

April 25, 2024



ROBINSON HURON TREATY SETTLEMENT UPDATE

On behalf of the Council, I want to share a significant milestone in the ongoing RHT Annuities Settlement journey. I am confirming that Ontario and Canada have each transferred 5 billion dollars (a total of 10 billion dollars) to the Robinson Huron Treaty Litigation Fund (RHTLF), fulfilling their obligations in the Robinson Huron Treaty Settlement, the largest settlement in Canadian history.

With the Settlement funds now in the BMO Custodial bank account, there is still much work that needs to be done before funds will be released to our corporate trustee account and flow into our community.

The WRFN-RHT Committee, WRFN Administration, and Chief and Council, along with our financial and legal advisors, continue to plan in preparation for Whitefish River First Nation to receive the settlement funds and distribute the funds.

Key considerations

- The settlement funds are currently with the BMO bank collecting interest daily. The interest generated will be equally shared by all RHT First Nations and will be included when priority payments are released to our corporate trustee account.
- The Robinson Huron Treaty First Nations Chiefs and Trustees met on Monday, April 22, 2024, primarily to fast track the distribution of compensation funds to the 21 RHT First Nations. More information to be shared at the Community Conversations.
- At our previous Community Conversations sessions, the community asked why we cannot have a 100% distribution to individual members. We have received an independent legal opinion that confirms that a 100% distribution is not possible. In our presentations, we conveyed that we need to determine the right balance for distribution of the collective and individual amounts for distribution. For those not yet born, funds will be put into a trust for future generations. We will continue to engage the community as we move forward and plan for the development of Trusts for the collective amount.

Some priorities in this planning include:

- PCD model that is Whitefish River First Nation specific.
- Working with the RHT Litigation Management Committee (LMC) on updating our Band member list.
- The WRFN-RHT Committee, and Chief and Council, will identify timelines.
- Working with Peace Hills Trust for distribution when the settlement money arrives in the corporate trustee account.
- A minor's trust will be created.
- We are preparing a community support plan to prepare for the potential impacts of funds coming to the community by hosting financial literacy sessions, ensuring elders are protected, educating on elder abuse, scam and fraud awareness, providing the option for individual trusts for members of the community that request this, mental health and addictions awareness and supports.
- We are also preparing a plan to protect children in care.
- To provide opportunities for band members to help them attain various identifications required to set up bank accounts or prepare to receive settlement funds.
- Update all member's addresses and banking information.
- Plan and prepare for a community vote if needed.
- To provide opportunities to help band members learn more about the history of Whitefish River First Nation; inclusive of the RHT of 1850.

We are planning for the following Community Conversation sessions:

- 1. Saturday, May 11, 2024 – WRFN Community Centre**
- 2. Monday May 13, 2024 – Zoom**
- 3. Wednesday, May 15, 2024 – Toronto – Courtyard Marriott**
- 4. Thursday May 16, 2024 – Sudbury – Radisson Hotel**
- 5. Wednesday, May 22, 2024 - Sault Ste. Marie -Quattro**

We are also looking at some additional Community Conversations where we have a strong presence of our community members residing. We are working on finalizing the Community Conversation agenda and providing information on the items to be discussed. Members will receive presentations for their review two weeks in advance of the sessions taking place. Please keep in mind, that some information is confidential and can only be shared at the community engagement session.

I ask our community to join the Chief and Council to express our most profound gratitude and congratulations to Nahwegahbow Corbiere Law Firm, Legal and Professional Associates, the Litigation Management Committee (LMC), RHT Elders, the Robinson Huron Treaty Trustees, the Lake Huron Chiefs, and previous Chiefs and Trustees. It was their determination, dedication, hard work, and commitment that led us in reaching this historic settlement agreement. This was certainly a unified effort by all and exemplifies “**NGO DWE WAANGIZID ANISHINAABE.**” “One Anishinaabe Family”.

As we continue all this work for our community, we ask for continued patience and support.

With much respect and kindness

Miigwech,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a circular scribble followed by a long horizontal line that ends in a small arrowhead pointing to the right.

Chief Rodney Nahwegahbow
Whitefish River First Nation

Please exercise caution while sharing any confidential or financial information shared on the members portals publicly with non-beneficiaries. Doing so makes those who are most vulnerable in our community target to scams and other risks. The more information scammers have, the easier it is for them to convince beneficiaries to share their banking details.

WHITEFISH RIVER FIRST NATION

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