



AFNWA Updates

Operator Workshop

February 16, 2023

Carl Yates, interim CEO

Mission

To provide safe, clean drinking water and wastewater in all participating First Nations communities in Atlantic Canada, delivered by a regional water authority owned and operated by First Nations.

Vision

To be a recognized leader for the delivery of water and wastewater services to First Nations communities across Canada.

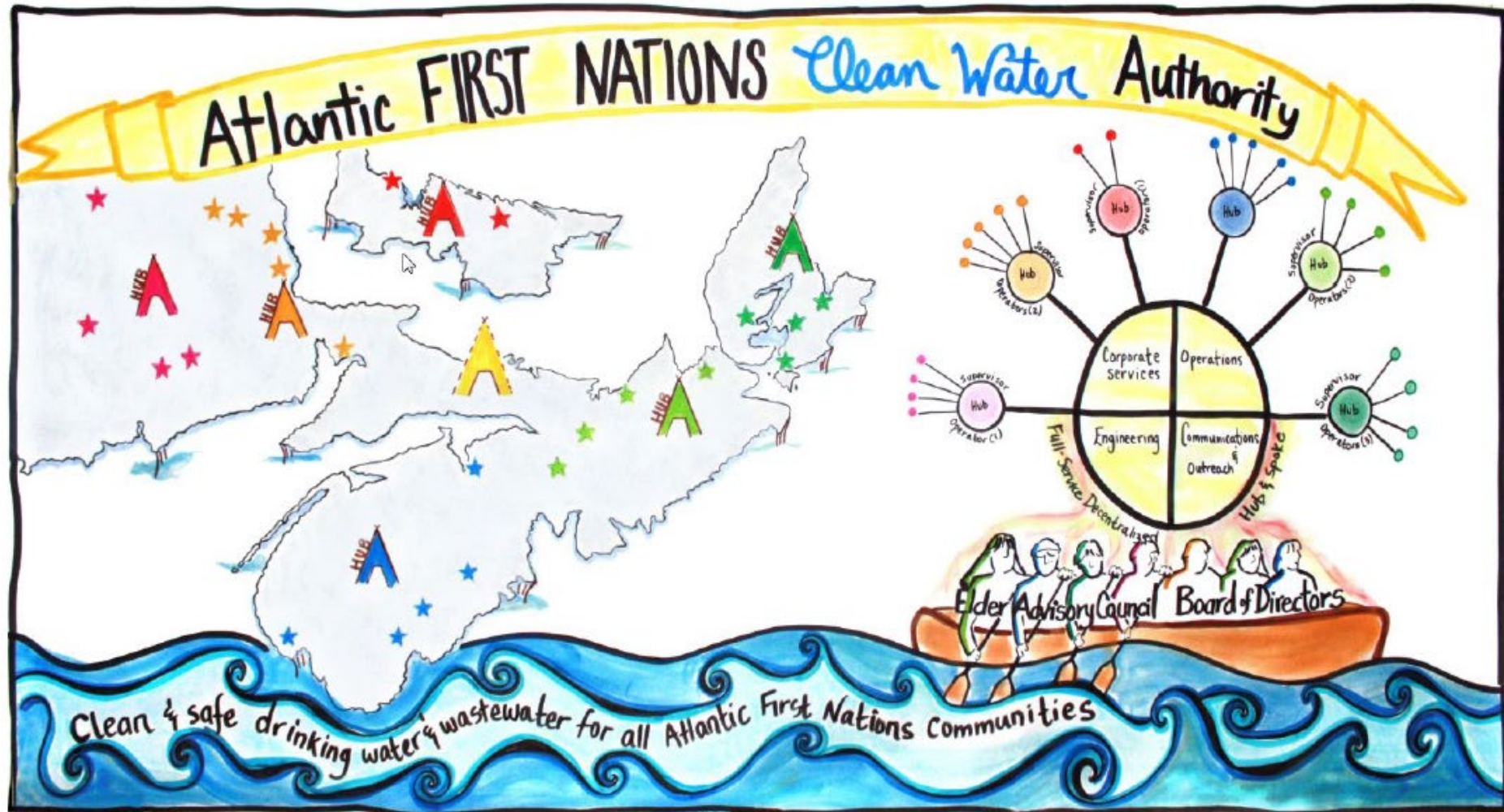
Values – Seven Grandfather Teachings

- **Love** (Kitpu/Cihpolakon - Eagle)
- **Honesty** (Putup/Putep - Whale)
- **Humility** (Paqtism/Malsom - Wolf)
- **Respect** (Tiam/Mus - Moose)
- **Truth** (Mikjikj/Cihkonaqc - Turtle)
- **Bravery** (Muin/Muwin - Bear)
- **Wisdom** (Kopit/Qapit - Beaver)

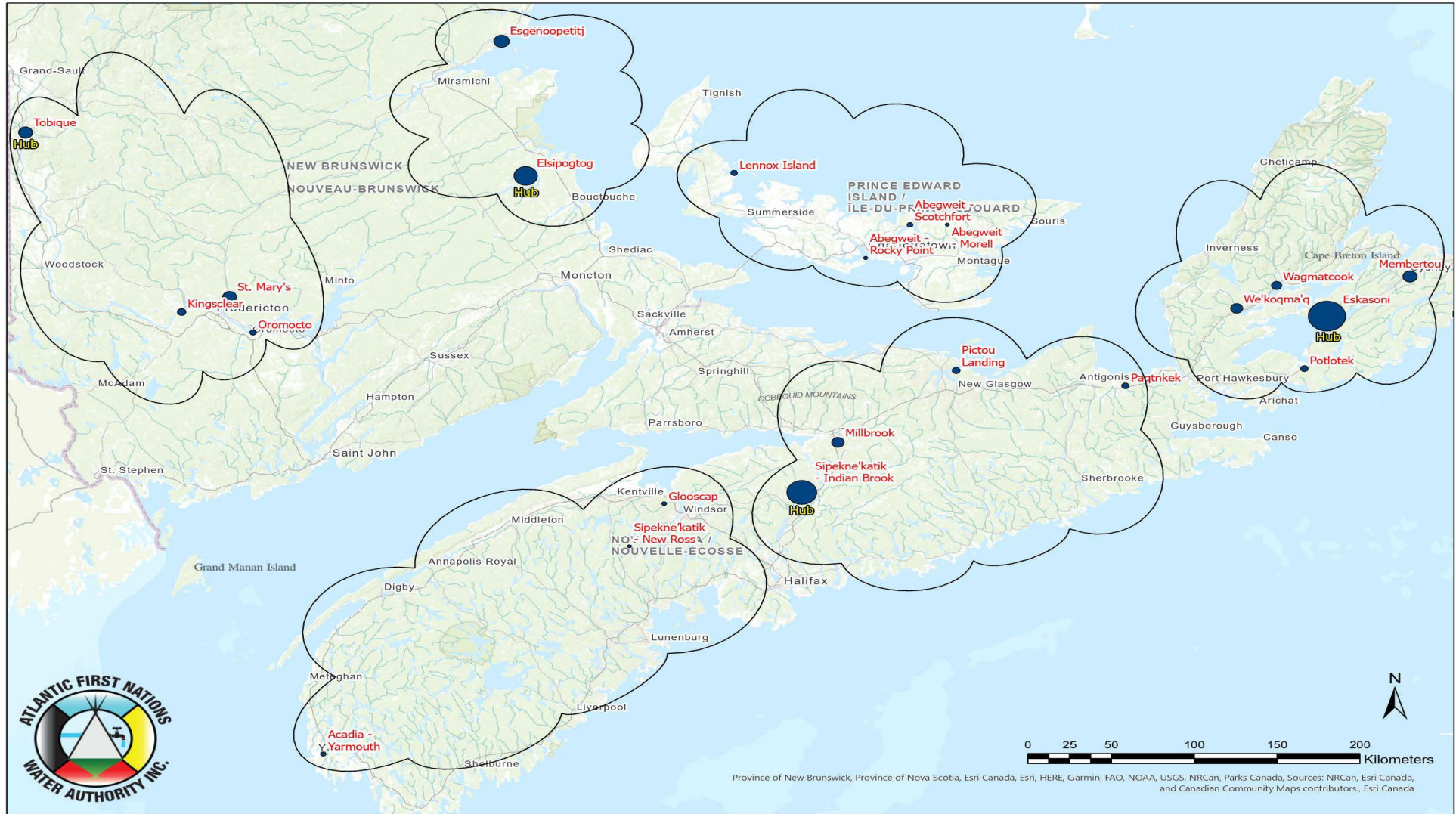
The Recent Roadmap

- AFNWA and ISC signed Framework Agreement on June 23, 2020
- AFNWA Board approved the Transition Implementation Plan [TIP] on June 24, 2020 to serve as a road map to track activities and milestones to make ready for autonomous operation in Spring 2022.
- The Asset Management Plan, SCADA Master Plan, Ten Year Business Plan, Service Delivery Transfer Agreement, Federal Funding Agreement and Community Agreement are key milestones of the TIP
- The objectives are centred on increased level of service, sustainable funding, public health outcomes and environmental stewardship in the context of self determination and capacity building for First Nations

Service approach that is accountable, equitable and based on *Two-Eyed Seeing*



Operations Hub and Spoke Model



Province of New Brunswick, Province of Nova Scotia, Esri Canada, Esri, HERE, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, NRCAN, Parks Canada, Sources: NRCAN, Esri Canada, and Canadian Community Maps contributors., Esri Canada

Asset Management Plan

- Asset Management Plan [AMP] and SCADA Master Plan completed by Dillon Consulting and Eramosa Engineering, respectively, in 2021
- AMP includes a Framework and Prioritization Matrix to select projects based on risk management principles
- Ten Year Capital Budgets completed for seventeen participating communities
- Coordination through AFNWA Engineering Department
- Wagmatcook and We'koqma'q First Nations passed Band Council Resolution in Spring 2022 to explore membership in AFNWA, participate in the AMP and SCADA assessment and the development of 10 Year Capital and Operating Budgets

Participating Communities

Asset Management Plan

- **New Brunswick**

- Elsipogtog
- Esgenoôpetitj
- Kingsclear
- Oromocto [MTSA]
- St. Marys [MTSA]
- Tobique

- **Prince Edward Island**

- Abegweit
- Lennox Island

- **Nova Scotia**

- Acadia [MTSA]
- Eskasoni
- Glooscap [MTSA]
- Membertou [MTSA]
- Millbrook [MTSA]
- Paqtnkek
- Pictou Landing
- Potlotek
- Sipekne'katik
- Wagmatcook in 2022
- We'koqma'q in 2022

Asset Management Framework



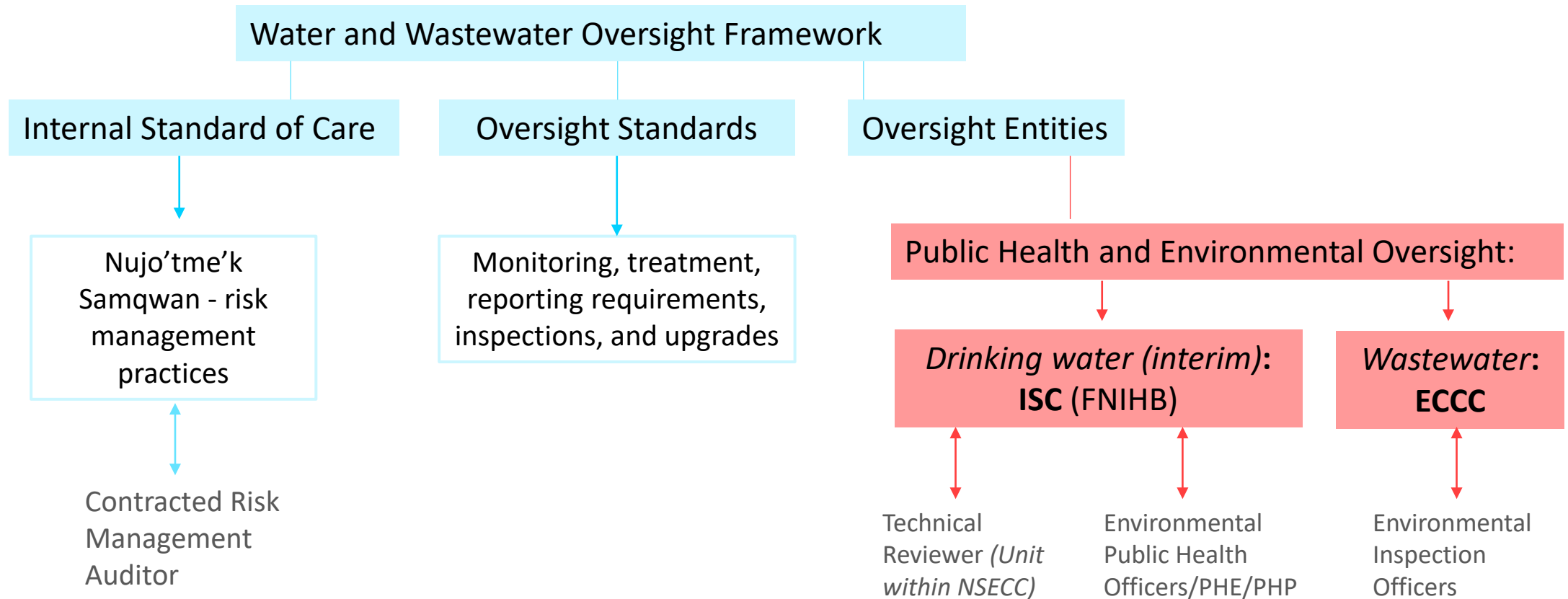
Business Readiness

- Governance in Place [Board of Directors and Elders Advisory Lodge active] with Governance Manual, By-Laws and Enterprise Risk Management Framework established
- Ten Year Business Plan approved by AFNWA Board
- Treasury Board approval of \$257 million in funding over ten years, consistent with Business Plan
- Water and Wastewater Quality Oversight Framework in Place
- Economic Oversight Framework being developed with First Nations Financial Management Board
- Management and office staff in place [25 employees]
- Employment offers made to Community Operators and Supervisors [all offers accepted]

Water and Wastewater Regulatory Oversight Framework

- Framework developed for drinking water quality.
 - Compliance with Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality
 - Proactive measures developed with the adoption of water and wastewater safety plans [Nujo'tme'k Samqwan]
- Wastewater to conform to Wastewater System Effluent Regulations [WSER] with oversight from Environment and Climate Change Canada
- AFNWA to go beyond WSER with inclusion of Effluent Discharge Objectives based on Environmental Risk Assessments consistent with CCME Municipal Wastewater Effluent Strategy

Proposed Drinking Water and Wastewater Oversight Framework



Economic Oversight Framework

- Relationship with First Nations Financial Management Board to develop framework for economic oversight
 - Economic oversight to demonstrate financial stewardship for Canada and Communities served by AFNWA
 - Goal to achieve certification from FNFMB for not-for-profit organizations to leverage debt servicing through First Nations Finance Authority

Key Programs – Operations

- **Emergency Response Plans**

- Conformance to Incident Command System
- Unified and consistent approach
- Partnership with First Nations communities and neighbour municipalities

- **SCADA Master Plan Implementation**

- Upgrades over a 5 Year period
- Total costs of \$13.3 million [2021 dollars]
- Eramosa completed Standards this year
- Two Pilots underway to test drive Standards
- Training for Operators

- **Water Loss Control/ Inflow & Infiltration Reduction**

- Saves money
- Reduces damage to property
- Supports public health outcomes
- Protects the environment
- Increases supply capacity for growth



Key Programs - Safety

- Conformance to Federal Occupational Health and Safety Regulations and Provincial Regulations, where infrastructure is situated within provincial or municipal rights of way
- Working Safe is a condition of employment with AFNWA
- Working Safe is a requirement for contractors working for AFNWA
- Focus on High Hazard Activities
- AFNWA has a dedicated Safety and Security Coordinator, and OH&S Committee [needs additional Operator participation]
- Supported by CC Safety & Compliance

Safety Foundation

- The Right to Refuse Unsafe Work
- The Right to Know
- The Right to Participate

The Agreements

- Service Delivery Transfer Agreement (SDTA)
 - AFNWA and Canada [Complete]
- Funding Agreement
 - AFNWA and Canada [Complete]
- Community Agreement
 - AFNWA and Member Communities [Closings in February/March]
- Access Permits (Indian Act)
 - AFNWA, Canada and Member Communities [Closings in February/March]
- Access Permits (Custom Land Code)
 - AFNWA and Member Communities [Closings in February/March]

Service Delivery Transfer Agreement [SDTA]

- Transfers responsibility for service delivery from Minister of Indigenous Services to AFNWA
- Federal government commitment to funding for the long term
- SDTA is in full force and effect; 9 Communities have signed a BCR to execute Community Agreement and Access Permit

AFNWA Member Communities as of January 31, 2023

- Neqotkuk [Tobique]
- Elsipogtog
- Lennox Island
- Membertou
- Eskasoni
- Potlotek
- Paqtnkek
- Pictou Landing
- Glooscap

Funding Agreement with ISC

- Commitment to fund the Ten-Year Business Plan (\$257 Million)
 - Detailed schedules outlining payment for each year
 - Funding delineated between Capital & O&M
- Annual adjustments for inflation [CapEx and OpEx]
 - Consumer Price Index for O&M
 - Construction Cost Index for Capital
- Funding Agreement to be reviewed in Five Years to recalibrate next Ten Year Business Plan
- Commitment to fund beyond Ten Years
- Funding Agreement Executed

First Nations Community Agreement

- Community Agreements (CA) with each individual First Nation include agreement on:
 - Transfer of Service Responsibility
 - Transfer of Liability
 - Municipal Type Service Agreement (MTSA) designation of responsibility to Water Authority
 - Delineation of responsibilities [including service laterals]
 - Employee Transfer

Access Permits

- Permits are required to grant access to the land where the infrastructure is situated.
- Authorized uses of the permit are for:
 - Operation and maintenance of Water and Wastewater Facilities
 - Fencing for security purposes around water and wastewater infrastructure
 - All related activities described in the AFNWA Business Plan

Community Onboarding a Phased Approach

- There are four phases:
 - Early Adopters (December, 2022)
 - Patient Adopters (April 1, 2023)
 - Late Adopters (2023/2024 Fiscal Year)
 - Future Adopters [with the standard membership protocol]
- In order to complete the transaction, AFNWA will require:
 - BCRs
 - Inclusive of Land Access Permits and O&M funding redirection
 - Community Agreement Approval

Operator Onboarding

- Already Started; lots of information with the Offer of Employment
- Payroll and Benefits through Corporate Services [Chantal LeBlanc and Verna Langley]
- Training on Safety and Security [Dan MacDonald, Gary West and Jim Trimble]
- Training on Compliance Sampling [John Vandenberg, Tiannie Paul, Gary West and Megan Fuller (CWRS)]
- Individual Training and Career Development Plans

Training and Career Development

- With Covid travel restrictions being lifted, more opportunities for in person training through ACWWA, MPWWA
- On-line courses are still an option
- AFNWA will also coordinate training session based on need
- AFNWA will pay for courses, study guides, tutoring, etc. to obtain Operator certification or other work-related courses
- We will adopt a formal training and development program for all AFNWA staff.

Total Compensation

- Salaries and Wages
 - Base Pay tied to National Public Sector Market using Korn Ferry methodology
 - Market survey every three years
 - Annual adjustments in between survey years based on Canadian CPI [3.4% for 2021 and 6.8% for 2022]
 - Eligible employees receive overtime pay at 1.5 times base pay and double time on holidays [cash or banked time]
 - Standby Pay for Operators [\$500 per week]. Target of one week per month

Total Compensation

- Pensions and Benefits
 - Defined Contribution Pension Plan [50/50 Cost sharing]
 - Contributions at 5.6% of Salary up to CRA Yearly Maximum Pensionable Earnings [YMPE]
 - Contributions at 7.6% above YMPE [currently \$64,900]
 - All employees participate in Canadian Pension Plan
 - Medical and Dental Plans tailored to employee needs [50/50 Cost sharing]

Total Compensation

- Vacation
 - 3 weeks to start and up to 6 weeks after 20 years of service
 - Existing Operators community service recognized for vacation
 - Coverage for Operators when they go on vacation
- Sick Benefits
 - Accumulated at 1 and $\frac{1}{4}$ days per month [15 days per year]
 - Sick Leave accruals up to 90 working days
 - Coverage for Operators when they call in sick
- Career Development Support
 - Courses tailored to job
 - Support for continuing education

Operator Salaries-Skill Based Pay

- The current salary range for an Operator is \$46,247 to \$57,808 depending on level of certification. There are eight steps in the range starting at Operator in Training with increments after each subsequent certification
- The maximum salary is \$57,808 for an Operator with Level 2 certification in all four categories
- Salaries increasing by 6.8% on April 1, 2023

Supervisor/Lead Operator

- There will be a Supervisor/Lead Operator assigned to each Service Area and we have a Float Supervisor
- The Operations Supervisor salary will range from \$51,565 to \$64,455
- There are eight steps in the range with a maximum pay of \$64,455 when Level 2 certification is obtained in all four categories
- Salaries increasing by 6.8% on April 1, 2023
- Supervisor will be assigned company vehicle for response in service area [mobile office]

Next Steps

Winter/Spring 2023:

Continue with Dedicated Outreach to Community Chiefs and Councils to present Business Plan, and Community Agreement to ensure an informed decision to transfer water and wastewater system responsibility and become a member of AFNWA

Winter/Spring 2023:

Onboarding and Training of Supervisors and Operators

Spring 2023:

Operations and Capital programs launched in Early Adopter Member Communities

**Do not go where
the path may
lead; blaze a
trail instead for
others to follow**

**Wela'lin!
Woliwon!**

