

WINTER 2025



CHI MINO OZHITOOWIN NEWSLETTER

Chi Mino Ozhitoowin LP is a 100% First Nation owned, for-profit organization with a strategic focus on the construction of the **Waasigan Transmission Line Project**.



A Message from the CEO
Peter Collins

ABOUT US

Chi Mino Ozhitoowin is owned by our 7 communities and powered to life through our partnership with Valard Construction LP and Hydro One Network Inc. on the construction of the **Waasigan Transmission Line**.

As a key subcontractor for the Waasigan Transmission Line project, Chi Mino Ozhitoowin plays a crucial role in cultural awareness and promoting understanding and cooperation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous partners.

"CHI MINO OZHITOOWIN" MEANS EVERYONE BUILDING (ANYTHING) IN A REAL GOOD WAY. IT WAS GIVEN BY THE WABIGOON LAKE OJIBWAY NATION ELDERS' COUNCIL.

Boozhoo,

Chi Mino Ozhitoowin has made tremendous progress, strengthening opportunities across our partner communities. Through training programs, job fairs, and business workshops, we're building skills and opening doors to lasting employment.

This project is more than an initiative—it's our commitment to a prosperous future for all.

Peter Collins

WAASIGAN TRANSMISSION LINE

Project Overview:

The Waasigan Transmission Line is a proposed new double-circuit 230-kilovolt transmission line between Lakehead Transformer Station (TS) in the Municipality of Shuniah and Mackenzie TS in the Town of Atikokan, and a new single-circuit 230 kilovolt transmission line between Mackenzie TS and Dryden TS in the City of Dryden.

Hydro One Networks Inc. has awarded the Engineering, Procurement, and Construction (EPC) contract to Valard Construction LP. Chi Mino Ozhitoowin has been engaged by Valard Construction LP to help maximize First Nations participation in the project.

Mining and forestry play a key role in driving economic growth in the northwest. According to the Thunder Bay Community Economic Development Commission's 2021 mining readiness report, mining-related electricity demand in the northwest is expected to increase 180% over the next five years.

Waasigan will bring an additional 350 megawatts of power to the region, enough to supply approximately 11 new average mining operations.

Our 7 Partnering Communities:

Eagle Lake First Nation
Fort William First Nation
Gakijiwanong Anishinaabe Nation
Lac Seul First Nation
Nigigoonsiminikaaning First Nation
Ojibway Nation of Saugeen
Seine River First Nation



WAASIGAN TRANSMISSION LINE

Map Legend

- Existing Transformer Station (TS)
- Preferred Route
- Existing Transmission Line
- Highway
- International Border
- Red Sky Métis Independent Nation Office
- Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Council Office
- Treaty Boundary
- First Nation Reserve
- Provincial Park



View the interactive map at HydroOne.com/Waasigan



Eagle Lake
First Nation



Fort William
First Nation



Gakijiwanong
ANISHINAABE NATION



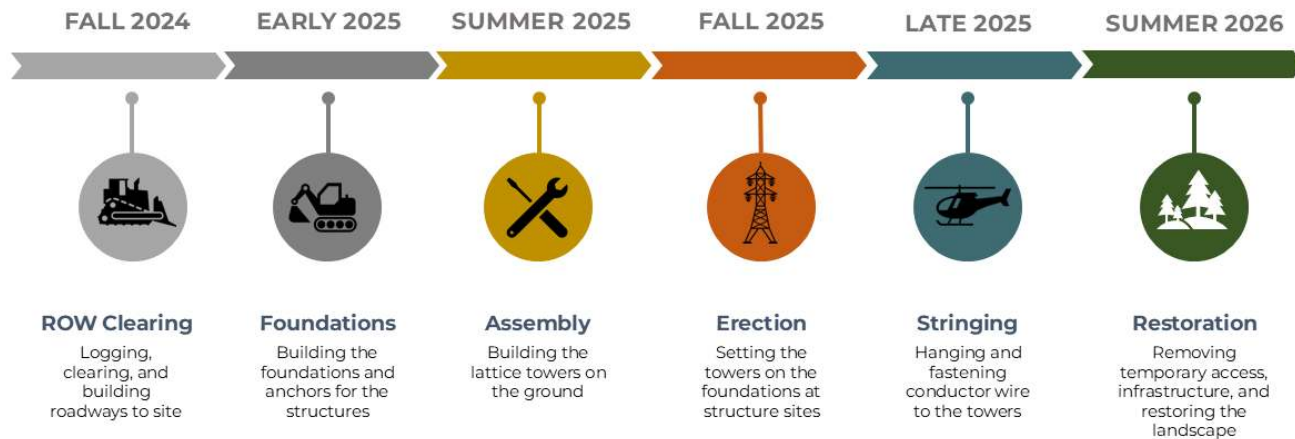
LAC SEUL
FIRST NATION



WAASIGAN TRANSMISSION LINE

WAASIGAN TIMELINE PHASE 1

Estimated construction start dates for each activity:



Revision 4, 2025-01-09

Note: Dates are estimated, and **subject to change**



Chi Mino Ozhitoowin Goals

Chi Mino Ozhitoowin has been subcontracted by Valard Construction LP for the Waasigan Transmission Line project. Both parties will collaborate to ensure that the traditional Anishinaabe ways of life are respected throughout the project, providing training and job opportunities to the seven participating First Nation communities.

Their joint commitment aims to enhance the relationship between Valard and the First Nations communities. Chi Mino Ozhitoowin's main goal is to facilitate communication between Valard and the represented First Nations, maximizing their involvement in the project by:

- Engaging with communities and sharing construction-related project details
- Identifying training needs and organizing training for local members
- Recruiting qualified individuals interested in project work
- Establishing competitive Indigenous businesses and partnerships (e.g., Joint Ventures) to participate in various construction scopes.



Gakijiwanong
ANISHINAABE NATION



INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT & PARTICIPATION



Chi Mino Ozhitoowin, joined by joint venture partners, during the Waasigan Job Fair Tour 2024 in Nigigoonsiminikaaning First Nation.

Indigenous Engagement & Participation

Chi Mino Ozhitoowin is dedicated to providing training and employment opportunities that empower individuals within our partner communities and surrounding areas. Through targeted programs, our goal is to equip participants with the skills needed to succeed in roles related to the Waasigan Transmission Line project and beyond.

Our team has been actively engaging within communities by hosting job fairs and community events to ensure accessible and relevant opportunities. We prioritize collaboration and provide ongoing support to ensure participants not only access training but are also well-prepared for sustainable employment.



To visit our job board for employment opportunities, scan here:



A Message from the
Indigenous Engagement & Participation Manager
Nancy Doblej

Boozhoo,

Our training programs have been a tremendous success, with many trainees proudly completing their certifications and preparing for rewarding careers.

Our job fair tour has been another important step in connecting directly with community members, ensuring they have access to employment opportunities and resources that align with their goals.

We are incredibly proud of the progress we've made together and are committed to continuing this work to create lasting opportunities for all our partner communities.

Nancy Doblej



INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT & PARTICIPATION

This past fall, the Indigenous Engagement team was hard at work supporting students as they progressed through their training programs.

Beyond ensuring access to quality education and resources, the team prioritized creating a well-rounded experience by engaging with trainees through a variety of activities. From bowling and movie nights to attending hockey games and providing cultural supports, these efforts fostered a sense of community and belonging.

By blending skill-building with meaningful connections and cultural enrichment, the team helped trainees feel supported every step of the way, ensuring their journey was as fulfilling as it was successful.



Trainees being trained on chainsaw operation from the Surveyor Assistant program in Thunder Bay, Ontario.



The newly trained Heavy Equipment Operators (1) celebrate with cake at their completion ceremony on September 13, 2024.

Graduating Classes of 2024 🎓

Training Programs

- Construction Craft Worker
- Heavy Duty Equipment Technician
- Heavy Equipment Operator
- Line Crew Ground Support
- Mechanical Harvesting Equipment Operator
- Natural Resources Field Worker
- Professional Chainsaw Operator
- Remote Camp Cook
- Remote Camp Support Worker
- Security Guard
- Surveyor Assistant

Training Partners:



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT



A Message from the
Business Development Manager
Shane Fugere

Boozhoo,

As we continue to sign joint venture partnerships, we are also focused on equipping community members with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed.

This spring, we will be hosting two-day business workshops designed to support those looking to start their business journey and become part of the opportunities within the Waasigan Transmission Line project.

Additionally, we are offering project management training to help our communities build capacity and take on larger roles in the industry. These initiatives reflect our dedication to long-term economic growth and self-sufficiency.

Shane Fugere



Interested in registering your
business to our Business Directory?
Register your business here:



Craig Hardy Sr., Business Development Associate, presents to the community members of Nigigoonsiminikaaning First Nation at the Waasigan Job Fair Tour 2024.

Business Development

Chi Mino Ozhitoowin's Business Development department hosted workshops at each community job fair, as part of the Waasigan Job Fair Tour 2024, to support the community members interested in starting their own businesses. These sessions shared essential information about getting a business off the ground, including guidance on choosing business structures, finding funding, understanding basic finances and more.

The 2-day business workshops that followed in the Fall occurred in Dryden, Thunder Bay, and Fort Frances, to provide opportunity to community members both on and off reserve as well with a virtual option. The Business Development team plans to host another round of 2-Day Business Workshops in Spring 2025 in the same locations.

For updates on Business Development and our upcoming workshops and opportunities, follow us on social media channels or check out our website: www.cmo-fn.ca



COMMUNICATIONS



Ken Ogima, Indigenous Relations Manager, and Amanda Drapaka, Senior HR Coordinator of Valard Construction LP in attendance at the Waasigan Job Fair Tour 2025 in Gakijiwanong Anishinaabe Nation.

Ken Ogima

Manager, Indigenous Relations
kogima@valard.com

Blaine Collett

Senior Director, Indigenous Relations
bcollett@valard.com



Scan QR Code for
 information on upcoming
 community visits, events,
 and project updates!

**EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT**

Heather Gardner
 Indigenous Engagement Coordinator

Boozhoo,

Waaazow Binesiik ndigo, Mooz doodem,
 Iskatewizaagegan #39 Independent First
 Nation and Migisi Sahgaigan ndoonjii.

Hello, my name is Heather Gardner, I work
 and live in Eagle Lake. I am the Indigenous
 Engagement Coordinator for Chi Mino
 Ozhitoowin. I get to work with our First
 Nations and Chi Mino Ozhitoowin in
 supporting to deliver engagement and
 participation activities.

I really enjoy visiting each community and
 seeing how each welcomes our team. I
 especially enjoy the local catering and
 hospitality. Each community is so unique. I
 look forward to visiting again and hope to
 meet with more community members.

Come say "hi", don't be shy.
 Miigwech,

Heather Gardner



Eagle Lake
 First Nation



Fort William
 First Nation



Gakijiwanong
 ANISHINAABE NATION



LAC SEUL
 FIRST NATION





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