# 20242025

# ANNUAL REPORT





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### **Executive Director's Remarks**

### 2024-2025



Kwe' msit no'kmaq to all my relations, Chiefs, Councils and colleagues. I'd like to thank each of you for your ongoing confidence and support. The work you do every day on behalf of our communities continues to demonstrate unwavering dedication and commitment.

It's a privilege to share with you the progress and mile-

stones we've achieved together over the past year—my third as Executive Director. As always, our work is guided by our Member Communities and fueled by the dedication of our staff and leadership.

This past year has brought continued growth and opportunity across the organization. We've seen our departments expand, programs evolve, and new partnerships take shape—all in support of the long-term vision of self-determination, cultural revitalization, and community wellbeing.

We celebrated continued leadership transitions in our communities, with an election in Sipekne'katik, welcoming Chief Michelle Glasgow back for a second term. We had two elections, provincial and federal, with returning and new leadership resulting from those votes. We thank those who served their communities with strength and integrity over their terms. These changes are a reminder of the importance of renewal, and the responsibility we all share in shaping a better future.

While it is always a joy to celebrate the triumphs and wins for our communities, we also somberly remember those we have lost. In 2024-25, we seen many loses: Murray Copage Sr., Councillor from Annapolis Valley First Nation, Becky Julian from Sipekne'katik, Doreen Knockwood from Sipekne'katik, Elder Judy Y. Bernard-Julian from Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation, and Elder Anges Madeline Potter of Bear River First Nation. The losses of these longtime contributors were felt deeply in our communities.

In 2024, we were proud to sign a new Mi'kmaq-led Agreement on Climate Resilience, advancing our collective responsibility to protect our natural environment in alignment with Netukulimk. This partnership is a continuation of our commitment to Etuaptmumk—Two-Eyed Seeing—and will strengthen our efforts in conservation, adaptation, and capacity building across Mi'kma'ki.

We've also seen further developments in The CMM's service delivery—especially in health, education, and governance. Through the hard work of our departments, and with input from communities, we continue to take steps toward better access, more inclusive programming, and culturally relevant service delivery.

We were especially proud this year to see members of our CMM family recognized for their leadership. Catherine MacEachern was appointed as the organization's first Associate Director of Health. Jacklyn Paul, our Director of Health, joined our organization after Janna MacKay's departure. Jacklyn brings an immense amount of knowledge and experience. Both bring a wealth of experience and a deep commitment to the work ahead.

We also recognized several long-standing staff for their years of service, honouring almost 30 staff who have served the organization for more than 15 years. The recognition of long-term staff was a great reminder of all the amazing people we have, who are committed to our organizations and communities.

As we move into 2025–26, we remain committed to strengthening relationships with our Member Communities, building on a foundation of trust, transparency, and accountability. Our work is deeply rooted in community priorities, and guided by the collective knowledge of our Elders, youth, leaders, and partners.

In closing, I encourage you to take the time to read through this year's report. It reflects the dedication of our staff, the direction of our leadership, and the strength of our communities. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me, our Directors, or Program Managers—we're always here to listen, collaborate, and support.

Thank you for your continued support.

Wela'liek.

Respectfully yours,

Angeline Gillis, B.A., LL.B Executive Director

Crujo Millis



### **Associate Executive Director's Remarks**

### 2024-2025



Kwe' msit wen,
To our Member Communities, Chiefs, Councils,
Elders, youth, and colleagues—thank you for your continued confidence, collaboration, and trust. It is an honour to serve in this organization and to support the important work being carried out across all our departments and within communities.

As Associate Executive Director, I have been working closely with our Executive Director, Directors, and Managers towards ensuring that our organization continues to evolve in a way that reflects the strategic priorities of our Member Communities. It has been a year focused on strengthening internal capacity, deepening cross-departmental collaboration, and ensuring that our service delivery continues to meet the growing and changing needs of communities.

Much of my focus this year has been on enhancing staff support and decision-making capacity—ensuring that our teams are equipped with the tools, processes, and know-how to do their work efficiently and more effectively. I am proud to support efforts that prioritize team wellbeing and foster stronger interdepartmental spaces for more mentorship and leadership opportunities across the organization.

We've seen exciting momentum within departments this year, as new leaders have stepped into key roles and long-standing staff continue to guide and mentor the next generation of professionals. I want to acknowledge the dedication and professionalism of our staff, whose everyday efforts make the success of CMM possible. Their work behind the scenes often goes unrecognized, but it is the backbone of the organization and deserved to be celebrated.

Looking ahead to 2025–26, I remain committed to supporting the systems and people that uphold our vision and mission. As we grow, I will continue to prioritize sustainability, accountability, and responsiveness—ensuring that we remain adaptable while rooted in the principles of Netukulimk, Etuaptmumk, and community-driven development.

Please take the time to read through this year's report. It reflects the scope and scale of what we have accomplished together, and the care with which our staff approach their work. As always, I welcome questions and feedback and remain humbly committed to our strategic path towards organizational excellence and community resilience.

Wela'liek.

Wyatt White B.Sc., M.Ed.
Associate Executive Director



## Sable Island Visit

### 2024-2025

In Fall 2024, The CMM sent a delegation of staff, directors and managers to visit Sable Island. That delegation included DENR Director Alyx MacDonald, Communications Manager Rebecca Page-MacDonald, DARFM Director Tyler Sack, Summer Student Abby MacMillan, Associate Director Wyatt White, Capacity Development Adviser Anthony King and Governance Director Shelly Martin.



### NS Mi'kmaw Communities



**First Nation** 



Wagmatcook

Eskasoni

Potlotek

Membertou

We'koqma'q

www.plfn.ca **Chief Tamara Young** 

**Pictou Landing** 

Sipekne'katik **First Nation** (Indian Brook)



522 Church Street, Indian Brook First Nation, NS B0N 2H0 Ph: (902) 758-2049 email: info@sipeknekatik.ca sipeknekatik.ca

Chief Michelle Glasgow

### **Annapolis Valley First Nation**

29 Toney Blvd Cambridge, NS B0P 1G0 Ph: (902) 538-7149 avfn.ca

Chief Gerald B. Toney

### Millbrook **First Nation**

820 Willow St, Truro, NS B2N 5E5 Phone: 902-897-9199 1-800-693-3112 www.millbrookfirstnation.net

www.glooscapfirstnation.com

159 Smith Rd, Glooscap 35, NS B0P 1P0

email: admin@glooscapfirstnation.com

**Chief Robert Gloade** 

Ph: (902) 684-9788

**Chief Sidney Peters** 

#### **Bear River First Nation**

130 Reservation Rd Bear River, NS B0S 1B0 P.O. Box 210 Ph: (902) 467-3802 bearriverfirstnation.ca

**Chief Carol Dee Potter** 

#### **Pagtnkek** Mi'kmaw Nation

7 Dillon St, Afton Station, NS B0H 1A0 Ph: (902) 386-2781 pagtnkek.ca

**Chief Cory Julian** 

### Wasoqopa'q **First Nation**

10526 Highway #3 Yarmouth, NS B5A 5J7 Ph: (902) 742-0257 Email: frontdesk@acadiaband.ca acadiafirstnation.ca Chief Deborah Robinson





## **CMM Board of Directors**

The Board of Directors, comprised of the eight Chiefs of the member Mi'kmaw communities and the District Chief, governs The CMM. They meet on a monthly basis to give their expertise and guidance to ensure the best interests of the community members are being supported and promoted.



**Chief Deborah** Robinson Wasoqopa'q



**Chief Gerald** B. Toney Annapolis Valley



**Chief Michelle** Glasgow Sipekne'katik



**District Chief Sherry Pictou Bear River** 



**Chief Carol** D. Potter Bear River



**Chief Sidney** Peters Glooscap



**Chief Tamara** Young Pictou Landing



**Chief Cory** Julian Paqtnkek



**Chief Robert** Gloade Millbrook



### Organizational Profile

The Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq (CMM) is a Tribal Council serving the interests of eight Mi'kmaw communities: Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation, Annapolis Valley, Bear River, Glooscap, Millbrook, Pictou Landing, Sipekne'katik and Wasoqopa'q First Nations.

Incorporated in 1986, The CMM was registered as a nonprofit organization in the province of Nova Scotia. Its list of programs and services has expanded and diversified over the past 30+ years of operation.

Initially mandated by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) to deliver advisory services in finance, economic development, community planning, technical services

and band governance, The CMM soon looked to member communities for direction.

The mandate from its member communities took priority and continues to do so today.

The mission statement best summarizes the organization's objectives: To proactively promote and assist Mi'kmaw communities' initiatives toward self-determination and enhancement of community.

The clear support and direction from the member communities has enabled the organization to grow and flourish far beyond its initial INAC mandate.

#### **Management Structure**



**Angie Gillis Executive Director** 



**Wyatt White** Associate Executive Director



Director of DARFM



Alyx MacDonald Director of DENR



Jacklyn Paul Director of DHSS



**Justin Julien** Director of DFA



**Shelly Martin** Director of DGOV



Jim Hepworth CEO of BDSE



**Tim Bernard** Director of MDCC



Trina Khattar Director of DCSI

Pictures by Gord Jones

### **Affiliated Entities**

The CMM operates within a solid accountability framework offering transparency, disclosure and redress to all stakeholders. The organization has consistently maintained a positive financial position since its inception. From its strong foundation, The CMM has also expanded its services and programs by establishing several affiliated entities:

Mi'kmaq Maliseet Nations News (MMNN) in 1992



**Eastern Woodland Print Communications** (EWPC) (Originally called Eastern Woodland Publishing in 1996)



Mi'kmawey Debert Cultural Centre (MDCC) in 2002





### **Department of**

### Finance and Administration (DFA)



Justin Julien,
Director of Finance and
Administration

Email: jjulien@cmmns.com

Director Of Finance & Administration

Occupational Health and Safety Officer

Front Desk Receptionist

Front Desk (3)

Outreach Coordinator

Assistant Finance Controller

Financial Advisor/Adult Care Administrator

Financial Advisor/Adult Intern

Travel Admin Clerk

Accounts Payable Supervisor

Purchasing Coordinator

Director Officer (Financial Communications Manager Manager

Communications Office (3)

Communications Officer (3)

Communications Officer (7)

Accounts Payable Supervisor

Purchasing Coordinator

The Department of Finance and Administration (DFA)has been working to keep apace of The CMM's recent growth, maintaining its high quality of service to Member Communities, and capacity building for our departments. In Fiscal 2024-25, it has overseen numerous new projects, helped study how The CMM functions and its own role in provision of services in human resources, IT, finance, operations Occupational Health and Safety, (OHS) and policy development for Member Communities.

The Department of Finance and Administration's goal is to support all other CMM departments efficiently. In Fiscal 2024-25, DFA participated in several major projects. These include First Nations Financial Management Board (FNFMB) Certification, and a 10-year New Fiscal Relationship (NFR) Grant, milestones reached in collaboration with the Office of the Executive Director (OED) and 21FSP Advisory Partners, a Halifax based business consultancy.

The Human Resources Department hosted 12 job fairs throughout Fiscal 2024-25 and restructured its Summer Student Program to boost the number of students hired, compared to the previous year.

The department also worked with the OED and other departments on Schwenker & Associates' Study of Systems and Processes – the Organizational Excellence Assessment. This entailed a baseline study of business systems, that reviewed key management areas and practices, making recommendations based on a series of webinar interviews with staff.

DFA, trough it's HR was heavily involved in the introduction of a new salary scale system by consultancy firm Korn Ferry.

DFA collaborated with other departments and 21FSP to develop an organization-wide Operations Manual in 2024-25.

The department of Communications has created new procedures to be more efficient and bring communications services to industry standards, with the manager providing support to Member Communities as requested. In Fiscal 2024-25, a request for proposals was sent out to PR and marketing agencies to start the rebranding process for The CMM.

In Fiscal 2024-25, DFA has provided OHS and human resources support to Member Communities, as requested. DFA revised and implemented its OHS policy, training staff members of its OHS Committee, and hosting mandatory information sessions on OHS and Worker's Compensation Board. OHS conducted 33 ergonomic assessments for staff. DFA offered training initiatives that include WHMIS and Fire Warden training, and vulnerable worker training.

A significant challenge in 2024-25 was keeping apace of The CMM's continued, rapid growth – a challenge DFA was able to meet by hiring new staff and streamlining processes relating to projects and staff.



CMM staff celebrate receiving Long-Term Service Awards at Staff Knowledge Day hosted in November.

# A Pita

# Department of Governance (DGOV)



Shelly Martin Director of Governance

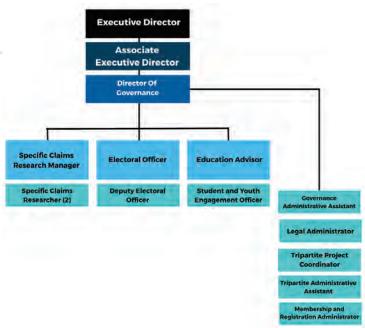
Email: shelly.martin@cmmns.com

The mandate of the Department of Governance (DGOV) is to advocate for legislative changes that will improve Mi'kmaw governance; to plan for and help to facilitate the devolution and transfer of services from provincial and federal government to Mi'kmaw organizations and to work directly with Mi'kmaw communities to outline and implement self-determination in the design and delivery of programs and services.

The department's electoral office secured an election contract with the Nova Scotia Native Women's Association (NSNWA) to do all their elections in Fiscal 2024-25. With just two staff under the governance program, DGOV has been approached to work with, and join many committees. The office works to host fair and unbiased Band elections, referendums and electoral policy support; providing community education and collaborative help to revise election codes and provide employment opportunities in-community.

In Fiscal 2024-25, the Specific Claims Branch (SCB) added six new specific claims to its inventory, adding supporting documentation to the database in the process. These claims will be in development for many years to come, as the branch works through the stages of research outlined by the SCB and Cross-Sector Initiative (CSI). Three of these claims are for Wasoqopa'q First Nation, and three are for Sipekne'katik First Nation. While researching new claims, the SCB identified additional resource databases it's working to access, and found promising information that may lead to future claims being added to the inventory.

The SCB digitized more of its archive in Fiscal 2024-25 – this includes the Anthony Bernard claim, and parts of the Resource References section. SCB staff hosted a Pre-Confederation Panel, while attending the National Claims Workshop at the Canadian Museum of History in Gatineau, as well as a Specific Land Claims Reform Engagement Session Department staff also attended the National Claims Research Directors Conference and Atlantic Policy Congress





CMM Specific Claims Researchers Mark Prosper, Marcus Tracey and Sharing Our Stories Coordinator Mercedes Peters were among those in attendance at the National Claims Research Workshop in Vancouver.

#### of First Nations Chiefs UNDRIP Workshop.

In Fiscal 2024-25, the Mi'kmaq-Nova Scotia-Canada Tripartite Forum hosted 36 working committee meetings, as well as several executive and secretariat meetings. The Tripartite Forum hosted a Working Development Session/All Mi'kmaq Members Meeting in Baddeck, in early June 2024, where committees met and engaged in discussions to find overlaps and priorities. The Tripartite Forum's Project Fund for Social and Economic Change subsidized five projects supporting initiatives that included symposiums on homelessness and economic development, a project encouraging physical activity for Mi'kmaw girls, a Mi'kmaq tourism plan, and the study of Glooscap Legends as a foundation for the revitalization of Mi'kmaq laws – as well as continued funding for a project showcasing Elders' stories from a previous year.

DGOV, through its Education Program, administered and hosts the Sammy Gehue Achievement Awards, celebrating the personal, academic and athletic and community achievements of four Mi'kmaq youths. This past year, Pacey Elizabeth Stevens, Lydia Sheila Turnbull and Jordan Michael Polchies were presented Sammy Gehue Achievement Awards, and Kassie Stevens was presented the Grade 12

Tuition Award on August 15th. The Education Program also supported 75 students throughout Fiscal 2024-25.

The Wills and Estates program provides education on estate planning, coordinates, prepares, reviews and executes wills, enduring powers of attorney, medical directives for CMM community members. In Fiscal 2024-25, Wills and Estates saw an increase in questions about how to get assistance for people who need help with making decisions, but don't have the capacity to do so through power of attorney. On account of this, Wills and Estates is preparing to provide more community supports to help.



CMM Specific Claims Research Manager James Lasaga with Hereditary Chief Stephen Augustine, and Dr. Elder Calvin White of the Flat Bay Band, at the National Claims Research Workshop in Vancouver.

Wills and Estates met with ten community members in the past fiscal year to discuss drafting estate documents, and to address the questions that came up regarding how these documents will help families, and how estates would be settled if a will is not in place. Wills and Estates is also preparing a new presentation for estate planning sessions and a new logo to make the department be more easily recognized.

#### Population Statistics as of 31 March, 2025

COMMUNITY	MEMBERS ON RESERVE	CROWN LAND	MEMBERS OFF RESERVE	TOTAL MEMBERS
PAQTNKEK	461		155	616
ANNAPOLIS VALLEY	122		207	329
BEAR RIVER	121		280	401
PICTOU LANDING	532		165	697
MILLBROOK	1003	4	1445	2452
GLOOSCAP	101		343	444
SIPEKNE'KATIK	232	4	1786	2022
ACADIA	1441	17	1640	3098
GRAND TOTAL	4013	25	6021	10059

Population Statistics printed from IRS database AVFN, BRFN, GFN, MFN, PLFN, and PAQ as of March 31, 2025.of the Flat Bay Band, at the National Claims Research Workshop in Vancouver.

Sipekne'katik Population Statistics from AANDC website as of March 2025

Wasoqopa'q Population Statistics from AANDC website, IRA as of March 2025.

# Governance year at a glance **Education** Recipients of the Sammy Gehue Students sponsored **Achievement Awards** and Scholarship **Recipients of Elementary Achievement Awards Elections** Referendum Communities received sessions on Election Canada's toolkits Bands supported on custom code 🎇 Tripartite Forum Working committee meetings Projects subsidized by the Tripartite Project Fund **Specific Claims** Specific claims research continued



### Department of

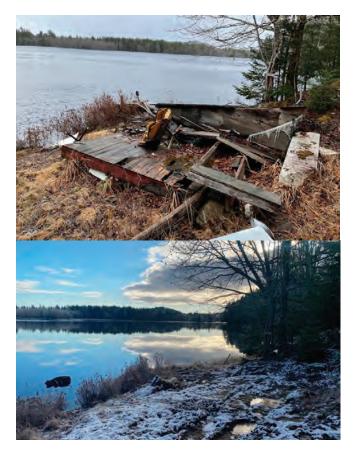
# Community Services and Infrastructure(DCSI)



Trina Khattar, Director of DCSI

Email: trina@cmmns.com

The Department of Community Services and Infrastructure (DCSI) strengthens relationships and provides technical support and assistance to Member Communities by increasing capacity, awareness, youth involvement, addressing community-identified needs and priorities in infrastructure, emergency management, solid waste management and energy efficiency.



Before and after photos from a clean-up in Wildcat.



In Fiscal 2024-25, DCSI augmented its staff by hiring an emergency training and engagement coordinator – who now sits on the Halifax Advisory Committee as a CMM representative as part of an ongoing collaboration with Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency.

This past year, DCSI's Green Communities Program, which helps Mi'kmaw communities become greener, cleaner and more sustainable through recycling and waste diversion and reduction, hit a milestone. In Fiscal 2024-25, Green Communities removed and disposed of more than 1.823 million pounds of illegally dumped waste in an area spanning two CMM Member Communities, since its work began in 2023.

Mi'kmawey Green Communities also conducted 16 community cleanups in Fiscal 2024-25, helping to remove bulky items, and helping community members with mobility issues and without the means, transport larger items to waste facilities.



2024 Graduates of the Atlantic First Nations Emergency Management Program.

Ten students graduated from the Atlantic First Nations Emergency Management Training Program in Fiscal 2024-25, in the program's third cohort of graduates, trained as part of a partnership with NSCC. DCSI has upgraded capacity for Member Communities to track requests, management of housing infrastructure and prepare and track work orders through a web-based maintenance management system.

In Fiscal 2024-25, DCSI collaborated with the National Advisory Committee on First Nations Solid Waste Management, the Joint Table on Waste Management and Unauthorized Dumping, the Chiefs' Committe for Emergency Management and the ISC Regional Emergency Management Coordinator Network. DCSI has also worked with the Atlantic Policy Congress of the First Nations Secretariat, ECO Canada (Acceleration Program for Indigenous Communities), the AFN Chiefs Committee on Housing and Infrastructure, and the Canadian Institute of Planners Indigenous Advisory Committee.



Bear River's Comprehensive Community Plan Implementation Planning

DCSI hosted many in-community projects throughout the 2024-25 fiscal year, from its regular Pop-up Bike Hubs (repairing a total of 205 bicycles) and this year's Pumpkins for Pigs, to a series of special waste and community cleanups. DCSI staff provided training opportunities, ranging from incident command system and rail safety training, to the NSBOA Building Official Program, and Diversion Centre Operator training.

DCSI developed three service delivery models as part of its ongoing transfer of housing and infrastructure services to First Nation communities. In 2024-25, the department consulted six of the eight Member Communities. Of the three service delivery model types – funder model, service provide model, or hybrid model – the hybrid model is the most popular. DCSI chose accountancy firm MNP as the proponent of the project in late 2024.

DCSI's Engineering Services Branch carried out 35 housing assessments throughout Fiscal 2024-25, focusing on Millbrook and Pictou Landing First Nations. The department fielded numerous requests for dumpsite remediation, ranging from battery dump sites to large-scale

### **Community Services** and Infrastructure

year at a glance

### **Housing and Infrastructure**

Work orders logged by community to the Maintenance Management System

Housing Assessments, EMAP, Inspections

Requests logged in the Maintenance Management System



### **Emergency Management**







New Everbridge users across all communities



Various Emergency Management training courses completed

### **Mi'kmawey Green Communities**



Pounds of unauthorized dumped waste removed from our Member Communities

Bikes repaired at our Pop Up Bike Hub cleanups overseen by The CMM, and implemented the ESRI GIS system in Wasoqopa'q First Nation and Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation, leading to better community ability to plan and track maintenance and expenses.

The CMM awarded the contract to carry out Extended Asset Condition Reporting System (EACRS) work this year to EXP Engineering Group, conducting inspections in Pictou Landing, Millbrook, and Paqtnkek in Fall 2024. The CMM also provided extended asset condition reporting system (EACRS) inspections in Miawpukek First Nation (Newfoundland).



DCSI staff preparing for civic sign installation in Yarmouth (Gardner's Mill)

Glooscap and Pictou Landing implemented asset management plans in Fiscal 2024-25, drafted with the help of DCSI. These plans guide decision making, management and renewal of community assets. These plans are an ongoing effort, and will require continual upgrading and revision, based on community need.

DCSI helped Sipekne'katik draft a Community Land Use



Greg Smith performing a housing inspection

Plan, as part of its Comprehensive Community Plan (CCP) for the National Aboriginal Land Managers Association for funding. The department started developing CCPs for Pictou Landing and Wasoqopa'q, and submitted and received approval from Bear River Council for an Implementation Plan.

The department also submitted a two-year implementation funding proposal to ISC, demonstrating a funding gap for developing and implementing CCPs, seeking support for developing plans, training and capacity-building.



Scott MacDonnell, Evan Fougere, and Paula Pictou at the Atlantic Emergency Management Conference in Fredericton



Sipekne'katik Diversion Centre opening: Trina Khattar, Chuck Roberts, Scott MacDonnell, Mitch Harris, Koree Nevin-McDonald with community staff, Katria Stephens, Katrina Knockwood, and Logan Zurbel in front.



Wasoqopa'q's Comprehensive Community Planning Session



### Department of

# Health and Social Services (DHSS)



Jacklyn Paul,
Director of Health & Social Services

Email: jmackay@cmmns.com

The Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) is dedicated to improving the health and wellbeing of Mi'kmaw communities across Mainland NS, providing culturally relevant health and social programming supporting wellness, accessibility, and community capacity.

The department provides critical support services, empowers families and youth to navigate systems and access resources, brings services to the community (mobile clinics, telehealth, local wellness programs), advocates for systemic change (influencing policies to improve Indigenous health and social services) and fosters community-led initiatives rooted in Etuaptmumk.

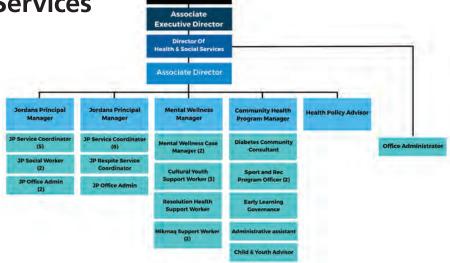


One of the beadwork poppies crafted at an event hosted by DHSS in Annapolis Valley First Nation

DHSS's programs include:

- Mental Wellness, Cultural Youth Support and Resolution Health Support
- Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative
- Jordan's Principle Service Coordination
- Early childhood hearing, speech, and developmental screening
- Sports and Recreation
- Health Policy, Advocacy for change and community capacity building

In Fiscal 2024-25, the department saw a change in leadership, with Jacklyn Paul joining The CMM as Director of



Executive Director

Health and Social Services, and Catherine MacEachern taking on a new role as Associate Director.



The aurora borealis made an appearance during a DHSS Healing Retreat in Liscombe.

A significant challenge for DHSS in Fiscal 2024-25 was dealing with the consequences of federal administrative changes to the funding and program structure of Jordan's Principle. This led to longer processing times, service delays, and uncertainty for families. DHSS proactively dealt with cases, worked directly with ISC to streamline documentation requirements, advocated for urgent cases, and helped families navigate the changes.



Participants in a ribbon skirt workshop displaying their work. The workshop was one of several hosted by the Department of Health and Social Services over the past fiscal year.

Throughout the past year, DHSS hosted a variety of events and administered programming in all CMM Member Communities. These include more than 76 mental wellness workshops, the L'nu Kamakn program, two healing retreats for women who have experienced family violence and served hundreds of community members throughout the year through department programs.



Wood splints used in a wooden flower worskshop hosted by the Department of Health and Social Services in Pictou Landing First Nation.

A wooden flower crafted from splints at a workshop hosted by DHSS in Pictou Landing First Nation.



The department collaborated with the Health Partnership Committee, the Tripartite Health Committee, and Jordan's Principle groups. DHSS also participated in the Atlantic Health Advisory Committee, through which it advocates for Mi'kmaq needs, Indigenous voices in policy and funding decisions, keeps Member Communities informed, builds partnerships with governments and other Indigenous organizations, and helps influence systemic change through collaboration.

Participation by DHSS in external committees benefits Member Communities by securing more culturally relevant, accessible health care and social services, strengthening advocacy for sustainable funding and program improvements, ensuring Mi'kmaq leadership has a voice in the decision-making process, and creating stronger partnerships with better coordination and fewer barriers to accessing care.



Participants in a November youth camp hosted by The CMM in Debert.



Participants in a youth camp hosted by DHSS in Mersey River.





**Photos submitted by CMM Staff** 



DHSS Staff at one of the many retreats hosted by the department in the 2024-25 fiscal year..



Participants in one of the many retreats hosted by the Department of Health and Social Services.

# **Health and Social Services**

year at a glance



Jordan's Principle

Total number of services approved

Active clients in community

1502

On First Nations community

Off First Nations community





Mental Wellness

Community members engaged in mental wellness programs

Workshops and



Clients accessed some form of

Participants during multiple Family Violence Healing Retreats

# community

services

Health Programs

Total for FASD workshops, training, and Assessments for Quality Improvement (AQI)

Participants in the L'nu Kamakn program, across all communities

Hand strung lacrosse sticks

Child and Youth Screeners completed

Children received the the "Moe the Mouse" program





### Department of

Aquatic Resources and Fisheries Management (DARFM)

Tyler Sack, Department of Aquatic Resources and Fisheries Management

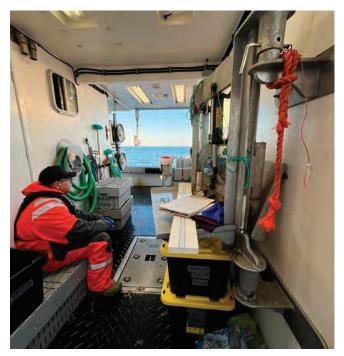
Director

Email: tsack@cmmns.com

Associate
Executive Director

Direct

The Department of Aquatic Resources and Fisheries Management (DARFM) oversees programs and initiatives on behalf of its Member Communities that focus on monitoring species at risk, restoring habitat and ecosystems, providing technical fisheries management, and promoting and restoring the concept of Netukulimk in modern resource management practices. DARFM specializes in programs relating to ocean sciences and climate change, Mi'kmaq stewardship and kinship, Indigenous fisheries, and freshwater and coastal ecosystems.



CMM Resource Management Officer Technician Alfred Young participating in The CMM's Lobster Bycatch Monitoring Program in early 2025.



The view from one of the fishing vessels from which DARFM's Lobster Bycatch Monitoring Program was conducted in early 2025.

DARFM's Ocean Science and Climate Change Branch developed a Mi'kmaw Marine Atlas in Fiscal 2024-25. This tool, made through geographic information systems (GIS), is a central location for Member Communities to access knowledge and scientific data collected by DARFM staff for planning, knowledge-sharing, education, or any other purpose. This atlas provides data sovereignty for Mi'kmaw communities, preserving knowledge for future generations. While not yet publicly available, the atlas was showcased to Member Communities over Fiscal 2024-25.

DARFM has hosted training initiatives in 2024-25 that include fish tagging training, electrofishing and marine emergency duties for three staff members through NSCC. The department hired five new staff, and collaborated with numerous stakeholders from across Mi'kma'ki and Canada.



Branden Hillier and Lachlan Riehl, tagging halibut in the Minas Basin.



DARFM Field Technician Roderick Gould and Fisheries Biologist Lindsay Carroll, participating in DARFM's Lobster Bycatch Program.

In Fiscal 2024-25, DARFM received community feedback on an offshore wind project. The department presented on opportunities and challenges in the sector, at the Net-Zero Atlantic Research and Discussion Forum, and International Institute Workshop on Coastal and Ocean Governance for Indigenous Peoples.

DARFM staff compiled information on coastal and marine sites of importance, with plans to map them. The goal is to protect coastal sites of ecological, cultural and economic significance.



A lobster bearing eggs found during DARFM's Lobster Bycatch Program.

During Fiscal 2024-25, DARFM staff tagged 14 Atlantic halibut, 41 spiny dogfish and 22 striped bass, during spring and fall 2024-25, in the Minas Basin, Cobequid Bay, Stewiacke and Shubenacadie Rivers, as part of its tagging/ocean management fund project. DARFM also carried out field surveys for mud-piddock in July, in the Shad Creek and Sloop Rocks, Saint's Rest, Maitland and Five Houses Road areas.

The department helped to film four documentaries highlighting activities and objectives associated with natural ecosystems, Atlantic mudpiddock, tomcod and salt marsh projects, with Orchard Avenue Studios Ltd.

In Fiscal 2024-25, DARFM uploaded information to the LunaOcean app, printed a Marine Animal Guide for the outer Bay of Fundy, and deployed a spotter wave buoy (to monitor wave and wind data) off the coast of the Whale Sanctuary Site near Sherbrooke, feeding data to the app. The department, with the help of Winged Whale Media, produced six VR videos of the Inner Bay of Fundy.

The department brought together Mi'kmaq women from across Nova Scotia to discuss their experiences, challenges and aspirations in their fishing activities, in a series of collaborative Fisher Women's Gatherings with HR and District Chief Dr. Sherry Pictou, addressing challenges, barriers and uplifting voices of Indigenous fisherwomen.

For the first time, DARFM hosted a hands-on tagging workshop for staff in February, covering tagging techniques, addressing challenges and cultural protocols. DARFM also trained staff and community members in salt marsh restoration.

The department launched a Lobster Bycatch Program – for which it hosted training in Fall 2024. In Fiscal 2024-25, staff went on seven fishing trips abord fishing vessels, under communal lobster licenses, working in Lobster Fishing areas 33, 34, and 35.

DARFM has been working with the Indigenous Habitat Participation Program (IHPP), designating the St. Mary's Watershed as an ecologically significant area – the first designation of its kind in Canada.



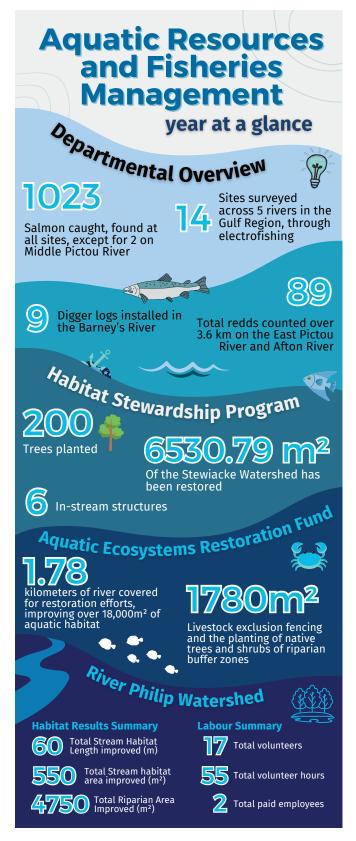
DARFM Staff Members Riley MacLeod, George Sark, Alaric Forde and Branden Hillier, about to release a halibut they tagged in the Minas Basin.

In Fiscal 2024-25, DARFM launched several multi-partner projects:

- Making Room for Wetlands A collaboration with Saint Mary's University and TransCoastal Adaptations, the Department of Agriculture, the Cape Breton Wetland & Environmental Specialists Inc., and Carleton University to restore tidal wetlands in the Inner Bay of Fundy
- The Community Eelgrass Restoration Initiative A project that involved Dalhousie, the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, Ulnooweg, the Zuppa Theatre Company and Ecology Action Centre, mapping and restoring eelgrass beds across Nova Scotia
- River Monitoring A fish monitoring collaboration



DARFM staff and filmmakers from Winged Whale Media, capturing virtual reality content at Burntcoat Head Park.



with Acadia University, and Commerical Fisher Darren Porter, focused on the Avon, Halfway Kennetcook, and St. Croix River watersheds. Staff hosted three presentations, one eel trap workshop and 291 boatbased fishing surveys, observing culvert effects on fish deaths in the Halfway River, and the effects of closed sluice gates on fish in the Windsor Causeway

- Enhancement of Mi'kmaw Communities Engagement in Species at Risk Conservation through SAR Stewardship and Monitoring Projects in Mainland Nova Scotia work between The CMM, Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources, Nova Scotia Salmon Association and Antigonish Rivers Association to restore Salmon/American eel habitat in Antigonish area rivers
- Habitat Restoration and Monitoring for Species at Risk (Stewiacke River) – Work done with the Nova Scotia Salmon Association (NSSA), Canadian Wildlife Federation and Cobequid Salon Association to restore habitat
- Preserving and Enhancing Cold Water Refugia in NS Watersheds (River Philip) – Collaboration between NSCC, the Maritime Aboriginal Peoples Council, the NSSA and Clean Foundation to preserve and enhance refugia (sheltered areas unaffected by climate change) for aquatic wildlife
- Enhancement of Mi'kmaq Communities Engagement in Species at Risk Conversation through SAR Stewardship and Monitoring Projects in Mainland Nova Scotia –A collaboration with the Clean Foundation, DFO and Cape Breton University
- Implementing a Two-Eyed Seeing Approach to Enhance the Recovery and Protection of Atlantic Salmon, American Eel and Brook Floater Mussel Within the Gulf of St. Lawrence Rivers, Bay of Fundy, and Southern Uplands Watersheds of Mi'kma'ki, Mainland Nova Scotia – Collaborative work with the Canadian Wildlife Federation, Pictou County Rivers Association, and NSSA.



Annie Johnson (Vice Chair of AFOA Atlantic), Chief Robert Louie (Westbank First Nation), Tyler Sack (Director, DARFM), and Terry Goodtrack (President and CEO of AFOA Canada), after a plenary session on exercising jurisdiction on lands and climate at the AFOA Atlantic Conference in November 2024.



Staff and summer students, participating in a sweetgrass workshop in the Amherst area.

In Fiscal 2024-25, the Species at Risk in Mainland Nova Scotia Project initiated habitat restoration efforts after discovering strong salmon populations in multiple Gulf Stream connected rivers. Staff also collected data on current and historic brook floater sites, to find what conditions support brook floater populations, and conducted predictive modeling to find previously unknown populations.

DARFM Staff found American eels, using electrofishing in the Afton River, but found no eels in any other Gulf-connected sites. These findings align with community knowledge, indicating a regional decline in eel numbers.

Staff placed 25 temperature loggers in the River Philip to identify potential cold-water refuge areas, and conducted electrofishing surveys at several sites for species assessment. The department also installed a digger log, conducted swim-through surveys for Atlantic salmon, and built community connections in the area.

DARFM partnered with the Nova Scotia Atlantic Salmon Association (NSSA) and the Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources (UINR) to launch Shaping the Future of Nova Scotia's Aquatic Ecosystems, a four-year initiative advancing freshwater restoration by integrating Indigenous and Western knowledge systems. This Federal Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Fund supported project is an effort to build capacity for habitat monitoring and restoration, keeping Indigenous stewardship, values and traditions central in decision making. The CMM's Aquatic Habitat Restoration Advisory Committee formed as a consequence of this partnership – with fishers, Elder and community members guiding restoration efforts with firsthand knowledge of freshwater ecosystems.

Partnership restoration efforts in Fiscal 2024-25 included work in the Antigonish/North Right's River Project, through which DARFM installed 15 in-stream restoration structures and fencing, and planted buffers to help rebuild river meander patterns, improve sediment deposition and

dissipate energy flows, with temperature loggers and bank stabilization along 1.78 KM of river.

In Fiscal 2024-25, DARFM began using a survey app for community members to report information seen on rivers. DARFM also hosted two community eelgrass replanting events – one near Maliko'mjik Island with Pictou Landing First Nation, and another in the Pugwash Estuary with the Friends of Pugwash Estuary – and hosted 10 snorkel biodiversity surveys through 10 eelgrass beds.

DARFM staff hosted numerous community initiatives, including several educational workshops and camps. The department also collaborated with the Clean Foundation and Pictou Landing community members on the Sitmu'k Living Shoreline to monitor progress, and for further planting to prevent erosion.

DARFM collaborated with the Ocean Frontier Institute, the Indigenous Protected and Conservation Areas (IPCA) Working Group, the Assembly of First Nations, DFO, and Natural Resources Canada, and Dalhousie University – bringing together expertise and knowledge systems to promote it's work. This work included building stronger connections between conservation groups and Mi'kmaw communities to better protect freshwater ecosystems; support for the NSSA's Adopt-A-Stream Program; the restoration of damaged habitats and involvement of local communities through outreach, education, and engagement.

DARFM hosted a variety of events throughout Fiscal 2024-25, including riparian tree planting in River Philip, eight community knowledge sharing sessions, two aquatic habitat restoration advisory committee meetings, and a walkthrough of the Afton River with community members to learn about changes in the system and consider areas for restoration and monitoring. The department has also implemented numerous training initiatives, from GIS training and water quality assessment, to electrofishing, communications and First Aid.



DARFM staff members Garret Velkjar, Nikki-Marie Lloyd, and Matt Russell planting sweetgrass in the St. Croix watershed area.





### Department of

# **Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)**



Alyx MacDonald,
Director
of Department of
Environment and Natural Resources

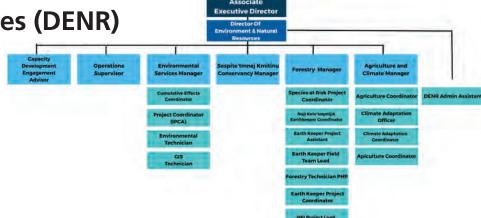
Email: AmacDonald@cmmns.com

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) maintained a strong level of service to Member Communities in Fiscal 2024-25, transferring over responsibility for a major project from another department, implementing plans in areas that include wildlife, forestry, and agriculture.

In Fiscal 2024-25, the Agriculture and Climate Change Branch led community engagement efforts, hosting sessions across multiple Member Communities to gather insights on climate vulnerabilities. Staff used that input to develop community-specific vulnerability maps and lists of recommended climate adaptation actions. Six of eight Member Community maps have been updated, with department and community staff preparing for implementation work.



Earth Keepers Chanelle Melvin (Annapolis Valley First Nation/CMM) and Lenley Melvin (Annapolis Valley First Nation/CMM) joined Nikki Lloyd (CMM) in planting Wisqoq in Glooscap First Nation. Ten trees were planted throughout the community.



Highlights from fiscal 2024-25:

- Held multiple food growing and preservation workshops
- Fruit trees planted in Member Communities
- Medicinal gardens were planted or maintained in Member Communities
- · Plant identification walks were organized



A pair of plovers were followed from the time they arrived at the beach in Pictou Landing First Nations in May, until the pair and two chicks fledged in late August. Signage and symbolic fencing were added to detour beach users and allow the birds safe space. Pictured here is one of the healthy chicks.

The Climate Change and Health Adaptation Project (CCHAP) was transferred from DCSI to DENR in August 2024. With engagement wrapped up, DENR took the lead on finalizing research and drafting a Climate Change and Health Adaptation Plan, to private communities. The resource is focused on connections between climate impacts and health, and providing information and includes a catalogue of 35 actions to adapt to climate-change-related impacts on health.



The Earth Keepers and Forestry staff set up trail cameras to capture any presence of the American marten within the Digby Mi'kmaq Forestry Initiative (MFI) site. Though no martens were captured on camera, other species such as the fisher, grey jay (nikjaku'kwej), and flying squirrel (sasqatu) were attracted to the beaver carcasses that were used as bait.

The plan was drafted, reviewed (in-department and by Communications) and finalized in-house. ICPA Project Highlights include the following:

- Sweetgrass In the Wild and Garden: The department developed successful methods for cultivating sweetgrass in gardens, established mother beds in all eight Member Communities, schools and hospitals; focused on stewardship, habitat assessments and restoring sweetgrass stands and provided a model for IPCA stewardship by increasing access to traditional medicines.
- White Ash Forest to Basket: This project included hands-on training with Elder John Franics on harvesting and basket-making; supporting knowledge transfer promoting stewardship of white ash as an alternative to endangered black ash and involving community to a greater extent in monitoring emerald ash borer threats.
- Native Species, Plant Inventories and Habitat Assessments These projects evaluate cumulative effects of 400 years of human activity on ecosystems, integrating historical, cultural and ecological perspectives for holistic assessments. The project also informs restoration planning, carbon capture strategies and long-term monitoring, while strengthening IPCA management through detailed ecological baselines and adaptive planning.

These projects, which blend ecological science with Indigenous knowledge are important, in ensuring that efforts go beyond protection, actively resorting landscapes, strengthening cultural connections and providing communities with knowledge and resources for effective land stewardship.

In its sixth year of operation, the Mi'kmawey Forest Initiative (MFI) harvested trees in an 80.5-hectare area of forest





In February, Earth Keepers from The CMM teamed up with the Department of Natural Resources to assist with aerial moose surveys across mainland Nova Scotia. With fewer than 1000 mainland moose left, collecting this kind of data is extremely important for understanding their population and overall health. Pictured here, Earth Keeper Selena Denny (Pictou Landing First Nation/CMM) scouting the area for moose activity from a helicopter.

in the St. Croix, and Digby areas, an 81.5-hectare post Fiona cleanup in St. Croix and thinning in a 59.8-hectare area, providing firewood to Bear River First Nation.

The MFI also updated its five-year operating plans, implemented species at risk and bird monitoring in all upcoming harvest blocks and other areas on MFI lands. The MFI codeveloped a hemlock woody adelgid treatment plan with the Province for MFI forest areas in Digby.

The MFI implemented its Archaeological Planning Pilot

in Fiscal 2024-25 with Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn (KMKNO), for forestry planning and operations, focused on soil integrity and archaeological heritage, for harvesting.

Acoustic bat monitors were placed in several communities, and multiple species were detected, including little brown bat, Northern myotis, and tri-coloured bat which are listed as endangered in Nova Scotia.



The MFI worked with the Earth Keepers, who helped with the hemlock woody adelgid treatment program in Digby and provided advisory services for treatment decisions and pesticide application, as well as planning and operations.

The Forestry Branch conducted many species at risk surveys (including aerial moose surveys with the Province, and American marten surveys near Bear River), acoustic monitors for birds (Digby, St. Croix) and for bats, in Member Communities, detecting little brown bats, northern myotis and tri-coloured. Staff also revitalized pollinator garden in Annapolis Valley First Nation and followed two plovers from a Pictou Landing beach, from June -August 2024, when their chicks hatched, adding symbolic fencing and signage to the beach to protect the birds.



This pollinator garden was revitalized with the help of the children at Three Wishes Learning Centre in Annapolis Valley First Nation.



Quinton Collins and Jillian working on a sweetgrass bed..



# Business Development and **Social Enterprise (BDSE)**



Jim Hepworth, CEO of Business Development and Social **Enterprise** 

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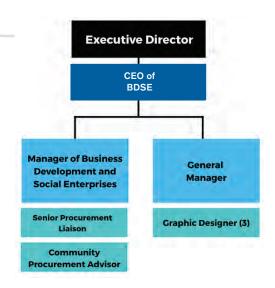
During Fiscal 2024-25, the work of The CMM's Business and Social Enterprise Department has been developed to align with the CMM's mission. Our social enterprise work has two main goals: to achieve social, cultural, community, economic and/or environmental outcomes, and to earn revenue to reinvest into our work.

Eastern Woodland Print Communications (EWPC) has served Mi'kmaw communities for 33 years, offering a wide range of services under the leadership of General Manager Carol Busby.

Through Mi'kmag-Maliseet Nations News (MMNN), EWPC maintains a significant presence in the print and publishing industry, supporting Mi'kmaw communities across Mi'kma'ki and beyond, providing printed materials and custom design services. EWPC's team of four dedicated staff members; three graphic designers, and a manger/editor, provided a range of editorial and graphic design services to a wide range of clients throughout Fiscal 2024-25.



(left) Graphic Designer Nadia Martin, Manager Carol Busby, Graphic Designers Steve Logan, and Evangeline Dedam — The EWPC Team







In Fiscal 2024-25, EWPC produced the annual Mi'kmaw History Month poster, collaborating with Mi'kmawey Debert Cultural Centre, the Elders Advisory Committee and local artist and historian Gerald Gloade, who designed the poster.

In the past fiscal year, EWPC adapted its work and publication schedules to the needs of The CMM's four day work week. While at first that entailed a learning curve, EWPC has found its rhythm, delivering quality service under the new work conditions. EWPC continued its work as a primary supplier for Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey (MK), supporting curriculum development and distribution to schools and departments.

The Procurement Liaison Initiative, a new, federally-funded project, debuted in Fiscal 2024-25, with the hiring of a senior procurement liaison, a community procurement advisor and all foundational infrastructure necessary for project delivery.

Through this initiative, the team hosted in-person seminars and outreach for entrepreneurs, businesspeople and artisans from Member Communities, supporting Indigenous participation in federal procurement.

The team has also launched a CMM-led business directory, receiving active support from businesspeople in several Member Communities, which led to local connections to mentorship and funding organizations. Several businesses registered on the Indigenous Business Directory (IBD) to pursue federal opportunities.

The CMM shut down the development corporation Mainland Mi'kmaq Development Inc., a non-functioning corporation that accumulated significant debt, in Fiscal 2024-25. The corporation was officially dissolved in August.



Procurement Community Sessions hosted by Social Enterprise.

In Fiscal 2024-25, The CMM worked with the Nova Scotia Department of Public Works to deploy artificial reefs (reef balls) made of marine-suited concrete, near Graves Island and Saddle Island and, concludeding a larger coastal restoration effort. The CMM managed the deployment of 403 reef balls in 31 clusters, each consisting of 13 reef balls, yielding a total of 27,900 square meters of habitat offsetting in Fall 2024. These reef balls enhance the natural habitat in waterways, providing habitat complexity and

shelter for animals.



CMM and Planetary Technologies staff, during a tour of Planetary's Tufts Cove based project.

In Fiscal 2024-25, The CMM's Business Development and Social Enterprise department visited Planetary Technologies for discussions on collaborations for potential Indigenous entrepreneur mentorship on carbon credit markets and other projects. Planetary is introducing a deacidification process in the water at Tufts Cove (Halifax), creating a carbon sink, similar to how forests absorb CO2.



An information session hosted by Carbon Run at The CMM building.

In September, The CMM hosted an open house with CarbonRun, a company that specializes in river restoration, by deacidifying waterways with doses of crushed limestone. This limestone also converts carbon dioxide into bicarbonate (a natural ion), which is released into the ocean via deacidified rivers.

In Fiscal 2024-25, the Benjamin's Mill Wind Project received all environmental and municipal permits for it's first phase. The CMM provided environmental monitoring services; these services included auditing of environmental compliance in the construction phase,



The Benjamin Mills Wind Project.

observations through field reports and regular check-ins, and environmental sampling.

The CMM supported the first phase of this 23-megawatt, eight-turbine wind project, collaborating with Natural Forces, a private independent power producer. Construction work began for the project in the same financial year.

Through the Wskijnu'k Mtmo'taqnow Agency Ltd., 13 Nova Scotian Mi'kmaw Bands have an ownership stake in the project, which entails development, construction and operation of the wind turbines located 14 km southwest of Windsor.

Over the past fiscal year, The CMM has provided Mi'kmaq Ecological Knowledge Studies (MEKS) services for RJ McIsaac Marine Recycling and Construction, negotiating with several other companies for upcoming contracts. MEKS services protect Mi'kmaq rights in new projects and developments, creating Mi'kmaq employment and skills development opportunities, while preserving traditional knowledge.

In Fiscal 2024-25, The CMM had discussions with Nexus and Dalhousie on how our Member Communities can become more involved with major project development in Nova Scotia. The CMM launched a review of the necessary skills, knowledge and capacities needed to conduct comprehensive assessments under the Impact Assessment Act (IAA) of Canada.

In Fiscal 2024-25, The CMM launched an organizational need assessment of how we collect data, and the system through which we manage it. This assessment is the first step in the process of implementing a data management system. Other steps include creating protocol on how data is collected, compiled and organized, and the establishment of a system describing how data is managed and stored.

L'nu Office Interiors, a joint venture between The CMM and Office Interiors, provided Mi'kmawey Debert Cultural Centre with workstation partitions and meeting room furniture in its first successful deal, in Fiscal 2024-25.



L'nu Office Interiors, provides office furniture, technology and related services, combining The CMM's community-mindedness with Office Interiors' expertise in creative productive workplaces.

The aim of this partnership is to encourage growth and

opportunity in Mi'kma'ki, offering a variety of products and services, including, office, health care, and educational furniture, wall systems, modular millwork, flooring, sound masking and acoustic paraphernalia, window coverings, printers, copiers print service and maintenance, and cloud-based phone and software services.



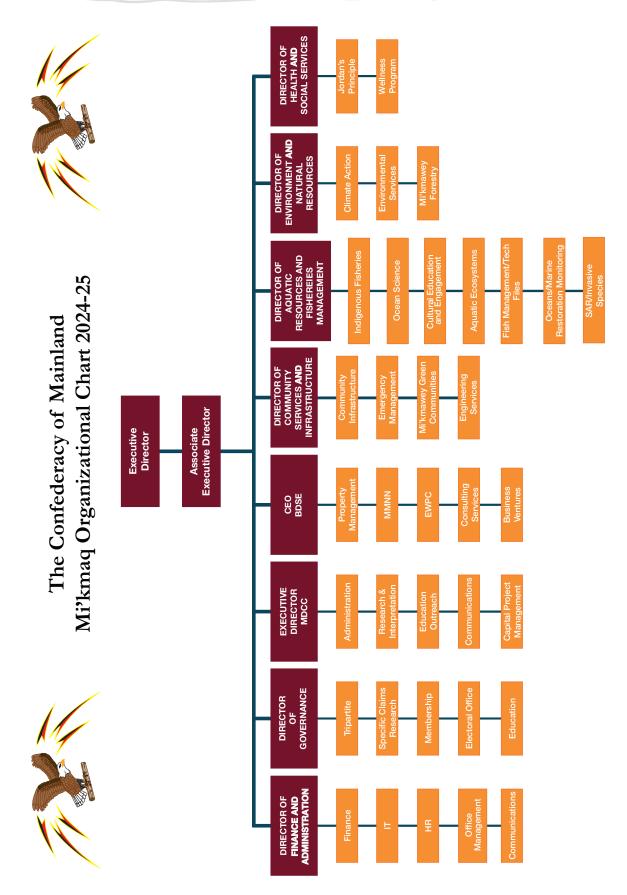


Jim Hepworth and CMM Executive Director Angie Gillis met with Honourable Gudie Hutchings, Minister of Rural Economic Development and Minister Responsible for ACOA, and Jeanetta Hill, ACOA NB Regional Office Director of Operations in October, where Jim and Angie told the minister about The CMM and its Member Communities, and opportunities, challenges, plans, and priorities.



Jim Hepworth and Angie Gillis, during a visit from Gudie Hutchings, Minister of Rural Economic Development and Minister Responsible for ACOA.







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