



WINTER 2023

SAMQWAN SAMAQAN + SAGE

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

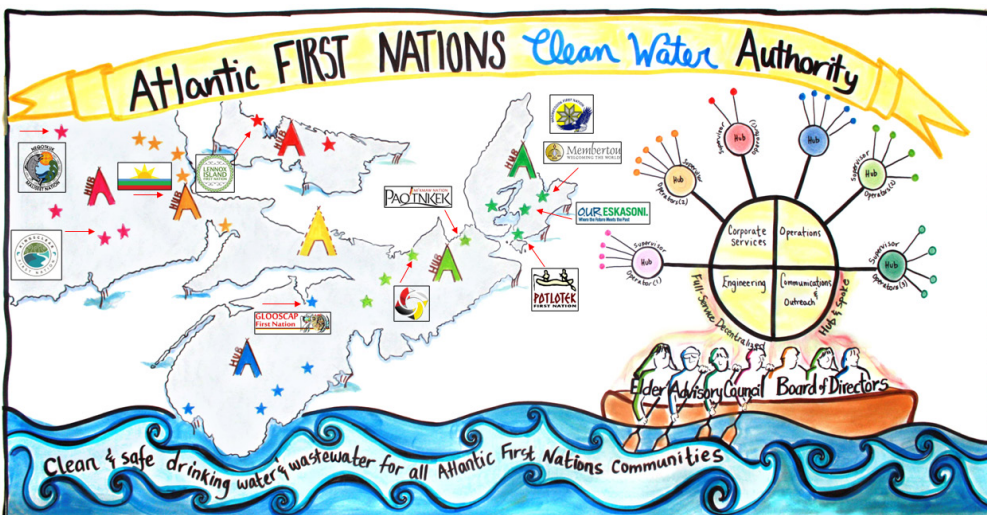
The Atlantic First Nations Water Authority (AFNWA) is a not-for-profit, Wabanaki Nations water utility that is owned and operated by First Nations, for First Nations. Our goal is to provide clean drinking water and safe wastewater services to participating First Nations communities.

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.

2023 PROGRESS UPDATE

- » The Atlantic First Nations Water Authority is officially in business with operations underway! Indigenous Services Canada required eight (8) communities to pass band council resolutions (BCR) to ratify the [Service Deliver Transfer Agreement \[SDTA\]](#) and this was accomplished on December 1, 2022. The first 'early adopters' are Elsipogtog, Eskasoni, Lennox Island, Paqtnekek, Pictou Landing, Potlotek, Membertou, and Neqotkuk [Tobique]. Since then, we have received BCRs from Glooscap, Wagmatcook and Bilijik [Kingsclear]. We anticipate more communities to confirm their memberships over the coming months.
- » We are excited to report that Corbin Stevens has achieved his [Level 3](#) certifications in both water and wastewater. Congratulations, Corbin!

- » AFNWA and ISC signed the [10-Year Funding Agreement](#) on February 3, 2023. Aligning with the SDTA, the Funding Agreement is a commitment of \$170 million for capital and operations and has the full support of the Minister of Indigenous Services, the Honourable Patty Hajdu. Discussions that happened over months have led to AFNWA funding being secured for the next 10 years!
- » In January, AFNWA received news that we were the recipient of the [Deputy Ministers' 2022 Recognition Award](#) in Partnerships and Collaboration. The AFNWA team was nominated by Louis Dumulon, Regional Director General for ISC (Gatineau). The project team included Mirjana Vaclavik, Rosemary Glynn-Conrad, Eilish Cleary, Jason Catoul, Len O'Neil, Xavier Redhead, Nick Sanders, Gabrielle Robert, Daniele Pion, Melanie Twomey, Brock Dumville, James MacKinnon, Carl Yates, and John Lam.



The AFNWA storyboard that is displayed proudly in our boardroom provides a visual of our progress. As a community confirms its membership via BCR, we add their logo to the storyboard. As of March 1, we have 10 early adopters.

COMMUNICATIONS & OUTREACH



» On a stormy evening in late January, CEO Carl Yates, COO James MacKinnon, and Engineering Manager John Lam gathered with Paqtneq community members. The **Community Café** saw Indigenous organizations and local industry representatives share background on their work and future projects, including a glimpse of the future Paqtneq business centre. *Photo credit: Rose Paul, Paqtneq*



» The pow wow trail returned earlier in 2023 and up first was **NSCC Truro Campus Mawio'mi**—where we were all “reunited, and it felt so good!” Good times, great people, AFNWA scholarship information, and the best swag is all we needed for a surprisingly mild February day.



» March is **National Engineering Month**, and we proudly supported the Engineers NS “Spotlight on Local Innovation” event earlier in the month. AFNWA’s professional engineers were joined by friends from Dalhousie University’s Centre for Water Resource Studies, including a young engineering student.

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Meet Chantal LeBlanc CPA, CMA, MBA, Manager of Corporate Services and Chief Financial Officer

Chantal joined the AFNWA team in March 2021, bringing an extensive background in commercial banking including managing a national portfolio of Indigenous clients. Upon departure from her Commercial Banking career, she assumed the role of Chief Financial Officer for a group of companies participating in various industries, including manufacturing and commercial real estate.

Wearing many hats in her role as AFNWA Manager of Corporate Services and CFO, she leads a team of six responsible for human resources, information technology, payroll and finance, and procurement services. As CFO, she is Treasurer to the AFNWA Board and the audit and finance committee.

When Chantal isn’t crunching numbers or putting out fires, she enjoys time working on home renovation projects and backcountry camping with her husband Bryan and their three daughters (including twins) all under age four. How this extraordinary and dedicated woman successfully manages her work/home balance is anyone’s guess!

Chantal has many goals for herself, her team, and AFNWA. She would like to spend time in AFNWA’s member communities to learn more about water and wastewater management, as well as to support our new operators.

“In my role as CFO, being transparent to the communities is my highest priority. If we don’t have the trust of the communities, then we will not be successful.”



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