



Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi

The Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi (NHBP) is a federally recognized Tribal Government with over 1,400 enrolled Tribal Members. The Tribe's main offices are located at the Pine Creek Indian Reservation near Athens, Michigan, with additional offices in Grand Rapids, Michigan, to better serve Members.

While NHBP seeks to improve the lives of their Tribal Members, we also look for ways to improve the lives of those around the NHBP Community. There are many events, programs and activities for NHBP Tribal Members, staff and Community members to attend throughout the year. The unity that NHBP purposely focuses on is meant to create a more diverse, accepting and caring culture.

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NHBP Tribal Council

The NHBP Tribal Council is responsible for showing leadership, direction and courage for the Tribal Members. They must always show and embody the Seven Grandfather Teachings, while always caring for the NHBP nation.

The NHBP Tribal Council is made up of five seats, with four yearlong terms. The seats are voted on by NHBP Tribal Members and sworn in during a monthly Tribal Council Business Meeting, which is open to all NHBP Tribal Members. This is very similar to a democratic election, as anybody in the NHBP community has an open opportunity to run against the other candidates and Tribal Members are encouraged to vote.

The NHBP Tribal Council also provides oversight to the Tribal government, FireKeepers Casino Hotel and Waséyabek Development Company, LLC. With the collaboration from leadership at these companies and organizations, Tribal Council is responsible for making key strategic decisions and plans to continue the growth and economic security for the NHBP Tribal nation.

NHBP Tribal Council positions include Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and Sergeant-At-Arms. For more information about who is on the current elected Tribal Council, please visit the NHBP website.

Pine Creek Indian Reservation

The Reservation was established by Chief Moguago on a 120-acre parcel of land along the Pine Creek near Athens, Michigan, purchased in 1845 with treaty annuity money. This is the central location for the NHBP Tribe. The official land in trust held by the Tribe is the 120-acre parcel of land, however, the Tribe owns 300 acres of land adjacent to the Pine Creek Indian Reservation. There are 37 houses on the Reservation, and 78 Tribal Members live on The Reservation.

The Pine Creek Indian Reservation holds many different opportunities and buildings to promote the prosperity of Tribal Members. Currently, these buildings on The Reservation include the Government Center, Community Center, Recreation Fields, Bkedé O Mshiké convenience store, Pow Wow Grounds, Environmental Center, Department of Public Works, Community Garden, Greenhouse, Tribal Court, Police Station and a Health Facility.

Services

NHBP provides benefits, programs and services to their Tribal Members through 14 Tribal Government departments, as well as a Tribal Police Department, Tribal Court and Gaming Commission.

Departments:

- Bkedé O Mshiké
- Communications
- Culture
- Environmental
- Finance
- Gaming Commission
- Government Records
- Health and Human Services Department
- Housing
- Human Resources
- Information Technology
- Legal
- Membership Services
- Planning
- Public Works
- Tribal Police
- Tribal Court
 - Victim Services
 - Probation

Health Service Area

NHBP's primary Indian Health and Bureau of Indian Affairs Service Area covers Allegan, Barry, Branch, Calhoun, Kalamazoo, Kent and Ottawa counties in Michigan.

NHBP History

The Potawatomi name is a derivation of Bodéwadmi, meaning a people of the Fire or a people who maintain Fire, both of which refer to the role of the Potawatomi as the Keepers of the Council Fire in an earlier alliance with other Tribes in the area. The Potawatomi Nation encompassed lands along the southeastern shore of Lake Michigan, across to Detroit and from the Huron and Grand Rivers southward into northern Indiana, Ohio and Illinois. Tribal Members were later forced to cede the remainder of their “reserved lands” contained within the “Notawasepe Reserve” and were relocated to lands west of the Mississippi River. During this removal, called the Trail of Death, a group of Tribal Members escaped and returned to their native lands in Michigan. Now the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi reside on the Pine Creek Indian Reservation, which was part of these traditional lands.

Federal Re-Recognition

NHBP endured a long, emotional road to receiving federal re-recognition, which was granted on December 19, 1995, from the United States of American Bureau of Indian Affairs. This recognition did not change anything for NHBP Tribal Members; they had always been a community and sovereign nation. However, the recognition opened up many avenues for NHBP to move forward, take care of their people and continue to work toward a prosperous government.

NHBP Culture

The Bodewéwadmik (Potawatomi) people were generally Great Lakes area inhabitants who chose to live near waterways. Being near water, the communities were able to use the water for fishing, harvesting and spiritual purposes. It has been our tradition to respect the Earth and strive to cultivate its resources carefully, while also providing a harvest for our families.

It is in the spirit of Native tradition to listen to Elders and respect their knowledge, while also celebrating the precious lives of the children who will become future leaders. The responsibility of motherhood and fatherhood are sacred and given by the Creator. NHBP culture continues to be shaped by these values.

Our culture includes traditional Dances, Drumming, songs, Medicines and teachings. Historically, Native families passed down teachings and ways of life orally, from generation to generation. NHBP still teaches in the ways of oral tradition, but also utilizes technology to preserve our culture.

Three Fires Alliance

NHBP is a Potawatomi Tribe, which is English for Bodéwadmí. The Three Fires Confederacy, or Alliance, promoted mutual interests between the Bodéwadmí (Potawatomi), Ojibwe (Chippewa) and Odawa (Ottawa) Tribes.

The Potawatomi Tribes were given the responsibility of being the Keepers of the Fire, the Chippewa are the Keepers of the Faith and the Ottawa people are the Keepers of the Trade. These responsibilities were given to the people by the Creator to ensure that no Tribe would be left to fend for themselves. The Tribes have always been able to rely on one another to make ends meet and join together when necessary.

Medicine Wheel

The Medicine Wheel is a round wheel broken up into four sections. Each section of the wheel contains one of the four Sacred Medicines. These Sacred Medicines include Séma (Tobacco), Skhop (Cedar), Wabshkebyak (Sage) and Wishpemishkos (Sweet Grass).

Each Direction has a main animal or bird. The East has the Eagle with its helper, the Mouse. The South has the Deer with its helper, the Turtle. The West has the Bison with its helper, the Black Bear. The North has the Polar Bear with its helper, the Snow Owl.

The East section of the Medicine Wheel represents the spring months. During this time, we must show appreciation for Tobacco, Earth and infants. The South section represents the summer months. We must give honor to Cedar, Wind and teenagers. The West section represents the fall months. During this time, we must show appreciation for Sage, water and the middle-age adults. The North section of the Medicine Wheel represents the winter months. We must give honor to Sweet Grass, Fire and Elders.

Smudging

Smudging is the burning of one or more of the four Sacred Medicines.

After harvesting Sweet Grass, it can be soaked in water, braided, dried and burned. After it is braided, some say that it is known to represent our grandmothers' hair. The Neshnabék (Great Lakes area indigenous people) use Sweet Grass for Smudging or purifying ceremonies and with prayer.

Tobacco is used with prayer and in ceremonies. It is said that when one prays while using Tobacco, their prayers are directly sent to Mamogosan (Creator, God, The Greatest Father of us all). When used while praying, a pinch of Tobacco is placed in your left hand, as your left hand is the closest to your heart.

Sage can also be used for Smudging. Traditionally, the Neshnabék would use Smudging to prepare and purify people, places or things for a time of openness and truth in the presence of Mamogosan. We see it as a way of cleansing one's self of the negative energy you may not realize you hold.

Cedar is known to the Neshnabék as one of the four Sacred Medicines. It can be used while Smudging, healing, prayer and when one is in need of protection. Cedar is also used in sweat lodges and is known to the Neshnabék as a woman's medicine.

Seven Grandfather Teachings

The Seven Grandfather teachings have always been a part of the Native American culture. Their roots date back to the beginning of time. These teachings impact our surroundings, along with providing guidance toward our actions to one another.

According to the story, long ago, a messenger was sent to see how the Neshnabék (Great Lakes area indigenous people) were living. The Neshnabék were living their life in a negative way which impacted their thoughts, decisions and actions. Some had hate for others, displayed disrespectful actions, were afraid, told lies and cheated. Others revealed pride while others were full of shame. During his journey, the messenger came across a child. This child was chosen to be taught by the Seven Grandfathers to live a good way of life. He was taught the lessons of Love, Respect, Bravery, Truth, Honesty, Humility and Wisdom.

Before departing from the Seven Grandfathers, they told him, "Each of these teachings must be used with the rest. You cannot have Wisdom without Love, Respect, Bravery, Honesty, Humility and Truth. You cannot be Honest if you are only using one of the other teachings. To leave out one teaching would be embracing the opposite of what the teaching means." The Seven Grandfathers each instructed the child with a principle. It was then up to the child to forget them or to put them to use.

Each one of us represents the child. We must faithfully apply the teachings of our Seven Grandfathers to our own lives. We must place our trust in the Creator. We must also never forget to be sincere in our actions, character and words.

Debanawen (Love)

Knowing love is to know peace. Our love must be unconditional. When people are weak, that is when they need love the most. Love is a strong affection for another. This can form between friends and family. Love is an attachment based upon devotion, admiration, tenderness and kindness for all things around you. For one to love and accept themselves is to live at peace with the Creator and in harmony with all of creation. Love knows no bounds. We must accept it sincerely and give it freely.

Wdetanmowen (Respect)

A way to honor creation is by showing respect. There should be no part of creation that should be excluded from the honor that we are to give. We demonstrate respect by realizing the value of all people or things and by showing courteous consideration and appreciation. We must give respect if we wish to be respected. We honor the traditional roles that we fill and the teachings we have been given. We honor our families and others, as well as ourselves. We are not to bring harm to anyone or anything. Respect is not just an action, but a heart-grown feeling.

Wédaséwen (Bravery)

Facing a problem with integrity is a true demonstration of bravery. We do what is right even when the consequences may be unpleasant. We face life with the courage to use our personal strengths to face difficulties, stand tall through adversity and make positive choices. We must stand up for our convictions, and have courage in our thinking and speaking. All of these actions together will lead to ceaseless bravery.

Débwéwen (Truth)

Truth is having the knowledge of our cultural teachings. It gives us the ability to act without regret. We must understand, speak and feel the truth while also honoring its power. Truth should not lead us to deceptions. We know who we are in our heart. By knowing that, we also know the truth. Our emotional, physical, mental and spiritual gifts will guide each one of us in our journey.

Gwékwadsewen (Honesty)

Facing a situation is to be brave, but having the courage to not only do the right thing, but also saying it is honesty. We must allow truth to be our guide. We must first be honest with ourselves. This will allow us to be honest with others. We must give full value to both the efforts of our own and others. When we walk through life with integrity, it is then that we know honesty. Be truthful and trustworthy. We must also remember to accept and act on truths through straightforward and appropriate communication.

Édbeséndowen (Humility)

Humility is to know that we are a part of creation. We must always consider ourselves equal to one another. We should never think of ourselves as being better or worse than anyone else. Humility comes in many forms such as compassion, calmness, meekness, gentleness and

patience. We must reflect on how we want to present ourselves to those around us. We must be aware of the balance and equality with all of life, including humans, plants and animals.

Bwakawen (Wisdom)

The mixture of these teachings, combined with the experiences of life is what we refer to as wisdom. It is given to us by the Creator to be used for good. Wisdom carries other meanings, which also includes intelligence or knowledge. When we cherish our knowledge or intelligence, we are also cherishing our wisdom. We must use sound judgment, along with the ability to separate inner qualities and relationships. We must use a good sense and course of action to form a positive attitude. We must remember to listen and use the wisdom that has been provided by our Elders, Tribal leadership and our spiritual leaders. We must also always remember that wisdom comes in all shapes, sizes, forms and ages.

Economic Development

FireKeepers Casino Hotel

NHBP has strived to develop and achieve economic self-sufficiency for current Tribal Members and future generations through the acquisition of a gaming license, which, after more than 10 years of planning, strategy and vision allowed NHBP to open FireKeepers Casino Hotel (FKCH) in 2009.

Located in Battle Creek, Michigan, FKCH is a Vegas-style casino which features an 111,700-square foot gaming floor, resort-style hotel, six upscale dining options and a multipurpose event center. An addition to FKCH was added in 2012 for a hotel and event center. The property also features 2,900 slot machines, 70 table games, a live poker room and bingo room.

FKCH has been named Best Casino by audiences in Western Michigan and Northern Indiana, plus earned nine first place awards in the Casino Player Magazine Best of Gaming 2017 Native Midwest category, including Best Overall Gaming Resort. FKCH was also selected as one of the Best Casinos to Work For by Casino Player Magazine. FKCH's signature restaurant, Nibi, is a multiple recipient of the Wine Spectator Award of Excellence.

FKCH offers a AAA-rated Four Diamond resort-style hotel, is the title sponsor of the FireKeepers Casino 400, a Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series race at Michigan International Speedway, and host of the FireKeepers Casino Hotel Championship a Symetra Tour-Road to the LPGA golf event.

For more information, visit firekeeperscasino.com

The Fire Hub

FKCH's unique casino community investment, The Fire Hub, is a restaurant and food pantry located in Battle Creek, Michigan. A first-of-its-kind nonprofit, hands-on investment by a casino operator, The Fire Hub serves as a restaurant, bakery and food pantry to help the less fortunate.

The rear section of the building is the home of The Kendall Street Pantry, a food pantry that serves as an agency of the Food Bank of South Central Michigan, distributing food from The Fire Hub's shelves to the less fortunate.

The Fire Hub has also created a fund to support local charities, with 80% of all restaurant profits and an allocation of 50 cents from every restaurant check going toward this fund. The remaining 20% of profits will be reinvested into maintaining the property.

Waséyabek Development Company, LLC

Waséyabek Development Company, LLC, (WDC) located in Grand Rapids, Michigan, is a 100% Tribally-owned entity organized to pursue nongaming, economic diversification opportunities on behalf of NHBP. WDC receives oversight and direction from a five member corporate Board of Directors. Execution of the strategies established by the Board is the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer.

Currently, WDC is a parent company to seven other companies. Each year, WDC evaluates companies to purchase, making sure to review, approve or deny acquisitions based on how the next Seven Generations of NHBP will be provided for.

Photos

If you would like to receive a digital copy of these photos, please contact the NHBP Communications Department at:

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