



FIRST NATIONS-LED JOINT TABLE ON WASTE MANAGEMENT AND ILLEGAL DUMPING ESTABLISHED TO DEVELOP OPTIONS TO ADDRESS REGULATORY GAPS

News release

February 2025 — Ottawa, Unceded Algonquin Territory, Ontario

A Joint First Nations-Federal Table has been established to explore options to address the longstanding gaps in environmental protections on First Nations reserve lands, with a focus on waste management and unauthorized dumping.

The Table brings together representatives from 13 national and regional First Nations organizations across Canada, as well as officials from Indigenous Services Canada and Environment and Climate Change Canada, to work collaboratively to address this important issue.

First Nations reserve lands are protected by fewer regulations than other communities in Canada and waste management systems have been historically underfunded. Most provincial and municipal environmental laws generally do not apply on reserves, leaving First Nations communities more vulnerable to environmental, health, and safety risks, and unable to enforce penalties for violations comparable to provincial fines.

Over the next several months, the Joint Table will explore options to improve the policy and regulatory framework governing waste management and unauthorized dumping on reserve. Findings are anticipated by fall 2025. These findings will first be discussed with communities, and may lay the groundwork for the development of a robust waste management regime on reserve lands.

The implementation of a waste management framework will empower First Nations to enhance environmental and public health outcomes while safeguarding their reserve lands. This initiative will provide First Nations with additional tools to protect and manage their lands in the best interests of their communities, aligning with practices across Canada.

For additional information on the Joint Table please send an email to: JTWM-TCGD@nalma.ca

Joint Table Members:

- Anishinabek Nation
- Assembly of First Nations
- Chiefs of Ontario
- Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq
- Environment and Climate Change Canada

Joint Table on First Nation Waste Management

- First Nations of Quebec Labrador Sustainable Development Institute
- First Nations Technical Services Advisory Group Inc.
- Indigenous Services Canada
- Indigenous Zero Waste Technical Advisory Group
- First Nations Land Management Resource Centre (ex officio member)
- National Aboriginal Lands Managers Association
- Ontario First Nations Technical Services Corporation
- Saskatchewan Aboriginal Land Technicians
- Southern Chiefs Organization Inc.
- Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory