

PRESS RELEASE

EMBARGOED UNTIL DECEMBER 8 AT 10 AM

Wolastoqiyik Wahsipekuk First Nation Economic Development Projects Announcement

Cacouna, December 3, 2021— On December 8, 2021, Grand Chief Jacques Tremblay, surrounded by members of the Wolastoqiyik Wahsipekuk First Nation Grand Council, held a press conference to announce the status of some of the First Nation's economic development projects.

A New Architectural and Landscape Signature

The First Nation has recently adopted a new architectural and landscape signature to reflect the community. The numerous economic development projects underway will result in the development of new infrastructures. The architectural and landscape signature will ensure continuity between the various developments and will anchor Wolastoqey culture and identity on Wolastokuk, the ancestral territory of the Wolastoqiyik Wahsipekuk First Nation. The Wolastoqey architect Robert Lavoie, from the firm Mainstudio architecture, and the firm Rousseau et Lefebvre were mandated to carry out this project.

Window on Beluga Whales

On November 15, the Government of Quebec announced the granting of \$600,000 in financial assistance to GREMM for the window on beluga whales scientific activity project. This announcement followed the agreement on the occupation of lands adjacent to the Gros-Cacouna harbour, concluded between the Government of Quebec and the Wolastoqiyik Wahsipekuk First Nation on July 2, 2021.

The window on beluga whales project is an alternative to the observation of this threatened species at sea. It links the two existing land-based observation sites, Pointe-Noire and Baie-Sainte-Marguerite, with the future land-based observation site on Gros-Cacouna Mountain. The project includes a recreational and tourist component and a scientific component. The involvement of the First Nation concerns the development of infrastructures and the tourist administration of the site. The development of the beluga whale land observation site on Gros-Cacouna Mountain represents an investment of \$3.7M for the Wolastoqiyik Wahsipekuk First Nation. The implementation of this project near the Kiskotuk coastal park will promote the development of a recreational and tourist attraction, transforming the Cacouna—L'Isle-Verte axis, along the river, into a major attraction for the Lower St. Lawrence region. Projected start of work: Spring 2022.

Administrative and Community Centre

The administrative and community centre of the Cacouna reserve no longer meets the needs of the First Nation. The number of workspaces is insufficient, the insulation needs

to be reviewed for energy efficiency issues and the limited space makes it difficult to accommodate community members for socio-community activities. Following a comparative study of three different scenarios, the demolition and reconstruction scenario representing the avenue was chosen. The new building will meet space requirements and best practices for energy efficiency. The environmental footprint of the reconstruction will be very small, and the architecture will reflect the community. This is an estimated investment of \$3 million. Projected start date: Spring 2022

Economic Development on the Kataskomiq Reserve

In order to diversify its sources of sustainable revenue, the Wolastoqiyik Wahsipekuk First Nation is considering an economic development project on a small portion of the Kataskomiq reserve territory. In negotiations with the Government of Quebec, as part of the development of Highway 85, the First Nation has obtained a guarantee for the development of two access ramps into the reserve territory. A process to designate the lands for commercial development will be put to a referendum of First Nation members in early 2022.

Aquaculture Project

In order to diversify its sustainable revenues and with a good knowledge of the marine products industry and market, the Wolastoqiyik Wahsipekuk First Nation is considering the development of an aquaculture industry. The land-based fish farming project is being studied in partnership with Merinov, the most important integrated centre for applied research in the fields of fishing, aquaculture, processing and the valorization of aquatic products in Canada. The gross annual revenues of the project are estimated at \$8 million.

Land Acquisition

In 2019, the First Nation acquired the land located northeast of the intersection of Route 132 and Avenue du Port in Cacouna. Recently, the opportunity to acquire the land located southeast of the intersection has arisen. The First Nation is now the owner of the land located east of the intersection, a strategic position from a recreational and tourism point of view due to its proximity to a growing tourism draw.

Quotes

“The projects presented today are in line with the 2021–2024 strategic plan, *Succeeding in the Wolastoqiyik Wahsipekuk Shift*, adopted last October and demonstrate our willingness to participate, in partnership with the community, in the economic development of the Lower St. Lawrence region.”

“The development of a typically Wolastoqey built heritage will allow culture and identity to be anchored in Wolastokuk, the community’s ancestral territory.”

“Window on Beluga Whales will not only reduce the impacts of scientific and tourist observation on a threatened species, but also the creation of the first land-based beluga whale observation site on the South Shore of the St. Lawrence. This is a cutting-edge

recreational and tourism development project that integrates the preservation of a threatened species and scientific research at the very heart of its activities.

Jacques Tremblay, Grand Chief of the Wolastoqiyik Wahsipekuk First Nation

–30–

Sources: Marc-Etienne Carrier
Communications Coordinator
Wolastoqiyik Wahsipekuk First Nation
Cell: 418 894-5124

Attachments:

- *Enscape_2021-10-29-12-16-00retouchée.png*
Credit: Architecture: Mainstudio architecture et Atelier 5 — Landscape Architecture: Rousseau Lefebvre
- *Enscape_2021-10-29-12-21-11retrouchée.png*
Credit: Architecture: Mainstudio architecture et Atelier 5 — Landscape Architecture: Rousseau Lefebvre
- *Grand Chef Jacques Tremblay.png*
Credit: Wolastoqiyik Wahsipekuk First Nation
- *Kataskomiq_secteur d'étude.pdf*
Credit: Wolastoqiyik Wahsipekuk First Nation