



Big Grassy River Ojibwe First Nation

P.O. Box 414, Morson, Ontario P0W 1J0
Phone: (807) 488-5614, (807) 488-5615, (807) 488-5533
FAX: (807) 488-5533

May 8th, 2020

COMMUNITY UPDATE

Big Grassy First Nation is providing an update of activities to the members in the community of planned preparedness in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic declared by the World Health Organization. On March 13th, 2020, the Leadership in partnership with the Health Centre staff reviewed and implemented the Big Grassy First Nation pandemic plan, and have been following the plan to date with preparing and being in communication with our local Tribal Health – Fort Frances Area Tribal Health services for the Public Health Information in regards to updates of any cases in our catchment area.

It was further decided by leadership and management to begin the necessary steps to review, update and begin the implementation of our Master Emergency Response Plan which has been in effect as of March 27th, 2020. We have created a Community Control Group that teleconferences 3x weekly and does have guest(s) join our calls to provide valuable information and to communicate with all of our Community Control Group members. We have personnel from our staff that are part of this Community Control Group along with Leadership and is comprised of Social Services, Health, Education, Management, Finance, and Child and Family Services, as well as operational service programs.

In response to the confirmed case of COVID-19 at the Rainy River Assessment Centre test site, we were immediately apprised and updated on an emergency call with FFATHS and then a decision was made on March 27th, 2020 to be in a standby position to declaring a state of emergency in our First Nation.

Since that time, we have ramped up plans in preparedness and have taken measures to be implemented immediately. Some of the tasks that have completed to date include, food security measures, ordering of PPE, hamper deliveries, cleaned and disinfected all band buildings done by Service Master cleaning, assisted financially to members, provided deep freezers, coordinated

equipment delivery, secured volunteers/ staff to stand security to our community and planning for isolation centers per recommendation by Chiefs of Ontario.

Some of these items include;

- Prepared home kits for the community households, March 12th, 2020.
- Implemented a protocol for returning staff of isolation, March 13th, 2020.
- Issued a travel restriction for non essential travel, March 13th, 2020.
- Provided households copy of the Pandemic Plan, March 13th, 2020.
- Issued a travel advisory for outside of Canada to self-isolate, March 15th, 2020.
- Provided assistance to off reserve members for COVID-19 relief, March 20th, 2020.
- Closure and restrictions to non essential business and visitors, March 25th 2020.
- Issued a curfew from 10:00pm – 7:00am, beginning March 27th, 2020.
- Emergency Response Plan, March 27th, 2020.
- Public Notice for Implementing Security Check Points, April 6th, 2020
- Updated the Big Grassy First Nation Trespass Law for Peacekeepers, April 10th, 2020.
- Provided the Membership with the Treaty Three Press Release for COVID-19 Enforcement, April 11th, 2020.
- COVID-19 Reference Guide to member households on the First Nation, May 7th, 2020
- Community Notice in regards to WTP project, May 8th, 2020
- Financial Assistance to Urban Members, May 8th, 2020.

As this COVID-19 virus changes daily, we will continue to try be in a preparedness position however we do not know what kind of impact or potential that this COVID-19 brings and we can only request that our own community members and public abide by the measures taken to date.

In regards to travel, it was recommended by the Community Control Group that any person(s) who may have traveled to or from an area known to have reported a high volume of confirmed COVID-19 cases such as Winnipeg, Kenora and or Thunder Bay, are being requested to voluntarily self isolate and to self monitor for any flu like symptoms, such as, cough, fever, and or difficulty breathing.

In the immediate future please be aware of our Service Providers who will be reaching out to inquire if any members within your household who may be experiencing any cold or flu like symptoms, which will then be followed up by our Community Health Nurse from FFATHS.

May 8th, 2020

FURTHER UPDATE:

The Community Control Group had designated certain units within the First Nation that were allocated to the T3PS as self isolation units, and the Community Care Program office. These self isolation units were for individuals that were coming from an area that is considered to be a hot zone for COVID-19 virus. We have also been in preparation of the isolation center in event of a

potential outbreak and is only our preparation plans as part of our preparedness measures. We are also distributing a COVID-19 Reference Guide for households that have been provided by FFATHS.

Many of the households may have received goods, the First Nation has distributed food to the homes within the First Nation, and this is meant to limit non essential travel for items such as dry goods and meat hampers. We hope that this will also address any food security issues that we could potentially face during this pandemic. It is part of our preparedness measures to keep our members safe and healthy.

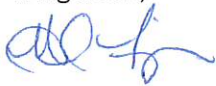
Big Grassy First Nation has been actively engaged with Gizhewaadiziwin Health Access Centre and have engaged their Health Team in the project screening for the safety protocols that will be implemented for this particular project to ensure the health and safety of our members. SBA Design and Aegus Contracting have been following the safety protocols that are being implemented by GHAC.

We are in preparation to planning an Urban Support program to the off reserve members for items similar to our on reserve food security measures. So that will be implemented for another round to our Urban Members.

For those members who are on social media groups like facebook, please join in on the weekly live feeds from Dr Ian Gemmell, Acting Chief Medical Officer for North Western Health Unit who can answer any questions that you may have in regards to better understanding the COVID-19 virus, Wednesday's at 3:00pm CST.

Again, we are open to suggestions and ideas so do not hesitate to contact any member of leadership. Please remember to be aware and to always practice your preventative measures when out for essential travel.

Miigwech,



Allison Finlayson
Communication's Officer



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May 8, 2020

Attention Community Members:

We will soon be undertaking the much needed construction project on our Water Treatment Facility. The project is set to begin on May 19, 2020 and is expected to take 12 months. During this uncertain time, we want to ensure the community remains safe so we have engaged Gizhewaadiziwin Health Access Centre to support the project. We have worked with them to ensure a plan is in place to protect the health and well-being of our community. They will be providing screening, education and monitoring of the workers on the project.

If there are any questions or concerns, please contact:

Tim Archie, Foreman of Infrastructure & Maintenance
Big Grassy First Nation
t_archie_makwa1@hotmail.com
(807)276-1376

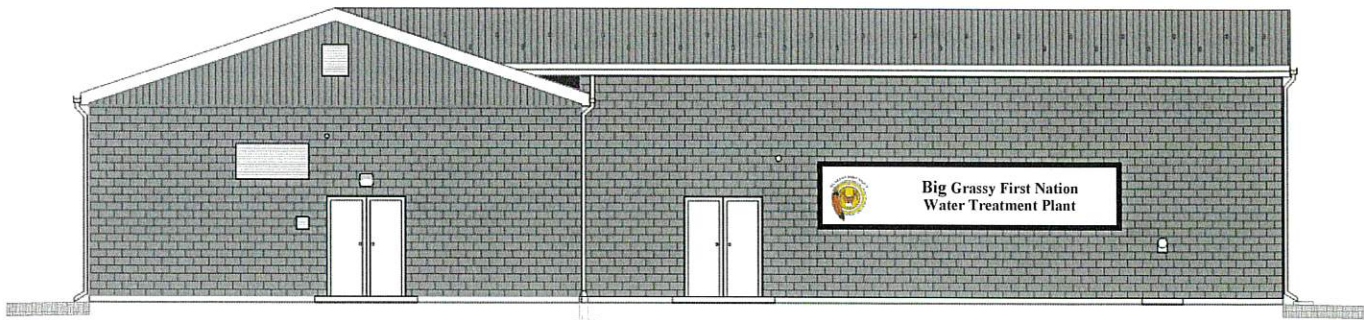
Or

Rhonda Mose, Clinical Programs Manager
Gizhewaadiziwin Health Access Centre
807-274-3131 (ph)
rmose@gizhac.com (email)

Big Grassy First Nation

WATER TREATMENT PLANT UPGRADES AND EXPANSION PROJECT

April 2020



Project Newsletter

The following is an update on our water treatment plant upgrade and expansion project and the progress to date. Our engineering consultant, SBA Engineering, has completed the detailed design for our Water Treatment Plant (WTP) expansion and construction is scheduled to begin in the coming weeks.

The project was awarded for a total of \$6.1 Million to Aegus Inc. with funding supported by Indigenous Services Canada. Chief and Council along with staff, Ontario First Nation Technical Services Corp., Anishnaabeg of Kabapikotawangag Resources Council, and our consulting engineer, SBA, have been working tirelessly to ensure that this project is realized and we are proud to be initiating construction in May 2020. Project construction is forecasted to continue for one year, with works being completed in Spring 2021.

The upgraded WTP will include an expanded footprint to accommodate a new dual-train conventional filtration system and upgraded disinfection technology. This will also include a reservoir expansion to support the anticipated growth of our community while providing emergency storage. Facility upgrades will provide our community with a reliable and cost-effective drinking water system that complies with all provincial and federal regulations. All existing process equipment and other outdated materials will be decommissioned and removed from the facility.

The MECP, ISC and several other agencies have approved the project design and permits are ready for construction.

Please be advised that during construction increased truck traffic is expected throughout the community. Furthermore, although some construction works will take place inside the existing WTP, significant construction will take place on the facility's exterior which may cause disruption to the community. We will work closely with the construction team to ensure that community members are aware of potential disruptions closer to the proposed dates. Please know that all provisions will be taken to reduce noise and disruption to the community throughout this process.

We would like to inform the community that Aegus Inc. has indicated that they will require support from the community for labour and skilled trades at various times throughout construction. If you will be available during this time and would like to support construction activities, more information will be provided to the community when specific requirements are confirmed.

The start-up and commissioning of the upgraded and expanded WTP will increase reliability of our water system, improve efficiency and support Big Grassy's water needs for years to come! We appreciate your cooperation through the construction period; however, if you have any questions or concerns at any time, please contact Tim Archie, First Nation Fire Chief or Daymar Creary (519-215-6524) at SBA.



Ontario First Nations
Technical Services
Corporation



ANISHINAABEG OF KABAPIKOTAWANGAG



Indigenous
Services Canada

ARE YOU CONCERNED ABOUT COVID-19 IN YOUR COMMUNITY?

Say **YES** to the Test



- ✓ TESTING IS KEY TO KEEP COMMUNITIES SAFE
- ✓ THE MORE WE TEST THE FASTER WE CAN IDENTIFY COVID-19 AND THE FASTER WE CAN PREVENT FURTHER SPREAD IN THE COMMUNITY
- ✓ TESTING IS QUICK AND CONFIDENTIAL

**IF YOU HAVE ANY SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19 CONTACT YOUR
COMMUNITY HEALTH NURSE TO DISCUSS TESTING OPTIONS**

SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19 INCLUDE:

- Fever
(*temperature of 37.8°C or greater*)
- New or worsening cough
- Shortness of breath
- Sore throat
- Hoarse voice
- Difficulty swallowing
- Loss of taste or smell
- Nausea/vomiting, diarrhea
- Abdominal pain
- Runny nose, sneezing
- Nasal congestion

**FOR A MORE DETAILED LIST OF ATYPICAL SIGNS & SYMPTOMS
CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE LISTED BELOW**



Fort Frances Tribal Area
HEALTH SERVICES

Community Health



807-274-2042

Monday- Friday from 8am-3pm



www.fftahs.com

More information on symptoms, resources & helpful links

HAVE YOU TRAVELED OUTSIDE THE RAINY RIVER DISTRICT IN THE PAST 14 DAYS? **YOU COULD BE AT RISK FOR COVID-19**

It is recommended that anyone who has traveled outside of the District self-isolates upon return

WHY DO I NEED TO SELF-ISOLATE, I'M NOT SICK?

If you were exposed to the virus, self-isolating will limit the potential of spreading the virus to others in your home and community. It is a way of protecting the people you love and share a community with.

Should you become ill, the risk of making other people sick is lowered if you have self-isolated.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO SELF-ISOLATE?

- **STAY HOME** - Do not visit public spaces or other homes
- **AVOID CONTACT WITH OTHERS** - Try to even avoid contact with people you live with
- **KEEP YOUR DISTANCE** - Try to maintain 2m distance if cannot avoid others in your home
- **WASH YOUR HANDS OFTEN & COVER SNEEZES/COUGHS**

YOUR COMMUNITY HEALTH NURSE IS HERE TO SUPPORT YOU!

WE WILL CHECK IN WITH YOU DAILY AND ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE.



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Visit for information on symptoms, resources & helpful links





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The implementation of Security Checkpoints began on April 6, 2020 for our community.

I would like to acknowledge and express gratitude to all Community Members and Peacekeeper's for their contributions and ensuring the health and safety of our community and members. I would also thank the members for providing food delivery to the Peacekeepers during their rotations and shifts.

At present time, we are still following the health guidelines set forth by FFATHS for non essential travel, recommendations on the lockdown of our communities in Ontario, and the provincial guidelines for the state of emergency.

All recommendations will continue to be monitored and once restrictions are lifted then we will update the community on our access restrictions (checkpoints).

We continue to thank all of our members, and residents for helping us in ensuring the health and safety and for following the restrictions that are being implemented for health reasons.

Miigwetch,

Charmaine Hunter
Treaty Three Police Representative