

Spring Newsletter 2023

“Advancing the
Indigenous Forest Sector.”

Many Thanks to the Meadow Lake Tribal Council

The Meadow Lake Tribal Council (MLTC) demonstrated their participation in the bioeconomy by touring NAFA's National Summit delegates through the process of energy generation from renewable biological resources. MLTC uses sustainably managed forest material (forest biomass) to make bioproducts like consumer goods and industrial products and converts the waste material into electric power. MLTC's operation is the largest Indigenous-owned mill and cogeneration station in the world!



NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS

NATIONAL SUMMIT 2023

INDIAN TIMBER REGULATIONS

NAFA COMMITTEE WORK

INDIGENOUS FORESTRY
INITIATIVE

CARBON TRADING

SUBSTANCE USE IN THE
NATURAL RESOURCE SECTOR

INVESTMENTS IN FOREST
INDUSTRY TRANSFORMATION



NAFA Participation in Responsible Business Conduct Committee with Global Affairs Canada

Canadian firms active abroad face variable environmental, social and governance operating conditions.

Firms with responsible business conduct (RBC) governance approaches are optimally positioned to thrive. RBC policies decrease the likelihood of environmental and social harm taking place and assist firms in addressing situations where environmental and social problems have arisen.

NAFA supporting modernization of the Indian Timber Regulations Guidelines

The National Aboriginal Forestry Association has agreed to provide advice to Update and modernize the National Guidelines for Administering the Timber Provisions of the Indian Act and its Regulations ("Indian Timber Regulations"). Per the work plan, we began the project in January 2023, retained policy analysts in February 2023, and conducted an initial review of pertinent regulations, policies, and legislation (March 2023).

Lori Wilson, RPF – loriw@nafaforestry.org

The National Summit on the Indigenous Forest Bioeconomy was inspiring. It was an honour to learn about the successes of our First Nations in the forest sector at three different scales: individual, First Nation and multi-Nation joint venture.

Cara's forest research project with youth in the north had amazing success. Her youth harvested, processed and built community infrastructure. Cara's project has such a positive social and community impact that it will be interesting to see an update from her in five years.

Our field and operational tour of Mistik Forest Management and Meadow Lake Bioenergy Centre showed us how a multi-Nation joint venture enables profitable scaling margin to compete commercially. The Meadow Lake Tribal Council is Canada's premiere 100% Indigenous-owned forest products manufacturing enterprise. Their purchase of Northwind Forest Products has expanded them into specialty wood products. Northwind Forest Products is affiliated with 15 First Nations. It is inspiring to see these multi-Nation joint ventures successfully compete at the industrial level. The organization of regional First Nations forming a joint venture and being a key player in a market is beyond amazing.

Each presenter at our Summit was equally impressive and a forerunner in their respective forestry areas. We have many First Nations excelling in various forest and biofuels projects, which is happening with forest tenure ownership. Our next Indigenous-held tenure study is coming up, and it will provide us with an update on wood supply volume, in cubic metres (m³) and area in hectares (ha), held by Indigenous tenure. The next dialogue is interesting: How do we Indigenous peoples want to organize ourselves next in the forest market? What is the next project or forest product that you want to strive for? What is your next level? The Summit was an inspirational experience, and I look forward to what lies ahead. Let's keep in touch; we are stronger together.

NATIONAL SUMMIT 2023

The National Aboriginal Forestry Association held a national summit on the Indigenous Forest Bioeconomy May 9-11, 2023 in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. The Meadow Lake Tribal Council hosted the event, which included a tour of their 8MW Bioenergy Centre (<https://mltcbioenergy.ca>), manufacturing mills, and forest management lands. Over 75 First Nations representatives, government officials, and Industry reps attended the event, sharing regional approaches to Indigenous Forest Management, bioeconomic business development, and assertion of Indigenous forest sector resource rights. The agenda for the event can be found here: <https://nafaforestry.org>. Proceedings for the event will be publicly posted in the Fall of 2023. Pictures from the event can be found [here](#). Meegwetch to the hosts, representatives, and event partners.

INDIGENOUS FORESTRY INITIATIVE BY NATURAL RESOURCES CANADA

The Indigenous Forestry Initiative (IFI) has been renewed for three additional years at existing levels. Over three years, this will invest \$13 million into projects supporting Indigenous leadership and forest sector participation. As part of this renewal, reflecting engagement with NAFA and other Indigenous Forest Sector players, the IFI has expanded beyond economic development to invite proposals that reflect communities' priorities for participation and leadership in forest stewardship, Indigenous knowledge and science activities, capacity building, and economic development. The IFI will now also be able to issue small grants to support Indigenous communities in preparing and participating in forest management planning and forest policy development to reflect Indigenous interests better and influence sustainable outcomes.

More information is available on the NAFA website.

In the meantime, if you would like to learn more about changes to the IFI, please get in touch with Laura Mackenzie (laura.mackenzie@nrca-nrcan.gc.ca), the Director leading the Indigenous Forestry Initiative.

Carbon trading protocol on Private Lands through Improved Forest Management

Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) has published the draft [Improved Forest Management on Private Land](#) federal offset protocol for public comment. Private Land in this context applies to recognized Indian reserves and lands reserved for Indians. NAFA served on the Indigenous advisory committee for the protocol.

Carbon trading protocol on Public Lands through Improved Forest Management

ECCC will initiate the development of a protocol on Improved Forest Management on Public Land in fall 2023. Public lands in this context apply to asserted and recognized Traditional Territories. Significant affect on Indigenous rights and lands may be triggered by this protocol. NAFA intends to serve on this committee when convened. For more information, please refer to [Canada's Greenhouse Gas Offset Credit System: Protocols](#) webpage. An [overview of the Canadian Greenhouse Gas Offset Credit System Regulations](#) is also now available, which outlines key requirements in the regulations and answers some frequently asked questions.

Follow-up on the National Roundtable on Substance Abuse and the Natural Resource Sector

NAFA received a response from the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions to facilitate the development of resources for the ongoing substance abuse crisis in the Natural Resource Sector. NAFA supports cultural change in the natural resource 'industries' response to substance therapy with harm reduction strategies and Indigenous-specific requirements for treatment and recovery. Specifically, we have suggested further study of the crisis from an Indigenous lens so that resources are of Indigenous interventions and ways of promoting health. We will continue to advocate for a healthier Indigenous natural resource sector and broader, more cultural access for individuals and their healing pathways. We welcome any suggestions that you may have regarding this dialogue.

Investments in Forest Industry Transformation

Created in 2010, the Investments in Forest Industry Transformation (IFIT) program facilitates the adoption of transformative technologies and products in the Canadian forest sector by bridging the gap between development and commercialization. The program aims to create a more competitive, resilient, and environmentally sustainable sector focusing on innovative, low-carbon projects that result in new or diversified revenue streams.

As part of its 2023 renewal, the IFIT program will increase its efforts to help improve the environmental performance of the forest sector by supporting demonstration and adoption projects that contribute to the decarbonization of industrial processes, as well as the efficient use of resources that generate more value from the same amount of wood. In addition to continuing to fund projects that produce renewable energy and sustainable bioproducts, IFIT will seek to invest in projects that integrate technologies leading to greater energy efficiency and explore bioenergy carbon capture in forest sector operations. These investments will enable the next wave of innovation, solidifying Canada's position as a leader in forest sector transformation.

For more information, go to [Investments in Forest Industry Transformation \(IFIT\)](https://www.investmentsinforestindustrytransformation.ca).
([canada.ca](https://www.canada.ca))

The goal of NAFA is to promote Aboriginal involvement in forest management and related commercial opportunities. NAFA is committed to holistic or multiple-use forestry, which implies the rebuilding and the sustainable development of the forest resource to serve a multitude of community needs. NAFA is a grassroots initiative backed by First Nations and other Aboriginal groups and organizations that function at either the regional or community level in the area of forestry.

The Board of Directors is comprised of ten representatives, one from each of the provinces and territories, except for the Atlantic region which has two directors.

New Brunswick & P.E.I.

Brad Sappier

Nova Scotia & Newfoundland

Ashley Childs

Confederacy of Mainland

Mi'kmaq

Quebec

Brenda St-Denis

Wolf Lake First Nation

Ontario

Raymond Ferris

Matawa First Nations

Management

Manitoba

Don Lathlin

Swampy Cree Tribal Council

Saskatchewan

Chief Blaine Fiddler

Waterhen First Nation

Alberta

Darrell Anderson

British Columbia

Lennard Joe

BC First Nations Forestry Council

Northwest Territories / Yukon

Vacant

NAFA is Canada's national Indigenous forest sector voice. Over 80% of First Nations are found in the forest, holding over 19.4 million cubic metres of annual allowable cut in aggregate. Driving performance with these nations through Free, Prior and Informed Consent can create over 5,100 new jobs and over \$2.4 billion in additional GDP, while protecting the environment and respecting culture.



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