



WINTER 2022

SAMQWAN + SAGE SAMAQAN

Leading progress, innovation, and a long-term solution for water and wastewater management for Atlantic First Nations communities.

The Atlantic First Nations Water Authority (AFNWA) is a not-for-profit, Wabanaki Nations water utility that is owned and operated by First Nations, for First Nations. Our goal is to provide clean drinking water and safe wastewater services to participating First Nations communities.

AFNWA will be responsible for the operation, maintenance, and capital upgrades of all water and wastewater assets in each participating First Nations community. We are committed to helping build stronger First Nations communities in Atlantic Canada, and supporting long-term planning initiatives.

2021 PROGRESS UPDATE

- » AFNWA congratulates departed Board member **Roger Augustine** on his recent retirement. Roger's career spanned over 40 years where he was elected Chief of Eel Ground First Nation, and most recently spent almost 13 years as AFN Regional Chief for New Brunswick and PEI.
- » The **Board approved** the following policies at recent meetings: Occupational Health and Safety (OSH), Flextime, Fraud, Whistleblower, Asset Management, Privacy, Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest, COVID-19 Vaccination, and IT. AFNWA policies are added to our **website** upon Board approval.
- » We welcomed **Mark MacDonald** to the Engineering Department in December 2021. Mark is our new Asset Management Technologist, and 21st staff member.

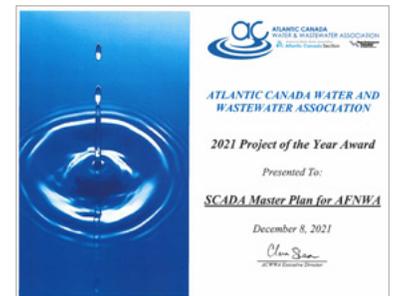


- » The Operations Department is hosting **Safety Update** meetings on Tuesday mornings. The weekly gatherings, hosted by Safety and Security Coordinator Mark Geck, share info and advice on how we can work individually and collectively to keep ourselves and teammates safe and healthy. All AFNWA staff are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and have completed First Aid Training.

- » AFNWA continues to **complete projects** and achieve new milestones by finalizing the Asset Management Plans [AMPs] and Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition Master Plan. Dillon Consulting completed 17 community AMPs as the SCADA Master Plan was carried out by Eramosa Engineering. AFNWA, in partnership with the First Nations Infrastructure Institute is working to complete a cost recovery pilot with Paqtnek First Nation regarding infrastructure associated with economic growth.
- » Atlantic Canada Water Works Association presented AFNWA with its 2021 **Project of the Year award** (Small Project Category) for our SCADA Master Plan.

- » Our **Ten-Year Capital and Operations Budget** was submitted to ISC in December upon invitation from the Government of Canada for consideration in the 2022-23 federal budget.

- » Indigenous Services Canada **Minister Patty Hajdu** accepted a request from the AFNWA Board Chair Chief Wilbert Marshall to discuss the AFNWA journey in recognition of our common vision for self-determination and capacity building within First Nations. The discussion was positive and the Minister will continue to support and monitor our progress!



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Mohamed Osman, Project Engineer

AFNWA's Project Engineer, Mohamed Osman, has been passionate about math and drawing since he was a young boy growing up in Sudan. Following in his father's and grandfather's footsteps, Mohamed studied civil engineering at the University of Khartoum.

Upon graduating, Mohamed began work as a construction engineer in Sudan's oil and gas sector. It was in this role that he discovered a keen interest in environmental engineering as it combined his love of nature and math. In 2003, he moved to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia for work and later completed his Master's (2006) and Ph.D. in Environmental Engineering (2013) at King Saud University. He continued his work as an environmental engineer while teaching Environmental Engineering at KSU.

In 2020, Mohamed, his wife, and their two daughters immigrated to Canada. They chose Canada because they were looking for a home where they would find peace, a better quality of life, respect for cultural diversity, and be surrounded by nature. When he first arrived in Halifax, Mohamed worked as an interim environmental analyst with the NS Department of Environment before joining AFNWA in January 2021 as an Asset Management Technologist. Six months later, he was promoted to his current role as Project Manager. Last summer, Mohamed earned his Professional Engineer designation.

As a project engineer, Mohamed oversees a range of capital projects and plays a key role in the asset management program related to AFNWA's infrastructure. Mohamed's duties include managing projects from beginning to end—including



concept development, project design oversight, tender process management, construction management, and facilities commissioning.

Mohamed believes that the success of one of us at AFNWA is the success of all of us. **"We are paving the way to create a successful model embedded with values from First Nations cultures."** Mohamed is looking forward to ever-increasing engagement with AFNWA's operators as he shares his expertise and learns from the "real champions" of safe drinking water and expert wastewater management.

A lifelong lover of learning, Mohamed wants to learn as much as he can about Indigenous culture. Outside of work, he balances his very busy life by spending quality time with his family, reading, visiting nature, walking on trails, talking with friends, and going to the gym. Eventually, he hopes to travel throughout Canada, discovering new places and meeting new people.

COMMUNICATIONS & OUTREACH

- » The [Cape Breton Post](#) published a feature in late January on the water authority and our plans for 2022-23. Board Chief Terry Paul, Membertou, was interviewed for the [SaltWire Network](#) publication, along with our CEO, Carl Yates, and Unama'ki's own James MacKinnon, our COO.
- » AFNWA will have a feature article in an upcoming issue of the American Water Works Association [Journal AWWA](#), following an article in OWWA's fall 2021 issue of [Ontario Pipeline](#).
- » Adam Gould was featured in [AWWA Member Spotlight](#) for November and in recognition of Alaska Native Heritage.
- » Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs Secretariat (APC) hosted the latest [Water Talks](#) virtual series in January with support from AFNWA. The sold out symposium included a presentation by AFNWA CEO Carl Yates. APC Water Talks has upcoming sessions for Indigenous students and youth in the coming weeks. Visit the APC and AFNWA social media pages for more information.

- » Indigenous students and youth are invited and encouraged to join the upcoming [Operators Workshop](#) on **March 22**. The training event has information on how to register in the brand-new [Events](#) page on our website.



- » AFNWA has a busy spring and summer ahead with its outreach program, including several [sponsorships](#) in Unama'ki and Kijipuktuk that will be covered in the next issue!

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