

**COMMUNITY PARTNER DESCRIPTION\*:**

Pictou Landing First Nation band council is the governing body of Pictou Landing First Nation, providing a voice for the community as a whole. As an organization, the band council is comprised of community members who act to safeguard community best interests, provision myriad services to the community, and generally determine the best ways forward through constant communication and engagement with the larger Pictou Landing population.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

Pictou Landing First Nation is a relatively small Mi'kmaw community located on the northern shore of mainland Nova Scotia. Located within the traditional territory of Pictou Landing is a body of water known as Boat Harbour, or A'se'k. In the Mi'kmaw language, A'se'k means "over there," or "the other room," suggesting a deep-rooted connection with this culturally significant area.

Prior to industrial development A'se'k existed as an estuary that was used for hunting, fishing, gathering of foods and medicines, anchoring boats, swimming, and practicing many other recreational and traditionally significant activities (Hoover 2020). As that industrial activity subsided, there was an interest in returning to traditional activities around the estuary, one of which was a community deer hunt. With concerns about the safety of consuming deer meat from the industrialized area, the community wanted to develop a testing method to ensure the meat from this important community activity was safe to eat. Ken Oakes, a biologist at Cape Breton University, using certified third party analytical chemistry labs, will work with the community to develop unbiased and contextualized information regarding fitness for consumption of a traditional food relative to established consumption guidelines by contaminant class (metals, mercury, and PAHs).

**PROJECTED BENEFITS:**

Through the hiring of qualified personnel and consistent engagement with community members, community interests will be best represented through assessment activities. Collection and storage of environmental data within the community, along with community involvement during sampling activities, will aid in the process of providing complete data transparency and ease of access to community members. Dissemination of environmental science practices and associated results of analysis to community members will aid in demystifying the assessment process through improving scientific literacy within the community. Creating and maintaining connections with various academic partner institutions such as Cape Breton University will hopefully help validate community concerns in the eyes of other "Western" science practitioners, such as those in relevant Provincial and Federal governmental bodies.