

Woodstock First Nation

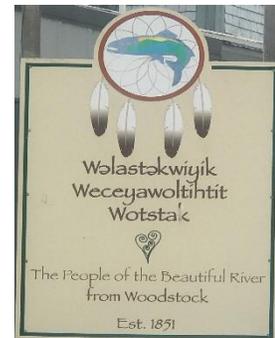
Written by Michael W. McDonald J.D.

Director of Economic Development with the Atlantic Policy Congress (APC) and
Angel Julian, Economic Development Administrative Coordinator



Woodstock First Nation is a Wolastoqiyik (wah-lew-stook-gey-ick) community situated alongside the St. Johns River. Located on the far West side of New Brunswick close to the Maine- USA border, Woodstock First Nation straddles both sides of the Trans-Canada Highway Number 2. Wolastoqiyik, which translated into English means “people of the beautiful or bountiful river.” Wolastoqey (wah-lew-stook-gay) refers to the Nation itself. However, many prefer to just use the term Wulastuk (wuh-lew-stook), much like the word Mi’kmaw, instead of Mi’kmaq.

Wulastuk have for years been wrongly referred to as Maliseet. The word Maliseet derives from the Mi’kmaw word Mali’sit (muh-lee-set), which translated into English, means “calm flowing dialect”. Many Wulastuk words have the same meaning as Mi’kmaw words with a slight difference in how they are pronounced



The Wolastoqey Nation have traditionally inhabited southwestern New Brunswick along the St. John River as far as Kittery, Maine, USA and North-Eastern Quebec. Today, Wolastoqey Nation is made up of six Wulastuck communities in New Brunswick, one in Maine, and one in Quebec.

Initially, Woodstock First Nation consisted of 226.1 acres of land. However, a further five parcels of land totalling 166.9 acres were purchased in 1992. Currently, the total reserve land holding is 426 acres, with an additional 200 acres recently purchased. These new lands are presently in the process of being converted into reserve land specifically for residential development. Thirty acres of land straddling both sides of TransCanada highway 2 have been set aside for economic development. The Woodstock First Nation registered population as of April 2019, was 1,105. The on-reserve population is 293 and the off-reserve population is 812. The predominant language within the community is English; however, among many Elders, the Wulastuck language continues to be used.

Woodstock First Nation has developed businesses that focus on the sale of fuels, commercial logging, local fisheries, and gaming. However, fisheries are one of the main key drivers of economic growth and development in the community. Woodstock First Nation currently holds 4 lobster licenses, that are all operated under band members, as well as licenses for snow crab,

sea urchin and sword fish. The logging operations of the community offers employment for community members and add and additional earnings of \$300,000 in annual revenues.

Like many First Nations communities, the community has invested in a service fuel station.

Established in 1997, Maliseet Fuels 1 was the first service fuel station of the community and is still in operation today.

Maliseet Fuels 1 is located on the east side of the reserve, sitting along side Route 165.



In 2014, the community built their second service fuel station, Maliseet Fuels 2. Maliseet Fuels



2 is located on reserve land just off Trans-Canada Highway Number 2. Maliseet Fuels 2 features six new service pumps, a large convenience and grocery store. Maliseet Fuels 2 also, has a small restaurant that offers a take-out service.

Sitting five hundred yards away from Maliseet Fuels 2 sits the Woodstock First Nation Shell Cardlock. The Woodstock First Nation Shell Cardlock is a truck stop that offers six lanes with a marked diesel pump, three diesel exhaust fluid (def) pumps, and two regular size diesel pumps for cars/lightweight trucks. The Woodstock First Nation Shell Cardlock is open twenty-four hours per day and seven days per week. It offers showers, laundry facilities and a lounge, where patrons can enjoy the free Wi-Fi service to connect with friends and family or just relax and watch tv. Since opening, the Woodstock First Nation Shell Cardlock has established yearly contracts with several local trucking companies in the surrounding area.



In 2004, Woodstock First Nation opened their new gaming center, Eagle's Nest Gaming Palace. Eagle's Nest Gaming Palace is often referred to as "the flagship" of the Woodstock First Nation Economic Development Corporation. The large facility offers both smoking and non-smoking Video Lottery Terminal (VLT) lounges, table card games, bingo and a snack bar. Situated on the second floor of the Eagle's Nest Gaming

Palace is Nighthawks, the community's night club lounge and bar. Nighthawks is open Thursday to Saturdays from 6 PM till 2:30 AM and offers a large dance floor, four large flat screen TV's for special sports and entertainment events, darts and two pool tables.

On the horizon, Woodstock First Nation is looking to add new ventures to their economic development. Thirty acres of land on both sides of the highway has been set aside specifically for economic development.

The community has plans on entering the cannabis industry and would like to follow a similar bylaw and policy models seen in Listuguj First Nation and Tobique First Nation. Presently Woodstock First Nation is building a new building which will house their first Band owned and operated medical cannabis dispensary. The dispensary is expected to open its doors to provincial medical marijuana license holders in the summer of 2019.



Woodstock First Nation is also looking to add renewable clean energy sources to their stream of businesses by way of a partnership with New Brunswick Power. Presently this is a five turbine wind energy project but there are plans for more turbines in the near future. The new project was named; the Wisokolamson Wind Energy Project. Woodstock First Nation has also partnered with SWEB Development. Wisokolamson (wisk-skoe-lum-sin) is a Wulastock word which translated into English means, "the wind blows very strongly."

The Wisokolamson Wind Energy Project partnership was formed through a provincial initiative, led by New Brunswick Power. The Locally-Owned Renewable Energy projects that are Small Scale (LORESS) program was developed to procure renewable energy projects from aboriginal communities and local entities throughout the province through a competitive bidding process. The Wiskolamson Wind Energy Project was selected as part of the aboriginal business component and will operate for 25 years, pursuant to the power purchase agreement with New Brunswick Power. The Wiskolamson Wind Energy Project is expected to provide New Brunswick with enough clean energy to service over 6,000 homes in the province. Moreover, the Wiskolamson Wind Energy Project has made many community members in Woodstock First Nation extremely proud that they are contributing to the employment and economic growth of the Wulastock territory. Further, the Wisokolamson Energy Project is seen by many as a way for Woodstock First Nation to strengthen their relationship with the private and business communities of New Brunswick.

