

July 5th, 2018

Wahkohtowin Development Grows Capacity in Forest Management Planning and Professional Development

On July 5th, alongside a day filled with workshops on Late Winter Moose Habitat and Herbicide Alternatives Program 2.0, the participants paused for a special signing event. The workshop participants were treated to witnessing an Ontario Professional Forester – Mentoring Agreement being signed between Isabelle Males (bottom center) and David Flood, RPF (top right) which will provide Isabelle the support and knowledge transfer to obtain the professional designation of Registered Professional Forester within a 2-year period.

It is not uncommon to hear that the need to build capacity to support Indigenous community's participation in Forestry and Forest Management. A call for action that Chris McDonnell (back-center) of Rayonier Advanced Materials - RYAM (formerly Tembec Inc) as the Manager Aboriginal and Environmental Relations knows well through his 20-plus years of experience with Indigenous community engagement. Participating in this signing marks a celebration and recognition of the results that deeper collaboration and commitment to partnerships can generate. The decade long relationship with the Northeast Superior Regional Chiefs Forum which birthed Wahkohtowin continue the journey toward Full Participation in Forestry and Forest Management. This success reflects well on the relationship mechanisms found in the voluntary Forest Stewardship Council – Forest Certification scheme – Principle 3 – Indigenous Peoples Rights and Rayonier's continued commitment to maintain FSC certification on its forest tenure.

Participating in the signing along with First Nation community members and MNR representatives are Chief Keeter Corston (left) – Chapeau Cree First Nation, a founder and long time Chair of the NSRCF and Chief Patricia Tangie (right) of Michipicotin First Nation are witness to incremental success this rare occurrence to date in the Province of Ontario where David as an Indigenous Registered Professional Forester is in the position to professionally sign off as a Mentor to Isabelle as an Indigenous Provisional Member. The increasing Indigenous professional capacity is anticipated to improve First Nation engagement with Forest Management Planning and generate fee for service revenue for Wahkohtowin as it takes on through partnership Contingency Planning, Annual Works Schedule and Operational Services and Forest Management Planning contracts.

Wahkohtowin Development GP Inc is a Regional Economic Development Corporation with a mandate to grow business opportunities associated with the Forest, Bioeconomy and Energy Sectors. Incorporated in April 2015, the business is wholly owned by Northeast Superior First Nations who see Full Participation in the stewardship, management and utilization of resources from their territories as integral for long term sustainability.

For more information visit www.wahkohtowin.com
Or contact David Flood, General Manager, M 705 622 9581

