



Atlantic First Nations Water Authority Inc.

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AFNWA becomes first Indigenous NPO to achieve FMB standards compliance in Canada

Millbrook, NS – The Atlantic First Nations Water Authority (AFNWA) has achieved another milestone. The First Nations Financial Management Board (FMB) has issued an opinion of compliance under its Nonprofit Organization (NPO) standards, making AFNWA the first Indigenous not-for-profit organization in Canada to be compliant.

AFNWA Board Chair, Chief Wilbert Marshall, commented, "This is another first for AFNWA, and I am very proud of the team and their efforts. While we are showing our communities that we are good stewards of our infrastructure and the environment, we also want to show that we are good financial stewards."

The FMB has developed a set of financial management standards and performance measures specifically tailored for Indigenous NPOs, including tribal councils operating as NPOs. These standards build upon FMB's experience as a standard-setter for First Nation governments. The first exposure draft of the NPO Standards was announced in June 2020, with input from identified stakeholders, and became effective in September 2021. This milestone marks a significant moment for Indigenous-led organizations and the broader non-profit sector, as the FMB's rigorous standards are designed to uphold financial integrity and foster sustainable growth for First Nations and their affiliated organizations.

"AFNWA achieving compliance with our NPO Standards is a notable achievement," said Harold Calla, Executive Chair of the FMB. "It sends a clear signal that they are an organization that takes their financial management practices seriously. We congratulate AFNWA on this achievement and look forward to working with other Indigenous NPOs that wish to seek a compliance opinion."

AFNWA began its pursuit of compliance in 2021 when the Standards were first introduced by FMB. Following an audit in 2023, AFNWA had processes to finalize but enhanced its approach in the 2023-24 fiscal year to amend and refine outstanding policies and procedures. A follow-up audit led to a recommendation to the FMB Board to issue a letter of compliance to AFNWA in December 2024. The compliance opinion for AFNWA will reinforce existing relationships with government and funders while opening doors to new relationships by establishing immediate acknowledgment of AFNWA's transparency, accountability, and governance excellence.



AFNWA was incorporated on July 18, 2018, under the Canada Not-for-Profit Act. An MOU was signed in 2022 to pursue a strategic partnership with FMB, which included the pursuit of achieving the highest standards in the Indigenous NPO sector. AFNWA has been responsible for 13 member communities' water and wastewater systems since April 2023.

For more information on FMB, visit <https://fnfmb.com>. For more on AFNWA, visit www.afnwa.ca.

