



SPRING 2022

SAMQWAN SAMAQAN + SAGE

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.

2022 PROGRESS UPDATES

World Water Day was March 22nd and we celebrated together with community water operators at our latest **Operators Workshop**. AFNWA noted the continued attendance of Dale Ward, the only Indigenous woman who is currently serving her community as a water operator in Atlantic Canada. AFNWA plans to develop initiatives that will direct women and girls to pursue studies and careers in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math). The next Operators Workshop will be in June with details to come.

Our team welcomed **Mark E. MacDonald** in March as Technical Services Technologist. He will work directly with Jeff Wujcik, Superintendent of Technical Services, in our Operations Department.

On April 7th, the federal government released **Budget 2022**, which proposed to provide Indigenous Services Canada with an additional **\$173.2 million over 10 years** starting in 2022–23 to support the transfer of water and wastewater services in Wabanaki communities to AFNWA. Following a news release, interim CEO Carl Yates, interim COO James MacKinnon, Board Chair Chief Wilbert Marshall, and Vice-Chair Chief Ross Perley were featured in interviews with CBC, SaltWire, Global News, and Brunswick News. Following the budget announcement, Chief Wilbert, Carl, and James also enjoyed a supportive conversation with Indigenous Services Minister, Patty Hajdu.

On April 20th, Crown-Indigenous Relations **Minister Marc Miller** attended our **Agreements Workshop** with Chiefs in Dartmouth. Joining him were Members of Parliament Kody Bloise (Kings-Hants) and Jaime Battiste (Sydney-Victoria).

The Association of Consulting Engineering Companies – New Brunswick presented its **2022 Engineering Excellence Award** to Dillon Consulting Ltd. and AFNWA. John Lam attended the ACEC-NB event along with Dillon's Julie DiCicco, Ryan Dunbar, and Angel Ransom of the First Nations Major Project Coalition (pictured below from left to right).



Crown-Indigenous Relations Minister Marc Miller being smudged by Elder Methilda Knockwood-Snache. Also pictured: Chief Wilbert Marshall (AFNWA Board Chair) and Jaime Battiste, MP.

AFNWA is currently working with Dalhousie University's **Centre for Water Resources Studies (CWRS)** on regulatory compliance operations plans, and needs the assistance of two Indigenous students for **summer internships**. Interns will work closely with Dalhousie and AFNWA staff to conduct drinking water sampling and learn about data collection and analysis. The position is based out of Halifax or Truro and interested students can apply or learn more by contacting Megan Fuller at Megan.Fuller@dal.ca.

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

James Trimble, Manager of Operations

James “Jim” Trimble joined AFNWA in April 2021 as Manager of Operations, bringing over 30 years of water and wastewater management experience in Indigenous communities. As leader of the Operations team, he ensures that all operators are fully trained and licensed and that water, wastewater treatment plants, and related infrastructure are operated and maintained to industry standards. His responsibilities also include oversight for quality assurance and quality control to ensure AFNWA delivers on its mission to provide high quality drinking water and wastewater services that meet the highest standards in the land.

Before AFNWA, Jim was Director of Capital and Public Works at Beausoleil First Nation, an Ojibwe community on Christian Island, ON. In his 11 years there, he was dedicated to solving issues in water and wastewater such as lack of operator training resources and securing funding for capital projects, operations, and maintenance activities. One of his major accomplishments prior to his tenure in Beausoleil was with Nunatsiavut in Labrador where he was the lead on the construction of facilities in Torngat Mountains National Park.

James is the father of seven and resides in Woodstock, NB, with his wife of 29 years and their two youngest children. The Trimbles are designated as a level three foster home to help First Nations youth.



His personal goal is to complete his MBA, demonstrate that this operations management style can succeed across Canada, and continue advocating for First Nations careers in trades. In his spare time, he enjoys video games, with a two cream and one sugar dark roast from Tim Hortons.

“We need to make First Nations water and wastewater services the same as other leading municipalities across the country. We need long-term plans for upgrading infrastructure in the communities instead of battling Indigenous Services Canada every year for funding.”

“We are leading the country in our approach to fixing long-standing issues with First Nations water.”

– James Trimble (when asked why he decided to join the Atlantic First Nations Water Authority)

March also ended on a cultural theme, this time in a thoughtful session with Houston Barnaby and Corey Mattie of **Indigenous Treaty Partners**. Our staff enjoyed an interactive afternoon of learning a deeper history of Indigenous Peoples in Canada. AFNWA looks forward to having our friends from ITP back for more knowledge sharing in the future.



We are proud to be an official sponsor for **Samqwan: Encore**, showing at the Highland Arts Theatre in Sydney, May 5–8, and Neptune Theatre from May 12–15. In the same week, AFNWA will also be a sponsor of the **National Aboriginal Hockey Championships** taking place in Membertou, NS, from May 9–14. Our team is grateful for the opportunities to be involved with cultural events, sports and recreation, and the arts in Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik communities.

The **pow wow trail** was announced in March and AFNWA staff hope to see you at events over the summer! The first Mawio'mi for pow wow season is in Pictou Landing First Nation, June 4–5, and wraps up the weekend of September 24–25 in Paqtnekek. Join us on social media for info on when you can expect to see us along the pow wow trail!



COMMUNICATIONS & OUTREACH

AFNWA had the honour of hosting Millbrook Elder-in-training, **Patsy Paul-Martin**, on March 1st as part of our staff cultural training. Patsy shared stories about Mi'kmaq culture, growing up in Mi'kma'ki, and then smudged our colleagues and office spaces at both Louise St. and Treaty Trail. Wela'liek, Patsy, our door is always open!

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