



Photo: Niisaachewan Boat Trip (August, 2019)

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# NIIWIN WENDAANIMOK

FOUR WINDS PARTNERSHIP

October  
2019

Shoal Lake 40

Obashkaandagaang

Niisaachewan

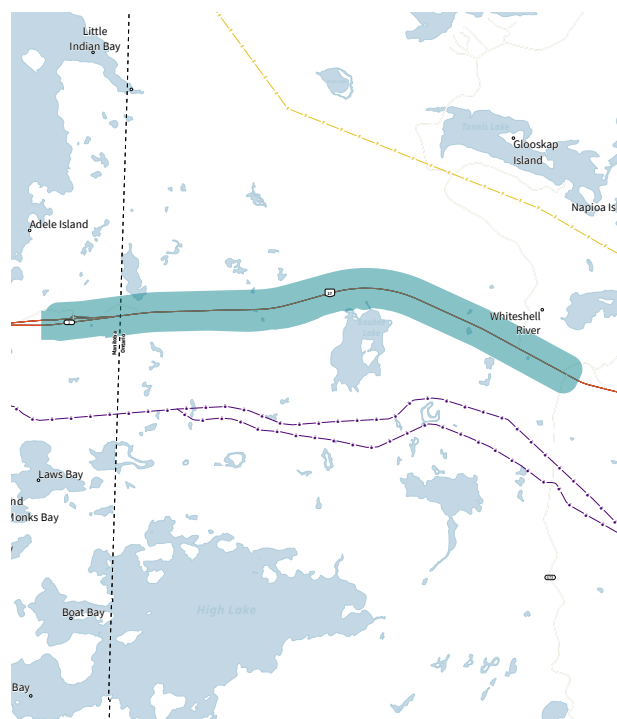
Wauzhushk Onigum

## Project Recap

A **Unity Agreement** was signed between the Nations of Shoal Lake 40 First Nation, Obashkaandagaang, Niisaachewan Anishinaabe Nation, and Wauzhushk Onigum Nation in October 2018 to coordinate the Nations' shared experience, concerns, and interests as they relate to the Twinning of Highway 17 between Manitoba/Ontario border and Kenora. This agreement marked the beginning of the Niiwin Wendaanimok Partnership. And this newsletter is the third one produced since formation of the partnership.

Since May 2019, the Niiwin Wendaanimok Partnership has been undertaking the Anishinaabe Aki Kakendamowin (AAK), referring to the documentation of the knowledge and practices associated with the care and protection for the land, its life, and its spirit. With Phase 1 of MTO's Highway 17 Twinning Project approaching the environmental approvals stage, knowledge from the AAK is informing an understanding of the potential impacts of the Project.

The AAK Team has begun meetings with each of the Niiwin Wendaanimok communities to consider the impacts of the Twinning Project on their lands in Treaty 3 Territory. Documentation of the AAK will continue over the next several years to help with future Phases of the project.



# The Niiwin Wendaanimok in action.

Here are a few of the activities and meetings conducted in August and September.



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## Niisaachewan Sweat Ceremony



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## Niisaachewan Community Meetings



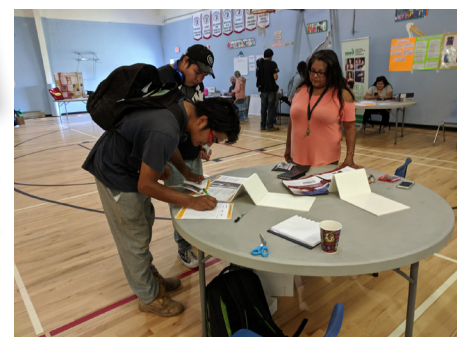
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## Obashkaandagaang Interviews



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## Shoal Lake 40 Community Event



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## Niisaachewan Ground Truthing Boat Trip



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## Niisaachewan Interviews



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## Wauzhushk Onigum Elders' Meeting



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## Wauzhushk Onigum Impacts Discussion



## Harmonized Impact Assessment

As part of a new and exciting approach to understanding the potential impacts of the Twinning Project, the Niiwin Wendaanimok will be co-authoring the environmental assessment report with MTO. This process is being called a Harmonized Impact Assessment.

Impact Assessments allow us to document impacts of projects on the environment, health, culture, and livelihoods. Impact Assessments are meant to be a tool to better plan projects such as the Twinning of the TransCanada highway so positive outcomes can be enhanced, and negative effects reduced. Typically for projects, the proponent (in this case the MTO) would undertake the Impact Assessment with some input or feedback from the Nations, based on Canadian laws. However, this approach limits the application of the Manito Aki Inakonigaawin (MAI).

The Niiwin Wendaanimok Partnership is therefore pushing the boundaries of how Impact Assessment should occur on Anishinaabe territory. To make sure all assessments follow our MAI, the Partnership has negotiated a Harmonized Impact Assessment process, which is now underway. This process will further allow the Partnership to gather and document evidence of impact for further negotiations.

This approach combines the jurisdictions of two nations - that of Canada (through Ontario) and that of the Anishinaabe of Treaty #3. It considers contemporary science and policy on the one hand, and the Anishinaabe Resource Law of the Manito Aki Inakonigaawin (MAI) on the other. Most importantly, the Harmonized Impact Assessment process recognizes a shared authority and shared responsibility for stewardship and decision-making on Treaty lands.

The Niiwin Wendaanimok is hopeful that this effort captures the true meaning and spirit of a Nation-to-Nation partnership.



## The Manito Aki Inakonigaawin: Our Teachings, Our Protocol



As noted in our previous newsletter, in every newsletter we will cover off key teachings of the Manito Aki Inakonigaawin. This is important as a guiding principle for building relationships, partnerships, communications and exercising environmental responsibility. The MAI will continue to guide the Niiwin Wendaanimok Partnership and the

Ministry of Transportation Ontario on joint processes on implementation, operationalization, and harmonization on this Twinning Project.

For this newsletter, we would like to focus on the Visioning Phase as explained under the MAI. The Anishinaabe People know very clearly who we are, and why we take on new major initiatives. Our Anishinaabe People are experts on environmental scanning and seek a clear vision before any such undertakings. We make sacred offerings. We fast. We meditate. We conduct extensive ceremonies. We prepare with the greatest care and guided by the Seven Laws of Creation. We do this together. We carefully consider our mission, our vision, and are guided by our values and principles.

Thus, in times of critical challenges or conflict, we can act quickly, decisively, because we have a clear knowledge of our purpose and our priorities. Our ability to do so allows for our Vision to be clear, and our Visioning Phase to be key to informing what we do.

## Logo Competition: Announcing Our Winner!

The Niiwin Wendaanimok Partnership held a logo competition. We asked people to create a logo that would represent the vision of this partnership. We are happy to announce the winner: Terry Greene from Niisaachewan Anishinaabe Nation!

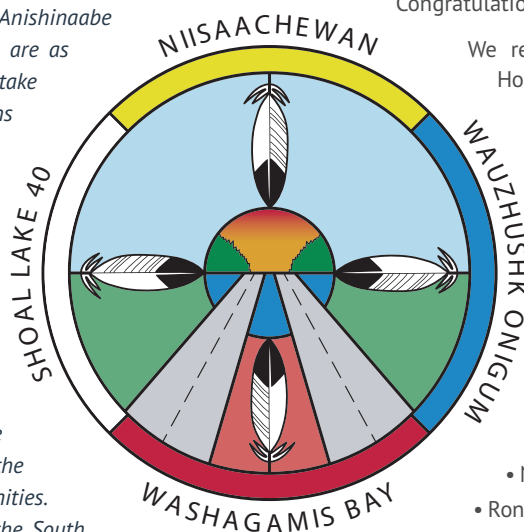


*represents acknowledgement of the Memegwesiwag (the little people) who will be disturbed as a part of this highway, and an acknowledgement of Burial Grounds, Sacred Sites and Ceremonial Grounds that should be protected. Also, when we pray, we ask the Creator to send helping spirits from the four directions to come help us. Waabinong (the East), Zhaawanong (the South), Epangishmok (the West), and Kiiwediningong (the North).*

*This logo is a reminder that we will continue to seek guidance, take our time and do things right so we can honour who we are as Anishinaabe Peoples."*

When asked to describe his logo, Terry said,

*When asked to describe his logo, Terry said "This logo represents our acknowledgement of our Anishinaabe identity, our Treaty rights, and who we are as Peoples. It represents making sure we take our time and do things right. It means we be careful and consider our lands, our duties, and our obligations. Niiwin Wendaanimok means the Wind comes from four directions. The Highway is from the West to East, so I moved the medicine wheel colours to reflect that. I made the road to symbolize our Anishinaabe path (red road). The smaller circle represents Treaty 3; with its sunrise, trees, and water. The feathers represent the four winds, the four directions, and the four communities. To the East is Wauzhushk Onigum, to the South is Obaashkaandagaang, to the West is Shoal Lake 40, and to the North is Niisaachewan Anishinaabe Nation. This logo*



Congratulations Terry!

We received many entries for this competition. Honourable mentions to go the following:

- Bansi Lal Ketki
- Connie White from Shoal Lake 40
- Daniel Skead from Wauzhushk Onigum
- Danielle Sinclair from Washagamis Bay
- Jeremy Chesson from Niisaachewan
- Kailey Daniels from Shoal Lake 40
- Kirk Boucher from Shoal Lake 39
- Kyla Henry from Niisaachewan
- Lakeyshia Sinclair-Fobister from Obashkaandagaang
- Natalie Henry from Niisaachewan
- Ronald Kabestra from Niisaachewan
- Yvonne Castel from Shoal Lake 40

We thank everyone for sharing their vision with us, showing care, and taking the time to make submissions.

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## Contractors Event

A key component of the MAI is building economic partnerships and opportunities and engaging with those around us in a meaningful way. On October 15th and 16th, the Niiwin Wendaanimok Partnership met with several reputable contractors from the region who have significant expertise and experience with large-scale highway construction. These meetings helped the partnership initiate a strategy for building economic alliances in Treaty 3. The Partnership looks forward to continuing to have discussions with local companies and service providers for this important task ahead.

