed to the successful 9 applicants.
- **Business Advertising Grant:** This grant was posted on October 17th, 2025 & was closed on October 31st, 2025. We received 8 applications from businesses serving all 4 communities. A total of \$24,352.84 was distributed to the 8 successful businesses.
- **Membership/ Licensing Grant:** This went live on November 21st, 2025 & was closed on November 26th, 2025. There were 8 applications received and were granted funds in offering services in Northwestern Ontario. A total of \$7835.21 was distributed to the 8 successful applicants.
- **Mobility Aids/ Hearing Aids Grant:** This application was posted on July 23rd, 2025 & closed on March 6th, 2026. 5 applications were received and all 5 were successful applicants. A total of \$2149.47 of funds were distributed to the applicants.
- **Tutoring Grant (Winter):** Offered tutoring grants for students 13-29 years old who were attending high school or post-secondary. This application was posted on September 1st, 2025 & closed on March 13th, 2026. There were 2 successful applicants, totaling \$789.00 issued.
- Engagement with the MNO regarding the Northwestern Ontario Métis Community Regional Implementation Agreement and Work plan to ensure sufficient capacity is provided for engagement with Region 1 citizens. Currently in discussions regarding a regional staff. This is taking longer than anticipated as the leadership would like the staff to be the regions and work for the region and not be staff working for the MNO, but for the region.
- Continued participation in quarterly meetings with New Gold on the Joint Implementation Committee (JIC) on issues such as Human resources concerns, training and contracting opportunities, and general issues of concern.
- Successfully signed a Relationship Table Agreement with the MNR. The Relationship Table is intended to improve consultations, resolve any matters before they get escalated to a higher level, provide training to the MNR and the MNO. We have signed a three-year agreement and held the first meeting in March 2026.
- Provided Region 1 Métis businesses that are in the mining sector the opportunity to apply to attend PDAC in March 2026.
- Assisted with Region 1 Mobile registry planning. Sessions were held in July 2025 across the region. Mobile registry dates are being planned for July 2025 with stops in Kenora, Fort Frances, Dryden and Atikokan.

- Dryden citizen Michelle Carter (CKDR radio host from Dryden) was the approved applicant to sing the Métis National anthem at the 150th Adhesion celebration on September 12, 2025.

On September 12th, 2025 the NWOMC Regional website was expanded to launch the **STORY MAP** as part of the Digital website expansion. It is an interactive map site where you can learn about the history of the NWOMC. It focuses on sharing the vibrant history and culture of the NWOMC. It is an interactive website featuring photographs, maps, and quotes, to tell engaging stories that promote the area as a unique region and connect it to its vibrant past.



Are you a Métis citizen who owns a business?

Register your business in the NWOMC
Region 1 Business Directory!

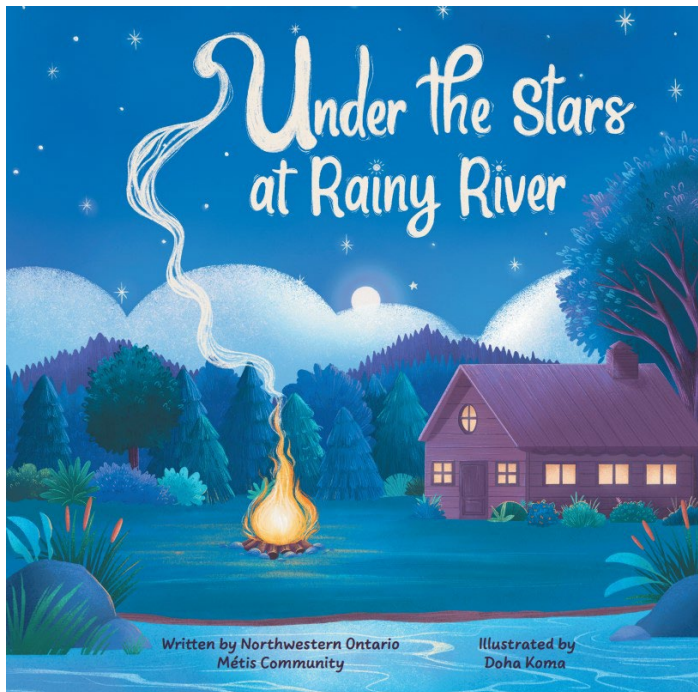


As a member of the NWOMC Business Directory you will receive emails about grants, funding opportunities, and notices to bid on RFPs and contract opportunities when they become available.

Scan the QR code
or follow the link to go
to our registration form.



✉ NWOMC@nwomcfs.ca
☎ (807) 223-5741



The regions Children's book **"Under the Stars at Rainy River"** went to print and is available to purchase from Friesen Press and other locations online and has been a **best seller several times** since being released. It is children's book (0-6 age range) that tells an engaging story about the historic Métis of Rainy River and Rainy Lake. **If you are interested in purchasing a book you can find the link on the NWOMC regional website or online from the Friesen Press Bookstore.**

LEGO STYLE HISTORIC TRADING POST

This project is currently underway as of February 2nd, 2026, with an estimated date for completion of summer 2026. We are working with a designer to create a 500-piece kit that will be suitable for ages 6+. This will be a limited-edition kit that will be provided to the local Community Councils.

The kit is based on a historic trading post. While the kit is not meant to replicate any specific post, it draws inspiration from historic posts across Northwestern Ontario, including places like Rat Portage, Northwest Angle, Lac La Pluie, Eagle Lake, and Lac Seul.



The box and instructions will be custom designed to include the NWOMC logo and branding. There will also be text to provide an explanation about the NWOMC and the historic posts that the kit is based on.

The Northwestern Ontario Métis Community

By the early 1800s, distinct Métis communities emerged along fur trade routes and strategic waterways in what would become Northern Ontario and Western Canada. When Treaty No. 3 was signed, many Métis families called the lands and waters of Northwestern Ontario home.

One of the original peoples of what is now Canada, the Métis were born of the unions between European fur traders and First Nations women. Known by many names, including "Halfbreeds" and "children of the fur trade," the Métis developed a distinct identity, language, culture, and way of life entirely their own.



The Morrisseau and McPherson families were among the Métis living in Treaty No. 3 territory when the original agreement was signed. In fact, the document was signed at the Northwest Angle, where interpreter and trader George McPherson Sr. (front left) lived with his family. Credit: Library and Archives Canada / C-079642.

"Halfbreed"

Historic records often used the word "Halfbreed" to describe the Métis. The word was used by the Crown, First Nations, and sometimes the Métis themselves.

Today, this is a racist term if used by non-Métis. In this exhibit, "Halfbreed" is used only in its historical context.

The Northwestern Ontario Métis Community included interconnected populations in and around Lac la Pluie (Fort Frances), Rat Portage (Kenora), Eagle Lake (Dryden/Wabigoon), and Hungry Hall (Rainy River). These settlements were made up of large, interconnected Métis families bound together by kinship. Over time, these growing families and communities created a distinct and recognizable Métis presence across the region.

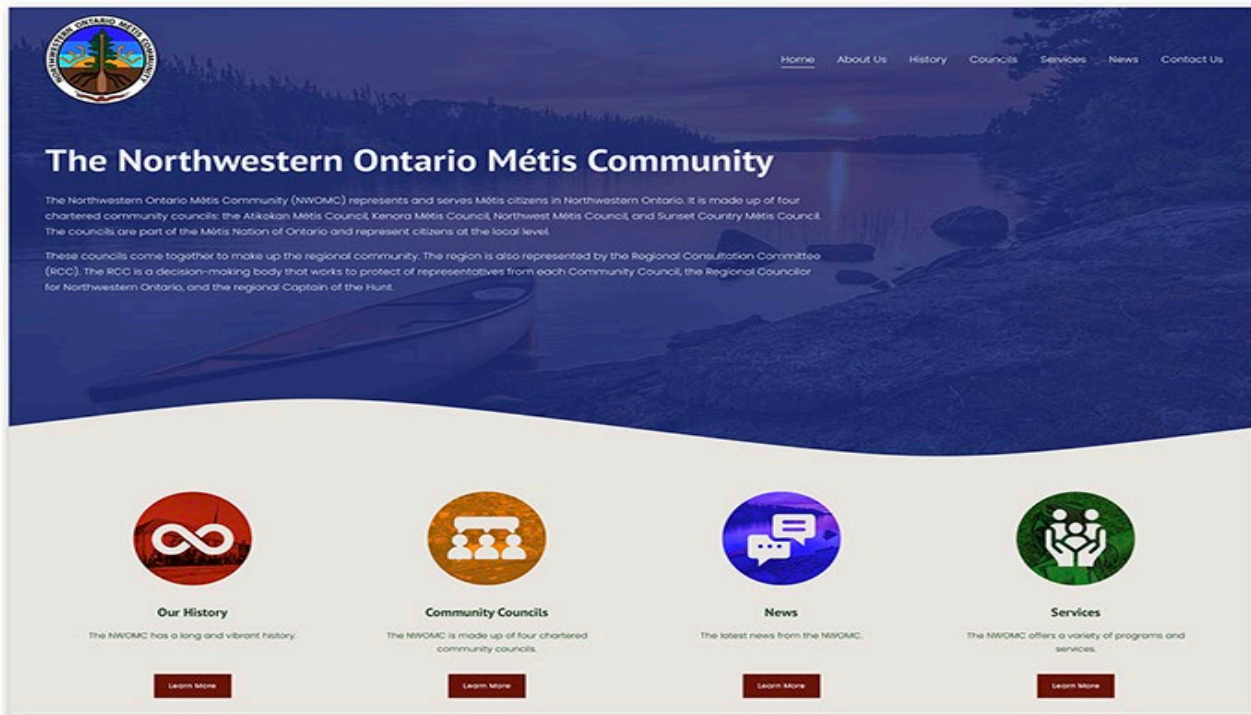
HALFBREED ADHESION TO TREATY NO. 3 ANNIVERSARY EXHIBIT

Join us in commemorating the
150th Anniversary!



 **Lake of the Woods Museum**
July 14 – July 19, 2025

Above is one of the panels that was used in the 150 Anniversary to the Half-breed Adhesion to Treaty No. 3 museum exhibit.



Pictured above is one of the pages from the NWOMC website.

NWOMC BOARD GAME (the visual is not the finished product, its an example)

This is a project is underway and it will highlight the history and interconnectedness of the NWOMC in a way that is fun and engaging for children and families. The game will include facts and history from across Northwestern Ontario, including Atikokan, Dryden, Kenora, and Fort Frances.



DID YOU KNOW

The NWOMC is working in collaboration with the MNR to ensure active & abandoned project sites do not pose a risk to wildlife or restrict your right to exercise traditional activities.

These projects may include:

aggregate pits, work camps, access roads, etc.
If you are aware of hazardous sites or suspect that active sites are not compliant with safety regulations;

Please contact NWOMC Consultation Advisor
Colin St. James
ColinS@metisnation.org or 1-705-340-3923
to report your concerns



THE NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO MÉTIS COMMUNITY:

UNDERSTANDING OUR COMMUNITY, OUR HISTORY, AND OUR RIGHTS



NEW BOOKLET

In February of 2026 we released another booklet on the Northwestern Ontario Métis Community and our long history in this region. It was prepared for the citizens of the NWOMC to share with anyone interested in learning more about our history.

Hard copies of the booklet were distributed to all 4 community councils. As well, it can be located on the NWOMC Regional Website under the History tab.



INTERPRETIVE SIGNS

Outdoor interpretive signs have been designed for Kenora, Fort Frances, Dryden, Atikokan, Rainy River and Eagle River. Several signs per community have been installed or will be installed this summer to tell stories about Métis history, which also include a QR code that visitors can scan to learn more about the NWOMC.

These signs were designed with graffiti proof materials and are expected to last 15-20 years.

Work was done with the various municipalities to approve the locations of the signs, the signs have been installed in both Kenora, Fort Frances, Dryden and Eagle Lake to date. Due to the weather/ season change, some of the Communities installation had been postponed until late spring 2026, and they are now being installed this spring/ summer of 2026.

Locations of the signs for each Community can be found on the regional website under History and then Interpretive Signs.



Pictured above is the Fort Frances signs ribbon-cutting ceremony as part of the 150th event celebrations in **September 2025**.



150th ANNIVERSARY OF THE HALF BREED ADHESION CELEBRATIONS - SEPTEMBER 12th & 13th, 2025



September 12th, 2025, marked the 150th anniversary to the *Halfbreed Adhesion to Treaty No. 3*. This historic agreement made the NWOMC the only Métis community in the Homeland to collectively adhere to one of the numbered treaties.

A major event was held **September 12th & 13th, 2025**, at La Place Rendez-Vous in Fort Frances, Ontario to celebrate this historic anniversary. More than 160 people attended the September 12th presentations and catered dinner event, with Métis citizen and Dryden radio host Michelle Carter singing the Métis anthem and a children's choir from Fort Frances singing O Canada, to open the ceremonies. Entertainment after dinner was provided by IFM Dancers, as well as fiddling by Jason Lepine (and band).

Métis leaders from across Canada, as well as government dignitaries and citizens from across Ontario were in attendance for the dinner and presentations.

Additional cultural activities were held at the Sunset Métis Hall on both days.

Métis Art Crawl (art display by local artists)

- Vendor event – Métis vendors set up tables to sell their local wares
- Interpretive Sign unveiling
- Workshops
 - Beaver skinning
 - Wild Rice harvesting & processing
 - Beading
 - Dot art
 - Jigging lessons

We had Upriver come and create a Documentary video highlighting the celebration for us. It has been released and is on our NWOMC website for viewing.





www.nwomc.ca

The sash of the Northwestern Ontario Métis Community is not merely a garment – it is the emblem of our pride, resilience, and unbroken spirit. Its colours reflect the land, waters, and history that shape us, carrying the strength of our ancestors, the knowledge we guard today, and our commitment to flourish as a people into the future.

THREADS OF THE SASH

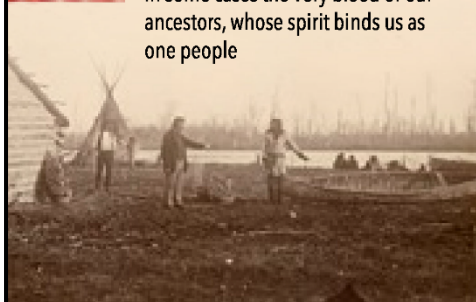
BLUE for the waters and skies of our territory, lifegiving and guiding the Métis across time

GREEN for the forests that sheltered our families and rooted our way of life

BROWN for the sacred earth beneath our feet, where our ancestors walked and where our strength takes root

YELLOW for the sunsets over our lakes and rivers, promising renewal, balance, and the generations rising

RED for the sacrifice, the courage, and in some cases the very blood of our ancestors, whose spirit binds us as one people



REGIONAL SASH & BOOKMARK

On September 12th, 2025 we launched the Regional Sash & Bookmark. The bookmark outlines the meaning of the Sash. The sash was created out of the colours of the regional logo. The sashes have been provided to the Community Councils.



www.nwomc.ca

The roots in our NWOMC logo are the same roots woven into the sash. Both draw life from this land in our traditional territory – Rainy Lake, Rainy River, Lake of the Woods, Lac Seul, and Treaty #3 – proclaiming that our culture and strength as Métis are not only preserved, but alive, growing, and enduring.

As you receive it, may you wear it, carry it, or display it with honour and dignity, knowing that the living spirit of the Northwestern Ontario Métis Community is now carried with you. This sash is our way of life – past, present, and future – carried with honour, lived with dignity, and worn with pride.

