

A MESSAGE FROM NWAC'S CEO

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WELCOME TO THE 16TH EDITION OF KCI-NIWESQ, THE MAGAZINE OF THE NATIVE WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION OF CANADA.

In this edition we take a deeper look at an issue that is critical to the Indigenous women and Two-Spirit, transgender and gender-diverse people who are served by our organization.

To many Canadians, the impact of climate change and environmental degradation is a debate that happens in the media or at national and international fora. Sometimes its effects hit them more directly, as the frequency of hurricanes, wildfires, and droughts increases. But, rarely (yet) is it a matter of life and death.

For the Indigenous people who live close to the land, however, this is an existential crisis. Food sources like caribou and seal are not where they used to be—or can no longer be reached as easily as they could in past years. Traditional medicines are becoming scarce. We see the world around us changing in ways our ancestors could not have contemplated.

Indigenous women have insight into these problems. We have ideas about steps that must be taken to find solutions. We are demanding to be part of the conversation.

In this issue, we tell you what happened 22 years ago when Carol McBride, who is now NWAC's President, demanded that the people of her region be part of the conversation around turning a local mine into a dump for Toronto's garbage.

We hear from Angela MacKinnon, a community engagement officer with Project Forest, who tells us how the Indigenous-based reintroduction of lost species is improving prospects for land-based living.

You will find out what Lisa Smith, NWAC's own senior director of governance, international and parliamentary relations, hoped to achieve when she and Madeleine Redfern, the President of

NWAC's Nunavut chapter, attended the next world conference on climate change in Egypt.

We talk to the young Indigenous Guardians working out of Chapleau, Ontario, about the work they are doing to conserve and protect their lands and to reconnect with the Traditional Knowledge of their Elders.

Andrea Reid, a member of Nisga'a Nation and the principal investigator at the University of British Columbia's Centre for Indigenous Fisheries, tells us the salmon are our relatives and other things she has learned from Knowledge Keepers in 18 communities of salmon people along the west coast.

And we meet Marina Best, a Métis environmental and climate change Knowledge Keeper, who explains that, to achieve balanced environmental conservation and reconciliation, both Western science and Indigenous Knowledge need to agree to start fresh, on equal grounds.

So, thank you once again for opening the pages that follow. Thank you for reading the 16th edition of *Kci-Niwesq*. Please drop us a line and let us know what you think at reception@nwac.ca.

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