

22/  
23



Fisher River  
CREE NATION



**Community**  
Report

Report





# Fisher River

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## CREE NATION

Fisher River Cree Nation is a community in which our history, language, traditions, and culture are paramount to who we are as a people. We will protect and maintain the spirit and intent of the treaties and our inherent rights. Fisher River will be a self-sustaining progressive community with a strong and accountable government. We will provide an environment where all people are healthy, safe, and respected.

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**Monday – Friday: 8:30 am – 4:30 pm, closed for lunch**



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# Chief & Council Update

The Fisher River Cree Nation Chief and Council are pleased to provide an update on the key initiatives and accomplishments of this past year. The 2022-2023 Annual Report outlines the work that has been done to ensure that we protect our treaties, community, lands and resources.

For fiscal year 2022-2023 we were still battling with the COVID 19 pandemic, however there was a significant decrease in the COVID 19 outbreaks at the end of March 2022 and we opened up our businesses, entities, our school, and started to have in-person meetings with our Federal and Provincial partners. It has been challenging for our nation during this time, however we are a resilient people and together we fought the battle and came together as one.

Another one of our challenges we had to face in May of 2022, was the flood. Some areas of our community were underwater, and we could not access the road to get out of the community so our First Nation had to declare a state of emergency. Some of our people had to be evacuated to the City of Winnipeg and Selkirk. Once again, our community members banded together to help fight the flood.

In spite of all these situations over this past year, our administration was able to complete some of the goals that were established and work has begun on

constructing the following projects: Transitional Shelter Home for Women, Red Turtle Lodge, Expansion of the new store, an outdoor recreational hall, renovations for the Charles Sinclair School, and completion of the East Side Road. We are pursuing other projects such as the new Health Facility, Policing Services, and Jordan's Principal building, and the expansion of our land fill. We are anticipating that this fiscal year we will see the fruition of the Child Welfare Law come into effect.

On August 3 – 6, 2023 our First Nation successfully hosted the National Cree Gathering. The gathering brought several Cree communities together to celebrate our culture and heritage.

Our future vision and a mission give us clear direction to provide ongoing delivery services that will address the needs of our community and to improve the lives of every community member.

Ekosani

Chief David Crate, Councillor Delaney Mason, Councillor Hillary Murdock, Councillor Darrell Thaddues, Councillor Barry Wilson





# Director of Finance Update

Fisher River finance had a busy 2022-2023 fiscal year as we work through the aftermath of COVID and begin the year with new challenges as well as some great new opportunities. The most impactful events in 22-23 were the spring 2022 flood and the new “Back to Basics Approach” under Jordan’s Principle. The Intention is to move this program from Health to Administration starting in the 2023-2024 fiscal year. The flood, which started in early May of 2022 caused many community members to be evacuated due to flooded homes. Thankfully, the Fisher River Community pulled together and were able to minimize the damage. Floods create an immense reporting burden on finance, however, the majority of the claims were submitted and approved before the end of the 2023 fiscal year. Finance Administration added an additional employee to the finance team this past year in order to accommodate the additional work load. Fisher River will need to tighten their belt in the coming years as inflation is higher than it has

been in decades. As loan renewals become necessary, the increase in interest rates will cause the cost of borrowing to more than double.

Due to COVID and new funding opportunities for projects that could not be fully completed by the fiscal year end, there are large deferrals across most entities, most of which will need to be expended in the 23-24 fiscal year.

Emphasis was placed on Sports and Recreational





activities in 22-23, as isolation ends there is a need to make up for lost time and get the community back to socializing and engaging with one another; particularly the youth and children as the impact of COVID will be felt for years to come.

There were some large projects approved in 2023 including the Transitional Housing Complex, the Red Turtle Lodge, the Grocery Expansion, New Home builds as well as ongoing home renovations.

We have been working on recruiting a proposal writer. It is Fisher River's intention to make proposal writing a priority in order to tap into new initiatives being offered by government including CHRT-41 for Capital Projects and CHRT-41 for Jordan's Principle. Both provide unprecedented opportunities for First

Nations to better serve the most dis-advantaged members of the community.

Fisher River had a good year financially speaking, with reduction in net debt of 4.8 million and an overall operating surplus of 5.1 million. See Appendices for further details on overall revenues and expenses.

As Director of Finance I would like to see more emphasis placed on investing in revenue producing ventures off reserve in order to bring revenue into the community to create self-sustainability and increase wealth for the community for the long term.

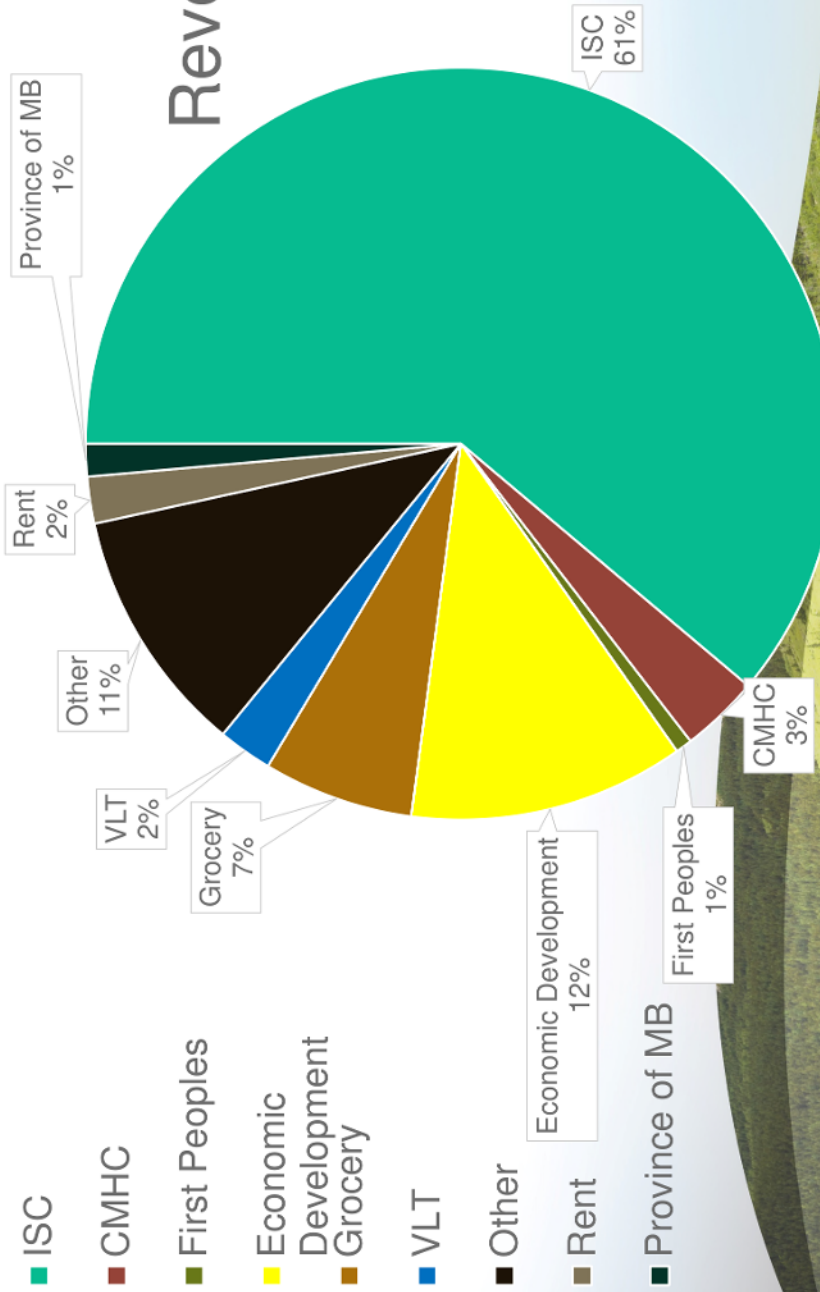
Ekosani

Eileen Loepp, CPA, CGA, CAFM





# Revenues



ISC

CMHC

First Peoples

Economic Development

Grocery

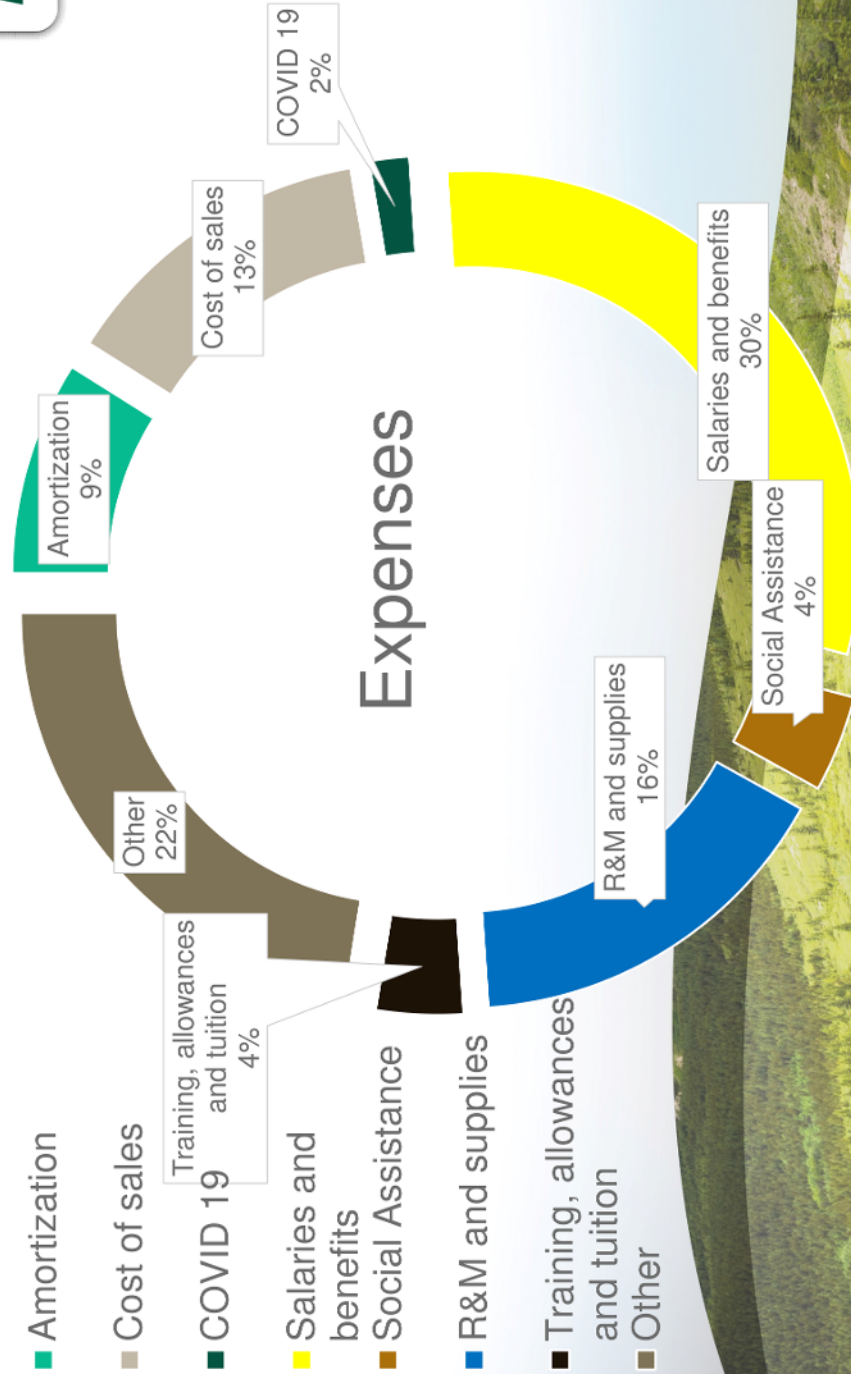
VLT

Other

Rent

Province of MB







# Fisher River Reconciliation

The Reconciliation Team has been involved with several ongoing projects including drafting the governance code which was signed by Council in 2022 as well as the custom election code. In respect to the custom election code, two referendums were held in 2023. The first was in February, the majority of votes were in favour of the Election Code but the threshold required by Canada was not reached. The second vote held in May 2023 was unsuccessful. Reconciliation is also preparing a Board Governance Code to serve as a terms of reference for all FRCN boards as requested by Council.

## Community Engagement

As a result of many meetings Reconciliation has held with FRCN entities, a community wellness planning meeting was organized to discuss departmental activities as well as serve as an opportunity for everyone to come together to work towards finding solutions and offering support to each other. The meetings were held on March 9th and 10th at Hecla Lakeview Resort. This meeting was a great first step to creating a wholistic approach to community wellness. Departments continue to meet on a monthly basis and assist each other with community initiatives.

## Community Events

Reconciliation has led and assisted with community events which include the following:

Niska (Goose) Camp held in April 2023. Students from CSS and FRHS were in attendance each day. They learned how to clean geese and tan hides as well as had the opportunity to hear stories from FRCN Knowledge Keepers and Guest Speakers. It was a very successful event as it was supported by all departmental entities as well as visitors from neighbouring communities.

Another program led by Reconciliation is Mitehikawiy (Heart Mother). It was held once a week for 7 weeks.



The program was a gentle form of learning where participants gained knowledge of Traditional teachings on smudging, preparing a traditional feast, Cree language, FRCN history, medicines and more basic teachings. There were also traditional handicrafts which went along with each teaching discussed.

Reconciliation has also offered ribbon skirt/shirt workshops once a week from April to June with support from other community entities. The workshops will start again in September.

Reconciliation also supported community events; i.e. Christmas, Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, Heritage Day, Festival of the Arts (CSS & FRHS), Moosehide Campaign, MMIW Walk, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Pride Parade, National Indigenous Peoples Day, Women's Gathering, and Treaty Days.

## Norway House Project

In 2023, Reconciliation began discussions with Dr. Moss Norman, UBC, regarding a collaboration with Norway House Cree Nation. He visited FRCN on May 25th to meet the Reconciliation team to provide a historical background of his project. It was determined that the next step would be to meet with the Norway House team to discuss possible project ideas. This meeting will take place August 30, 2023 in Winnipeg.





### **RIRSD Table Meetings**

In March 2023, Reconciliation submitted the workplan for the 2023/24 year which outlines the objectives and deliverables for the year. Reconciliation continues to hold regular meetings with the RIRSD lead negotiator and staff. Recently, the RIRSD Team with Canada travelled to FRCN to discuss the issues which presently affect the community. The meeting concluded with a tour.

### **Research**

Reconciliation continues to offer support to Dr. Winona Wheeler as she conducts research for the FRCN community history book. She and her research assistants have been gathering documents and information for this community history book in addition to other projects related to Cows & Plows and Treaty 2 Boundaries.

### **FRCN Child & Family Law**

Reconciliation continues to be a part of the team establishing FRCN's Child & Family Law. The FRCN working group met bi-weekly with the Cochrane Saxberg team to complete the critique of the draft. A separate briefing will be done by the Cochrane Saxberg team.



# Fisher River Child & Family Law

## What is Bill C-92?

Bill C-92 came into force as federal law on January 1, 2020 as An Act respecting First Nations Metis and Inuit children, youth and families (still at times referred to as Bill C-92).

Bill C-92 established national standards for Indigenous children in child welfare and it also established a path for Indigenous governing bodies to enact their own laws with respect to child and family services.

Fisher River retained our law firm, Cochrane Saxberg, in March 2021 to assist in the development of a Fisher River Child and Family Law further to Bill C-92.

## What has Fisher River Cree Nation accomplished to date?

### Notice of Intention

On September 30, 2020, Fisher River formally passed a resolution to:

- be recognized as the “Indigenous governing body” (as defined in Bill C-92) for Fisher River Cree Nation members;
- develop and implement a Child and Family Law based on Cree law;
- undertake the responsibilities over prevention services, early intervention services, and child protection services for Fisher River Cree Nation.

On the same date, September 30, 2020, Fisher River sent correspondence to Canada and Manitoba pursuant to subsection 20(1) of Bill C-92 giving notice of Fisher River’s intention to exercise legislative authority in relation to child and family services and enclosed the resolution mentioned above.

The correspondence to Canada included a workplan and budget for both the community and legal to begin the work on developing the law, this is now known as a “capacity-building” proposal.



### Funding

Fisher River received capacity building funding from Canada in the amount of \$550,000 for the fiscal year of 2020-21 and again for the fiscal year of 2021-22.

On June 16, 2023, Canada sent Fisher River correspondence that the request of an additional \$345,182 for capacity building funding for the 2023-24 fiscal year will be funded.

### Law Development Process

In the Spring of 2021, a Working Group was convened to guide the law drafting process. The Working Group was made up of Elders, ICFS Board Members, the Executive Director of ICFS, the Community Justice Coordinator, health workers, etc.

The Working Group met bi-weekly from March 2021 to August 2022 to discuss a wide range of topics on child and family services, including:

- Traditions, laws and ceremonies that apply to families and children;
- How children were cared for prior to colonization;
- Key definitions such as “family”, “customary care” and “customary adoption”;
- The shortcomings of the provincial child and family services system;
- The concept of “need of protection” and apprehensions in the provincial system;
- Prevention and early intervention methods;
- Development of circles of care for families to convene and reach family-driven resolutions;



- Wholistic approach to child welfare through the creation of a Child Care Committee;
- What the scope of the Fisher River Child and Family Law will be;
- Dispute resolution mechanisms, such as creating a Fisher River Tribunal to hear all matters relating to child and family services;
- Requirements of agency employees;
- How children's views and preferences will be considered;
- Etc.

In the fall of 2022, a smaller Technical Working Group was convened to review the first draft of the Fisher River Cree Nation Child and Family Law that had been drafted based on the Working Group discussions. The group included the Elders Executive, ICFS Board Members, and the Executive Director of ICFS plus a designate.

We have met with the Technical Working Group through September 2022 to July 2023. The group has received and reviewed three drafts of the Fisher River Cree Nation Child and Family Law and has discussed next steps in the Bill C-92 process.

Community consultations in community and in Winnipeg have also taken place to provide updates and receive feedback on the draft law.

## ***Coordination Agreement Preparation***

### **Agency Preparedness**

Our team met with the ICFS senior staff in March and April 2023 to discuss their current service delivery and transitional matters that will be discussed at the coordination agreement table.

Examples of matters that will come up, particularly with Manitoba, are the following: intake and emergency services, abuse investigations, placement resources, records, information sharing, etc.

### **Fiscal**

Fisher River entered into a Collaborative Research Agreement with the Institute of Fiscal Studies and Democracy (IFSD) in August 2022.

The overall expectation of the agreement is to build a funding approach for the delivery of child and family services. The expected outcomes of the project is to receive budgets, capital needs assessment, assessment of organizational models to deliver services, test indicators to measure well-being, and to support the reform and transition of First Nations child and family services.







We understand that draft budgets have been provided to date but are only focused on Fisher River Cree Nation, and does not include off reserve members.

### ***Request to Enter into Coordination Agreement Discussions***

On July 27, 2023, Fisher River sent correspondence to Canada and Manitoba pursuant to subsection 20(2) of Bill C-92 to formally request to enter into a coordination agreement.

The correspondence to Canada and Manitoba included a brief overview of the Fisher River child and family services model stating that it will be focused on core values, prevention services, family decision making, and keeping children connected to families and the community. It also stated Fisher River's intention to exercise jurisdiction recognized in section 18(2) of Bill C-92 with respect to dispute resolution processes by creating a Tribunal.

### **What are the next steps?**

#### ***Coordination Agreement Discussions***

The Coordination Agreement stage is where Fisher River will sit down with Canada and Manitoba to discuss transitional issues and other issues such as funding and implementation of the Fisher River

system. The intention of the table is to enter into a Coordination Agreement between all three parties.

Pursuant to sections 21-22 of Bill C-92, an Indigenous governing body's law will have the force and effect as federal law and prevail in the event of a conflict with provincial laws if reasonable efforts are made to enter into a coordination agreement for one year after the request is made or an agreement is entered into.

Now that Fisher River is in the coordination stage of the Bill C-92 process, we need to develop a coordination agreement budget. There is no formal request for proposals for these budgets or limit, however, Canada has stated that funding will be provided for matters that can be connected to the work at the table. Examples are participation at the table, IT support, engaging experts for fiscal negotiations, etc.

For the fiscal negotiations, we need to ensure that we have the proper expertise and analysis done on all aspects of funding the Fisher River child welfare system. The work that is being done by IFSD will need to be reviewed to determine if additional fiscal expertise is needed to support the discussions at the coordination agreement table.



# Fisher River Economic Development Corporation

## Board of Directors

- Lorne Cochrane, Chair
- Dion McKay, Vice Chair
- Willy Whiteway
- Josh Sinclair
- Stanley McKay
- Cliff Kirkness
- Doug Beyer

## Management

- Patrick McKay, Director of Operations
- Maxine Murdock, Executive Assistant and Human Resources

## Fisher River Economic Development Corporation serves as business oversight for the following businesses:

- Fisher River Building Supplies (Castle)
- Fisher River Grocery
- Bay River Inn and Suites
- Bay River Developments
- Fisher River Car Wash and Laundromat
- Fisher River Outfitters
- Fisher River Business Centre
- Mikisew Security

Fisher River Economic Development Corporation continues to promote the mission and vision of the organization on behalf of Fisher River Cree Nation. To continue being progressive with respects to our objectives, we continue creating employment in the community. We employ up to 100 people with our Fisher River Building Supplies company during construction season. The Fisher River Grocery store employs 20 community members, Bay River Inn &



- Beachcove Campground & RV Park
- Fisher River Pharmacy (Partnership)
- Fisher River Solar Farm

## Mission

The Fisher River Economic Development Corporation, on behalf of the Fisher River Cree Nation members, will identify, develop, and undertake activities that will expand employment, stimulate economic activity, and contribute to overall community investment

## Vision

Fisher River Economic Development Corporation along with Fisher River Cree Nation Chief and Council has been involved in and serves as a catalyst and facilitator for Fisher River Cree Nation and its members. The corporation creates new revenue streams through its oversight, investment and partners in business.

Suites employs 6, and the Car Wash and Laundromat employs 4 community members, respectively.

Fisher River Economic Development fully understands that our community is situated at the end of the highway. With this in mind, we must continue to look at ways to add to the economy and ensure self sufficiency. In 2022, We had the grand opening of the Fisher River Business Centre. We

have re-established the Fisher River Outfitters, and continue to promote Bay River Developments, and will begin establishing Beachcove RV Park in 2023. It is our goal to promote our community as an attractive visitor destination for all. These new businesses will ensure to combine new opportunities with the existing products and services we currently offer.

Please have a look at our current businesses below:

### **Fisher River Building Supplies**

Fisher River Building Supplies, a Castle Building Centres Franchise, is a retail home and building supplies centre located in Fisher River Cree Nation. We carry lumber, seasonal goods and also offer building packages. We are also build commercial and residential units.

Over the past year our construction arm was very busy as the general contractor and supplier for Fisher River Cree Nation on projects. As a general contractor, we hired local trades, employing over 100 community members on residential and commercial building projects. Some of the projects we are currently constructing are:

### **Red Turtle Lodge - Completion - July 2024**



### **Women's Transitional Housing Units - Completion - August 2024**



### **Fisher River Grocery Expansion - Completion - May 2024**

#### **Fisher River Grocery**

Fisher River Economic Development Corporation serves as business oversight management of the grocery store. Fisher River Grocery offers grocery, fuel, tobacco and lotteries sales. The post office is also located within our grocery store.

#### **Expansion**

We are currently constructing a 3500 square feet expansion to add more product to our grocery store. Having the ability to add more space will allow us to look at carrying clothing, basic home needs and the possibility of a bakery.

#### **Bay River Inn & Suites**

Bay River Inn & Suites offers 12 rooms at our location. We have 2 standard double queen, 4 suites, and 2 handicap accessible rooms.

The past year was very busy for our business. We were or at near at capacity with our current facility. Fisher River Economic Development is looking at expanding Bay River Inn & Suites. We are seeking out the possibility of adding another stand alone building with more rooms and adding a swimming pool. The image below shows where we would add another building.





**Fisher River Car Wash & Laundromat**

The operations of the car wash and laundromat are . We have 2 indoor bays and 1 outdoor bay for our car wash is fully functional. Our laundromat offers scheduled laundry service. We are open 7 days a week for laundromat and car wash service.

**Bay River Developments**

We currently offer for sale to the public, undeveloped cottage lots. To date, there are 23 lots available for purchase located on Cree Drive close to the community of Fisher Bay, Manitoba. We also offer turn- key cottage packages through our Fisher River Building Supplies.



**Beach Cove Campground**

Beach Cove located at Bay River Developments is going to become an RV park and Campground. This area which was originally going to be for Lot

Development, has since been re-designated for campground development.

**Fisher River Business Centre**

The Business Centre had its official grand opening in October of 2022. Many community members came out to view the ribbon cutting ceremony, and also treated to a meal courtesy of King Ho Chinese Restaurant and some dessert from the Pine Cone Dairy Bar. The renovated facility is fully leased with the tenants being Fisher River Jordan’s Principle, Pine Cone Dairy Bar, King Ho Chinese Restaurant and Fisher River Pharmacy.



# Fisher River Board of Education

Fisher River Board of Education strives to provide quality education for all learners while recognizing the potential of each individual. We are committed to working cooperatively with parents and the community to develop a respectful educational environment. In order to attain this mission, as reflected in our 5-year plan (2023-2028), we will be strengthening our programs in the following areas:

- Literacy, Numeracy and Assessments;
- Cree Language and Culture Revitalization;
- Special Education/Resource Program;
- Outdoor/Land-Based Education;
- Physical Education Program;
- Academic Program;
- School Attendance;
- Mental Health and Wellness Program;
- Guidance Program;
- Parental Involvement;
- School Bus Transportation;
- Technology Enhancement;
- Infrastructure Maintenance and Development;
- Professional Development;
- Staffing; and
- Securing Funding through proposal writings.

## Challenges and Next Steps:

**School Clinicians** – Charles Sinclair School and Fisher River High School will be needing full-time clinicians (Psychologist, OT, SLP and Behaviour Therapist) in order to support the learning needs of the more than 100 students under our special education program. Fisher River Education is finding ways to address this critical concern by making proposals and applying for grants.

**Educational Assistants** – In both schools, we need qualified and competent EAs to effectively work with our students with severe to profound special learning needs in one-on-one setting. We have a good number of certified EAs already, however, we need more EAs to be trained in this area. Our goal is to have all EAs get certified in the years to come. In order to achieve this goal, we will be offering the EA



program once again in the community in partnership with UCN.

**Professional Development** – FRBOE has a meager budget when it comes to Staff Professional Development. Sending staff to attend PDs will definitely enhance their teaching competence; thus, students will benefit from the strategies they gained from these workshops. We are looking for grants and sponsorship for this purpose.

**CSS Building** – we are slowly putting the CSS building into a better shape. So far, the crawl space has been cleaned-up and the Sentinel 586 Fresh Scent Enzyme Cleaner & Odour has been applied. The roofing/shingles is currently under repair to be completed very soon. A new CSS building is deemed essential in the near future.

**Day Care/Head Start Building** – some repairs have been done to improve the condition of the building. A new ramp has been built, repair of the flooring and fence reinforcement have been completed. A comprehensive structural building assessment has been completed as well. A new Day Care/Head Start building is deemed necessary in the near future.



**Funding/Grants that we received through proposal writing for the 2022-2023 School Year:**

| Funding Agency  | Description  | Grant Amount                                     |
|---|--|--|
| Jordan's Principle  | Items included in the proposal are: hiring of additional Educational Assistants, School Clinicians, Special Education Teachers; Purchase of Bus for students with physical disabilities; Purchase of Sensory Room Equipment; Lunch Program; Sports-related activities, Festival of the Arts; Educational Trips; Land-based Education; Healthy Lunch Program and Parenting Skills Workshop. | \$818,895.00                                     |
| Canadian Heritage<br>–Indigenous Languages & Cultures Program | 5-Year Cree Language & Culture Revitalization  | \$476,136.00                                     |
| Innovation in Education Program - ISC                         | Enhancing Student Cultural Awareness   | \$28,517.00                                      |
| Education Partnership Program - Structural Readiness          | Strengthening Capacity for Information Management and Technology of Fisher River Cree Nation Education – PowerSchool SIS   | *\$270,052.22<br>Waiting for the approval letter |





Fisher River Education Program Heads with Councillor Delaney Mason during the 5-Year Development Planning Session held at Hecla Resort on March 14, 2023.



Sarabelle Garson, a Grade 9 student from Fisher River High School won a Gold Medal in the MFNERC Science Fair on March 8, 2023 and was awarded the Sanofi Biogenius Canada 2023 Award by the Youth Science Canada. She was also chosen as one of the Canada-Wide Science Fair Finalists and competed in Edmonton, Alberta in May 14-19, 2023. With her is Mr. Jordan Cochrane, her Science Teacher and Mentor and Mr. Wilson Fallorin, Director of Education





Mature Grade 12 Graduation and FRHS Grade 12 Graduation.



Festival of the Arts and Culture activities – Students, Teachers, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, MFNERC staff attended this very successful event held on May 27-29, 2023.



# Fisher River Human Resource Program

In October 2022, Fisher River Cree Nation/Human Resources signed a new 6 – year Agreement with Indigenous Skills and Employment Training, formerly Human Resources was under FPD

## Program Services

- Provide Support Services to Community Members, such a computer and office support, resume assistance, assistance with filling out forms
- Service Canada Support
- Accommodate clients so that they have the room for planned activities
- Funded And Training Programs
- Provided Financial Educational Assistance
- Funded 12 Students for Programming
- Intro To Trades Course
- Human Resources Course
- Food Handlers
- 1st Aide/WHMIS/CPR
- Respirator Fit Testing
- Janitorial/Housekeeping Safety
- Hospitality and Hotel Safety
- Mental Health
- Flag Person Training
- Adult Education Program

## Job Creation

- Provided Financial Assistance with Job Starts , Adult/Child Abuse Checks/Criminal Checks
- Provided Wage to Community Organizations

## Youth Support Worker, Mentorship & SWEP Program

- Employed 2 Youth Support Workers, 2 Mentees and 2 Youth Support Workers
- Employed Students under SWEP Program
- Held a Youth Culture Camp

Human Resource Program  
**Fisher River**



**Cree Nation**  
Employment & Training

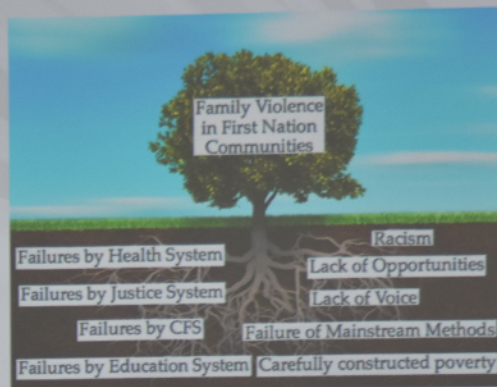
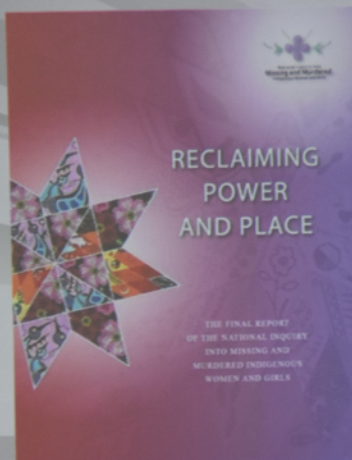
# First Nations Healing Centre



The First Nation Healing Centre organization was able to administer operational funding for 2022-2023 accordingly, pointed in the direction from our mission statement, Board of Directors, and Chief and Council.

We utilized this direction in designing our annual work plan and developing our annual budget. The Family Violence Prevention Program with Indigenous Services Canada, provides us with annual operational to deliver our shelter services, as well as provided with a top-up to enhance our services throughout the year. We utilized surplus funds to enhance community initiatives that promote community safety and wellness. For example, to share a few, contributions were made to the community security program, community feasts such as powwow, Cree Gathering and womens gathering. Throughout the year the Healing Centre contributes to loss and grief, healing and wellness by providing wood for sacred fires in our community when we lose a loved one. We try our best to stretch our resources, supports and funding by spreading contribution to community initiatives and creating innovative approaches to addressing family violence in our community.

## Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, Urban Transitioning and the Path to Healing



*Fisher River First Nation*

*June 25, 2019*



# Ochekwiwanasowewin Restorative Justice Program

We offer prevention and intervention services by incorporating an education and cultural based justice program. The Ochekwiwanasowewin Restorative Justice (ORJ) prevention programs provide four prevention elements into our resource list; therefore, the diversion clients are given an opportunity to attend one or all physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual program: here are some topics that are provided into our justice program:

1. Physical: drum making class, rattle making, ribbon skirts, drum songs, etc.
2. Emotional: soul painting, counselling, anger management, etc
3. Psychological: inner self trauma, generational impact, reconciliation, grieve,
4. Spiritual: provide awareness and supports to cultural based programs such as Sundance, sponsorship, sweats, church, and self care packages, etc

Once client has completed their scheduled case plan, a completed report is attached with the summary report and it is send by email to the Restorative justice referrals, crown, court and RCMP.

We have Peguis Circuit court dates and the ORJ provides the circuit court dates calendar on our Ochekwiwanasowewin Restorative Justice Facebook webpage. The ORJ staff and Justice Committee does attend court and provide update on client progress if completed or need more time, most cases charges reinstated, dropped.

File closed but most cases we have continuing supports.

We also support and assist with justice application/documentations, day school supports, child custody, pardons, escort warrants to RCMP, support letters for employment, integration, housing, homelessness, Addictions, mental health, youths, elders and family disputes.



Restorative Justice Coordinator advocates strongly on her personal and professional experiences around finding ways to improve the challenges and the barriers such as Housing, Addictions, Mental Health, Victim Services, RCMP, CCRA, Justice Robust (section 271) section 84 and other issues relating to Justice.

Housing: integration and transition homes; independent living for mental illness and poverty, transparency, on and off reserve release from correction, no place to go, repeat recidivism as result of hope, no stability.

Working with diversion clients who are BCR by meeting through other communities to get that help.

Presently working on housing case plan, however there is a shortage of housing when clients completes treatment, remand and release from other correction institution and most cases some clients can not return to their residence due to offences occur at home and no family supports for replacement homes.

I receive a lot walk in to the office and I have people share ideas and their concerns, one issues I hear:

“Every one deserves a chance, some are labelled due to their past, history, family dynamics, or some family are left out.”

Recently, I researched another local independent living and emergency housing call ECHO.

Echo is located in Dauphin; Manitoba they provide emergency housing in the Interlake area. In August



the ORJ staff and one committee member attend the tour. The Echo also provided information on how to apply for funding for emergency homes to our community.

So far we have two potentials diversion clients on emergency housing list.

The ORJ and Committee had visit The Women Headingly Corrections Institution in May, it was awesome experience and meeting the women as we talked and shared with the ladies and staff. The ORJ donated some crafts for the women living in transition homes and we have donated clothes for ones who are picked up in summer and release winter, that they have no warm clothes once released or picked up winter released in summer.

The ORJ have recently filled out a visitation form to visit Milner Correctional, Stoney Mountain and Headingly.

The Ochekwiwanansowewin Restorative Justice Program is expanding as we go out and do Power point presentations, take part in community events, contribute, donate our time, facilitates workshops, guest speak, gatherings, and now in process on

creating a community justice circle, developing a Manitoba Justice Strategy Guide and third phase meetings of Justice network partnership.

One of success; Fisher River was one of two selected Restorative Justice Program of Manitoba to be involved in the RCMP pre-pilot project, it was tremendous success.

One barriers: housing, lack supports, lack of follow ups, and justice taking on more then justice, venues.

Another justice engagement was the National Cree Gathering 2023, the Justice Coordinator and mediation worker worked all through weekend for complete success for our community.

Also we engaged with other networking workshops, women gatherings, youth gatherings, moose hide campaign, decorate the Pride parade, youth leadership camp, goose camp, medicine picking, etc.

The Ochekwiwanansowewin Restorative Justice work plans expands each month as new ideas and other issues arise that can be challenging, but we have the team to tackle these requests.





# Fisher River Sports & Recreation

Over the last year, Fisher River Sports & Recreation worked diligently to create more programs and activities for the community of Fisher River. Our goal was to increase opportunities in recreational activities and sports for all ages. We will continue to strive to increase and enhance our services, activities, sports programs, special events, and community gatherings. With the continued support we receive from leadership, organizations, and the community members our Sports & Recreation program can be a successful one for all members.

We were pleased to extend our facility hours to meet the needs for evening programming and events. We upgraded the pool tables, dart board area, and were able to repair the 4-lane Bowling Alley. The canteen was open for the season with daily breakfast, lunch specials, and made available for evening programs or events.

We were able to identify areas within our facility that was in need of maintenance or need to be repaired. Some of the issues include; lighting, electrical, heating/AC installation, proper doorways for disability, accessibility with shelter, interior paint, ice plant/pipes, floor matting for skate protection.

## Sports & Recreation Project Developments

We are excited that a 100 x 80 ft Outdoor Rink equipped with boards, lighting and covered by canvas is under construction. The Outdoor Rink will be cemented for year round access for programming and events. During winter the outdoor rink can be utilized for ice hockey, broomball, figure skating, learn to skate programs, and evening skating. Our Zamboni from the main arena can go from rink to rink for daily flooding and ice cleaning. During Spring/Summer it will be used for a variety of programs such as lacrosse, ball hockey, exercise programs, dances, festivals.

A Family Park is being developed which will be located just over the Murdock Bridge on the left. This area will have a 3300 square foot play structure area



for ages 5-12, with green area for picnic tables, and fire pits for families. Landscaping is currently in progress.

The Ice rink preparation has begun for our on ice programs. Curling Rink installation is planned to be started after ice installation, There are repairs needed for new connecting piping, and prep work but all equipment for flooring is already at arena for installation.

A Community Splash pad is being planned and will be constructed and placed behind the outdoor rink. This is a future project that will be ongoing for next spring.

## Sports & Recreation Events

Winter Carnival was 5-day event that was a great community effort that helped make it successful. The participation numbers were high, and lots of family involvement. It took place at the Arena using areas outside and inside activities for all ages from 0 – 65+. Event had ice skating, snow show races, fire and log sawing, broomball and tug war, and jiggling competitions. Youth and Talent showcases, and entertainment, feasts, and pancake breakfasts.

Spring Break was a 5-day week of events that created fun and enjoyment for the youth of the community. Events were cost shared with other organizations to contribute to all ages. Canteen prepared sponsored daily lunches for the youth.

Created numerous event using inflatables, bowling, pool tables, foam dance party, and movie nights with popcorn.

Dougie Rundle Fastball Tournament original dates have returned to the weekend before our annual treaty days. Men's and Women's Division with a future plan to incorporate a Minor Division for future.

Treaty Days was a great gathering of community members and visitors. All events were filled with participation, and enjoyed by everyone. Each year we try to make it better than the next, so a planning committee will be utilized to help prepare for our 150th Annual Treaty Days coming July 19-28,2025.

Partnerships working along with other organizations to help where we can with our equipment and resources for the Goose Camp, Pride Month, Woman Gathering, Pow-wow, Cree Gathering, Culture Camp, Family outings, etc..

## **Sport & Recreation Sports**

### ***Spring/Summer Season***

Hosted Fastball Provincials for 4 age divisions where Fisher River had teams representing our community. The Fisher River Hawks celebrated with medals for the following age divisions. U11 – silver, u13 – bronze, U15 - gold, U19 - bronze. Fastball will continue to be developed for boys and girl's divisions.

Thanks to our volunteer coaching and organizing committee that helped make this a great experience for our members, and our visitors. Hosting more provincials is planned. We also plan to develop our diamonds with lights for evening games, and purchase of a groomer for our diamonds.

Daily Canoe, Kayak, and York Boat outings for families, groups, and individual training. Planning a 4-year canoe development program to get our youth ready for the next North America Indigenous Games 2028. York boat being a traditional way of our journey we want to create more opportunity to teach and learn about our history through sports.

Started to do a Run, Walk, Bike club utilizing the high school track that took place once a week. We wanted to provide support for more daily fitness no matter the skill level. Would like to keep this program available and try to include our elders in our programming that fits their needs and capabilities.

Family activities such as Foam Party Dances, Outdoor Movie Nights, Game Nights, and outings at Arborg Splash pad, beaches, corn mazes, or local areas that offer evening entertainment. We have over 5 big inflatable bouncers that create hours of entertainment for events, programs, and birthday rentals. These inflatables are available to use for all occasions and are a huge success with all ages. Our





two tents we have are used throughout the year and add to our events.

### ***Fall/Winter Season***

Evening activity leagues for Darts, Bowling, and Pool Table/ Billiards. All age groups who play against one another and at the end of the season points get added together to see who the leader is from each age group and league. Once curling rink installed curling leagues will begin to develop.

Ice activities host as home ice for our Fisher River Minor Hockey. FRMH has 7 teams that range from U7 to U18. There is a Sunday Hockey League that has games for Senior Recreation Hockey League, and Youth 3 x3 league. This year we created a female development program that takes place 1 a week. This program was to reach out to all girls who want to learn how to skate, and play hockey in an all girl atmosphere which included local qualified female instructors. This season we will be introducing on and off ice training camps, clinics that will take place for all ages to develop their skating, and hockey skills. We will be utilizing our facilities year round to keep these off ice training programs available to our community members.

Treaty Grounds park maintained seasonally for accessibility to the walking trails, play structures, 2 ball diamonds, basketball courts, skateboard park, and outdoor hall. The outdoor hall was repainted, and an extension for the stage was built. During winter lights were installed for path walks around grounds.

Working together with organizations to support sporting leagues utilizing the gymnasiums for basketball, volleyball, soccer, and fastball. Using the resources from the organization we create more opportunity for more programs for fitness, and exercise for personal growth and development.

Sports & Recreation want to introduce Jiu Jitsu and Boxing program that will be taught from local certified members. These programs will be available to all ages and skills levels. Working with an organization that has the space and equipment will be needed to determine start date. These programs will help create respect, healthy choices, and strength in all areas for physical, mental, and emotional living.



Radio Media Bingo is still currently in operation and current pot is now over \$5,500. Our big winner of our \$157, 270.60 was won by our own community member Andrea McKay-Mason. Sports & Recreation will begin Chase the Ace again where it will take place once a week, and same percentage ratios will be same as the Radio Media Bingo. 40% to Sports & Recreation programming, 30% accumulative pot, 30% consolation.

Thank you to all who took the time to volunteer, and get certified to coach, become an official, supervise events, and programs. Without volunteers or support we cannot run these opportunities for the youth, Elders, and community members. Lets continue to work together to make great things happen.

# Fisher River Lands & Resources Department

On October 28, 2020; the membership of Fisher River Cree Nation voted in favour of passing the Fisher River Cree Nation Land Code and Individual Agreement.

Fisher River Cree Nation has signed an agreement with Canada called the Framework Agreement on First Nation Land Management.

This agreement results in the recognition of our inherent rights to govern our own reserve lands and natural resources.

The agreement was originally signed by the Government of Canada and 13 First Nations in 1996.

By signing the agreement, we agreed to develop our own Land Code (or Land Laws). Now approved by membership through a community vote, the Federal Government will no longer be involved in the management of Fisher River Cree Nation reserve lands.

The Council and Land Governance Director along with membership will work together when making land and resource management decisions, while recognizing the current hereditary river lot system.

Fisher River Cree Nation recognizes that environmental and stewardship support is necessary and there needs to be a hands-on approach in order to protect our waters and our land from any kind of contamination and environmental hazards. This support is not restricted to Fisher River Cree Nation lands but to all the shared traditional territory of the Fisher River Cree people.

## The Individual Agreement

This Agreement between Fisher River Cree Nation and Canada will be negotiated to deal with such matters as:



- the reserve lands to be managed by Fisher River,
- The specifics of the transfer of the administration of land from Canada to Fisher River,
- The transfer of revenues,
- an interim environmental assessment process.
- and the funding to be provided by Canada to the community for land management.
- Once these two documents are completed membership on and off reserve must decide to approve them through a community vote.
- The Land Code and Individual Agreement are in their final form.

## The Land Code

The Land Code is the tool to create land laws specific to Fisher River and will replace the 44 land management provisions of the Indian Act. The Land Code and its contents will be drafted by Fisher River Cree Nation and its membership and will make provisions for the following matters:

- Identifying the reserve lands to be managed.
- Develop general rules and procedures for the use and occupation of these lands by members and others.
- The making and publishing of Fisher River land laws.



The Land Code provides increased protection for reserve land and resources.

## Projects

### Landfill Remediation Project Update

JR Cousin Consultants Ltd. (JRCC) has completed a Landfill Remediation Project for the Fisher River Cree Nation, in accordance with the proposed community development plan. Abandoned landfill sites on Lot 77/78 and Lot 22/23 will be remediated and waste hauled to the active landfill site expansion on Lot 3. JRCC conducted site investigations to identify the extents of the buried waste at each of these abandoned sites and prepared the Remediation Plan and the Landfill Expansion Design. The sites will conform to residential/parkland use once the remediation works are completed.

### Environmental Management Plan Update

JR Cousin Consultants Ltd. (JRCC) has prepared an Environmental Management Plan (EMP) for the Fisher River Cree Nation which branches off of the recently adopted Land Code. The EMP establishes long-term goals for environmental sustainability on the reserve, by incorporating the community's concerns on environmental issues and providing practical response plans. JRCC conducted a community survey and organized a community meeting to discuss concerns among band members that were incorporated in the plan.

### House Numbering and Wayfinding Project

Together, Fisher River Cree Nation and HTFC Planning & Design are working to establish a house numbering and road naming system for our Community. When complete, the house numbering and road naming system will:

- Help Community Members, visitors and delivery services navigate on-Reserve,
- Aid emergency services, and move us towards establishing enhanced 9-1-1 service,
- Reinforce Fisher River Cree Nation's sense of place and promote an image of our Community as a destination.

With HTFC, we are confirming the names of existing named roads and developing new road names where needed. Homes and other buildings will each receive

a unique address. We will also inventory existing road signs and identify new sign locations in our Community.

A draft house numbering system has been developed for our Community that gives all current homes a street address, and provides policies to address future development. Requirements to put an enhanced 9-1-1 service in place have been identified. HTFC continues to work with Chief and Council and the Lands Department on the next steps towards completing this important project.

### Resolution Of Legacy Issues

The Resolution of Legacy Issues is regarding two (2) former Landfills. These sites were identified through Phase I and II Environmental Site Assessments by J.R. Cousins and Associates.

### Background

Through LABRC we began a project addressing landfill issues we have retained from the Indian Act administration prior to our FRCN land code becoming operational. The project's goals are to address all reasonably unavoidable impacts and effects of landfill construction, operations, and decommissioning of two former landfill sites in the community. These sites are located on River Lots 78 & 79 north of the FRHS (site 1) as well as River Lot 22 south of the FRCN gravesite (site 2).

The successful remediation of these areas to residential standards will enable our community access to prior inaccessible areas for housing in areas currently unusable as well as strengthen our efforts in preserving our land.

### Currently

Our project team currently acquired J.R. Cousin and Associates as lead consultants who have been tasked with developing a remediation plan report. This will include complete reporting of all project activities, budget, remedial action plan, landfill policy/by-laws and any other necessary requirements necessary to proceed to construction phase.

Through site investigation the remediation plan report will include design, cost estimates, environmental approvals, and tender documents required to seek funding to complete remediation activities.

# Fisher River Flood Remediation Project

Fisher River Cree Nation (FRCN) is extremely vulnerable to seasonal flooding due to proximity to Lake Winnipeg and the low lying, swampy land that the community resides on. FRCN regularly experiences flooding during the spring melt as well at various times through the summer when north winds cause the water levels in Lake Winnipeg to rise significantly. During the spring of 2022 (April 29 - May 6), FRCN endured one of the worst floods in its history. The primary access road to the community was submerged along with numerous local roadways. Dozens of homes were submerged by flood waters forcing the evacuation of all affected residents. In June 2022, FRCN experienced additional flooding caused by strong north winds on Lake Winnipeg. With lake levels already above seasonal, exacerbated by heavy localized rainfall,

flash flooding occurred from June 24 - 27, submerging several roads and approximately two dozen houses, forcing further evacuations.

## Documentation & Assessment

Following the April/May flood of 2022, FRCN retained JR Cousins Consultants (JRCC) to complete inspections of the community and damaged infrastructure to assess property damage and prepare for conceptual design and cost estimate of flood mitigation measures. Flood damages observed by JRCC included washed out driveways and roadways,





flooded basements including total loss of basement appliances such as furnaces, washing machines, etc. as well as personal belongings and materials damages such as drywall, studs, carpets, finishings etc. A complete list of damages and repair costs have been compiled by FRCN in the *Spring Flood 2022 - Phase 1 & 2 April 29 to May 6 Report* as well as the *FRCN Flash Flood 2022 - June 24 - June 27, 2022 Report*

### **Proposed Flood Mitigation Measures**

Having observed the flood damages and completed topographic survey of the affected areas, JRCC proposes the following measures for FRCN to mitigate future flood events.

All future structures and roads are to be constructed 600mm above the 100-year water level of the Fisher River. Home which are currently below this level should be raised to be above this level or having a ring dike constructed around the affected structure(s). As the majority of houses on FRCN are bi-level with main floor elevations 0.60m-1.0m above ground elevation, to minimize cost, imported fill material is recommended to be placed around the houses to raise ground level instead of raising the house itself. Prior to placement of the imported fill,

window wells will need to be installed on the houses, existing patios and steps will need to be removed and hydro meters and utility vents will need to be raised. Houses which are located on a crawl space or slab on grade will need to be raised by having the existing foundations modified/reconstructed.

In addition to the homes themselves, FRCN dwellings repeatedly have their critical infrastructure such as wells, septic fields and septic tanks submerged during flood events. Therefore, these structures will also need to be raised to be 600mm above the 100-year water level.

To improve drainage within the FRCN boundaries it is proposed that the recommendations and improvements outlined in the *2012 Community Drainage Report* by JRCC be implemented. This includes cleaning and re-grading existing ditches and drainage channels, constructing new drainage channels and replacing and up-sizing existing culverts

Lastly, existing roads which are below the design flood level are to be raised to provide unhindered to all residences within the community.





# Fisher River Fitness Centre

- Currently 9th year of operation
- Highest active gym membership since 2014.
- Offer a selection of high-quality commercial grade equipment.
  - Newest additions include Stepper, Treadmill and Cable accessories.
- Surround Sound entertainment provided by a SONOS Radio system and two Wall mounted Smart TVs to provide a stimulated environment.
- Wide range of sugar free, low carbohydrate, and low-fat snacks to provide healthy nutrition to our gym members.
- Active fitness clubs such as “Active Kids Club” and “Active Adult Club” which both focus on movement, healthy nutrition, and fitness confidence.
- In partnership with Jordan’s Principle to provide youth memberships.





# Ochekwi-Sipi Personal Care Home

## Ochekwi-Sipi PCH (OSCN PCH):

Currently, the PCH is operating at an occupancy of 15 Residents for a facility of 25 beds; 2 beds open for respite care and one bed open for palliative care.

The OSCN PCH Resident status is:

- 9 Resident members from Fisher River Cree Nation
- 6 Resident members from other First Nation communities

In September 2022, the OSCN PCH went under new management with the following 2 main directives:

- Provincial PCH Licensing Standards: Re-implementing the Provincial Personal Care licensing process. Currently, there are 26 Standards which is taken from the Personal Care Homes Standards Regulation under The Health Services Insurance Act. Through the Province, these Standards are under review at this present time. OSCN PCH hired a Standards Coordinator until March 2024 to assist with this initiative.
- Accreditation: What is Accreditation? It is a process for an organization to regularly and consistently examine and improve the quality of services.

The Accreditation Canada primer has begun for the PCH with various components that are required prior to the on-site review: Strategic & Operational Plan, Ethics Framework, Quality Improvement Plan, Revised Disaster & Emergency Preparedness Plan, Client Safety Plan. Within these frameworks, a total of 13 policies are required.

Accreditation on-site review as been extended until February 2025.

OSCN PCH Board of Directors:

6 monthly board meetings occurred during this reporting period. All BOD seats are filled. BOD supports day-to-day management to be handled by



the Executive Director with monthly reports provided at each board meeting. During this period, the BOD is aware of regional information that have occurred therefore they are now up-to-date with such information.

## Staffing:

Staffing guidelines formula: (25-bed facility)

- RN: 15%
- LPN: 15%
- HCA: 70%
- 1.0 FTE – 21 staff; 0.5 FTE – 11 staff; Casual – 15 staff

Currently, staff vacancies are filled; Two Agencies continue to be utilized as a last resort for nursing shift replacements.

Training & Development/Staff:

- Lateral Violence
- Principals of Strategic Planning: Quality Improvement vs Quality Assurance
- WHIMS
- Infection and Control
- Food Handlers Training
- Lifts & Transfers

## Resident Care:

- Physician visits occur 2 to 3 visits a month depending on the PEMH ROTA (schedule).
- Dietician and Occupational Therapist (OT) visits continue with monthly Resident care assessments.

- Data of visits: Physician visits: 22; OT visits: 12 visits; Dietary visits: 13
- Resident family care conferences: 5 of 15 families' Next of Kin attended their scheduled conferences.
- COVID-19 Outbreak occurred Dec 2022 and declared over Jan 2023.
- Residents are allowed to have full visitations with family and friends.

### Personal Care Home Facility:

#### Projects:

The facility received Supportive Care Initiative proposal funding from Indigenous Services Canada in fiscal years 2020/2021, 2021/2022, 2022/2023 during the Pandemic. The following list provides an insight of this project

- Fire & Safety: Repair/replace piping & valves
- Interior painting
- Interior furniture: Dining & office
- Exterior/ interior electric upgrades
- 2 storage sheds
- Crawl space concrete and external upgrades
- Gazebo
- Kitchen appliances
- Bobcat, maintenance vehicle, riding Mower
- Nursing equipment
- Technology upgrades: desktops/laptops/phonelines
- heating upgrades

### Other:

#### Successes:

- Staffing shortage has improved
- Resident continuum quality of care
- Facility upgrades
- Internal recreational activity staff & Resident involvement
- Mission and Vision statement revised
- Draft 3-year OSCN PCH Strategic plan
- Draft 3-year OSCN PCH Ethics Framework
- Provincial licensing and Accreditation in progress

#### Challenges:

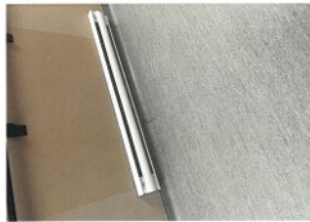
- Funding constraints
- Facility space/storage
- Local employment interest in working
- Limited Provincial representation within the regional First Nations PCH Network

#### Future targeted Goals:

- Full bed capacity: 2024
- Accreditation approval:2025
- Licensed PCH facility:2025/2026
- FRCN Co-development of a "Wholistic Long-Term Care Framework": Partnerships – Jordan's Principle, Home & Community Care, Assisted Living and Long-Term Care/PCH









# Fisher River

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