



Protecting the Water

Message from the President

Maps have always fascinated me, everything from day-to-day weather maps to maps that depict environmental problems.

A map of northwestern Ontario displays a meshwork of countless waterways. A summer issue in 2024 of the Canadian Geographic Magazine featured a novel map of Canada’s lakes (excluding northern Canada). It graded over 600 lakes on degree of recreational use, environmental stressors (e.g. pollution) and change from natural state. The map was concerning. Most lakes had significant impacts. There were a few oases - regions with relatively healthy lakes. One of these oases covered much of Northwestern Ontario.

Of course, Northwestern Ontario waterways are not pristine. For example, mercury deposits remain in Lake Superior and the impact of mercury poisoning on the community of Grassy Narrows is ongoing. How can we keep this relative oasis intact? We hope to avoid threats such as radioactive contamination from nuclear waste. A plan to build a site near Atikokan in the 1970s was prevented. Now there are plans to build a site in the Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation – Ignace Area. In 2017, the plan to build Energy East, an oil pipeline, was shelved. Fossil fuel pipelines are now discussion points

in the upcoming federal election. There are also future risks from the looming mining boom. Environment North began with concerns about releases of toxins from the forest industry into Lake Superior. Maintaining and improving water quality remains a critical issue. Lake Superior is a source of drinking water for many communities including Thunder Bay.

One of the environmental stressors included in the social-ecological map was the impact of climate change on lakes. Research at the Experimental Lakes Area has shown a number of impacts. For example, Lake trout are being squeezed into smaller and smaller habitats, “between surface waters that are too hot and bottom waters where dissolved oxygen is too low.”

Our actions in 2024 were concentrated on the opposition to disposal of nuclear waste. At the 2025 Annual Meeting we welcome Kevin Kamps is a nuclear waste specialist with *Beyond Nuclear*. Recently, *Beyond Nuclear* and many other parties including state governments presented to the Supreme Court of the United States regarding a temporary above ground storage site for nuclear waste from reactors across the United States.

Hope to see you at the Annual Meeting!

Graham Saunders

2024
Annual Report



In this report

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On April 23, 2025

With Kevin Kamps

Northwestern Ontario's clean fresh water and Canada's high level nuclear fuel waste - they should never mix.

Is burying nuclear waste underground a "solution"? Should more nuclear waste be created?

Water is Life

Nuclear Waste is Toxic

Come to the Environment North AGM and Public Presentation And ask your questions...

Wednesday April 23, 2025 All are welcome!

With Kevin Kamps, nuclear waste specialist of *Beyond Nuclear*, an American non-profit charitable organization advocating for a world without nuclear power and nuclear weapons. Kevin is a longtime leading opponent of efforts to dispose of nuclear waste at Fernald (Montreal, Pennsylvania), and his extensive knowledge about the risks of radioactive waste transportation through communities. Kevin has addressed communities and government forums in the U.S. and overseas.

We can move *Beyond Nuclear*

Oliver Road Community Centre, 563 Oliver Road (there are three nearby parking areas) Business Meeting at 6:00 PM Public Presentation on Nuclear Waste begins at 7:00 PM More details at environmentnorth.ca

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2024 AGM SPEAKER

Around the world the nuclear industry is challenged with the problem of nuclear waste from nuclear power generators. The industry appears poised to expand which will generate more waste.

At the Environment North Annual Meeting on April 23, 2025, **Kevin Kamps**, a nuclear waste specialist with *Beyond Nuclear*, will be the guest speaker for the public presentation. Beyond Nuclear is an American organization advocating for a world without nuclear power and nuclear weapons. Kevin Kamps was a key member of the opposition to construct a nuclear waste disposal site at Yucca Mountain in Nevada.

In a recent interview Kevin Kamps discusses the "New Nuclear Push" and related topics.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=psPv71EODOE> (Part 1 - 29 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j92dyFEti2E> (Part 2 - 29 minutes)

Nuclear Waste

In 2024, Environment North continued to collaborate with We the Nuclear Free North (WTNFN) and Nuclear Free Thunder Bay (NFTB) in opposing the siting of a nuclear waste disposal site in Northwestern Ontario. The campaign to inform and mobilize the public and lobby all three levels of government intensified during this past year as the Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) approached its deadline for making a site selection decision. Environment North Board members along with other volunteers engaged in various advocacy activities such as public speaking engagements, media interviews, deputations before municipal councils, rallies and petitions to the Ontario Legislature and Parliament of Canada.

The outreach efforts of WTNFN coalition helped to secure 19 additional resolutions and statements opposing the NWMO proposal from various First Nations, Treaty organizations, non-government organizations, and communities along the transportation route and in the watershed of the proposed site. By the end of 2024, over 75 letters had been

written to the Editor of the *Chronicle Journal* and *TBNNewsWatch*.

Our public education and advocacy activities regarding the nuclear waste campaign in 2024 included:

- On April 2, 2024 nuclear lead, Dodie LeGassick participated in the second Grassroots Groundswell in Ottawa.
- On April 13, 2024, Dodie LeGassick and Brennain Lloyd of Northwatch were members of the All-Voices Panel at the Northwestern Nuclear Exploration Event in Ignace.
- Environment North secured funding to publish promotional materials in support of the anti-nuclear waste campaign including lawn signs, billboards, brochures, post cards, bumper stickers and T-shirts.
- Meetings took place with MPs Patty Hajdu and Marcus Powlowski, MPP Lise Vaugois as well as various City Councillors.

- A major event in April was the Environment North Annual Meeting with guest speakers Dr. Mark Winfield and Laura Tanguay from the Faculty of Environmental and Urban Change at York University. Dr. Winfield described how nuclear energy cannot be considered a sustainable form of energy. Graduate student, Laura Tanguay, shared her research into the lack of justice around nuclear waste decisions.
- Environment North made a modest donation to the Kebaowek Legal Defense Fund for their court challenge of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission decision to license the low and mid-level nuclear waste facility at Chalk River.
- On December 11, 2024, MP Marcus Powlowski presented the WTNFN Petition with 817 signatures to Parliament. The petition called on the government to direct the NWMO to stop the siting process for a deep geological repository.

How can you help?

- ➔ Sign the Change.org [petition](https://www.change.org/p/we-the-nuclear-free-north): 13,408 signatures so far!
 - ➔ 7 actions you can take <https://wethenuclearfreenorth.ca/seven-actions/>
 - ➔ Spread the news about the growing number of resolutions opposing geological disposal of nuclear waste in Northwestern Ontario, including Environment North's! <https://wethenuclearfreenorth.ca/nuclear-waste-resolutions/>
- Environment North is a "We the Nuclear Free North" (WTNFN) alliance member.

Deputations were made to municipalities including Oliver Paipoonge, Schreiber, Shuniah, Terrace Bay and Thunder Bay.

As a follow-up to the 2022 deputation to the City of Thunder Bay City Council regarding the Proximity Principle, deputations were made to the City Council's Intergovernmental Affairs Committee (IGAC) by Environment North, WTNFN and NFTB in late 2023 and early 2024.

On August 26, 2024 Thunder Bay City Council heard from the IGAC re the Proximity Principle and an additional deputation was made Environment North and NFTB asking City Council urge the NWMO to establish storage solutions for nuclear waste closer to the reactor stations. The IGAC memorandum contained a motion that City administration review transportation of hazardous goods standards within city boundaries. The Council voted in favour of amending that motion to include that a letter be drafted on behalf of City Council urging the NWMO pursue the option of managing used nuclear fuel waste closer to the reactor stations where the waste has been generated. Unfortunately, the required ratification of the amended motion failed at the subsequent Council meeting on September 9, 2024.

Public support of the deputation was demonstrated via hundreds of letters, emails, and phone calls to Council members, packed council chambers and well attended rallies outside city hall.

Late in 2024, after the communities of Ignace and Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation had indicated their willingness to continue with the site characterization process, the NWMO declared that they had selected the Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation- Ignace area as the preferred site for disposal of nuclear waste.

The decision is not final as the NWMO must undergo a licensing process and impact assessment with opportunities for public participation. The resistance to nuclear waste disposal in Northwestern Ontario is ongoing and Environment North intends to continue its public education campaign.



NUCLEAR WASTE DISPOSAL AROUND THE WORLD and AT HOME

No final repository for high-level nuclear waste is in operation. Only Finland has begun construction.

- [Licensing of Finnish repository further delayed](#)

Other repository designs?

- [UK government-funded project milestone for borehole disposal](#)

Knowledge gaps in the research on Canadian nuclear used fuel containers?

- [Corrosion processes affecting copper-coated used fuel containers for the disposal of spent nuclear fuel: critical review of the state-of-knowledge](#)

Forging Alliances with First Nations

A very significant outcome of our nuclear waste campaign in 2024 has been aligning with First Nations over our shared concern about the environmental impact and cost to human health posed by burying and abandoning highly radioactive nuclear waste. Environment North was pleased to participate in the two rallies sponsored by Grassy Narrows held in Waverley Park. Hundreds of people were in attendance from First Nations and communities from across Northwestern Ontario, including Fort William First Nation, Asubpeeschoseewagong Netum Anishinabek (Grassy Narrows), Kiashke Zaaging Anishinaabek (Gull Bay), Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug, Netmizaaggamig Nishnaabeg (Pic Mobert), Kenora and Dryden. Chiefs and other representatives from the First Nations in attendance all spoke of their higher duty to protect the land and the water. A women's traditional drumming circle also performed at both rallies. Environment North representatives spoke at the event to critique the deeply flawed NWMO proposal to bring nuclear waste to our region.

Another occasion where we witnessed a strong convergence of perspectives with many First Nations in our region was at the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Regional Dialogue Session on Nuclear Waste held in Thunder Bay in May, 2024. Two Environment Board members attended and spoke at this session. We also had an opportunity to meet other participants, discuss our campaign and share our mutual concerns with other participants. Several First Nation leaders expressed their solidarity with our campaign and gratitude for the work we are doing. We were pleased to see that in the final report from these sessions, the AFN reminded the NWMO that they must obtain free, prior and informed consent from all the First Nations impacted by the site selection decision, including those along the transportation route and in the watershed of the chosen site.

Forestry

Underreporting of Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Environment North would like to share research conducted by board member Dr. Julee Boan, in her role as Partnership Director, Global Nature with the Natural Resources Defense Council, an international organization with headquarters in Washington, DC. She was co-author on the article, [High emissions or carbon neutral? Inclusion of “anthropogenic” forest sinks leads to underreporting of forestry emissions](#) published in January 2024. The researchers examined Canada’s forest-related activities and found that they were a significant source of GHG emissions yet the National Inventory reports that forests are a small carbon sink. Discrepancies can be explained by conceptual differences in what is counted. Canada’s National Inventory approach claims that GHG emissions from wildfires are “natural”, but GHG removals from forests at the age of commercial maturity, are “anthropogenic”, even when these forests have had no significant human management intervention and have never been logged before. The result of such a reporting approach is that it may result in climate mitigation policies that are ineffectual or detrimental to reducing net carbon in the global atmosphere.



consult. There is considerable lithium exploration occurring in Northwestern Ontario as lithium is a key material required for making batteries for a number of products such as electric cars. The mining of lithium however, can affect water quality from leaking extraction ponds and also from greenhouse gas production.

the Magpie River in Quebec. Daniel outlined steps to consider achieving personhood status for Lake Superior including attempting recognition from highest level of government possible.

Who speaks for the lake is another aspect. A guardianship model involving primarily the many Indigenous communities around Lake Superior with some input from the Crown may be an option. How much power or which rights the Lake has also has to be determined and if they would be robust in court challenges. There are now nine natural places in world that have recognition as legal persons, three of which are in New Zealand.

Mining

ProBono Student Research on Lithium Mining

In their research on a lithium mining project proposal near Kenora, Jigme Tsering and Owen Zimmer primarily examined the need for a duty to consult. They reviewed Canadian case law, Canadian legislation and international jurisprudence. Their review would suggest the necessity of a duty to

Lake Superior

ProBono Student Research on Legal Personhood of Lake Superior

Daniel Strachan explored legal personhood status for Lake Superior. He first reviewed the history of personhood, such as an article from 1972 on “Should Trees have legal standing....”. Recent examples he reviewed were three rivers, one in Ecuador, one in New Zealand and



Community Resilience

Lakehead University Bora Laskin Pro Bono Law Students

Environment North continues its participation in this program which connects law students and local organizations. In March, 2024, three students completed their research memos: Daniel Strachan, Jigme Tsering and Owen Zimmer. Their work is described in the Mining and Lake Superior sections.

Three new students began their project in the fall of 2024. Jana Abu Deyah, Kamran Bozourpour and Umar Javaid have been studying three Federal Court Challenges of a decision of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission allowing a nuclear waste disposal facility proposed by Canadian Nuclear Laboratories to be built on the sacred Kichi Sibi (Ottawa River). The applicants in these court proceedings are: Kebaowek First Nation, Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg, Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility, Concerned Citizens of Renfrew County and Area, and Ralliement Contre la Pollution Radioactive. Issues regarding the breach of the duty to obtain free, prior and informed consent from First Nations and the lack of compliance with the *Species at Risk Act* were addressed.

A New Online Game

Board members Allison Farrish, Norma Liscomb and Graham Saunders participated in a review of the International Joint Commission game "[Choosing Your Great Lakes Future](#)".

Players make decisions that will shape the future water quality of the Great Lakes. Play the game to find out!

Boulevard Gardening

Environment North provided feedback in the Boulevard Gardening By-law online survey. Environment North generally supported the initiative.



Champion Project

Final work occurred in 2024 on the first and major component of the project is the preparation of an anthology entitled *Canadian Human Rights Champions ~ The Arduous Journey* and we anticipate a celebration of publication in 2025. Environment North has been supporting this project close to its inception in 2022.

Cruise Ships

Environment North was interviewed by *The Walrus* regarding the environmental impacts of cruise ships in Lake Superior. Enforcement of regulations was emphasized as a key element to minimizing impacts.

Environment North Strategic Plan

Strategic Plan

After a number of years the Board of Environment North undertook a review of the organization's Strategic Plan. Board member Bruce Hyer generously offered Wabakimi Lodge as a location for members to gather and discuss ideas over two days. The meeting was facilitated by Margaret Wanlin. The board was enthusiastic about maintaining and growing Environment North as a vibrant environmental non-governmental organization in Thunder Bay and Northwestern Ontario. One of

the action plans from the Strategic Planning Session was for the Board to re-establish a committee structure.

Fundraising and Development Committee

The mandate of this committee is to assist the Board in the planning, coordination and implementation of all fundraising and development activities in support of activities of the organization. By the end of the year, the Committee had sent out a fundraising letter by email to members and supporters to solicit donations and highlight some of our work. In addition, the Committee ran a Giving Tuesday campaign on social media. Over \$3000 was raised as a result of these two campaigns. The Committee meets monthly or more often as needed and they hope to make the organization more effective by hiring staff to deliver programs such as a student internship and updating the website.

Governance Committee

This committee undertook the task of updating the Environment North By-law in order to be compliant with the Ontario Non-Profit Charitable Organization Act. During this process it became apparent that the Letters Patent from 1976 would need to be amended. A lawyer was consulted to assist in developing what is now called the Articles of Incorporation and beginning the process with the Articles of Amendment. Both the new By-law and the Articles of Amendment were presented to the membership March 2025 in a Special Meeting of Members.



Photo: Paul Berger

Climate Change

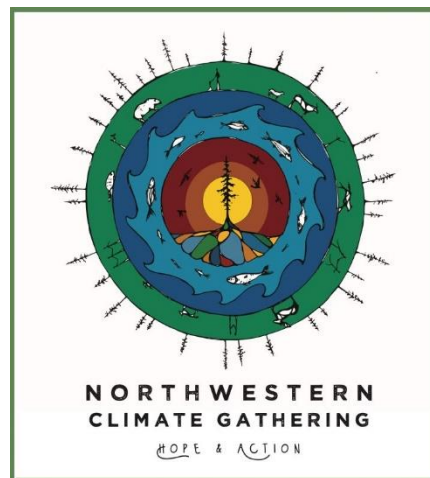
Hope and Action

The Hope and Action Art Exhibition took place at the [Thunder Bay Art Gallery](#) took place in March/April 2024. The series of a dozen articles written by presenters at the 2023 Gathering (originally published in the Chronicle Journal under the banner “Hope and Action”) was available at the Art Exhibition in a newspaper format with the title “The Climate Times”. The series had been primarily organized by Environment North.

Climate Transition Collaborative

Environment North is one of the founding members of The Thunder Bay Climate Transition Collaborative (TBCTC), along with representatives from Rotary Club of Thunder Bay – Port Arthur and the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment - Ontario. The Collaborative is an initiative that emerged from the 2023 Northwestern Climate Gathering. Adopting a multi-sector approach, TBCTC’s goal is to co-create a framework that aligns and integrates climate actions to achieve systems level change at the local level, centered on equity and justice. They held two roundtable discussions with representation from key public sector and private sector stakeholders: the first in May and the second in October of 2024.

EN Board members, Mary Veltri and Allison Farrish, have been volunteering with the Collaborative in planning its current public education campaign to urge the City to adopt a Green Development Standard (GDS). This building standard will result in eliminating carbon emissions from new buildings. Adopting GDS is essential for Thunder Bay to achieve its Greenhouse Gas reduction targets set out in the Thunder Bay Net Zero Strategy. The Collaborative will appear before Thunder Bay City Council on April 14, 2025 to make a deputation.



Wildfire Insights

After attending the first Climate Transition Collaborative Round Table Event, Board member, Graham Saunders and Collaborative member Dr. Marg Woods, undertook organizing another series of articles to be published in the

Chronicle Journal. The theme in this case was wildfires and included discussions of the health impacts, emergency response and effect of climate change. The articles were published under the banner [Wildfire Insights](#).

Environment North participated in another Northwest Climate Gathering was held in October 2024 as well as smaller potluck gatherings throughout the year – a great chance to meet community members of all ages and backgrounds interested learning about and addressing climate change.

European Climate Network

Environment North signed onto the joint statement by The Climate Action Network Europe which was released on March 21, 2024. The statement calls for safe, affordable, climate-friendly energy.

Lakehead University

Environment North was asked to present on the topic of climate change to International Students at Lakehead University. Board member Graham Saunders spoke to the students in late May, 2024.

Weather Whys

The *Weather Whys* newsletter by Graham Saunders reported on global target of “1.5 degrees Celsius”. At the 2015 Paris Climate Accord, countries agreed to limit global warming by 2 degrees Celsius above preindustrial levels and would also try to undertake measures to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

Weather Whys outlined some uncertainties about the 1.5 degrees Celsius threshold such as:

- what was agreed upon value of the preindustrial temperature and
- how long the average global temperature would need to be 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial until the threshold would be considered crossed.

In 2024, most meteorological organizations generally agreed that the year 2024 was 1.5° C above.

2023 Financial Report

Income Statement

Receipts	2024	2023	2022
Donations and Memberships			
Individual	\$ 3,175.00	\$ 4,200.00	\$5,716.73
Canada Helps	3,894.57	8,568.66	4,707.51
Corporate	170.00	1,680.00	15,531.50
Grants	3,661.14	-	6,352.24
Project Fundraising	1,008.05	737.30	1,166.62
Other (interest)	468.73	40.16	45.65
Total Receipts	\$ 12,377.49	\$ 15,226.12	\$33,520.25

Expenditures	2024	2023	2022
Charitable programs and donations	\$ 10,126.13	\$ 29,586.29	\$ 18,930.86
Travel, vehicle and accommdation	1,548.50	0	0
Fundraising, Conferences	721.95	0	0
Salary & Benefits	0	0	0
Membership Fees Paid	135.85	0	131.27
Honorariums	500.00	250.00	375.00
Insurance	1161.00	1,026.00	1,026.00
Banking Fees	118.28	69.40	146.76
Other disbursements	0	0	0
Total Disbursements	\$ 14,311.71	\$30,931.69	\$ 20,609.89

Balance Sheet

Assets		Commitments	
Bay Credit Union Chequing Acct.	\$ 9,265.51	Scott Harris	478.12
Bay Credit Union Term	10,548.89	Climate Change	\$690.46
Bay Credit Union Profit Sharing and Shares	78.97	Lake Superior	392.11
		Food	186.60
		Forests	639.80
		Champion	-
		Nuclear Waste Initiatives:	
		LUSH Grant	-
		Freshwater Future Grant	-
		Signage	2,480.00
		Sales and Donations	355.95
		Enduring Property	\$ 14,670.33
Total	\$ 19,893.37	Total	\$ 19,893.37

BOARD MEMBERS

Graham Saunders (President)
Lea Matyuska (treasurer)
Mary Veltri (secretary)
Julee Boan
Allison Farrish
Susan Grinstead
Bruce Hyer
Dodie LeGassick
Norma Liscomb

New Board Members in 2024-25

Mary Veltri

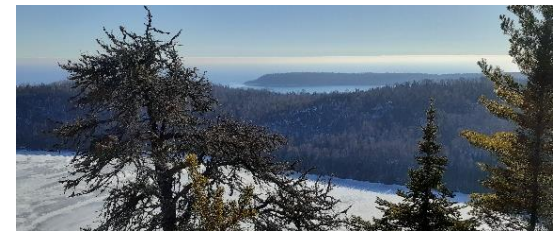
Mary Veltri joined the Environment North Board of Directors in February 2024 and comes with a wealth of experience from her career as a lawyer, teacher and community volunteer.

Allison Farrish

Allison Farrish joined the Environment North Board in late 2024. Allison is a Mechanical Engineering and Master of Business Administration (MBA) student at Lakehead University.

Norma Liscomb

Norma Liscomb joined Environment North in the fall of 2024. She is in the Environmental Management program at Lakehead University.



Donations were made in memory of

Scott Harris
Mary L. Benson

Memberships

New fee structure

Environment North has simplified the membership structure. Memberships will now be individual and valid for one calendar year. There is now only one Membership fee set at \$15.00.

Please renew your membership soon. It will still be possible to renew memberships at the AGM, though renewing sooner will help to avoid lineups at the meeting.

A **tax receipt** will be issued for all membership fees and for donations over \$15.00.

Acknowledgements

Thank you!

- To our donors! Many of the donations continue to support the campaign opposing nuclear waste in the region. In addition, donors responded generously to assist with increased operating costs.
- To Freshwater Futures! Funds were granted to Environment North to help

protect Great Lakes waters from hazards of transporting nuclear waste by promoting the [Proximity Principle](#).

- To the Bora Laskin Law School and the [Pro Bono](#) law student program.
- To the Chronicle Journal for publishing our articles.
- To our partners, collaborators and supporters:
 - ☆ We The Nuclear Free North,
 - ☆ Nuclear Free Thunder Bay,
 - ☆ Thunder Bay Climate Transition Collaborative,
 - ☆ The Champions Project

- ☆ Citizens United for a Sustainable Planet (CUSP)
- ☆ Northwest Climate Gathering...

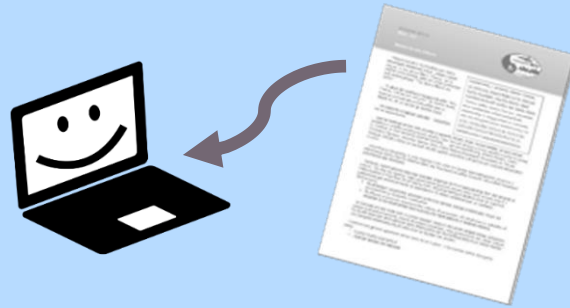
And finally, to thank our members and volunteers who support our campaigns and come out to our rallies, with particular thanks to Wendy O'Connor, Kerstin Muth, Lucy Lafromboise and Margaret Wanlin, who have uniquely contributed significant time and effort to sustain and promote the work of Environment North.

Environment North's specific actions revolve around respect and shared responsibility for air, water and land
the essentials of all life.

We welcome new members! Or maybe its time to renew?

Visit: [Environment North Membership](#)

For members: *Weather Whys*, a regional weather, climate and environmental newsletter by board member, Graham Saunders is delivered right into your electronic mailbox!



Online payments for membership are possible via etransfers or CanadaHelps

NEW

Considering a Donation?

Visit our [DONATIONS WEBPAGE](#)



A regional non-government, charitable organization

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