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NIIWIN WENDAANIMOK

FOUR WINDS

August
2021

Wauzhushk Onigum

Washagamis Bay

Shoal Lake 40

Niisaachewan

Project Recap

Since 2018, the Niiwin Wendaanimok Partnership has been working to secure the territorial interests of the Anishinaabeg of **Wauzhushk Onigum, Washagamis Bay, Shoal Lake 40, and Niisaachewan**. This is the sixteenth newsletter produced since the formation of the Partnership. The Partnership's mandate has been focused on the **twining of Highway 17**, which is proposed to be constructed over 3 Phases between the Manitoba / Ontario border and Kenora ("the Project"). The Partnership has been working hard to understand and mitigate the impacts of the Project and to secure opportunities for the four Nations.

2020 saw the completion of Phase 1 of the **Anishinaabe Aki Kakendamowin (AAK)**, the documentation of the knowledge and practices associated with the care and protection for the lands, skies, soils, and waters. This knowledge has been used to identify and assess potential impacts of Phase 1 of the Project through the unique Harmonized Impact Assessment (HIA). The HIA was brought into ceremony on April 30th, 2021 and is now publicly available at <https://niiwinwendaanimok.com/#hia>.

As part of the harmonized process, the Ministry of Transportation Ontario ("MTO") was also working on their own assessment. This assessment, known

as the **Transportation Environmental Study Report (TESR)** has recently been completed and is now publicly available. **See page 2 to learn more!**

The Partnership is currently in the process of building an **Anishinaabe Guardians Program**. This will provide opportunities for community members to be responsible for protecting their traditional territories by enforcing the Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and ensuring all mitigation measures in the HIA are being followed when construction begins. **See page 3 to learn more!**

Transportation Environmental Study Report

Ministry of Transportation document available for public review

The Ministry of Transportation Ontario ("MTO") has recently completed their Transportation Environmental Study Report ("TESR") for Phase 1 of the Project. As part of the Ministry's environmental assessment process, a notice of completion was published on July 29th, 2021 in the Kenora Miner and Wawatay News. The TESR is available for a 30-day public comment period on the study website: <https://4lanehighway17kenora.ca/>. Completion of this report is an exciting step in helping the Project move forward!



Introducing Evan Fisher

Boozhoo, my name is Evan Fisher. My position with the Partnership is the Participant Success Navigator.

My job entails oversight of the Community Navigators, ensuring that they have the support needed to bring programming, training and employment opportunities to the Indigenous communities. Offering services and supports that will aid in an individual being able to build their capacity and skills.

I bring a wide variety of skills that I've learned through various jobs, training and life skills. I was a Police Officer, a Forestry Technician, an Enforcement Assistant, Resource/Fisheries Technician, Child Care worker, Early Years Driver, Pandemic Coordinator, among other titles. Most importantly I am a father of 6 beautiful children.

I believe this project is important because it really gives great opportunities back to the First Nations. For too long we have not been given the chance to build our success. We have to say Chi-Miigwetch to our Leaders for advocating and fighting for these opportunities.

What I am most excited about is seeing the progression of each individual as they build their life through the training and employment opportunities that we will provide. Seeing the project completed with flying colours. Knowing that I can help people build themselves up for a successful career is what makes me happy. These are exciting times.

Traditional Teachings

Ginoozhég (Northern Pike/Jackfish)



The AAK provides a valuable opportunity to safeguard traditional knowledge for future generations. With education as a key principle of the MAI, these newsletters include traditional teachings shared by community members during the AAK. This month we would like to share some teachings on ginoozhég (northern pike or jackfish).

Ginoozhég live in shallow and vegetated areas on the shores of lakes and rivers, creeks, and streams. These shallow areas are ideal for ambushing prey and spawning. Ginoozhég are top predators of many waterways and feed on giigoonh (fish) species such as asaaweg (yellow perch), odoonibiinsag (cisco), and rainbow smelt.

They will also attack and consume unwanted visitors to their territory including ashaageshiinyag (crayfish), waawaabiganoojinyag (mice), waterfowl, wauzhushkwag (muskrat), and omagakiig (frogs).

Ginoozhég have an inherent role in Anishinaabe tradition through the odoidaymiwan (Clan System), representing swiftness and elegance. Through fishing, ginoozhég represent a source of sustenance and livelihood for the Anishinaabeg, as well as an opportunity to share teachings and spend time together with loved ones. Although use has changed over time, ginoozhég continue to be an important component in the Anishinaabe way of life.



Anishinaabe Guardians Gatherings

The Niiwin Wendaanimok Partnership is currently building an **Anishinaabe Guardians Program ("AGP")**. This will provide opportunities for community members to be responsible for protecting their traditional territories by enforcing the Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and ensuring all mitigation measures in the HIA are being followed when construction begins.

The Partnership recently held Guardians Gathering events on July 20th, 2021 in Wauzhushk Onigum and Niisaachewan, and July 21st, 2021 in Washagamis Bay and Shoal Lake 40 to introduce the AGP.

A virtual session was held on July 26th, 2021 for those who were unable to attend in person, and an informational video about the AGP will soon be available on the NW facebook.

If you are interested in getting involved or have any questions, reach out to us on Facebook or contact your Community Coordinator!

Translation Services Needed

Are you fluent in Anishinaabemowin and English? The Niiwin Wendaanimok Partnership is in search of translation services so that documents and materials can be made available in Anishinaabemowin. If you or someone you know is able and willing to provide Anishinaabemowin translation, please email info@niiwinwendaanimok.com or send us a message on Facebook!

The Niiwin Wendaanimok in Action

Here are a few of the activities and meetings conducted since the middle of July.



13

MTO Contracts Meeting



14

Chiefs' Meeting



20

Guardians Gathering in Wauzhushk Onigum



20

Guardians Gathering in Niisaachewan



21

Guardians Gathering in Washagamis Bay



21

Guardians Gathering in Shoal Lake 40



21

Pandemic Response Training



26

Virtual Guardians Gathering

Follow us on
Facebook!



Be sure to follow our page for updates, current news on the project, upcoming events and contests, and chance to give your feedback

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The Niiwin Wendaanimok Community Coordinators are responsible for setting up meetings and managing logistics in each community. If you'd like to contribute to the project or know a friend or family member who might (including catering or assisting with distributing fliers or other support), please give your Community Coordinator a call!