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NISICHAWAYASIHK
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NCN Women's Shelter Closer to a Reality

CMHC Funding for new Women's shelter a major step to improve safe supports for women and children.

On January 10th, 2017 NCN Chief and Council received confirmation from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) that the application for the new Shelter Enhancement Program On-Reserve had been selected by the joint review committee to proceed. Although pending a few additional requirements by CMHC, this funding puts NCN one big step closer to making the Women's shelter a reality.

Chief Marcel Moody said, "We recognize the immediate importance of having safe places for women and families in situations of domestic violence, abuse, substance abuse and trauma. Helping them and their loved-ones by providing proper surroundings to heal and be secure is essential. Getting the needed funding is a step to making this happen directly in our community."

Having safe places for women and families in situations of domestic violence, abuse, substance abuse and trauma are vitally important.

The Chief added that the shelter is an ideal fit with community services like those offered by the NCN Medicine Lodge, Nursing Station and NCN Family and Community Wellness Centre. "The shelter will build-on other community supports offered and enhance care for vulnerable Citizens within the local community. It will help improve the self-sustainability of the Nation and also paves the road for better services for Northern Manitobans."

NCN's Family and Community Wellness Centre CEO, Felix Walker says, "There are still plans to be put in place before the shelter can be built, but this is certainly a good step toward the reduction of recurring violence and will also provide improved supports for women and children."

Citizens have demanded and recognized the need for a dedicated service like this in the community for many years. Moody believes the final CMHC requirements are a formality and will be easily met. Once fully approved, the CMHC funding will cover capital and operational costs for the shelter.

NCN was among only five First Nations in Canada' selected to receive similar project funding. Chief Moody added, "We have a solid reputation for working with partners on major projects and because of our accountability and progressive vision as a First Nation, we were among the handful of First Nations selected to receive this important funding. Our Citizens should be proud of this accomplishment as it reflects on the hard work of everyone."

NCN will now explore options for the site and design plans, site inspections, and additional funding requirements and later review potential contractors and a construction schedule. The shelter construction and operation is also expected to generate additional jobs for NCN Citizens.

WANT TO BE ADDED TO THE NCN NEWS DELIVERY LIST...

And Get Achimowina Newspaper at Home Each Month?

If you are a NCN Citizen living in Nelson House, Leaf Rapids, South Indian Lake, Thompson, Winnipeg or Brandon, we want to get news to you. Send your address to Joyce Yetman by phone (204) 484-2604, or joyceyetman@ncncree.com.

WANT AN E-COPY? You can always find the latest Achimowina online at ncncree.com!

OKIMAHKAN OTY'AMIWIN

From the Chief

Tansi,
I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season with friends and family. I wish you the very best for a healthy, happy and prosperous new year ahead.

We should all feel proud of the many achievements of our community in 2016. Looking ahead to the plans for the coming year, we should also have an optimistic outlook for 2017! There are several economic development projects already underway and in the works. They'll improve our infrastructure and increase the well-being of our Citizens while addressing major concerns. Several projects will also make our community and neighbourhoods more beautiful. We look forward to discusssing this with you more at the 2017 NCN General Assembly on February 15th.

Lagoon Project

Upgrades on the lagoon will start in the coming weeks, which will allow for community development as we prepare for population growth.

New Housing

As discussed later in this newsletter, more than 40 new homes are being built to reduce our housing shortage, and 10 houses for the *Bring Our Children Home* program to reduce the number of NCN kids in foster care.

Multi-Plex Development

Our multi-plex, which will provide space for fitness, wellness, and community events, is in the cost estimate phase. We will receive class C estimates shortly that will determine the estimated capital costs of the project. We have funds set aside for the project and we will be submitting a proposal to INAC to see if they can cover part of the capital cost. The facility will add additional supports for fitness and wellness. This will complement the facilities already in place at the Wellness Centre and Parks and Recreation department. The NCN multi-plex will also have large meeting spaces and a community hall for public events and funeral services. If plans move as scheduled, groundbreaking could take place as early as this summer.

Mystery Lake Lands Development

Watch for a referendum vote in February about land designation for the Mystery Lake Urban Reserve lands in Thompson. We are finalizing plans for a gas station on the land, and are determining feasibility for a pharmacy and/or walk-in clinic in the same area. Chief and Council continue to explore the best options for this prime business land.

New Nursing Station and Proposed Women's Shelter

First Nation Health Inuit Branch has indicated that we will be receiving funds this spring for the design of a new nursing station for our community. The design phase should take approximately 5-6 months to complete and once that is done, we expect construction to start. We are next in line for a new nursing station in Manitoba. A new NCN nursing station will provide improved technology and facilities, which will enhance health services for our Citizens. We have also recently received confirmation from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation about funding for our women's shelter, a service we've needed for a long time.

Sports Field Upgrades and Powwow Arbour

We're halfway to securing the funding required for infrastructure planned for the 150 Canada Anniversary. A new baseball complex on Bay Road in Nelson House will require about $123,000, and a powwow arbour, tentatively planned near the existing baseball fields, will require about $300,000 to complete.

Veteran's War Memorial and Community Beautification

Other community enhancement projects include a new entrance landmark sign, planned for the road entering Nelson House. A Cenotaph monument and war memorial for NCN war and World War veterans is proposed for downtown Nelson House. It will list the names of NCN war veterans.

Professional Development

In 2016, Chief and Council and NCN organization staff and managers have worked diligently to improve Human Resources policy and law development. Chief and Council have approved in principle – through a series of meetings and workshops – the new policies based on changes in the law and/or NCN experiences over the past few years. More work will be done early in the year to enhance and finalize policies to improve workplace laws, rights and accountability.

These are just a few of the major projects planned. With so many exciting new developments ahead of us, I personally look to the coming year with pride and excitement. Here's to a positive year ahead for NCN and all of its Citizens!
Ekosani.

Chief Marcel Moody
Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation

Fish Derby Raises Funds for Late Teacher's Memorial Monument

Dozens of fishers participated in the First Annual David MacDonald Memorial Ice Fishing Derby on the weekend of January 14 and 15, 2017. Participants had an awesome experience out in Osik Lake and shared memories with great friends. Although pickerel were tough to find, the weather was beautiful and teachers, friends, loved ones and outdoor enthusiasts took part in a memorable and touching tribute for the late Dave MacDonald. Prizes were handed out for the largest jack fish, pickerel and unusual categories. Proceeds raised by the NCN Parks and Recreation department event are being donated to a monument to honour MacDonald's legacy. David passed away in 2016 while doing outdoor winter activities that he loved and cherished.

KITITAHWINAOW ACHIMOWIN

Community News

New CFS Homes in Hart's Point Being Built to "Bring Kids Home"

The NCN Family and Community Wellness Centre's Child and Family Services continues to focus on creating its own network of care within the NCN community, and is seeing impressive results.

An exciting development in NCN's self-reliance is the ten new CFS homes being built in Hart's Point. The houses will provide space for 40 children, many with special needs that in the past would have been sent away for care. Each home will house up to four kids at a time and also provide space and accommodations for caregivers. This will keep kids in the community and close to family and regular routines like school, until a time when they can be reunited with families. The Centre's Jacqueline Walker and Linda Cantelon have been instrumental in coordinating, developing and submitting the proposal to the Manitoba Province for licensing approval.

"We don't want to rely on emergency shelters and hotel placements in Winnipeg. We want to keep our young people here," says NCN Family and Community Wellness Centre CEO, Felix Walker. "It's a major shift in our approach, because we're not relying on the outside."

Walker also believes the homes could be retrofitted with the necessary equipment for various special needs of children with health, physical or mental disabilities. The homes are expected to have additional enhancements if funding is secured from the Jordan's Principle initiative. This will ensure health or social services are quickly and directly provided for our First Nation's children needing direct care.

"We don't want to rely on emergency shelters and hotel placements in Winnipeg. We want to keep our young people here," says NCN Family and Community Wellness Centre CEO, Felix Walker

More Being Done to Protect Children

The Centre has also begun a public awareness campaign for local families to consider fostering. Walker says there's a way for people in the community to get and keep more CFS kids from being moved out of the community. He's hopeful that NCN Citizens will "step-up" and share love and care for a child in their own homes.

Caring for a foster child is a rewarding experience that can change the life of a child and strengthen our Nation. There are many supports and social services to help foster parents, such as funding to cover costs and family therapy for both family and child.

"We're hoping to expand our network of families, especially for short-term stays," says Walker. "If a child doesn't have special considerations, we want to keep that child here at home."

If you'd like to foster a child in our community, call 204-484-2341 to learn more.

The Removal of the Parent program, which began two years ago, is also a success story. Keeping children at home, and moving the parent out, has many benefits for the child, the community, and CFS. The usual routine of home and school can reduce a child's stress levels and help them feel normal, even if their lives are not. The Centre's Removal of Parent program also frees up CFS human resources and funding.

Building new homes for children-in-care, fostering to keep children in the community, and removing parents to receive the help they need, are all initiatives that decrease the number of children in care.

Felix knows the success of reducing the kids in CFS comes with the risk of seeing further financial cuts to the Centre's CFS funding. But it's a problem worth having. Walker says the ultimate goal is to reunite kids with their families when it's safe to do so. Accomplishing that with less reliance on the outside, by keeping every single child who needs temporary care within the NCN community, will be cause for celebration.

"It's achievable," says Walker. "Over the next three years we're going to see a big change."

New Homes a Blessing for Community

The ten new homes for Child and Family Services are a huge boon and blessing for the NCN community. The 1,465 square foot, five-bedroom units are currently under construction. The foundations and walls are complete on all houses and workers are focused on rafters and roofs.

CFS is hoping to have kids and caregivers in the new homes by mid-May, says NCN Family and Wellness Centre CEO, Felix Walker.

"We've talked about these homes for about three years now. They are owned by the Nation through the Development Corporation, and then are being leased by the Wellness Centre," says Walker.

An exciting by-product of the new CFS homes is the 65 new full-time positions that will provide support and care for the children.

"These jobs range from case managers to program coordinators to respite workers," says Walker. "We'll start training for these potential employees in mid-March."

Thanks to Jordan's Principle (which aims to give First Nations children equal and fair access to services ordinarily available to others), NCN will receive federal government funding for kids with high medical needs. Two of the ten homes will accommodate them with special equipment.

"It's exciting, because we were spending the money outside, and now we can spend it inside. We've always had to use outside agencies. Now we have the resources to manage these children by ourselves," says Walker.

Professional Development Workshop to Improve NCN Workplace Standards

In December, NCN management and employees gathered for a professional development workshop. It was part of the NCN Strategic Plan to make workplaces better for everyone and to improve services for Citizens.

The workshop focused on three topics: new NCN policies and why they are important, and human rights in the workplace.

Presenters and legal counsel explained that policies are essential for employee satisfaction and the success of an organization. They define acceptable behaviour, establish fairness and encourage best practices.

Human rights are the overarching privileges and dues that people can expect to receive in society. The presentation explained that they are a combination of federal, provincial and NCN laws and outlined how they should be incorporated in the workplace.

NCN management and employees gathered to work to improve workplaces and services for Citizens.

Five new NCN Policies were outlined at the workshop:

- **Respectful workplaces** allow employees and customers to work in and visit a space without violence, harassment, discrimination or bullying. If a person experiences any of these, he or she has the right to make a complaint in confidentiality, without threats or retaliations.
- **NCN employees must act professionally** at work, but codes of conduct also apply to off-hours. Acting or speaking in a way that could affect NCN's reputation, business or relationships, can lead to discipline, including loss of employment. Off-duty conduct applies to all times outside of working hours and includes social media.
- **All potential NCN employees must submit a criminal record check**, but this should not stop you from applying for a job. If you are an appropriate candidate for a position, but have a criminal record, you will be asked more questions. Details such as how much time has passed, and the relevance of the offence to fellow employees and the position will be evaluated.
- **Charges, detainments, and arrests must be reported** to a supervisor within two days. There may be disciplinary actions, which can include losing your job. Offences involving drugs, alcohol or violence require the employee to get counselling or treatment.
- **Duty to accommodate** means sometimes it's necessary to treat someone differently in order to be fair. For example, it's not fair to ask a blind job applicant to take a written test.

NCN has an obligation to accommodate its employees under human rights legislation, but it has the right to evaluate requests for accommodation to ensure changes won't affect operations or costs.

Attendees also did group work in which they discussed typical workplace scenarios and created potential solutions. A highlight of the workshop was a trip to the Canadian Human Rights Museum in Winnipeg. Additional workshops are planned and policies and laws are expected to be finalized in the near future.

Margaret Sprowl, Employee of the Year Award.

Margaret Sprowl Receives Annual Award

On Wednesday, December 14, 2016, at a staff dinner, the Nelson House Medicine Lodge recognized Margaret Sprowl with the *Employee of the Year Award* for exceptional service. Executive Director, Laurel Wood presented the award on behalf of the staff, clients, board, management and community members. Congratulations Margaret!

PUSIKONISOWINI ACHIMOWIN

Business News

End of Strike at Personal Care Home

Residents at the NCN Personal Care Home and their families sighed in relief when health care staff agreed to come back to work on December 15, 2016. They had been on strike since November 28, 2016 to protest their wages, about $4 an hour less than that of staff with the same training doing the same work at other care homes around the province.

The workers ratified a new two-year contract, which includes a 10 per cent wage increase (retroactive to their previous contract, which ended March, 2016). The 30 staff members also will receive a three per cent increase in the second year of their new contract.

While the increase may sound substantial, their new wages are still not the same as others.

"The new agreement will go about halfway to addressing the inequity in pay between Nelson House health care support workers and workers in places like Thompson," said Michelle Gawronsky, Manitoba Government and General Employees' Union (MGEU) President. "This is a significant move forward and the employer has also committed to working with us to secure the necessary funds to achieve wage parity in the near future. Health care providers throughout this region who do the same jobs should be paid the same wages no matter where they live and work."

The employer that Gawronsky is planning to work with is Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation. Chief Marcel Moody has been sympathetic to the workers' frustrations. In November, he contacted INAC and the provincial government to discuss the inadequate wages.

People in the community were happy to hear the health care staff were back at work.

But the bigger problem, both Moody and Gawronsky agree, is the federal government.

"When it comes down to it, this is about the need for stable, predictable funding for our First Nations communities," said Gawronsky. "In order for our members to be paid fairly and equitably, our federal government needs to step up and adequately fund First Nations personal care homes like Nisichawayasihk."

Health care staff were not happy to be on strike, and considered it a last resort to get results. The NCN community and surrounding area rallied around them during their 18-day protest. The Thompson Labour Committee provided a hot lunch for workers on the picket line. NCN Citizens donated money, warm socks, hats and gloves, which MGEU/NUPGE collected and distributed.

People in the community were happy to hear the health care staff were back at work.

"I know our members are profoundly relieved too, that they're there again, caring for their elders," Gawronsky said.

Staff are pleased to return to work after the Care Home Strike.

EMERGENCY CONTACT LIST

Attention Citizens, please cut out this important contacts card and ensure the phone numbers are in an easy-to-find location in your home or office, in case of emergency.

Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation:
204-484-2332
1-888-323-7658 (toll free)

Ambulance:
204-484-2911

Fire:
204-484-2047

Nursing Station:
204-484-2031

RCMP:
204-484-2288

Band Constables:
204-307-0912
204-679-0057

Electrician – Elvis Wood:
204-679-1482

Housing:
204-679-7723

Plumber – Donny Hart:
204-307-6435

Canadian Centre for Child Protection:
1-800-532-9135

Cree Nation Child and Family Caring Agency:
1-855-682-1566

Crime Stoppers:
1-800-222-8477 (then press 3)

Domestic Violence Crisis Line:
1-877-977-0007

Forest Fires and TIPS:
1-800-782-0076

Gambling Help Line:
1-800-463-1554

Health Links:
1-888-315-9257
(then press 1)

Kids Help Line:
1-800-668-6868

Legal Aid Manitoba:
1-800-665-0656

NCN-CFS after hours:
204-679-5544
204-679-6386

NCN-CFS designated intake:
204-778-1960

Poison Centre:
1-855-776-4766

Radio Station:
204-484-2065
toll free 1-866-228-1504

Senior's Abuse Line:
1-888-896-7183

Sexual Assault Crisis Line:
1-888-292-7565

Suicide Prevention Line:
1-877-435-7170

Thompson Crisis Centre/Shelter:
1-800-442-0613

Thompson General Hospital:
204-677-2381

Youth Emergency Crisis Line:
1-204-949-4777

For RCMP and Ambulance, your call will be answered by a centralized Dispatch Service. Be prepared to answer questions.

Development Corporation Achieves Significant Economic Growth for NCN

The Nelson House Development Corporation (NHDC) was created by Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation (NCN) Chief and Council in 1992 to help in fulfilling its vision of sovereignty, self-sufficiency and self governance. All activities of the Development Corporation aim to build capacity, create employment for NCN Citizens and generate revenue to fund NCN programs/services.

The Development Corporation office employs three full-time staff and a couple summer students. They manage several existing NCN corporations, with tens of millions in assets and businesses that employ upwards of 100+ workers.

The NHDC continually searches for viable economic opportunities to create a foundation for future success. They also offer training, mentorships, and small business loans and subsidies to local Citizens.

Nelson House Development Corporation (NHDC) was created by NCN Chief and Council in 1992 to help in fulfilling its vision of sovereignty, self-sufficiency and self governance.

David Kobliski, Nelson House Development Corporation Manager says, "To ensure a positive future, we are proactive with business development and seek out ventures that will contribute to our community and help our Citizens. We believe prosperity for NCN can be achieved through rigorous financial management and solid business partnerships."

David Kobliski, Nelson House Development Corporation Manager

Providing Growth and Sustainable Development

The Nelson House Development Corporation was created to improve economic security and success for our Cree Nation. They are always actively working on present and future business opportunities with an eye on economic development.

For current NCN corporations and employees, we also:

- Manage long-term planning and oversee operations, through proactive management
- Provide a business advantage by keeping costs affordable, purchasing direct from manufacturers/suppliers or wholesale and keeping all businesses competitive in the Northern Manitoba market
- Provide financial support through loans and subsidies
- Guide NCN businesses with successful financial planning
- Work with NCN Human Resources in areas of employee recruitment, development and training
- Collaboratively enhance training programs with the Atoskiwin Training and Employment Centre (ATEC)
- Create summer student programs and offer apprenticeships
- Create partnerships with financial institutions and stakeholders
- Provide guidance for potential business owners
- Sponsor community events
- Help young people to develop career goals and pursue appropriate training.

Success Stories – A Proven Track Record of Financial and Business Development Success

The Nelson House Development Corporation currently oversees several businesses, which are wholly owned by NCN and fully self-sufficient, with no provincial or federal funding. These businesses offer amenities, goods and services to the community, provide employment for Citizens, and create profits – 100% of which are received directly by NCN and are used to fund and support many NCN programs and services.

Meetah Building Supplies

The building supplies company was established in 1997. It was an important supplier to the Wuskwatim Hydroelectric

Meetah Building Supplies supports the local economy.

Continued on page 9

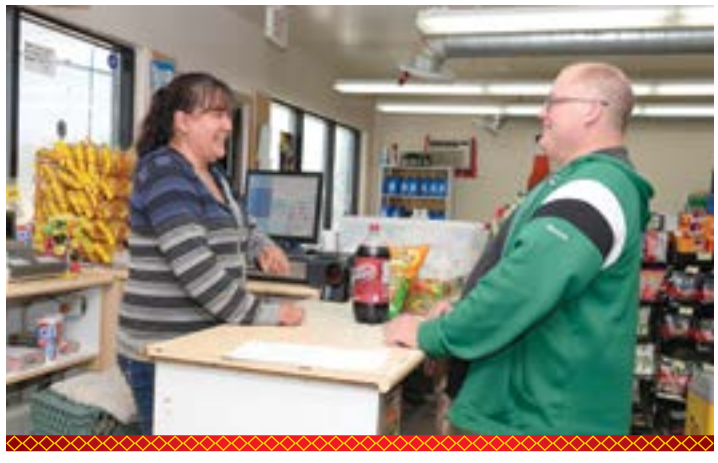
Continued from page 8

Project construction. It also provides building and construction materials to other Northern Manitoba First Nations' projects and currently supplies most of the building materials for NCN housing developments, repairs and local contracting projects. Meetah employs 15 people and eight seasonal workers.

Cabinets and doors made in Nelson House.

Door and Cabinet Manufacturing Facility

This successful operation employs four people and produces doors and kitchen cabinets for sale in its retail store, for its own house building operations, and for home repairs in the community.



NCN Stores are a profitable business and employ many.

Otohowin Gas Station

The local station has been in business since 1997. It has four fuel pumps, a snack shop and employs 12 NCN Citizens. It provides valuable opportunities for NCN youth entering the workforce and is a proud sponsor of many community events.

Gas Bar in Thompson

This fuel station on Mystery Lake property came under the Nelson House Development Corporation umbrella in 2016. Opening in 2017, it is being upgraded to be 2,500 sq. ft. with 12 gas pumps, a snack shop and employs 16 full-time employees.

Thompson Family Foods

Officially opened by NCN in 2013, the food store employs about 34 workers, and provides groceries and goods to local Thompson, Manitoba consumers and NCN Citizens.

NCN Three River Store

The store on Cree Road in Nelson House opened in 2016 with state-of-the-art coolers, a solar wall to reduce operating costs, and 400 post office boxes for NCN Citizens. The store's goods are competitively priced with Thompson Family Foods and it provides full-time employment for 16 Citizens.

Other NHDC Initiatives

New ventures are always being explored, ultimately aimed at generating employment for NCN Citizens and revenue to fund NCN programs. Businesses like NCN's highspeed internet service, four rental homes in Thompson and development of the Mystery Lake Urban Reserve property are managed by the Corporation. In 2017, ten five-bedroom homes in Nelson House will be completed and jointly owned/managed (with NCN and the NCN Family and Community Wellness Centre) for the Bringing the Children Home program. Forty children plus caregivers will occupy the ten homes – rather than being placed in foster or CFS care.

Family Foods in Thompson, Manitoba.

New Three Rivers Store officially opened.

Working Cooperatively with NCN Cree Nation and Business Partners

The Nelson House Development Corporation is governed by NCN Chief and Council. All profits are put into capital or business development or NCN government-run programs. The NHDC frequently meet with potential business developers, financial institutions, potential employees and student program applicants. They are always open to partnership opportunities with organizations, communities and other First Nations.

The NHDC is in place to share ideas, provide guidance and advice, answer questions, and create enthusiasm and success.

Looking for a Job to Build Your Resume?

We are always looking for skilled staff and summer or part-time students

For more information contact us:

Nelson House Development Corporation
Box 429
Nelson House, MB
R0B 1A0
Email: davidkob@mts.net
Phone: 204-484-2225

NCN LANDS DEPARTMENT

Strengthening our Land Governance Through Community Engagement

NCN is currently taking initiative to strengthen our Land Governance for our Reserve Lands. The Lands Department is working closely with the Resource Management Board (RMB) to collaborate Lands & Resources under one authority. Lands was added as a"New" NCN portfolio in the 2014 Chief and Council Election. The Lands technical and management team currently consist of three staff members, the Land Code Development Committee, Centralized Office Location jointly with RMB, a future land administrator and participating Elder advisor(s).

PROGRAM GOALS

STRENGTHEN LANDS GOVERNANCE VIA COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

- **Strong Local Administrative & Management Capacity** – Establish Project Team & Work Plan – local members wherever possible
- **Community Engagement & Input** – meetings, smaller workshops, one on one interviews, written submissions, website, on & off reserve
- **Field Work/Research** – conduct interviews with membership through one on one interviews – Data Processing & Management: compile, entry, analysis & verification
- **Build technology requirements and Information Systems** – Digital Mapping system (GIS), electronic filing system, geodatabase, network/server
- **Good Administrative Policies & Procedures** – Implement Plan & Policies through a Land Admin & Stewardship Program

NCN LANDS DEPARTMENT TEAM

- Portfolio Lead: Councillor Willie Moore
- Ed Vystrcil, Lands Director
- Jeremiah Spence, Land Code Coordinator
- Terry Linklater, TLE Coordinator

Councillor Willie Moore, Portfolio Lead

PROGRAM AREAS

- Land Management & Planning
- Land Administration & Information Management
- Land Additions – TLE, NFA, Additions to Reserve
- Economic Development
- Special Projects (Research & Development)

CURRENT PROJECTS/INITIATIVES

- Land Code
- Land Disparity Claim
- Strengthen Capacity and Technical Skills
- Strengthen Administrative & Governance Structures
- Add more land to reserve for economic development (e.g., TLE, NFA)

NCN POTENTIAL LANDS IN THOMPSON

(FOR PROPOSED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT)

- River Cabaret
- Yale Newman (85 Acres)
- Mystery Lake Property (4.2 Acres)

NCN LAND CODE

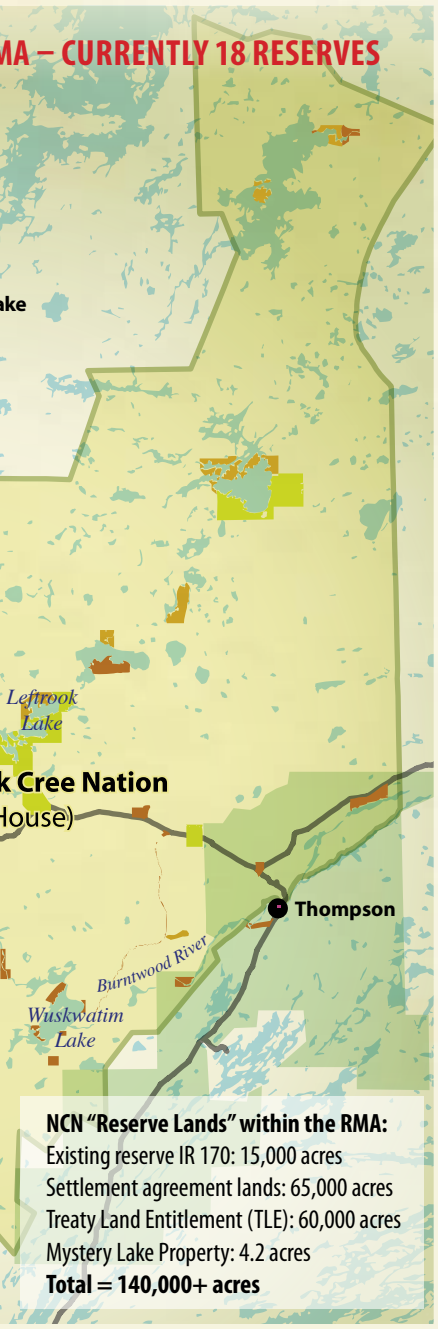
NCN is developing a Land Code under the First Nation Land Management Framework Agreement. The Land Code development stage is ideally a two-year process that involves:

- **Drafting** a Land Code with community Land Code Committee
- **Negotiating** an Individual Transfer Agreement with Canada
- **Conducting** a community ratification vote (in year 2).

The developmental stage includes input directly from community members through community engagement (e.g., workshops, information sessions, committee meetings, newsletters, focus groups, etc.).

NCN LAND CODE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- Bill Yetman (Chair)
- Darcy Linklater
- Roslyn Moore
- Willie Moore
- Ron Spence
- Greg Tayes
- Cheyenne Colomb
- Colleen Hunter
- Coordinator: Jeremiah Spence



PROGRESS TO DATE

Management and Technical Team created to include a Lands Director, Land Code Coordinator, TLE Coordinator, Land Code Development Committee, GIS Tech and Elder Representative(s)

Capacity Building has included Training on Matrimonial Real Property, Land Committee Orientation, Land Use Planning Training, Staff Orientation, GIS mapping system in Community

Major Lands Initiatives undertaken include Land Code, Land Disparity Claim, Resolution of Third Party Interests on TLE Selections, NFA Compensation Lands, Mystery Lake Hotel Property Land Designation, exploring other Lands in Thompson

Funding has been accessed for 48% of Lands Budget from outside sources (where CAP/CIP funds enables us to seek outside funds)

Central Office Location: Lands Office Established (Trust Office Administration)

NEXT STEPS

Land Code:
- Ongoing Land Code Committee meetings will be held to draft Land Code, Individual Agreements and determine Community Ratification Process
- Community Engagement & Workshops will be held with a Ratification vote targetted in May 2017

Land Disparity Claim:
- Research will be conducted to determine the validity of Land Disparity Claim
- Community meetings will be held to discuss claim
- We will retain legal counsel to pursue claim

Land Administration:
- Establish Governance structure jointly with RMB – Lands Board
- Hire additional staff for Lands Administrator and Land Disparity Claim Coordinator

Land Additions:
- Resolve issues on TLE & NFA selections
- Consider additional Lands to capture Thompson Market Opportunities – Economic Development
- Hold Lands Workshop to review existing Land selections

Special Projects:
- Land Designations
- Work jointly with Housing to explore leasehold interest Home ownership
- Mystery Lake Hotel Plan
- IR 170 Community Plan

WHY THE LAND CODE IS IMPORTANT?

The Land Code will allow NCN to shift away from the *Indian Act* and AANDC paternalism of our NCN Reserve Lands. It will also Strengthen Land Governance by establishing legal and administrative frameworks to allow us to start managing our Lands ourselves. This will also speed up economic development processes and other development on NCN Lands.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Jeremiah Spence
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NCN Lands and Resources Office
Box 393, Nelson House, Manitoba R0B 1A0
Phone: (204) 939-3805
OR
Land Code Development Committee
Email: ncnlandcode@gmail.com
NCN Lands and Resources Office
Box 393, Nelson House, Manitoba R0B 1A0
Phone: (204) 484-2970 Fax: (204) 484-2588

Voice of Our Youth

When the Nelson House Medicine Lodge asked NCN students about their view on important addiction issues as part of an essay competition, the words that came back were compelling and showed the vision and gift these students have for writing. The essays were written during National Addictions Awareness Week and recognition was given for the top essays in the grade 9/10 category and 11/12 categories. Here are some of the winning submissions:

Alcohol

*by Lynette Spence, grade 10 (**1st place for the grade 9/10 category**)*

Alcohol leads too many situations all around the world, like drinking and driving where it could lead to serious injuries and can lead to death. And you can put yourself and other people at risk.

Also alcohol leads to domestic violence and can lead to death, just because you had drinks and were too drunk to remember. You start losing friends from drunken violence; also family, which is more important.

You can also get health issues which are from alcohol poisoning, which can damage the organs and it will make you really sick you'll end up in the hospital. And you'll start feeling really weak; some people get the shakes from drinking too much.

Alcohol isn't free – it cost lots and it's just a waste of money. Why buy alcohol when it's only going to make you sick the next day? When you keep drinking you don't realize how much money you're spending so then you become broke.

You start becoming depressed because you're a drunk and nobody wants you around because of your behaviour when you're drunk. Also your sad because you don't feel the same anymore. Your body has gotten weaker and you start feeling sorry for yourself wishing you could do things differently.

I've never seen anyone drink themselves smart, successful or happy, they just end up broke, miserable and alone. Why would anyone want a life like this?

I chose alcohol because there are a lot of people in Nelson House that are addicted to alcohol. And it makes me sad because of the violence when involved with alcohol, it's like watching your hometown rip itself apart from all the drinking.

Just remember alcohol doesn't give you happiness, it will just ruin your whole life.

Drinking and driving claims too many lives and can be stopped.

How has alcoholism become a normal and accepted part of life in NCN?

*by Kiya Spence, grade 10 (**2nd place in the grade 9/10 category**)*

Addiction. Addiction is defined as the fact or process of being addicted, the condition of taking a drug or alcohol habitually and being unable to give it up without adverse effects.

Alcoholism is a problem in the community, for the elders, men and women also adolescents/teenagers, children and infants.

The elders can be scared to walk around in the community, or to take a step outside for fresh air.

People under the influence of alcohol can beat an elder, or asking for cigarettes, also threaten for money. Elders don't want to see a view of drunks around, which is why they can't walk around the community.

For men and women, alcohol addiction can be a problem also. They can be domestic, swearing, being rowdy or fighting random people. To see men and women being under the influence, teenagers think that being under the influence of alcohol is normal. Teenagers would also think that domestic violence is normal, also beating on random people.

Domestic violence caused from alcoholism affects our entire community.

Teenagers look up to young adults; they want to see hard working people and good role models. Teenagers see young adults under the influence and they would think of it as a normal thing to see, and it's not.

For children and infants, alcoholism is a big problem. Alcohol being involved in a home with infants and children is very dangerous! Children can get into dangerous hazards such as plug ins and choking on small items. Children being left alone can turn on a stove or just be up to no good.

For infants, it is very dangerous as well as they can be forgotten in addictive homes. Infants need bottles, to be burped or could need a pamper change. Infants being left alone from people who are under the influence are in danger! An infant can choke on puke in their sleep or be frightened from all of the noise people are making under the influence. That is good for nothing!

1st Place
Autumn Hunter

Drug and Alcohol Awareness

*by Autumn Hunter, grade 11 (**1st place for the grade 11/12 category**)*

Drugs and Alcohol awareness is only on for one week.

Yet my people, our people aren't showing respect to our community, instead they are acting ignorant and continue to drink openly.

Sadly what they don't realize is that 'our kids' (our future) play on the streets and they're not just learning from school, they're also learning from what they see.

A lot of people say that the statement "Monkey see, Monkey do" is true, if that's so, wouldn't you dislike it if 'our kids' said that the monkeys are you!?

Addiction is what causes pain, you might think it'll bring you happiness when you are dealing with the rain, but the truth be told addiction is the reason why you are stuck there in the first place.

You might think addiction is your friend, but isn't addiction the reason why you lost your true friends?

Addiction is a killer and that is a factor, it can't help you throughout your life, it'll only get you messed up, and fill your so called 'friends' with laughter.

There are a lot of addictions that are happening throughout our community; Drugs, Gambling and numerous addiction activities, but the one thing I would like to write about is the number one addiction in our community and that is ALCOHOL!

The Medicine Lodge is just a call away for individuals dealing with addiction.

Alcohol destroys families, alcohol wrecks homes, it can cause pain to your significant other, it can cause pain in your life, and it can even cause pain to your father and mother.

Alcohol can turn you into something so dark, your friends will notice before you and turn away from your kind heart because they see something inside you that they've never seen before, and you don't want to lose your true friends because alcohol can't be there for you, like your true friends are!

We see people become depressed by alcohol and alcohol is a depressant, people will take their lives not knowing what they are doing, imagine drinking with them and not knowing you won't see them tomorrow. We see alcohol make people angry, and they hurt the ones they love, suddenly they awake and wonder about what they have done.

Bootleggers are killing our people, they sell them whiskey bottles until they are needy, and bootleggers truly are greedy!

You know what tragedies alcohol and addictions can bring into your life, and still you won't bring this addiction to an end.

But no worries, my family, my friends, there is hope and you can get the help that you need at The Medicine Lodge, its just one call away, the number is always there its shining bright red, they can help you free your spirit from pain, they can help you to succeed in living a beautiful life alcohol and drug free.

2nd Place
Roxy Moose

Gambling Addiction

*by Roxy Moose, grade 12 (**2nd place in the grade 9/10 category**)*

Gambling is a very bad habit, which many people have. This habit can be so bad and people can become addicted. Gambling is done in many ways, and consists of many different prices. Gambling to date has made millions of dollars and continues to make millions of dollars. It has many effects on people around the world.

It may start out as a game, and then turn into a habit, leading many people to become addicted. It may be playing slot machines, cards, bingo, lottery, and making bets. Gambling is done in many more forms as well, and usually has a low chance of winning. Many people are deceived by the amount that can possibly become theirs, when the chance of winning isn't even promised.

Although a person may spend a lot of money for a better chance, the amount spent may be lost, or a big portion of the winnings. This is because the money spent could be won back, and less may actually be profit. This type of gambling situation happens a lot, and still people continue to spend more. As well gambling isn't always money, it may be a persons valued belongings.

Gambling addiction can lead to stealing and other criminal acts.

This addiction can be very harmful to a person's life. The fact of losing, and depth increasing, could create other bad habits. A lot of times people tend to steal, and use the money or goods to pay up. As well it may also make a person become distant to family and friends. This would have a very bad effect on them afterwards, such as feeling selfish, loneliness, and becoming depressed. They may also lose a lot, or even everything, and make a person frustrated, or angry.

This can be a controllable habit, avoiding addiction, by setting limits with time and money. It's nice to understand the odds are you will lose, and avoid trying to win. Keep a profile, record the time spent, the wins, and the losses. Do not drink then gamble, try while bored, sad, or angry, it often leads a person to get carried away. View it as entertainment, and not a way to make money. Have a balanced lifestyle, there's always other fun, and meaningful activities rather than gambling. The best option is not to gamble at all.

Dealing with Addictions?
call (204) 484-2256 to get help.
NELSON HOUSE
MEDICINE LODGE
PAVING THE RED ROAD TO WELLNESS

New Year–New NNCEA Activity

By: NNCEA Director of Education, Gail Gossfeld-McDonald

Tansi! Happy New Year! 2016 was a busy year and 2017 has begun with plenty of activity.

News Around the Meeting Table

The NNCEA School Board had its first meeting of 2017 on January 10th and it was very well attended. Regular board meetings are held once a month for those wishing to attend. Upcoming meetings are scheduled for 5:00 p.m. on February 14th, March 14th, April 11th, May 9th, June 13th and July 11th. This does not include any special board meetings that have to be held.

The board table has been refurbished and the Alice Moore Education Centre has a new outdoor sign. Feel free to check them out and stay tuned in the near future for the launch of the NNCEA website. It will be absolutely fantastic and will help keep students and parents informed.

Saying Goodbye to Long-term Board Member

Sadly, our long-time NNCEA School Board member and retired NNCEA educator, Trustee Dolly M. Spence passed away on Friday, January 13th, 2017! Sincere condolences are extended to family, friends and associates.

New NNCEA boardroom table.

Important Update on a Newly Created *Manitoba First Nation School System* (Division-FNSS)

Since 1981, our education system has been based on First Nations Control of First Nations Education (FNCFNE) and received minimal dollars from the federal government. Yet, we have survived and lived through the many, many challenges and changes that have occurred within the realm of FNCFNE in our community/province. The latest major change has been the December 16th, 2016 historic signing of an Education Governance Agreement for the creation of a *Manitoba First Nations School System* (MFNSS and aka as the *Partnership Transition Initiative* [PTI]). It will be totally operational for the 2017-18 school year and thereafter. This agreement, sanctioned by the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, is between the Government of Canada and the Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre (MFNERC).

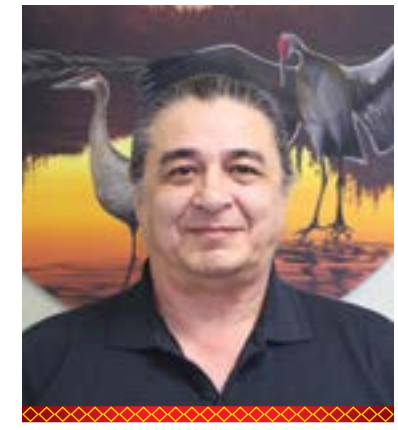
The MFNSS is a First Nations (FN) designed school system (division) which will have funding comparable to provincial school divisions (estimated to be $17,000 to $18,000 per student) for partner First Nation that join. But, all of the educational dollars for elementary and secondary schooling will go directly to MFNERC not the First Nation directly. The purpose of the MFNSS is to establish a strong support system for participating First Nation schools in Manitoba and improve academic standards, outcomes, retention and graduation rates. The MFNSS will administer and manage K-12 programs and services in the participating First Nation communities. About ten First Nations (8 from the south and 2 from the north) have signed on. Additional schools will be phased in. There is no obligation for First Nation's schools to join this MFNSS.

It is clear, joining the MFNSS will mean many improvements. Without participation, **no improvements/services will be received from the MFNSS** and no additional funding will be provided. First Nation school systems who do not join will remain under existing policy and the funding framework for Band-operated Federal Schools (BOFS) and proposal-based programs. In other words, the same financial struggles and woes will continue. If NNCEA chooses to remain an independent First Nation school (which is our right), then we will not be entitled to the $17,000 or $18,000 per student. *Do you think this is fair?* The NNCEA Board doesn't think it is fair and will be pursuing the matter further. Collaborations and strategic planning with Chief and Council will be conducted shortly. NNCEA will keep Citizens posted regarding any developments via the local radio station, special meetings and/or newsletters. Your thoughts and opinions are appreciated as well.

New sign for the Alice Moore Education Centre.

Director's Assistant Busy at Work

William Elvis Thomas, Director's Assistant, has been a great asset to our organization. His days are full with: NNCEA housing; to develop a survey instrument to gather info from households on attendance and school views; to conduct, analyze and compile the household surveys; to participate in the Nehetho language and cultural framework/ programming process; to keep abreast of First Nation educational matters via various media venues; to assist with community conferences and meetings and to assist the Director.



Assistant to the Director, William Elvis Thomas.

Filling the Gap of a Great Loss

The passing of David MacDonald has left a void at our high school we are working to fill. Mrs. Angela LeVasseur will be half time Vice-Principal to the end of this school year. We

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School cook Michael Linklater and the newly renovated stove range.

congratulate her on this assignment! New teachers for Physical Education, Math and Science have to be recruited to June 2017. The Mature Student Diploma Program and the High School Apprenticeship Program will continue at ATEC to June 2017. The Small Engine Repair program is still enduring some challenges that we are working to resolve.

Capturing Our History and Cree Language

The Nehetho History, Language and Culture Project has reconvened. The team has been working diligently on the history of our community and our school system. A mini-dictionary of our "th" Nehetho language and some legends is being compiled. There is much to be done in the next three months. By the end of March, resource booklets will be available.

Nehetho language classes are on hold for now. Once matters are settled, Nehetho classes at the Otetiskiwin School will resume to the end of March 2017. Further updates will be made available.

The Cree team, Life Skills, Land-based education as well as the traditional arts/crafts and Nehetho technology programs have ordered some much needed resources. These materials will definitely enrich programming for our students.

The school and school area are being "decluttered." Just before Christmas, a few extra bodies were hired, temporarily, to clean out some areas: the stage; the old art room; the school garage; and garbage receptacles. Thanks to the crew who did a dynamic job! Bigger, better garbage receptacles are on order. Decluttering will continue into 2017.

Room 101 at OK has been transformed. Thanks to the negotiation and planning efforts of the previous Director, School Administration and the CAP/CIP process, Room 101 has reopened with a new look. Your patience and understanding during its closure was appreciated. A much needed ventilation system has been installed as well as new cupboards, countertops, kitchen flooring and two new fridges. It is expected future Health inspections will pass all the required codes and the hot lunch program will continue without further setbacks.

Upcoming Events and Plans

The modernization of student washrooms on the main floor is planned for the coming months.

The 20th anniversary of the Alice Moore Education Centre was initially scheduled for Monday, December 5, 2016 and has been rescheduled to Friday, February 17, 2017. Due to the untimely passing of one of our beloved employees, the event had to be postponed until further notice. We encourage everyone to come out. In the morning, an all-denominational purification/blessing ceremony and a few speeches from officials are planned. In the afternoon, the Moore family will provide information and a display of the building's namesake, Alice Moore. There will be snacks and beverages available.

The CAP/CIP funding is expected to be announced in February. The NNCEA submitted proposals for the renovations in room 101, a new roof at the AMEC and the hot lunch programming at the school. It is hoped that these proposals will be approved. If so, the contributions will be most appreciated.

Work on the high school has begun. Conterra has been contracted by the NCN Government to do the work. Regular updates on the work progress will be shared. As you know, major projects can be slow but the task will get completed. Once that happens, the move back to the trailers will be most welcome. Ekosani!

Honouring Those Passed ... Dolly M. Spence

(Presented at January 18th, 2017 Funeral, NCN United Church)

Sincere condolences are extended to the family of Dolly M. Spence including Dolly's children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, brothers, sisters, and loved ones.

Dolly was a respected and valued part of the NCN community and contributed greatly to the NCN Education Authority. She will be greatly missed by all who knew her, worked with her or shared moments of her life.

Dolly was believed to be in her teens when she started work for the Education Authority in 1966. Little did Dolly know that her years of service would span over 50 years. When her oldest daughter was only six days old, Dolly began university. In 1978, Dolly received a Bachelor of Teaching from Brandon University. Seven years later, she went back to attain a Bachelor of Education degree. She worked on her Masters of Education degree as well.

Dolly was a Christmas baby and she was said to be strong and courageous to the end. She was a daughter of beloved NCN WWII veteran, Mr. Lawrence Spence. She was an active United Church Women's Group member. She was a very proud Nehetho iskwe! She spoke the language fluently and made sure her children became proficient in speaking as well. She was proud that her daughters were both involved in the field of education. Like mom, both have attended Brandon University. The youngest is the local HeadStart Coordinator and the oldest will be a High School Cree teacher within the next two years! Besides being a wife, mom, grandmother and active family member, Dolly was a dedicated Kindergarten teacher, a Vice-Principal/Principal, and NNCEA employee for numerous years. She spent most of her working career at Otetiskiwin School. She had many passions including her family, friends, work, hockey, outings, and being involved in the community.

In June 2011, Dolly retired from teaching and the employ of the NNCEA. Of course she did not remain idle. She ran in the School Board elections of 2012 and was voted in. She got 235/618 ballots cast which was a remarkable standing. She was one of six new School Board Trustees elected on April 11, 2012. During this four-year term, Dolly served as Chairperson of the Board.

Once the term expired, Dolly ran again in the elections of November 2015 and was successful. She served as a NNCEA School Board member, at large, until her passing. All in all, Dolly was involved with our school system for over 50 years which is an incredible accomplishment! I'm pretty sure she may have set the record!

Life is a gift and Dolly lived it fully. Dolly's work is done now. She did everything in her power for family, friends and our education system. Dolly will be sadly missed by her immediate and extended family, professional family and all other associates. We thank Dolly for all her teachings, sacrifices, efforts and contributions! We're pretty sure that she will not be lonely on the other side. She goes to join many loved ones who are celebrating her return! We need to celebrate her life and must be grateful for all the time that she was allowed to be with us. Thanks to all who took time to support the family. Blessings to all!

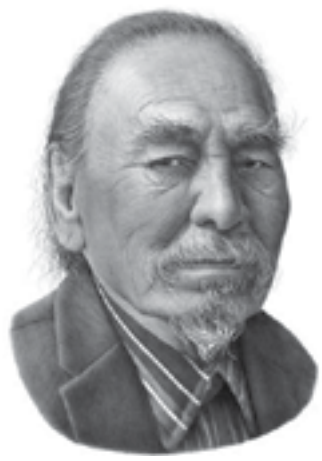
Portraits of Our NCN Elders

Adele Thomas

Adele was born in Nelson House in December, 1918. She had a reputation as an outspoken woman with a good sense of humour.

Young Adele Spence married Tommy Thomas from Cross Lake and afterwards the married couple moved to South Indian Lake.

Wellington Spence



"The residential school was to educate me so that I could enter the civilized world. I commented when I left, 'If this is the civilized world, I want no part of it.'" Powerful words from a man who at fifty-five became spiritual leader of his community.

Wellington Spence was born September 15th, 1921, near Mynarski Lakes. The Spence family had eleven children. Wellington was six years old when his nurturing relationship with the land began – it lasted a lifetime.

"At age seven I went to a residential school, to look after my younger sister, Bella. At age seventeen, Wellington left. I was extremely violent and for the next twelve years was in and out of jail for fighting." Wellington began living with Madeleine Nicholas in Waboden in 1955. They enjoyed a long, loving relationship. "We were raising four foster children before having any of our own. Eventually we had eleven children and adopted two grandchildren. Over the years, we fostered about 75 children. Somehow we managed to feed and clothe them."

"In 1976 I became spiritual leader of Nelson House. Both sets of grandparents taught me traditional knowledge. I learned to perform sweat lodge and pipe ceremonies that were outlawed until 1972; even the use of traditional medicines was illegal. Years later I was asked to cure people of various ailments." Wellington continued, "I taught my children kindness, love and to respect all people." Wellington Spence passed away September 22, 2012 at 91 years of age, a beacon for humanity.

YOUTH RESOURCE CENTER

Are you looking for something to do during the day from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.?

If so, come join us for a 6-week program.

For all ages over 15+

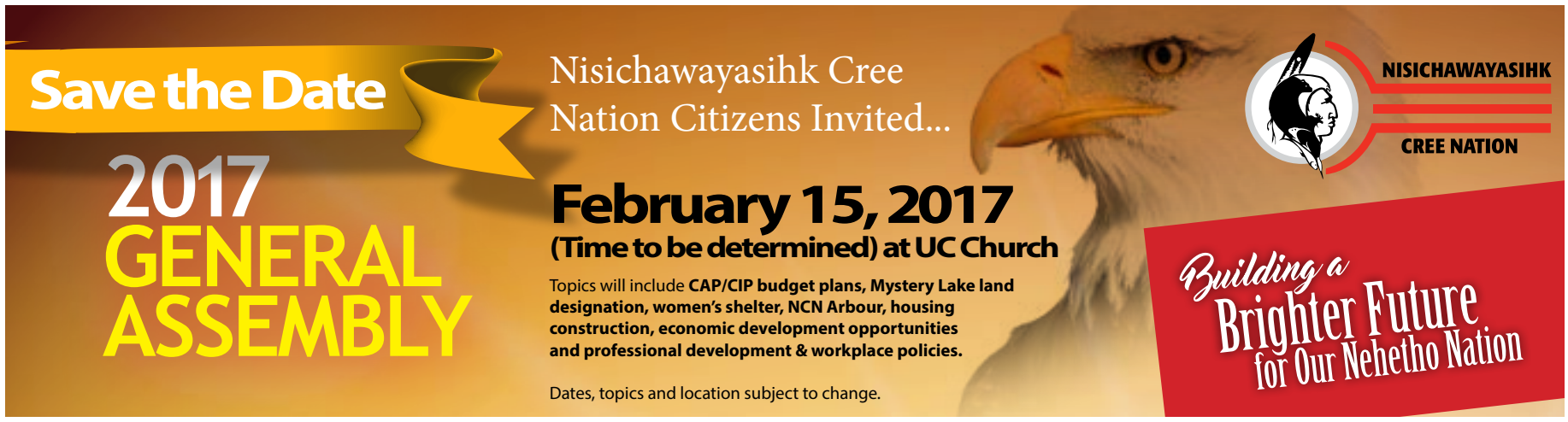
Registration deadline is February 13, 2017.

First 20.

Contact:
Cheyenne Spence
204-679-6827
cheyennespence@ncncree.com

- Cooking Class/Soup Kitchen
- Study sessions/groups for obtaining a license
- Proposal Writing
- First Aid/CPR
- Violence/Bullying Prevention
- Identification
- Culture, language, and tradition
- Building Self-esteem
- Portfolio Building
- Workshops on community issues
- Elders knowledge sessions
- Tea and Bannock
- Sewing/Beading

We will build, and empower ourselves and each other. We will make change and be capable of making a difference in our community.



Footprint Lake Water Levels

Footprint Lake 60-Day Water Level Forecast

Revised Forecast
January 1 – February 28, 2017

On January 1, 2017 the level of Footprint Lake is forecasted to be 798.6 feet. The level of the lake is expected to rise 7 inches to an elevation of 799.2 feet by the end of January.

During the month of February the level of the lake is expected to rise 1 inch to an elevation of 799.3 feet by the third week of the month and then remain fairly constant near an elevation of 799.3 feet until the end of February.

Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation
General Delivery
Nelson House, Manitoba R0B 1A0
Phone: (204) 484-2332
Fax: (204) 484-2392
www.ncncree.com

NCN Parks and Recreation Department is proud to contribute 30 tickets *(26 O.K. School students and 4 chaperones)* **to take part in the Disney on Ice Trip!** Students will be selected by teachers.

For more information contact:
Lou Moody (204) 307-2243, Terry (204) 307-2246 or Brent (204) 679-2023.