



AFNWA Updates

Operator Worksop

May 11, 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)

Participating Communities

Asset Management Plan

- **New Brunswick**

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

- **Prince Edward Island**

- Abegweit
- Lennox Island

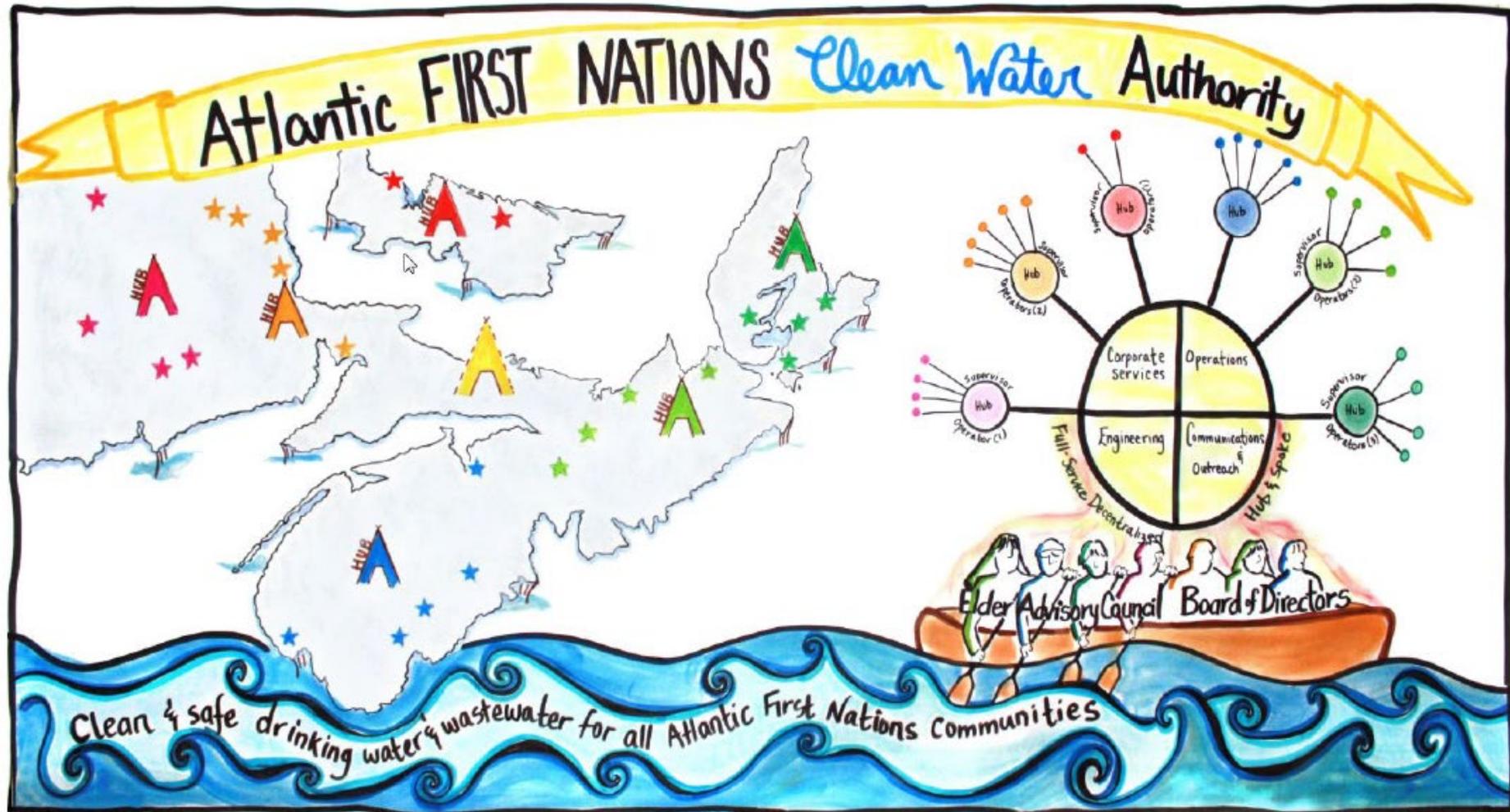
- **Nova Scotia**

- Acadia [MTSA]
- Eskasoni
- Glooscap [MTSA]
- Membertou [MTSA]
- Millbrook [MTSA]
- Paqtnkek
- Pictou Landing
- Potlotek
- Sipekne'katik
- Wagmatcook in 2022
- We'koqma'q in 2023

AFNWA Member Communities as of May 1, 2023

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

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



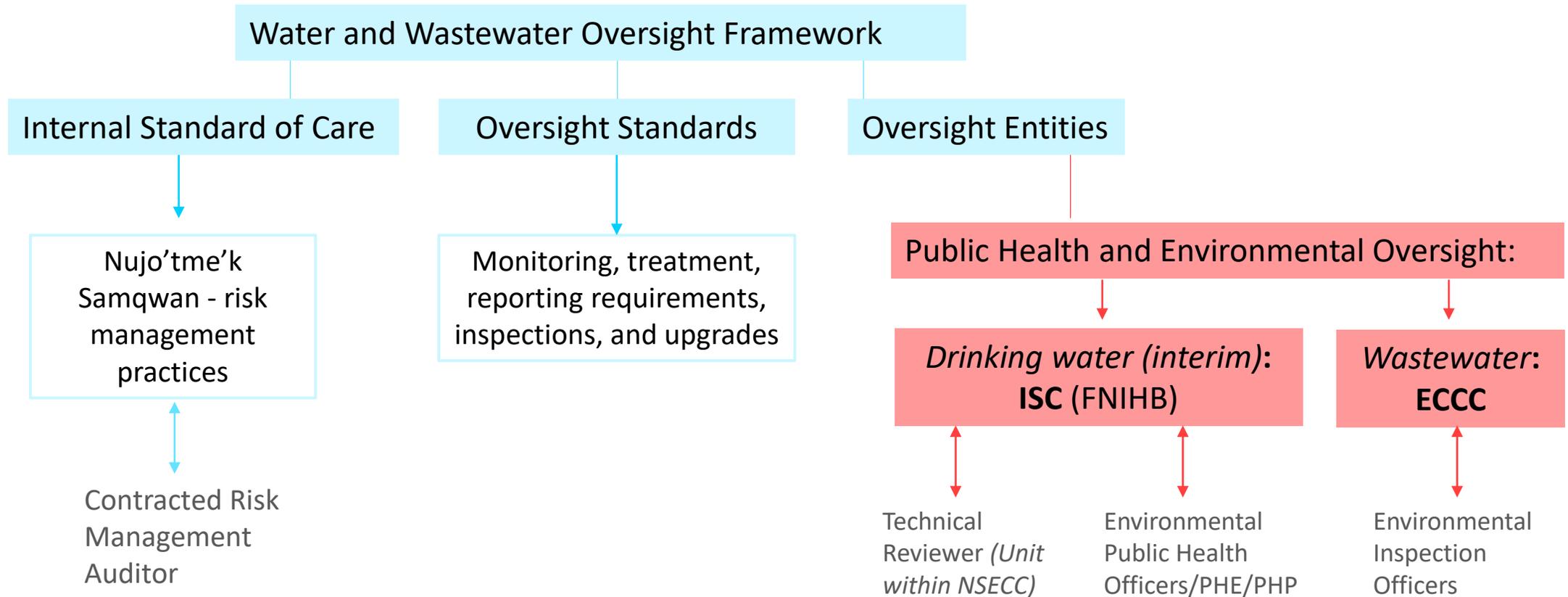
Business Readiness

- 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
- Employment offers made to Community Operators and Supervisors [all offers accepted to date]
- 47 employees in place; front office, back office, field staff, management

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 [Lennox Island and Pictou Landing]
- 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 [the Top Five]
- AFNWA has a dedicated Safety and Security Coordinator, and Workplace Health & Safety Committee [needs additional Operator participation]
- Supported by CC Safety and Compliance Services Inc. [Paul Cormier]

Safety Foundation

- The Right to Refuse Unsafe Work
- The Right to Know
- The Right to Participate
- Internal Responsibility System

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

AFNWA Lateral Responsibility

- Responsibility from Mains to Foundation Wall
- Problems inside the homes and facilities are a Band responsibility
- If there are structural problems with the lateral, including infiltration of tree roots in the sanitary sewer, it is an AFNWA responsibility
- If the sanitary sewer lateral is plugged due to things flushed down the premise drains [wipes, diapers, condoms, syringes, fat, oil, grease, etc.], it is a Band responsibility, including plumber services
- Calls for assistance from community members should be directed to the Area Supervisor

Individual Wells and Septic Systems

- Just like centralized systems, individual wells and septic systems are problematic and underfunded
- During engagement in 2020, recognized as an issue and brought to the attention of AFNWA Board
- If AFNWA gets involved, recognized as an unfunded mandate
- Board provided direction at March 29/23 meeting for AFNWA to subsidize maintenance costs for individual wells and septic systems within Main Reserve lands of First Nations communities
- Does not include any cost for capital upgrades [eg. new well pumps, new tanks or new septic fields]

Board Direction – Wells and Septic Systems

- Staff will coordinate maintenance activities for individual wells and septic systems
- AFNWA will subsidize costs up to \$250,000 per year in total for member communities [11 member communities to date]
- Funds shared on a fair and equitable basis and prorated based on the number of individual wells and septic systems [database being developed to determine the number and location of wells and septic systems for member communities]
- Calls for assistance from community members should be directed to the Area Supervisor

Strategic Initiatives – Wells and Septic Systems

- Development of a database for individual wells and septic systems for member communities to determine the number and location of systems within main reserve lands [contract with CBCL]. Trying to complete by this summer.
- Raised the issue of standards and funding during the engagement sessions for the review of the Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act to ensure the Act contains wording to include a sustainable approach for both centralized and decentralized systems.
- Direct discussion with Indigenous Services Canada on approaches to fund maintenance and capital upgrades for individual wells and septic systems.

Operator Onboarding – Information Overload

- 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

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

Total Compensation

- **Salaries and Wages**

- Base Pay tied to National Public Sector Market using Korn Ferry methodology
- Market survey every three years; survey next year
- 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 but will take time to get there. Will require cross training between water and wastewater and between communities

Overtime – Memo of April 24, 2023

- Employees will be compensated for all hours worked.
- Unless it is an emergency, preapproval of overtime must be obtained from your direct Supervisor in accordance with Article 14 of the HR Policy.
- Unless it is an emergency, when working on a Weekend or a Holiday, **prior written approval** for overtime **must be obtained** from your direct Supervisor by email, copying HR@AFNWA.CA.
- When travelling to attend conferences outside of normal work hours, hours will be charged at straight time.
- Best efforts should be made to travel during regular work hours.

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 ¼ 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 \$49,392 to \$61,738 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 \$61,738 for an Operator with Level 2 certification in all four categories

Supervisor/Lead Operator

- Supervisor/Lead Operator assigned to each Service Area and we have a Float Supervisor
- The Operations Supervisor salary will range from \$55,690 to \$68,838
- There are eight steps in the range with a maximum pay of \$68,838 when Level 2 certification is obtained in all four categories
- Supervisor assigned company vehicle for response in service area [mobile office]
- Company vehicles are only for company work

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

**Wela'lin!
Woliwon!**

