

Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians

2024 ANNUAL REPORT



Ma'iingan

(Wolf)

Wolf Clan members are traditionally known as warriors, protectors, and thinkers. They are valued for their strong sense of loyalty, intelligence, perseverance, and guardianship.

The Seven Grandfathers Teachings

Debwewin—	Truth	—Be faithful to reality
Gwekwaadziwin—	Honesty	—Tell the truth
Aakdewin—	Bravery	—Choose with courage
Nbwaakaawin—	Wisdom	—Use good judgment
Minadendmowin—	Respect	—Act without harm
Zaagidwin—	Love	—Practice absolute kindness
Dbaadendizwin—	Humility	—Treat all life equally



Win Awenen Nisitotung Special Section

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TRIBE’S GOVERNING BODY: BOARD OF DIRECTORS



AUSTIN LOWES,
CHAIRMAN



KIMBERLE GRAVELLE
DIRECTOR, UNIT I



ISAAC MCKECHNIE
DIRECTOR, UNIT I



ROBERT MCRORIE
DIRECTOR, UNIT I



MICHAEL MCKERCHIE,
DIRECTOR, UNIT I



AARON PAYMENT
DIRECTOR, UNIT I



LANA CAUSLEY-SMITH,
DIRECTOR, UNIT II



KIMBERLY LEE,
DIRECTOR, UNIT II



SHAWN BOROWICZ,
DIRECTOR, UNIT III



BRIDGETT SORENSON,
DIRECTOR, UNIT III



LARRY BARBEAU,
DIRECTOR, UNIT IV



KIMBERLY HAMPTON,
DIRECTOR, UNIT IV



TYLER LAPLAUNT
DIRECTOR, UNIT V

The Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians Board of Directors

The Sault Tribe Board of Directors is the governing body of the tribe. There are 12 board members and one chairperson, elected to four-year terms. The board members represent the five units of the tribe’s service area in the Eastern Upper Peninsula of Michigan. The chairperson is elected at large. Five board members represent Unit I, two board members represent Unit II, two board members represent Unit III, two board members represent Unit IV, and one board member represents Unit V. Regular meetings are held twice a month, usually on Tuesdays.

See www.saulttribe.com/government/board-of-directors for the meeting schedule, board votes and minutes. See www.facebook.com/saulttribe for live meeting links. Write to your board representative care of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, 523 Ashmun St., Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783.

Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians seven-county service area

The tribe’s seven-county service area consists of the seven easternmost counties in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula: Marquette, Delta, Alger, Schoolcraft, Luce, Mackinac and Chippewa.



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CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER 2024 HIGHLIGHTS



Vision
The Executive Office of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians provides leadership through efficient governance systems, and effective administration of all departments, programs and services to ensure benefit to the tribal membership for the next seven generations.

Purpose
The Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians is committed to communicating and working together to develop and implement programs and services to positively impact the lives of tribal members, strengthening tribal families and communities to live mino bimaadiziwin [a good life].

Executive Office Functions
— Internal Structures and Procedures
— Coordination of communication between leadership and team members
— Collaboration across tribal operations
— Membership access to tribal programming

Supervisory Responsibilities
Executive Team:
— Deputy Chief Executive Officer: DCEO Executive Assistant, ACFS, Education, Elderly Services, Membership Liaisons, Recreation, Repatriation and Historic Preservation, Language and Culture
— Efficiency Analyst / Trainer
— Administrative Manager: CEO Executive Assistant, Chairman’s Executive Assistant, Admin Reception / Mailroom

Department Oversight: Strategic Planning Director, Communications Director, Consortium for Cooperative Ecological Resilience Director, Chief of Law Enforcement, Human Resources Director, Natural Resources Division Director, Tribal Registrar of Enrollment
Board of Directors
Directives and Reporting
In 2024, The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) attended 30 board meetings and 46 workshops. A total of 100 resolutions were passed, addressing administrative, contract, or grant tribal needs.

Major directives included:
— Governmental Directors and the Executive Office participated in “Denim Day” in support of Sexual Assault Awareness month during the month of April.
— The CEO took part in a listening session on May 17 with First Lady Jill Biden and Second Gentleman Douglas Emhoff to discuss health challenges facing Indian Country.
— The CEO played an active role in the recruitment and selection of key personnel by participating in interview panels, evaluating candidates’ qualifications, and ensuring alignment with the organizations, mission, values, and long-term goals.

— Improved communication for the membership by installing audio/visual conferencing



The annual Team Member Recognition Luncheon for Kewadin, Government and EDC was held on April 29.

systems in four tribal facilities across the Sault Tribe’s seven-county service area.
— Managed ARPA funds allocated for government departments to ensure their computer and technology systems remain current.

— The annual Team Member Recognition Luncheon for Kewadin, Governmental and Enterprise team members was held April 29. A total of 193 team members were recognized, with 117 in attendance.

— The annual team building event took place on Aug. 9 in four locations — Sault Ste. Marie, St. Ignace, Munising and Manistique — with a combined total of 454 in attendance.

— Implementation of the Governmental Compensation Study as passed by the Board of Directors, resolution 2024-410 Comprehensive Classification and Compensation Study Project #24-028.

— The Mackinac Straits Health System, now home to the St. Ignace Tribal Health Clinic, held its grand opening in August. A special ceremony was held to place an eagle feather at the entrance, symbolizing healing for all who enter. Project trustees also came together for a ceremonial signing ahead of the final truss installation.

Budget Oversight
The CEO Office oversees 90 cost centers across eight divisions/departments. The chief executive officer attended budget oversight meetings, submitted 68 budget modifications and establishments that were approved by the board of directors in 2024.

Overview of Governmental Departments
Communications Department

The Communication mission is to inform and educate tribal members and the public concerning the Sault Tribe’s nature, activities and issues that affect the tribe and its people.

— The Communications Department published 12 online and 12 print editions of Win Awenen Nisitotung (One Who

Understands)
— Gained 1,151 Facebook followers in 2024, ending with 15,947 followers
— Administrated Sault Tribe website, Facebook and Intranet, updating daily
— Website: 365 posts, 364 posts unpublished, 169 web page updates

— Assisted Bellwether PR with Sault Tribe public relations, fisheries PR projects, 2% PR projects and as directed
— Assisted with Employee Recognition Luncheon planning and communications and provided coverage
— Assisted with Employee Team Building Event planning and communications, provided coverage and group shot with drone camera

— The Communications Director joined the Emergency Response Preparedness workgroup as the Public Information Officer to ensure communication during an emergency incident.

Consortium for Cooperative Ecological Resilience (CCER)
On June 6, 2023, the Board of Directors approved Resolution 2023-192, which directed the Sault Tribe Wildlife Program—now CCER—to pursue formal relationships and establish Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with universities and federal agencies. Since then, CCER has made significant progress toward this goal. In 2024, we developed MOUs with the U.S. Forest Service – Northern Research Station, Michigan State University, and the University of Michigan. We also executed a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and initiated efforts to place CCER Postdoctoral Researcher Evan Wilson within the newly established U.S. Geological Survey Fish and Wildlife Cooperative Research Unit.

Collaboration Presentations
— We Get by With a Little Help from Our Friends: Developing Ma’iingan Assessment Protocols in the

1836 Treaty Ceded Territory - Permits, Traps, Tracks, Cameras, and Anesthesia, Native American Fish and Wildlife Society – Wolf Workgroup, May 1

— Supporting Treaty Rights and Community Relationships through the Development of Decision Support Frameworks guided by Anishinaabe and Western Sciences, US Fish and Wildlife Service – Coastal Program Leadership Team, Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., May 2

— Supporting Treaty Rights and Community Relationships through the Development of Decision Support Frameworks guided by Anishinaabe and Western Sciences. TEK in Fire Symposium, Inter-Tribal Timber Council Annual Conference, Cherokee, N.C., May 16

— Advancing Partnerships between the Sault Tribe and the University of Michigan centering the Chase Osborn Preserve as a Tribally-led collaborative research forest; Meeting with Sault Tribe, Senator Irwin, UM Governmental Relations, Ann Arbor, Mich., May 24.

— Advancing Co-Stewardship of Federal Lands & Demonstrating Relational Engagement in Remnant Boreal Forests in the EUP; Utilizing Anishinaabe and Western Sciences to drive resilience in remnant boreal forest ecological systems, Rise to the Future Awards Seminars, Washington, DC, July 10

— Co-stewardship on the Hiawatha National Forest; Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians and United States Forest Service, First Nations Development Institute- Shared Horizons Co-management Conference, Gila River Indian Community, Ariz.; Nov. 19

— Landscape Approaches to Co-management and Co-stewardship; First Nations Development Institute- Shared Horizons Co-management Conference, Gila River Indian Community, Ariz.; Nov. 20

— Advancing Adaptive Co-management in Hemiboreal Ecosystems within the 1836

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Treaty Ceded Territory, Michigan the Beautiful; – Steering Committee, online; Dec. 13

Highlights
— CCER hosts monthly coordination meetings with Tribal Nations across the Great Lakes Basin to collaboratively guide planning efforts. In 2024, key activities included co-hosting a joint meeting with NOAA, the Michigan Wild Rice Initiative, and the Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan; supporting a University of Michigan student team in conducting interviews with tribal agencies; and beginning a conceptual design to remove the dike system from Munuscong Bay in the St. Mary’s River.

— In May, CCER hosted the second in-person workshop at Kewadin Casino in Sault Ste. Marie to advance the development of collaborative planning tools. This effort also includes the creation of an adaptive management framework to guide the control of invasive cattails and the restoration of Manoomin and other native plant communities in Munuscong Bay.

— In 2024, CCER made substantial progress on several Tribal Forest Protection Act objectives. Many of the research projects described above are specifically designed to fill critical information gaps necessary for adaptive management. Key accomplishments included completing snowshoe hare fire response simulations for the Betchler Marsh burn complex and compiling initial white-tailed deer habitat models for northern white cedar research sites.

Enrollment Department
The Enrollment Department oversees the tribal member enrollment and maintains its database, and offers tribal member services: tribal membership cards, tuition waiver certifications, blood quantum certifications, relinquishment requests, enrollment of children, update address changes, assist in the process of obtaining a treaty fishing license, family genealogy, eagle feather permits and form BIA-4432 (Indian preference forms).

— On Feb. 1, the membership rolls officially re-opened. The rolls were originally closed to adults in 1998. The roles remained closed until 2005 when they were opened for 9 months. As of Dec. 31, there are 51,740 [living] members enrolled with the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians.

— The 2024 Elder Dividend payment was released in the amount of \$360 to 7,987 elders.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE 2024 REPORTING, cont'd

— The Enrollment Department is exploring the possibility of offering enhanced tribal cards. The department is hoping to have this implemented by the end of 2025.

Governmental Relations Department

The Government Relations Department’s vision is to protect and advance the administrative and legislative interests of the Sault Tribe at the state, federal and tribal level.

— Rx Kids: The Government Relations department collaborated with the tribal chairman on launching the first-ever city-wide cash prescription program for pregnant mothers and babies, offering \$3,000 in unconditional support during pregnancy and the first three months of life. The program, currently active in Flint, is also being piloted in Chippewa, Luce, Mackinac, Schoolcraft, and Alger counties.

— Opioid Settlement Funds (OSF): MDHHS agreed to divide \$20 million in Opioid Settlement Funds equally among Michigan’s 13 federally recognized tribes, allocating \$153,846 to the Sault Tribe. Unused funds by Sept. 30, 2025, may carry over to FY 2026.

— The Governmental Relations Health Care Listening Session with the First Lady, Dr. Jill Biden and Second Gentleman took place May 17 at the Nagaanagiizhik Building in Sault Ste. Marie, Mich.

— Labor Day Bridge Walk: The Governmental Relations Department coordinated the Labor Day bridge work for Chairman Lowes to walk with Senator Damoose and Vice-Chairman Tyler LaPlaunt to walk with Lt. Governor Garlin Gilchrist.

Housing Authority

The mission of the Sault Tribe Housing Authority is to improve the quality of life for our tribal members through affordable and unique housing opportunities.

Resident Services

The Resident Services Department processed 166 applications in 2024 for rental units, completed 55 move-ins and conducted 1,747 home visits. The Occupancy Specialist processed 499 interim recertifications and 252 annual recertifications in 2024. There were 16 families that received rental vouchers through the rental voucher program.

Resident Services held 22 events in 2024. These events included an AMERIND poster Contest, elder bingo, mini-site clean-ups, Marquette resource fair, trash to treasure event, family fun day, health and safety fairs, back to school events, recovery walk, and Christmas events.

Human Resources Department

The Human Resources Department goal is to create a high-performing, engaged, and diverse workforce by empowering employees, fostering a culture of continuous learning, and aligning human resource initiatives with organizational goals.

— In 2024, the Human Resources Department expanded to form two distinct branches: Kewadin Human Resources and Governmental/EDC Human Resources.

— Human Resources implemented the Governmental



Sault Tribe Law Enforcement Officers Duffy, TenEyck, Santa (Dale Bosley), Chief of Police Marchand and Gardner (L-R) celebrate Christmas with the children at Sault Tribe Daycare.

Compensation Study conducted by Bluestone Strategy Group, effective Oct. 1, 2024, for the Housing Authority and Health.

— The department successfully completed its annual audit of payroll records and personnel files.

— The Human Resources Training Department tailored specific training programs, including virtual training courses and customized management series courses.

Sault Tribe Law Enforcement (STLE)

STLE serves tribal communities in Sault Ste. Marie, Kincheloe, Hessel, St. Ignace, Newberry, Manistique, Wetmore, Munising, Escanaba and Marquette. STLE also serves as the Conservation Enforcement and treaty licensing entity for Sault Tribe. The department oversees the operation and administration of the Sault Tribe Youth Facility, a 25-bed facility in St. Ignace that houses youth 11-17 who are court ordered to a detention facility. Sault Tribe Law Enforcement provides access to Sex Offender Registration and Notification (SORNA) resources, public registries, and related information to help keep the community informed and safe.

In 2024, STLE remained committed to growth and development by sending multiple officers to specialized trainings, including forensic interviewing, human trafficking, active violence response, CPR, firearms and Taser certifications, K9 operations, and criminal jurisdiction in Indian Country.

In 2024, STLE:

- Purchased four new Dodge Durangos.

- Provided presence at multiple concerts at all of our Kewadin Casino sites.

- Assisted Santa Claus with his visit to the Sault Tribe Daycare and helped spread some much-needed joy.

- Supported the Tri-County Drug Enforcement Team (TRIDENT) by assigning an officer to assist in combating illicit narcotics in Sault Tribe and surrounding communities.

- Put together 250 bags for JKL School Halloween including bags, candy, glowsticks, flashlight and everything needed to be safe

for trick or treating!

- Announced a new initiative to promote suicide prevention awareness in our community. Each STLE vehicle will display the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.

- Ensured continued compliance with Sault Tribe’s Chapter 72 – Sex Offender Registration and Notification Code, which included ensuring that all offenders within Sault Tribe’s jurisdiction were registered, updated, and/or verified.

- Participated in Shop with a Cop for the Christmas season in Manistique and Cheboygan.

- Participated in “Breakfast with a Badge” with Malcolm High School students.

Natural Resources Division

The Natural Resources Division was established in December 2023 to oversee the coordination, collaboration and growth of the Environmental, Fisheries, and Wildlife Programs. Since then, it has pursued strategic planning, filled open administrative and technical positions, and established a new Forestry Program. The following report is organized by four main priorities: sustainable self-governance, interagency management, community outreach and engagement, and division capacity and wellbeing.

- Atikameg (Lake Whitefish) Initiative: Relocated gravid fish from Lake Huron into a tributary to facilitate spawning.

- Translocation of adult whitefish project summary: Eight receivers were positioned in the Carp River, 100 fish were tagged with external transmitters and 25 fish were tagged with internal transmitters.

- Stocking summer fingerling in Great Lakes tributaries summary: Approximately 46,000 summer fingerlings were stocked into the Pine River.

- Summary of the gamete collection for the 2025 year class of whitefish: Over 300 adult fish were collected. Approximately 130 pairs of male and female fish were spawned. Over 800,000 eggs were placed into incubation jars at Nunn’s Creek.

- Ogaa (Walleye) stocking: Natural Resources successfully established a contract with the

Bay Mills Community to stock 100,000 walleye fingerlings in Waishkey Bay and used these funds to support program activities.

- Great Lakes Fisheries Management: Fisheries obtained biological information (length, weight, and age) from over 230 fish representing 16 different species in 2024’s survey.

- Deepwater Project: Sampled 33 sites (out of 222 total sites, with over 78,000 total fish examined), and no new non-local species were detected. A non-native ruffe from Lake George was removed.

- Coastal Resilience Initiative: NRD treated roughly 20 acres of aquatic invasive species from the shorelines of the St. Mary’s River and mapped detected invasive populations along all public lands bordering the lower portion of the river (Raber to DeTour) in 2024.

- Spruce Grouse Habitat Utilization: Staff initiated a pilot project in 2024 using GPS units to assess spruce grouse movements and habitat use. In April, staff caught and affixed GPS units on three spruce grouse near the Betchlers Marsh complex.

- Sharp-tailed Grouse Occupancy Survey: Wildlife staff continued to monitor for sharp-tailed grouse throughout the Ishkode Project area. This involves running transects along dirt roads and stopping and listening for lekking individuals. This is a collaborative project with the Hiawatha National Forest.

- Water Quality Initiative: The Environmental Health scientist conducted monthly drinking water sampling at nine tribal properties to ensure compliance with state and federal standards under the Safe Drinking Water Act. This regular sampling helps detect bacterial contamination and prevent waterborne illnesses, ensuring the community has safe drinking water.

- Air Quality Initiative: Staff drafted and submitted five indoor air quality (IAQ) assessment reports for tribal residences. Each assessment involved inspecting

the home of a tribal member for moisture intrusion, mold growth, and ventilation effectiveness. Additionally, air sampling was conducted to measure levels of particulate matter, carbon monoxide, and carbon dioxide. Upon completion of the assessments, detailed reports were prepared and delivered to the respective property owners.

- Brownfields, Pollution Control, and Risk Reduction: Updated the Brownfield Inventory Site List to ensure accurate documentation of contaminated and potentially contaminated properties on tribal lands. This update involved reviewing historical land use records and previous environmental assessments, a more comprehensive assessment of tribal lands will be conducted in 2025.

- Harvest Assessment and Reporting: STNRD continue to meet our reporting requirements for the Inland and Great Lakes decrees. These reporting and assessment activities have existed in some format since the 1980s and have helped support the negotiation of three Great Lakes decrees in 1985, 2000, and 2023 and an inland decree in 2007.

- Great Lakes Decree: The Natural Resources Division collected 2,500 total fish from commercial samples this year. Efforts also included monitoring the new Lake Trout trap net fishery. the division continued to meet its reporting requirements for the Great Lakes decrees. This reporting includes over 50 Little Bay de Noc special subsistence permits, twice monthly commercial fishery reports and retail bills of sale reporting from 48 licensed fishers, and monthly reports for approximately 170 typical subsistence fishers.

Planning and Development

Planning and Development’s vision is to empower the tribal government with strategic planning, grant administration, data administration and research.

- USDA ReConnect FOA 3: Awarded \$24,944,355. During 2024, Planning & Development partnered with Cherry Capital Connections. This has enabled the tribe with the ability to generate additional revenue. The partnership also provided the department with industry insight and the ability to provide lasting maintenance of the network.

- USDA ReConnect FOA 4: Awarded \$3,742,293. This would bring fiber to the premises for each of the households. This will allow the tribe to move its fiber connection payments to our own network, and to set up revenue streams.

- Energy Study with Slipstream: Planning & Development utilized Slipstream at no cost to the tribe to do a net zero carbon plan, and a facility-level solar feasibility plan.

- SSBCI Capital and Technical Assistance Programs: Continued support for SSBCI Capital and TA programs, which transitioned from planning to the EDC for implementation, with nearly \$11 million in funding to benefit the tribe.

TRIBE’S 2024 FINANCIALS, FUTURE OUTLOOK FOR 2026

This section of the Tribe’s annual financial report presents our discussion and analysis of the tribe’s financial performance during the fiscal year that ended on Dec. 31, 2024. Please read it in conjunction with the tribe’s financial statements, which follow this section.

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

The tribe’s total governmental assets decreased by \$19.2 million or 5.3% over the course of this year’s operations and total assets from business-type activities increased by \$36.1 million or 24.42%. Total primary governmental assets were \$528 million at 2024 year-end, an increase of \$16.8 million or 3.29%.

Total liabilities in governmental activities decreased by \$58.4 million or (29.41%). Total liabilities in business-type activities increased to \$49.6 million or 1.74%. Total primary governmental liabilities were \$189.8 million at 2024 year-end.

During the year, the tribe’s governmental expenses and transfers were \$40.7 million less than the revenues generated by grants, taxes and other sources for governmental activities.

In the tribe’s business-type activities, total revenues were \$120.4 million while total expenses, taxes, gain on disposal of capital assets, and transfers were \$88.7 million.

The tribe’s General Fund reported an increase in expenditures of \$1.47 million or 10.8% for the year due to increases in General Government expenses funded with ARP Act of 2022 COVID-19 grants.

The tribe’s MERS Defined Benefit Pension Plan for law enforcement employees reported a net pension liability of \$29,083 in the government-wide financial statements.

Tribal external debt reduction payments amounted to \$6,330,848.

Major capital projects included:

As part of the overall plan to obtain property to expand the contiguous land holdings on Sugar Island, 120 acres were purchased next to the Sacred Health Church on the Sugar Island at a cost of \$152,000.

The Tribal Building Fund purchased land, buildings, equipment, vehicles and made building improvements totaling \$9,610,253. These were funded in part as noted in the ARPA section and with Building funds. These included improvements to office buildings, cultural and recreation centers and expansion of housing opportunities.

Improvements at the JKL School included playground resurfacing and parking lot resurfacing.

The Health Centers in the service area received various upgrades including upgrade to the Sault Health Center Fire Alarm System, new building environmental control systems and boilers, common area upgrades, security systems and new flooring.

The Escanaba Community Center has a health center that will be occupied in 2025. The Gladstone Health Building added a fitness center.

The St. Ignace Health Center

moved into a new building on the Mackinac Straits Health Campus. New medical equipment, computers, furniture and fixtures and security systems were purchased at a cost of \$896,325.

Phase II of the Tamarack Business Development Center was completed at a cost of \$306,673 using a grant from the state of Michigan and tribal funds.

The Public Safety Department purchased four vehicles at a cost of \$279,060 using a COPS-TGRP grant.

Tribal infrastructure improvements made with Department of Transportation funds totaled \$20,250.

ARPA - USE OF FUNDS IN 2024

With the receipt of ARPA funds in 2021, the Sault Tribe formulated plans in each geographic unit of the seven-county service area to purchase or use existing tribal property and develop much needed housing and community centers. A land parcel and building were purchased in Marquette County for a total of \$1.2 million. The building will be repurposed into a community center for the the Marquette area.

Infrastructure work was completed on the Sault Health Center Campus in anticipation of constructing an annex to the existing building. Total cost was \$240,000.

In 2022, ARPA funds were used to begin construction of 38 affordable housing units at various locations throughout the tribe’s service area. The goal for this project is to provide community members another source of desirable housing alternatives. Units will be either placed on lots at Odenaang (Sault Tribe Housing Authority housing development), Riverside Village Park or on a site chosen by the tribal member. As of Dec. 31, 2024, all the units were occupied. Total cost of the project was \$ 10.2 million.

ARPA funds were also used to repurpose and upgrade existing buildings. Improved access, new HVAC systems, security enhancements and restroom renovations were among the uses of the funds.

Also in 2022, the Sault Tribe began to implement the board-approved housing and community center expansion projects. Each unit in the service area received funds to initiate the projects based upon the need developed in that unit. The Escanaba Community Center was completed in 2024 at a cost of \$4,561,000 using ARPA funds. The Manistique Building will be completed in 2025. Plans are currently being developed for the center in Hessel for construction in 2025.

Plans were developed and remodeling began in the Administrative Complex for three office suites using ARPA funds. Completion will be in early 2025.

Another critical element of the ARPA funding is the provision for the computation of “revenue loss.” This is a calculation of the tribal-wide loss of revenues beginning in March 2020 with the onset of the COVID pandemic and initially ending at Dec. 31, 2020, and comparing it to 2018 and 2019 revenues. A similar computation was performed in years 2022 and 2023. The goal is to gauge the impact this loss

of revenues had on the ability of the tribe to provide services to members and fund the administration of the organization and to use ARPA funds to supplement this loss in revenues. For 2024, the Sault Tribe was able to use \$25,810,407 of ARPA funds in this manner.

The Natural Resources Division received the go-ahead for design work to remodel the existing Motor Pool Building and add additional space at the Three Mile Rd. location in Sault Ste Marie. Completion is expected in 2025.

The following projects were completed or initiated in 2024 using ARPA funds:

- McCann - HVAC upgrade
- Sault Powwow Grounds
- Sault Cultural Bldg. upgrades
- Sault Elderly Bldg. Parking Lot Reconstruction
- Big Bear Arena Chiller upgrade

ARPA funds were also used by Kewadin Casinos in 2024 for various projects — Hotel Room Remodeling Project, Hotel Exterior Surface Replacement and design work for the replacement of the Casino South Entrance.

ENTERPRISE MAJOR PROJECTS

Additions to the various casinos’ land improvements, furniture and fixtures, equipment and right-to-use assets totaled \$2,897,944 with the major projects being the replacement of computer equipment and credit card devices, furniture and fixtures and slot machines at all five locations. Additional improvements are noted in the ARPA section above.

The Property Management Companies procured additional properties, buildings and improvements along with equipment additions in the in the amount of \$5,535,486. Major activity included the transfer of ownership of 19 modular units to DeMawating and two to Sawyer Village from the CARES Program, which totaled \$3,870,725.

DeMawating’s remaining additions totaled \$1,207,956 after the CARES transfers. These included a rental property purchase in Sault Ste. Marie, which included 23 apartments and three retails suites. Also for 2024, the DeMawating saw the completion of a rental house in Cedarville that was constructed by the Building Trades class at Cedarville High School. The remaining additions was their program of systematic roof and furnace replacements and interior renovations.

In addition to the CARES unit transfers, Sawyer Village’s 2024 additions were \$456,805. These included furnace replacements in the retail locations at the Harvey location. The remaining additions involved their program of systematic roof and furnace replacements and interior renovations.

In 2024, the MidJim Convenience Store in the Sault received CARES transfers with a cost of \$110,511. This included new countertops, a bottle return machine and replacement of the HVAC system. The St. Ignace location also received CARES transfers with a cost of \$110,855. These included a HVAC system replacement, bottle return machine, new outside doors and

new countertops.

The White Pine Lodge and Convenience Store was also the recipient of the CARES Fund transfers. Included in this transaction were sliding doors, a walk-up window, kitchen remodeling, fuel dispensers, bottle return machine, laundry equipment, new point of sale and member software and a HVAC system. These improvements totaled \$247,163.

The Eagle Lending Program received a \$2,956,523 grant under the State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI), which is geared towards assisting small business with procuring financing through loan participation or collateral support.

Improvements at the Tanglewood Golf Course included furnace replacements, golf simulator program and point of sale equipment for a total of \$61,409.

Bear on the Mountain (Hessel Ridge) Golf Course improvements included a new Irrigation Pump and signage totaling \$52,275.

The Sault Tribe Housing Authority (STHA) received a \$414,400 Indian Health Services Sanitation grant. This grant afforded 27 tribal member families with new well or sanitation systems.

STHA also received \$4,079,143 from the U.S. Treasury to provide financial assistance to tribal member homeowners. Assistance includes mortgage payments, utilities, internet, insurance and property taxes.

Sault Tribe Housing Authority Property and Equipment totaled \$75,887,295 at the end of 2024 and consisted of land improvements, building and structures, equipment and machinery and vehicles. The total net increase in 2024 for these types of assets was \$4,531,694.

In addition, the Authority served a total of 204 tribal members under the Emergency Rental Assistance Program Grant. Total expenditures for this program were \$313,717 in 2024.

The Housing Authority also acquired 20 new homes in 2024 to be placed at Odenaang under the Lease to Purchase program.

In addition to the renewal of funding for a host of tribal programs, new grant awards in 2024 consisted of the following expenditure amounts:

- Office on Violence Against Women (VAWA), \$217,550
- State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI), 2,956,523

OVERVIEW OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

This annual report consists of four parts — management’s discussion and analysis (this section), the basic financial statements, required supplementary information and other information that presents combining statements for non-major governmental, internal service, enterprise and fiduciary funds. The basic financial statements include two kinds of statements that present different views of the tribe.

The first two statements are government-wide financial statements that provide both long-term and short-term information about the tribe’s overall financial status.

The remaining statements are fund financial statements that

focus on individual parts of the tribe’s government, reporting the tribe’s operations in more detail than the government-wide statements.

The governmental funds statements tell how government services like public safety and health and welfare were financed in the short-term as well as what remains for future spending.

Proprietary fund statements offer short and long-term financial information about the activities the government operates like businesses, such as the Gaming Authority and MidJims.

Fiduciary fund statements provide information about the financial relationships-like the retirement plan of the tribe’s employees- in which the tribe acts solely as a trustee or agent for the benefit of others, to whom the resources belong.

The financial statements also include notes that explain some of the information in the financial statements and provide more detailed data. The statements are followed by a section of required supplementary information that further explains and supports the information in the financial statements. In addition to these required elements, we have included a section with combining statements that provide details about our governmental funds and internal service funds each of which are added together and presented in single columns in the basic financial statements.

GOVERNMENT-WIDE STATEMENTS

The government-wide statements report information about the tribe as a whole using accounting methods similar to those used by private sector companies. The statement of net position includes all of the government’s assets and liabilities. All of the current year’s revenues and expenses are accounted for in the statement of activities regardless of when cash is received or paid.

The two government-wide statements report the tribe’s net position and how they have changed. Net position – the difference between the tribe’s assets and liabilities – is one way to measure the tribe’s financial health, or position.

Over time, increases or decreases in the tribe’s net position are an indicator of whether its financial health is improving or deteriorating, respectively. To assess the overall health of the tribe, consider additional non-financial factors such as changes in the gaming industry regulations and changes in federal law.

The government-wide financial statements of the tribe are:

GOVERNMENTAL ACTIVITIES – Most of the tribe’s basic services are included here, such as health and welfare, public safety, education, and recreation and culture. Taxes, federal revenue, state revenue, and charges for services finance most of these activities.

BUSINESS-TYPE ACTIVITIES – The tribe charges fees to customers to help it cover the costs of certain services it provides. The tribe’s Gaming Authority and businesses are included here.

2024 GOVERNMENTAL FINANCIAL OVERVIEW, cont'd

FUND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The fund financial statements provide more detailed information about the tribe’s most significant funds — not the tribe as a whole. Funds are accounting devices that the tribe uses to keep track of specific sources of funding and spending for particular purposes. Some funds are required by federal law.

The Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indian’s Board establishes other funds to control and manage grant money for particular purposes (Head Start, Fisheries, Sanitation, etc.).

The tribe has three kinds of funds:

GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS – Most of the tribe’s basic services are included in governmental funds, which focus on (1) how much cash and other financial assets that can readily be converted to cash flow in and out and (2) the balances left at year end that are available for spending. Consequently, the governmental funds statements provide a detailed short-term view that helps one determine whether there are more or fewer financial resources that can be spent in the near future to finance the tribe’s programs. Because this information does not encompass the additional long-term focus of the government-wide statements, we provide additional information at the bottom of the governmental funds statement, or on the subsequent page, that explains the relationship (or differences) between them.

PROPRIETARY FUNDS – Internal services for which the tribe charges internal customers a fee are generally reported in the general fund. Proprietary funds, like the government-wide statements, provide both long and short term financial information. In fact, the tribe’s enterprise funds (one type of proprietary fund) are the same as its business-type activities, but provide more detail and additional information, such as cash flows. We use internal services for the tribe’s other programs and activities – such as the Management Information Systems, Human Resources, Accounting, etc.

FIDUCIARY FUNDS – The tribe is trustee, or fiduciary, for its employees’ pension plans. It is also responsible for other assets because of a trust arrangement – can be used only for the trust beneficiaries. The tribe is responsible for ensuring that the assets reported in the funds are used for their intended purposes. All of the tribe’s fiduciary activities are reported in a separate statement of fiduciary net position and a statement of changes in fiduciary net position. We exclude these activities from the tribe’s government-wide financial statements because the tribe cannot use these assets to finance its operations.

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS OF THE TRIBE AS A WHOLE

Net position. The tribe’s combined governmental and business-type net position was \$204,959,436 for 2024. (See Table A-1.) \$76.3 million of governmental assets are invested in capital assets (land, buildings and equip-

ment) with \$121.7 million of business assets invested in the same manner

Change in net position. The tribe’s total revenues from primary activities (excluding special items) was \$247 million. (See Table A-2.) The tribe’s revenue comes mainly from gaming revenues, charges for services, taxes and federal sources.

The total cost of all primary activities was \$218 million and included both governmental and member services along with business-type operating costs excluding transfers and taxes.

The tribe was able to cover the current year’s costs for programs and services of governmental operations through revenues. Table A-2 and the narrative that follows consider the operations of governmental-type activities and business-type activities separately.

Governmental and Business-type Activities

Revenues for the tribe’s governmental activities decreased (27.3)%, while total expenses decreased (43.9)%.

Revenues for the tribe’s business-type activities increased 6.47%, while total expenses increased 37.48%.

Governmental Activities

Table A-2 presents the cost of each of the tribe’s five largest programs—health and welfare, public safety, recreation and culture, education, and general government as well as its judicial services, public works and interest expense.

The cost of all governmental activities this year was \$111.4 million. The cost of those services was paid from the following:

- Taxes of \$9.38 million
- Charges for services of \$31.2 million.
- Operating and Capital Grants of \$103 million.
- Component unit distributions of \$3.2 million.
- Interest, dividends and other revenues of \$829 thousand.

The increase in governmental net position for 2023 was \$35.1 million.

Business-type Activities

Revenues of the tribe’s business-type activities were \$94.9 million and expenses were \$106.7 million. (See Table A-2.) Business-type activities provide all of the governmental tax revenues, and the decrease in net position for the businesses in 2023 was \$12.5 million after taxes.

As the tribe completed the year, its governmental funds reported, on Page 19, a combined fund balance of \$46.1 million, an improvement in combined fund balance of \$24.2 million from 2022. The primary reason for the increase in fund balance is highlighted in the analysis of governmental activities. In addition, these other changes in fund balance should be noted:

Debt service expenditures were \$2.8 million.

\$9.1 million net was transferred in from other activities to the General Fund, an increase of 141% from 2022.

General Fund Budgetary Highlights

Over the course of the year, the tribe’s board made several changes to the tribe’s budget. The budget process falls into three categories:

Table A-1						
	Governmental Activities		Business-type Activities		Total	
	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023
Current and Other Assets	\$ 262,552,822	\$ 290,643,174	\$ 55,154,210	\$ 37,118,875	\$ 317,707,032	\$ 327,762,049
Capital Assets	81,357,974	71,963,140	128,609,826	110,578,160	209,967,800	182,541,300
Deferred Outflows of Resources	384,363	475,855	-	-	384,363	475,855
Total Assets	\$ 344,295,159	\$ 363,082,169	\$ 183,764,036	\$ 147,697,035	\$ 528,059,195	\$ 510,779,204
Current Liabilities	\$ 110,279,880	\$ 220,929,108	\$ 20,874,938	\$ 13,578,946	\$ 131,154,818	\$ 234,508,054
Noncurrent Liabilities	29,306,906	30,471,902	26,895,925	40,978,837	56,202,831	71,450,739
Deferred Inflows of Resources	552,874	720,066	1,853,548	-	2,406,422	720,066
Total Liabilities	140,139,660	252,121,076	49,624,411	54,557,783	189,764,071	306,678,859
Net Position						
Net Investment in Capital Assets	76,332,652	\$6,535,772	121,658,201	103,419,326	197,990,853	159,955,098
Restricted	9,435,091	-	240,000	-	9,675,091	-
Unrestricted	115,387,756	61,447,788	12,241,424	(19,443,450)	127,629,180	42,004,338
Designated	3,000,000	3,000,000	-	-	3,000,000	3,000,000
Total Net Position	\$ 204,155,499	\$ 120,983,560	\$ 134,139,625	\$ 83,975,876	\$ 338,295,124	\$ 204,959,436

Table A-2 Changes in Tribe’s Net Position				
	Governmental Activities		Business-type Activities	
	2024	2023	2024	2023
Revenues				
Program Revenues:				
Charges for services	\$ -	\$ 31,152,361	\$ -	\$ 94,827,553
Operating grants and Contributions	-	101,917,920	-	-
Capital grants and Contributions	-	1,782,412	-	-
General Revenues:				
Taxes	-	9,379,280	-	-
Interest/Dividends	-	4,226,060	-	112,959
Component unit distributions	-	3,200,000	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-
Total Revenues	\$ -	\$ 151,658,033	\$ -	\$ 94,940,512
Expenses				
Gaming Authority	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 85,745,567
Other	-	-	-	21,015,886
Judicial	-	1,649,905	-	-
Education	-	10,816,725	-	-
Health and Welfare	-	73,128,002	-	-
Recreation and Culture	-	2,794,986	-	-
Public Safety	-	4,778,965	-	-
General Government	-	12,182,640	-	-
Public Works	-	2,959,156	-	-
Interest Expense	-	3,171,817	-	-
Total Expenses	\$ -	\$ 111,482,196	\$ -	\$ 106,761,453
Excess	\$ -	\$ 40,175,837	\$ -	\$ (11,820,941)
Gain (loss) on Disposal of Capital Assets	-	-	-	-
Transfers	-	(5,719,502)	-	5,719,502
Taxes	-	-	-	(8,095,122)
Change in Net Position	-	34,456,335	-	(14,196,561)
Net Position - Beginning	-	81,807,993	73,113,358	87,309,919
Net Position - Ending	\$ -	\$ 116,264,328	\$ 73,113,358	\$ 73,113,358

Original budgets are approved by the board prior to the beginning of the program’s fiscal year.

Amendments and supplemental appropriations are approved as needed by the Board of Directors during the course of the fiscal year.

Year-end modifications are made during the calendar year as needed for programs with non-December year ends.

Even with these adjustments, actual expenditures were \$2.4 million less than the final budgeted general fund amounts. The actual excess of revenues over expenses and other uses was \$869,000 less than the final budget anticipated. This is due, in part, to lower tax and other revenues, less debt service costs and higher transfers in than the final budgeted amounts.

The most significant variances were as follows:

Tax revenues were significantly lower and this was offset by other financing sources.

Debt service costs were less.

General government costs were less.

Other financing uses of funds were less.

CAPITAL ASSETS

At the end of 2023, the tribe has invested \$168,396,220 in a broad range of capital assets,

including land, machinery and equipment, buildings, roads, and vehicles.

The principal change in capital assets consists mainly of land purchases and equipment purchases.

Long-Term Debt

At year end, the tribe had approximately \$14.4 million in notes payable. There was no governmental debt at year end and Internal Service debt decreased by \$838,000.

ECONOMIC FACTORS AND NEXT YEAR’S BUDGETS AND RATES

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the tribe’s operations. The tribe is carrying over \$29.4 million of unspent ARP Act of 2021 COVID 19 funding to 2025 for COVID-19 disaster relief. The effect of COVID-19 continued to impact all aspects of the tribal economy during 2024 from both the governmental and business perspectives. It will remain to be seen how quickly both the general and tribal economies recover.

These indicators were taken into account when adopting the General Fund budget for fiscal 2025. The amount appropriated in the General Fund budget for operations is \$13.4 million, which is a 19.0% decrease from final fiscal 2024 budget. The tribe will use its revenues to

finance current and expected future programs, program expansions into outlying areas, and the expected impact of inflation on those programs.

The largest fiscal 2025 budgeted expenditures are for direct services, consulting / subcontracting, and expansion of member services. If these estimates are realized, the tribe’s budgetary General Fund balance is expected to remain steady by the close of fiscal 2025.

As for the tribe’s business-type activities, we expect that the 2025 results will also improve based on these items:

- Reduction in operating costs.
- Reduction in Debt Service.
- Increase in operating margins.

CONTACTING THE TRIBE’S FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

This financial report is designed to provide our members, grantors, investors and creditors with a general overview of the tribe’s finances and to demonstrate the tribe’s accountability for the money it receives. If you have questions about this report or need additional financial information, contact the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians Administration Office, 523 Ashmun, Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783.

TRIBAL COURT 2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

One of the most important aspects of our tribe’s sovereignty is the exercise of jurisdiction through the tribe’s judicial system. It is the Tribal Court’s responsibility, and therefore that of the Judge and Magistrate, to adjudicate the cases that come before it. Our Tribal Court hears a wide range of cases, as authorized by our Tribal Code, including child welfare, juvenile delinquency, adult criminal, conservation, landlord-tenant, general civil lawsuits, and personal protection orders. In addition, Tribal Court exercises Special Tribal Criminal Jurisdiction over non-Natives. Appeals from the trial level court’s decisions can be filed with the Tribal Court of Appeals. Our trial-level Court consists of the Chief Judge, Court Administrator/Magistrate, Court Clerk, Deputy Court Clerk, a Probation Officer, a Specialty Court Coordinator, and a part-time Field Surveillance Officer/Bailiff.

Court Administration
In 2024, 344 new cases of various case types were filed in Tribal Court. The Court held 1,334 total hearings during 2024, which included arraignments, pre-trial conferences, motion and plea hearings, bench trials, sentencings, dispositional review and permanency planning hearings. No jury trials were held in 2024. While many of the hearings took place in Sault Ste. Marie in the George K. Nolan Judicial Building courtroom, approximately half were held via Zoom video-conference to allow litigants and attorneys to appear remotely for court from other locations (even across the country), including from jails and prisons, making the appearance rate increase. In addition, the Court issued over 2,000 Court orders and opinions in the past year.

In 2024, the Court finalized three adoptions and 10 juvenile guardianships, which are always among some of the most joyful days at the court.

Probation Department
The safety of individual victims and the community is the foundation of the services of the Tribal Court Probation Department. Those services are tailored to the individual needs and circumstances of each probationer and are intended to facilitate accountability while providing opportunities for personal growth and behavior modification. In 2024, 23 adults and seven juveniles were sentenced to shorter terms of probation and were ordered to complete specialized services designed to treat and

support each person in a community-based setting.

The Court used assessment tools to help guide decisions on what types of services were needed. The Court offered an array of services including significant use of electronic monitoring devices like GPS tethers and Soberlink, along with treatment and treatment court as an alternative to incarceration and monetary obligations in hopes of redirecting individuals with mental health or substance abuse issues towards community-based treatment, support and resources, allowing each to address a specific need or needs, in a traditional way that also addresses the root causes of one’s behavior. Not only did we see the cost-effectiveness, but also the potential for reduced recidivism, and a new positive, structured way of life for our people.

Probation staff still conducted 201 drug screens and 216 preliminary breath tests of probationers, drug court clients, and defendants on bond. Tribal Court probationers and Drug Court participants also completed 168 total hours of work service in and around the community.

Gwaiak Miicon
Tribal Court operated its Gwaiak Miicon Adult Treatment Court for the 24th consecutive year. Gwaiak Miicon is an evidence-based treatment, structured program for offenders who have substance use disorder and who are at high risk of engaging in further criminal conduct without intervention, combining Court oversight with substance abuse treatment services to focus on the reasons an offender engages in criminal activity. If, as a tribal community, we can treat the “why” someone commits a crime, we can reduce crime and provide a means for our people to address underlying trauma. Each week, a team of service providers from the tribal criminal justice and treatment systems, defense attorney, prosecuting attorney, behavioral health treatment providers, peer recovery coaches, law enforcement, and judicial staff, meet before each review hearing to discuss how each client is doing and determine if there should be modifications to their services, any sanctions imposed to address non-compliance, or any incentives handed out to reward and promote compliance. In 2024, Tribal Court held two graduation ceremonies to celebrate our participants’ successful completion of the program and their continued sobriety.



ADOPTIONS — Above, the Hudacek family grew by two. Below, the Bradley Family continues to be another forever home for our children.



Gwaiak Miicon treatment court is available to all tribal members, whether their case is proceeding in tribal or state courts, and is even available to non-Natives who fall within the Tribal Court jurisdiction.

Court of Appeals
The restructuring of the Appellate Court occurred on Aug. 20, 2024, by board resolution. The panel now consists of three attorney judges, one elder, and one community member, making up the 5-member panel. The Court of Appeal heard oral arguments in five cases during 2024, stemming from appeals filed between 2023–2024. Five new appeals were filed in 2024: Two landlord/tenant matters, one Personal Protection Order case, and two election complaints.

The Court also continued its Domestic Violence (DV) Court program this year for offenders convicted of abusive crimes against an intimate partner. DV Court is presided over by Magistrate Swan and is a specialized docket that allows the justice system to have intensive oversight on cases, enhances victim safety, and holds offend-

ers accountable while offering them rehabilitative services to deter repeat offenses. Participants must attend frequent Court review hearings, attend Men’s Group, complete a behavioral health assessment and treatment if recommended, and write a series of essays on power and control. Tribal Court staff are trained in the Men’s Education Group Duluth Model and Moral Reconation Therapy (MRT) to facilitate the weekly groups. The curriculum for Men’s Education is 26 weeks, and the Court also incorporates cultural teachings and two sweat lodges into its program through collaboration with Traditional Medicine. MRT is a 12-step workbook designed to modify criminal thinking. Tribal Court accepts referrals to Men’s Education Group and MRT from social service agencies and other tribal and state courts for a nominal fee.

Other 2024 accomplishments and a farewell
— Tribal Court staff regularly participated in community events in 2024 and also served on many community workgroups and committees focusing on tribal and community justice issues.



— Former Chief Judge Fabry sat on the Board of Directors for Families Against Narcotics (FAN) of Chippewa County. Court Administrator/Magistrate Swan serves our tribe on the national VAWA Inter-Tribal Work Group, and on the MMIP committee. Fabry served on the Board of Directors for the Michigan Association of Treatment Court Professionals, the Michigan Tribal State Federal Judicial Forum, and the Michigan Supreme Court Child Welfare Leadership Workgroup. Swan also serves on the Michigan Indian Legal Services Advisory Committee.

— Swan was among the attendees at the December 2024 ITWG meeting.

— Tribal Court received Special Tribal Criminal Jurisdiction Reimbursement funding in 2024 for expenses associated with exercising VAWA-22.

— Tribal Court received one-time BIA funding for staff training/travel, and wages to continue to employ a Specialty Court Coordinator.

— Lastly, in June 2024, Tribal Court lost a wealth of knowledge and a pillar to this Court, the tribe, and our people. After a dedicated tenure marked by leadership and a commitment to justice, Fabry decided to step down as Chief Judge. Fabry has served as the Tribal Court’s Chief Judge since 2010. Fabry’s departure will have a lasting impact on the judicial system and this community she proudly served. The dynamic presence she brought to this Court will be missed.

Tribal Court Goals for 2025
— Advocate to increase jurisdiction of the Tribal Court under the Tribal Law & Order Act, which would increase the maximum criminal penalty for a crime from 1 year to 3 years confinement.

— Continue working towards combating substance abuse as outlined in the tribe’s Tribal Action Plan.

Please like “Sault Ste. Marie Chippewa Tribal Court” on Facebook for information on court events, jury duty, court closures, and other items of interest.



Court Administrator/Magistrate Swan was among the attendees at the December 2024 ITWG meeting.

NATURAL RESOURCES DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS IN 2024

The Sault Tribe Natural Resources Division (NRD), Gidayangwaami'idimin Ezhi-inawendiyang, ensures sustainable air, water, land, fish, wildlife, and plant stewardship within the tribe's reservations, seven-county service area and 1836 Treaty Ceded Territory, focusing on tribal rights protection and implementation, environmental quality, and sustainability in governmental operations. These functions require robust monitoring programs, data management and analysis, and communication and translation of findings into appropriate regulations, codes, and on-the-ground management. The division advises the Sault Tribe Board of Directors and the Conservation Committee on fish, wildlife, plant populations, tribal harvest, regulations and codes, and environmental quality within the 1836 Treaty Ceded Territory.

Great Lakes Fisheries Management

Fisheries-dependent and fisheries-independent monitoring programs inform the protection and management of the tribal fishery and comprise a large portion of annual fisheries monitoring work. The Fisheries Program collects data to estimate stock size and mortality of commercially important species such as Atikameg (Lake Whitefish) and Namegos (Lake Trout). Projects that protect subsistence fishing and recreational angling for tribal citizens are also prioritized. Cooperation with management and research partners is critical for success.

Fishery-independent Survey: Survey crews completed the fishery-independent Giigoonh (fish) community survey in Lake Michigan across management units WFM01 through WFM04. Staff have conducted this survey annually since 2000 to monitor fish population trends in Lake Michigan and Lake Huron. In 2024, crews deployed twenty-two experimental graded mesh nets on the lake bottom along randomly selected depth strata and set eight suspended nets targeting the midwater column. They collected biological information—length, weight, and age—from over 230 fish representing 16 different species.

Deepwater Project: The team completed 2024 fieldwork for the GLRI-funded Deepwater project. Due to the loss of the ROV pilot, the team was unable to collect ROV footage and benthic samples. However, staff successfully sampled fish and zooplankton at four study sites.

The team contributed ultraviolet light (UV) transparency data from their ROV to a basin-wide research project investigating the potential effects of ultraviolet radiation on Lake Whitefish eggs and larvae. This project examines how increased water clarity—driven by invasive mussels—may expose fish nurseries to harmful UV radiation. Through these contributions, the Deepwater project provides valuable support to researchers studying this aspect of Lake Whitefish ecology.

Non-Local Being Monitoring: The Sault Tribe completed its non-local species monitoring survey in the St. Marys River as part



During Boat to School, students visit five learning stations including this one on trophic levels.

of a collaborative effort with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bay Mills Indian Community, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Tribal staff sampled 33 sites, contributing to the 222 total sites surveyed by all collaborators and the examination of over 78,000 fish. They detected no new non-local species during the survey but found and removed a non-native Ruffe from Lake George.

Siscowet Assessments: This year, the Sault Tribe conducted its triennial assessment of Siscowet Lake Trout in Grand Marais, Lake Superior (unit MI-7). This work contributes to a broader collaborative monitoring effort involving multiple agencies across Lake Superior. The assessment aims to improve understanding of Siscowet Lake Trout's ecological role in the lake and to determine fish abundance in offshore areas. Specific objectives include estimating the relative abundance, food habits, and age and size composition of Siscowets. Researchers also recognize that Siscowet may help mitigate Sea Lamprey predation pressure on commercially harvested Lean Lake Trout.

Coastal Resilience Initiative Since 2011, Division staff have led innovative invasive species control and coastal wetland restoration along the St. Marys River. Efforts target migratory bird habitat by managing invasive plants (hybrid cattail, purple loosestrife, and European frog-bit) and restoring native species (manoomin, bulrush). Wildlife Program staff mapped newly detected invasive species populations in the lower St. Marys River to inform targeted treatment and ecological restoration strategies. Over the past three years, the Wildlife Program, in collaboration with local partners, has treated 78 acres of aquatic invasive species to support native habitat recovery.

Invasive Species Mapping and Removal: In 2024, the Wildlife Program continued a systematic

surveillance program of coastal wetlands on public lands in the lower St. Marys River, including wetlands in the Eastern Upper Peninsula and Neebish Island. Staff treated roughly 20 acres of aquatic invasive species from the shorelines of the St. Marys River and mapped detected invasive populations along all public shorelines from Raber to Detour in 2024.

Manoomin Restoration: Staff continued manoomin (wild rice) restoration in coastal wetlands along the St. Marys River. An experimental manoomin restoration site was seeded in Munuscong Bay for the fourth consecutive year, with the intention of continuing to learn from this site over time. The program is also assessing the feasibility of expanding manoomin restoration to other coastal wetlands within the Obtawaing Biosphere Region. The Wildlife Program seeded roughly 17 acres in Munuscong Bay, Baie De Wasai, and Shingle Bay in 2024 – including a fall community event, where Sault Tribe members, other local Anishinaabeg, and Division staff seeded Munuscong Bay. Restoration efforts will expand in 2025.

Secretive Marshbird and Waterfowl Monitoring: The Wildlife Program has led long-term monitoring of secretive marshbirds, focusing on target species such as American bitterns, coots, and rails. These surveys track species' presence or absence as indicators of ecosystem health and disturbance. Additionally, the Wildlife Program conducts fall point count surveys of migratory waterfowl to assess changes in abundance, migration timing, and breeding activity.

Black Tern Monitoring: The Wildlife Program collaborated with Audubon Great Lakes to conduct monitoring of Black Terns at Munuscong Bay, which supports one of the largest breeding colonies in the Great Lakes region. The data collected provides critical insight into the species' rapid decline and informs a targeted Conservation Action Plan outlining evidence-based

strategies for population restoration. The Wildlife Program is committed to executing these recommendations to ensure the long-term protection and recovery of Black Terns and their essential wetland habitats.

St Marys River Structured Decision-Making Project: Staff participated in planning team meetings for the St. Marys River Structured Decision-Making Project throughout 2024. This collaborative effort, which is led by Sault Tribe's Consortium for Cooperative Ecological Resilience, brought together tribal, state, and federal land managers, as well as researchers, to develop a comprehensive coastal wetland management and restoration plan for the St. Marys River, scheduled for completion in 2025.

Muskrat Decline Study: In 2024, the Wildlife Program partnered with the Wildlife Ecology Institute and local trappers at Munuscong Bay to collect muskrat and mink carcasses. This research investigates health, disease risk, reproduction, and population structure to better understand the causes of regional muskrat declines.

Hemiboreal Forest Resilience Initiative

Hemiboreal forest species and communities are integral to Anishinaabe ways of life. The last two centuries of colonization, land use, and climate-driven changes necessitate concerted efforts to protect and restore these communities and sustainable relationships with them. Through this project, the Division seeks to revitalize and restore Anishinaabe ecosystem management practices across the 1836 Ceded Territory while enhancing tribal access to and management of treaty resources. This project includes the "Inter-agency Ishkode (Fire) Stewardship Plan" and collaborations with the community and other agencies, including Sault Tribe's Consortium for Cooperative Ecological Resilience (CCER).

Community Engagement: NRD staff work to facilitate tribal community member engagement

in ishkode planning processes, including through interviews, pre- and post-burn assessments, and winter storytelling events. In September 2024, NRD organized a community gathering at Betchler Marsh with a fire, pipe ceremony, feast, and giveaway. Over 40 community members, Forest Service partners, tribal staff, and leaders attended.

Remote Camera Trapping: The Wildlife Program concluded the second year of a two-year camera-trapping project designed to better quantify wildlife populations in the 1836 Treaty Ceded Territory. In November, staff set 60 remote camera traps across the east unit of the Hiawatha National Forest. Division staff compiled and organized data from the 2024 cameras, identifying the wildlife species present in each photo. The Consortium for Cooperative Ecological Resilience will use these data to develop occupancy models and inform future population estimates for gray wolves in the eastern Upper Peninsula.

Wolf Assessments, Monitoring, and Planning: Wildlife staff have been using peer-reviewed research and Sault Tribe-led research to create a draft ma'iingan relations plan. In 2025, NRD will identify management priorities and recommendations.

Cameras continued to monitor 20 wolf sites in the Straits area, with over 13,000 trap nights recorded. Wolves were detected at 14 of the 20 sites. Additionally, staff conducted over 20 winter wolf track surveys in February 2024. Staff organized two years' worth of wolf project data to facilitate analysis. This includes health assessments and fecal samples that can be used to track genetic information and inform a population estimate.

Spruce Grouse Habitat Utilization: Staff initiated a pilot project in 2024 to assess spruce grouse movements and habitat use. In April, staff affixed GPS units on three spruce grouse near the Betchler Marsh complex. Movement data were downloaded from these units every two weeks, with nearly 10,000 locations collected. Future vegetation surveys will allow staff to investigate resource selection by these individuals.

Sharp-tailed Grouse Occupancy Survey: Wildlife staff continued to monitor for sharp-tailed grouse throughout the Ishkode Project area. This involves surveying along dirt roads and listening for lekking individuals in a systematic way. This is a collaborative project with the Hiawatha National Forest.

Water Quality Initiative The water quality section ensures safe drinking water and surface waters on reservation lands. Since 2012, staff have monitored surface water quality, conducted outreach, and reported under the Clean Water Act, as well as monitored drinking water in tribal health centers and housing for compliance with the EPA Safe Drinking Water Act.

Surface Water Quality In October 2024, a new Environmental Scientist-Water

NATURAL RESOURCES WILDLIFE 2024 HIGHLIGHTS

was hired, and staff were trained on the Water Quality Exchange (WQX) for compliance with EPA standards. Historical surface water sampling data from 2017 to 2022 were uploaded into WQX to support the EPA Section 106 Water Quality Assessment Report, which will inform water quality standards and monitoring. New monitoring protocols and methods were also developed to enhance data accuracy.

Drinking Water Quality
Monthly drinking water sampling at nine tribal properties ensured compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act, preventing contamination and waterborne illnesses. Staff monitored water usage with monthly meter readings. Progress was made on a uranium project, planning reverse osmosis systems in eight homes by spring 2025, and a survey of lead service lines was completed to meet EPA’s Lead and Copper Rule requirements.

Air Quality Initiative
The Air Quality section, established in 2016, works to protect both indoor and ambient air quality on reservation lands. Air quality staff engage in outreach, review air permits, and operate an NTN monitoring site. In late September 2024, a new Environmental Scientist-Air was hired.

Throughout the year, staff conducted weekly visits to the NADP monitoring location to ensure accurate atmospheric data collection, which is critical for assessing the impacts of acid rain. Collected samples were sent for chemical analysis, with results expected in late spring 2025.

Staff also submitted five indoor air quality assessment reports for tribal residences, inspecting homes for moisture, mold, and ventilation issues. Air sampling measured particulate matter and gases, and detailed reports were provided to property owners.

Brownfields, Pollution Control, and Risk Reduction
The Brownfields section monitors environmental conditions at tribal properties and develops tribal codes. A new Environmental Scientist was hired in November 2024, and staff updated the Brownfield Inventory by reviewing historical land use and assessments.

Staff submitted the Property Activity and Cleanup (PALs) report, ensuring program funding and compliance with EPA conditions. Inspections at four Midjim gas stations revealed that two spill kits were needed, which were purchased. Staff confirmed the presence and condition of these kits. An 8-hour HAZWOPER training session, organized with the U.S. Coast Guard, educated participants on safe handling of hazardous materials. The Littering section of the tribal Criminal Code was revised to enhance enforcement against environmental degradation. Staff also collaborated with various agencies on regional planning and emergency response strategies.



Above, watching for marsh birds. Below, lake whitefish take a short break in a holding tank before tagging and in a recovery tank after tagging.



Atikameg (Lake Whitefish) Initiative: From Start to Finish
Lake whitefish are central to the Sault Tribe’s commercial fishery, but populations in the 1836 Treaty territory have declined since the early 2000s. In response, the Tribe launched a pioneering pond-based rearing program in 2018 to restore river-spawning stocks and improve conservation practices. Centered at Nunn’s Creek hatchery, the program can incubate 1.5 million eggs and raise 400 pounds of fish annually. In 2024, 46,000 fingerlings were stocked in the Pine River, and gametes from over 90 adult pairs yielded 800,000+ eggs. A new effort relocated 125 spawning adults to a tributary, using acoustic tags to monitor their presence during spawning.

Ogaa Stocking
The Sault Tribe operates an ogaa (walleye) hatchery in Barbeau, annually stocking 1–1.5 million fingerlings in Great Lakes and inland lakes within the 1836 Treaty territory. In 2024, over 1 million fingerlings were stocked, and fall electrofishing surveys showed more

than 75% of sampled juveniles were hatchery reared. Biological sampling and aging of 400+ fish helped assess population health and stocking success. The Tribe also partnered with Michigan DNR on additional lake surveys.

Harvest Assessment and Reporting
In 2024, the NRD continued to meet reporting requirements under the 2023 Great Lakes Consent Decree and the 2007 Inland Consent Decree, which are vital for understanding subsistence and commercial use of fish, wildlife, and plant species across the 1836 Ceded Territory. This information helps guide species assessments, regulatory review, and monitoring programs that support treaty-reserved harvesting by tribal members.

Under the 2023 Great Lakes Decree, NRD compiled and submitted subsistence and special harvest reports, reviewed commercial fishing data, and collected approximately 2,500 fish from commercial samples, including monitoring of the new Lake Trout trap net fishery. Staff processed over 50 special

subsistence permits, bi-monthly reports from 48 commercial fishers, and monthly reports from around 170 subsistence fishers. Staff completed catch-at-age models for key whitefish units in Northern Lake Huron and Bay de Noc, which support quota setting and sustainable management.

Under the 2007 Inland Decree and the MOU with the U.S. Forest Service, NRD assembled harvest data from 2,528 inland reports, representing nearly 13,000 wildlife species. Staff conducted the annual lake sturgeon, elk, and bear permit lotteries. Finally, staff worked with Sault Tribe Law Enforcement to issue and meet reporting requirements for 160 walleye system harvest permits and 20 special method harvest permits.

Inter-agency Management
In 2024, the Sault Tribe NRD advanced its role in co-stewarding treaty-reserved resources by collaborating with federal, state, and inter-tribal partners across the 1836 Ceded Territory. NRD supported Sault Tribe leadership by developing and reviewing management plans for

fish, wildlife, plants, and ecosystems, while ensuring agency activities aligned with tribal priorities. Staff actively engaged in Chippewa Ottawa Resource Authority (CORA) governance, contributing to implementation of the 2023 Great Lakes Decree and the 2007 Inland Consent Decree through technical committees focused on wildlife, inland fisheries, and Great Lakes fishery modeling and monitoring.

Beyond CORA, NRD staff participated in technical and policy work across multiple Great Lakes committees, contributed to restoration planning in the St. Marys River Area of Concern, and coordinated with agencies such as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, EPA, USFS, USFWS, and BIA on projects ranging from Line 5 permitting and prescribed fire to stream crossings, species assessments, and habitat management. Additional work included supporting invasive species prevention, air quality policy, climate action planning, manoomin mapping with NOAA, and research collaborations with universities to address whitefish recruitment and forest health. These partnerships reflect a broad commitment to ensuring tribal science and stewardship priorities guide resource management throughout the region.

Ezhi-Inawendiyang Community Outreach
Division staff wove Anishinaabe values into a busy 2024 outreach calendar: booths at powwows and community walks, Boat-to-School and Sturgeon-in-the-Classroom lessons, AIS boat-wash days, two YEA youth events, a native seed workshop, and a public manoomin planting in Munuscong Bay. NRD hosted the first hatchery open house and helped produce the Sacred Waters documentary, while donating nearly 900 pounds of fish to the Elders Meal Program.

To keep the Division’s work cutting-edge and amplify tribal voices, staff briefed or presented at the International Association for Great Lakes Research, the Inter-Tribal Timber Council Symposium, the National Forum on Air Quality, the Great Lakes ANS Panel, EPA Region 5’s program-manager meeting, and the National Atmospheric Deposition Symposium. These engagements strengthen partnerships, bring practical knowledge home, and reinforce the Division’s commitment to community health, treaty rights, and long-term stewardship.

Funding
In fiscal year 2024, the NRD managed approximately \$3,928,780, of which 94% was external funding and 6% was tribal support. External funding acquisition has been vital in supporting Division staffing and initiatives. In 2024, NRD applied for and received numerous funding awards from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, and The Nature Conservancy, among others.

2024 LANGUAGE & CULTURE HIGHLIGHTS

The Sault Tribe Language and Culture Division works to provide meaningful opportunities for tribal members to learn our Anishinaabe Bimaadiziwin (way of life) and Anishinaabemowin (Ojibwe language). In doing so, we protect and preserve the beautiful way of life given by Gichii Maniidoo (Creator) and left to us by our ancestors to carry on for the next seven generations.

CULTURAL EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

- Annual Events
- New Year’s Sobriety Powwow
- Winter Survival Camps
- Snow Snake Tournament and Games
- Sugar Bush Camp on Sugar Island
- Seasonal Ceremonies, Spring-Summer-Fall-Winter
- Baaweting Homecoming Powwow
- Sugar Island Powwow
- Jiibe – Feast for the Ancestors
- Honor Our Veteran’s Powwow
- Winter time storytelling
- Other activities when knowledge keepers available:
 - Black-ash basket making
 - Canoe building
 - Moccasin making
 - Porcupine Quill work
 - Birchbark basketry
 - Ojibwe design
 - Dance Regalia sewing
 - Powwow Dance instruction
 - Hide Tanning
 - Indigenous Corn processing
 - Making Maple sugar
 - Drying Fish / Bush cooking
 - And More...



SUMMER 2024 —Grand entry for the 43rd annual Bahweting Homecoming Powwow.

ANISHINAABEMOWIN – Ojibwe Language Programing

An important goal for Language and Culture is to reach as many tribal members as possible to share and preserve our beautiful Ojibwe Anishinaabe language.

Since the COVID pandemic, this new way of learning Ojibwe has been a great tool. New lessons are posted weekly by four language speakers and are also available live. There are about 150 lessons archived and available for viewing. Look for the ads in Sault Tribe Language and Culture on Facebook.

The division also hosts the annual Anishinaabemowin conference to give opportunity to learners to listen to and interact

with other language speakers and each other. Workshops provide an array of culturally based discussions, including the importance of revitalization and preservation of the language.

Ojibwe calendars with the traditional names for each month are available on the site along with list of language related to that month. Language lessons are also published monthly in the tribal newspaper.

The division also operates an Ojibwe Language After-school program for children ages 7-12 with the goal of producing emerging speakers. Children take part in fun projects and recreational activities and learn everyday language and cultural practices woven into the curriculum. Visits

from elders and local drums make for a favorite “pop-up” powwow day.

NIIGAANAGIIZHIK CEREMONIAL BUILDING

The division acts as caretaker for the Niigaanagiizhik Ceremonial Building, which was built in the 1990s at the request of tribal elders in the Baaweting community. The elders wanted a place where loved ones could journey to the spirit world with Anishinaabe ceremony, traditions and family, without question. The building has recently undergone upgrades ranging from the kitchen to the firehouse right down to the kitchen plates. The building is also used for many tribal ceremonies, family gatherings and an occasional wedding or baby



shower.

MARY MURRAY CULTURE CAMP

Mary Murray Culture Camp on Sugar Island is also under the supervision of the Language and Culture Division. It sits on 40 acres of hardwood with nature trails throughout. The camp was built to provide an environment to teach our traditional life ways including everything from sugar bush to building a canoe to tying fishing nets. It sleeps 35-plus for overnight stays, with a full kitchen, showers and bathrooms, and community gathering space. The camp is available for use by other tribal departments, Youth and Education (YEA), tribal Health and Education, and by tribal Natural Resources.

OTHER DIVISION RESPONSIBILITIES

- Assist with many other tribal powwows.
- Operate the PA system
- Build lodges for ceremony
- Process cultural leave request for tribal employees.
- Annual “Night of Native music and Dance” at the Soo Locks.
- Invocations and other ceremonial functions.
- Assist tribal Repatriation with grave preparation and ceremony for repatriation of ancestors.

REPATRIATION AND LIBRARY ACTIVITIES FOR 2024

NAADIN ESHPENDAAGWAK — To get back what we hold sacred

The Ojibwe Learning Center & Library offers educational materials and space for our community, and promotes the learning and preservation of traditional Anishinaabe ways. Books are focused on Native American traditions, cultures, and languages. The library contains authentic cultural pieces, including baskets, beadwork, and a birchbark canoe. It is also a place to hold meetings, events, classes, or language classes (in-person and online).

Repatriation & Historic Preservation represents our tribe on issues concerning the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) and Section 106, and facilitates the return of ancestral remains and items of cultural patrimony removed from our homelands, past and present. The program deals with inadvertent discovery of ancestral remains and sacred or traditional cultural properties taken from tribe during construction projects. It also serves as the administrative contact for Wequayoc Cemetery Committee. It addresses the tribe’s policy concerning gravesites and their protection, works with tribal, federal, state, and local branches

of government.

RHPO STAFF

The Repatriation and Historic Preservation Office, located in the Ojibwe Learning Center and Library is staffed by the Repatriation and Historic Preservation Specialist, and a part-time library aide.

REPATRIATION

The RPHO facilitated the repatriation of 24 ancestors and their belongings. The Repatriation Specialist conducted routine NAGPRA consultations. The RHPO held four Repatriation Ceremonies (burial of ancestors) on June 3, June 14, Oct. 18, and Nov. 22.

The Repatriation Specialist traveled numerous times in 2024:

- Petoskey, Mich., for a quarterly MACPRA Meeting
- Sagamok, Ont., to attend a Traditional Textiles Workshop as part of the Rematriating Anishinaabe Art Grant
- Ann Arbor, Mich., for Honoring and Recommitment Ceremony with the University of Michigan,
- Chicago, Ill., for repatriation with the Chicago History Museum and the Chicago Field Museum,
- Paradise, Mich., for repatriation from a private individual

- Lansing, Mich., for a return of archeological materials from the State Historic Preservation Office
- Schoolcraft County Historical Society for a collections donation
- Grand Rapids, Mich., to assist with repatriation to the Grand River Band of Ottawa Indians
- Lansing, Mich., for repatriation with Michigan State University
- St. Ignace, Mich., for Wequayoc Committee Meeting
- Ann Arbor, Mich., to attend the Association of Tribal Archives Libraries and Museums
- Lansing, Mich., for NAGPRA Consultation with Michigan History Center

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The Repatriation Specialist conducted routine NHPA Section 106 reviews or consultations with the US Army Corps of Engineers at Soo Locks Complex to discuss the removal of the Brady Park Obelisk from the burial mounds. Also:

- Held a Section 106 staff-to-staff conversation with Huron Manistee National Forest Heritage Manager,
- Conducted tribal relations relationship building with Hiawatha National Forest Tribal

Liaison for presentation “Tribal 101” to Hiawatha leadership, line officers, and staff.

- Met with DNR Archaeologist to discuss Palms Book and Indian Lake State Parks cultural resource management and the DNR’s new planning document for each park.
- Attended routine Line 5 Tribal Cooperation meetings.
- Attended EPA Line 5 workshop hosted by Bay Mills Indian Community.
- Worked with United States Geological Services on re-naming traditional cultural landscape. This included creating a pronunciation guide. The USGS is documenting the Sault Tribe’s approach as a model in a report for other tribes.

The Repatriation Specialist was a member of the Sault Tribe’s Powwow Committee, the administrative contact for the Wequayoc Cemetery Committee, and a member of the Heart of Great Turtle Island, an advisory committee formed to advise on development of the St. Ignace park next to the Mackinaw Bridge that is also used for the powwow grounds.

OJIBWE LEARNING CENTER AND LIBRARY

In 2024, the OLCL hosted 885 visitors. The OLCL was available to tribal and commu-

nity members to view library materials and research. The OLCL accepted several library materials and collections donations from individuals. The OLCL hosted three Anishinaabe Art Workshops, as a part of the Rematriating Anishinaabe Art Grant: Mitten Workshop March 1-3 with instructor Jackie Minton, Drum Stick Making Workshop April 6 with Cody Jodoin, and Quill Wrapped Earrings with Madeline Big Bear, Nov. 21-23. The OLCL also loaned items to be on display for the First Lady visit on May 17.

GOALS FOR 2025

Repatriation and Historical Preservation

- Continuing consultations with current institutions
- Follow-up with institutions reaching out requesting a consultation

Ojibwe Learning Center and Library

- Continue developing art workshops for Rematriating Anishinaabe Art Grant
- Develop a plan to rotate throughout the Units some of the art and craft collections housed in the Learning Center
- Continue providing educational resources, providing meeting/gathering spaces, museum-type exhibition

HEALTH DIVISION’S 2024 HIGHLIGHTS



Health CEO James Benko

In 2024, the Sault Tribe Health Division embarked on a transformative journey, laying the foundation for a more efficient, accessible, and patient-centered healthcare experience. This year marked the beginning of a comprehensive reassessment and restructuring effort, including the selection of a new Electronic Health Record (EHR) management system—a major initiative that, once fully implemented, will significantly enhance service delivery. Among the key developments was the appointment of James A. Benko as our Chief Executive Officer. Benko brings over three decades of experience in healthcare operations and administration, along with a bachelor’s and master’s degree in Health Care Administration. Originally from Flint, Mich., he offers a strong background in financial and operational leadership, as well as strategic planning, positioning the Health Division for long-term success.

The Health Division operates four large health facilities — Sault Ste. Marie, St. Ignace, Manistique, and Munising — and five smaller nursing stations — Hessel, DeTour, Newberry, Gladstone, and Marquette. Serving over 14,000 tribal members and eligible patients, the staff of the Health Division have shown their dedication and professionalism by providing high-quality care to our patients. An addition in 2024 was the Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) Clinic located in the Sault.

SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS

The After-Visit phone surveys conducted by JP Morgan & Associates revealed that patients who visited the clinic in 2024 expressed high satisfaction with the care delivered by their providers. Overall, the satisfaction rate was 94%. These survey results are invaluable as we strive to enhance our processes and better serve our patients. Despite challenges such as staff shortages, high demand, and limited resources, our Health Division remains committed to quality care. We appreciate patient feedback and are actively addressing areas for improvement.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

In the Health Division’s ongoing commitment to patient safety, continuous improvement, and adherence to national best practices, Quality Improvement studies are conducted. In 2024, the Health Division monitored hand hygiene compliance across mul-

multiple sites, achieving 98–100% compliance by October in most departments, including Sault Ste. Marie Medical, the Walk-In Clinic, and St. Ignace Dental. A follow-up study in early 2025 at Sault Ste. Marie Community Health confirmed a 99% compliance rate.

The Health Division also participated in the AAAHC Safe Injection Practices (SIP) Benchmarking Study twice in 2024. The first round of 35 observations identified five hygiene-related issues, which were promptly addressed. Following policy updates and staff training, STHD earned a 100% best performer rating in the second half of the year.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

The Sault Tribe Behavioral Health Program offers a variety of culturally sensitive outpatient program and services. Some of the services provided are: Screening, Intake and Assessment, Therapy (e.g., play therapy, cognitive behavioral, etc.), Psychiatric Evaluation and Follow-up Care, Crisis Intervention/Urgent Care, Outpatient Services for Substance Use Disorders, Compulsive Gambling Counseling, Alcohol/Drug Education and Awareness, and Employee Assistance Program. Psychological testing is available for 5-year-old through elderly patients. Tele-psychiatric and psychiatric services are offered to clients through a referral from their primary care provider or therapist. Behavioral Health also offers the Road to Wellness Program, to assist active clients with transportation to make it easier for them to attend appointments.

The Behavioral Health Program has seen a significant rise in demand for urgent care and crisis intervention services, mirroring broader increases in mental health needs since the COVID-19 pandemic. Urgent care services are available on a walk-in basis, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., with staff always available to respond. Rural sites also accommodate urgent care needs, though appointments may be required based on therapist availability.

The Behavioral Health Program leads several long-term initiatives funded by federal and tribal grants, including a SAMHSA Opioid Response Grant. This grant supports a wide range of recovery services including three Peer Recovery Coaches, a Prevention Specialist, and three residential Recovery Homes. Behavioral Health also fosters community engagement through events like the annual Recovery Gala, which recently welcomed over 75 attendees in a substance-free celebration of recovery.

Additionally, two home-based programs funded by the Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan Inc. enhance family wellness. The Family Spirit Program, led by RN Pam Smith, offers in-home parenting education for caregivers of tribal children. The Healing to Wellness Program provides in-home support for families



Community Health cooking class in 2024.



New dental equipment was purchased in 2024.

affected by perinatal substance use, with a Perinatal Opioid Coordinator serving 24 active clients. These programs offer transportation, essential supplies, and personalized care coordination to promote healing and stability within the home.

CLINICAL SERVICES - RURAL HEALTH

The Sault Tribe’s Rural Health program continued to provide vital services across five Upper Peninsula locations in 2024. The two larger facilities—Manistique and Munising—offered a full range of care, including Medical and Nursing, Dental, Optical, Pharmacy, Nutrition Counseling, Behavioral Health, and Community Health services.

The three smaller clinics—Newberry, Marquette, and Gladstone—focused on Community Health services, Nutrition Counseling, medication pick-up, health education, and

connecting patients to additional tribal resources. A key advancement in 2024 was the expanded use of telemedicine in these clinics, allowing patients to consult with providers remotely and access more care options closer to home.

The Manistique Tribal Health Center continued to serve as a comprehensive care hub, offering services in Medical, Dental, Optical, Pharmacy, Nutrition, Behavioral Health, Audiology, and Community Health. The Gladstone Tribal Health Center provided Community Health and Nutrition services, telemedicine clinics, medication pick-up, and access to tribal programs.

In 2024, Manistique and Gladstone recorded a combined total of 6,928 visits across Medical, Community Health, Audiology, and telemedicine services, along with 2,333 Dental visits and 878 Optical visits. A



notable enhancement was the introduction of laboratory services at the Gladstone clinic, offered twice monthly. This new service has been well received, reducing the need for patients to travel to Manistique for lab work.

Construction of fitness centers in Manistique and Gladstone progressed throughout 2024, with both opening to tribal members in early 2025. The Manistique facility features an exercise room, yoga room, half basketball court with walking track, and locker rooms with showers. Gladstone’s center includes an exercise room and lockers. Both are equipped with modern fitness equipment and trained staff to assist members.

Recruitment efforts also saw success. In Fall 2024, Dr. Nicholas Golba joined as Dental Supervisor in Manistique, and a new Dental Hygienist began in February 2025. These hard-to-fill positions are critical to expanding dental care access.

CLINICAL SERVICES - ST. IGNACE

St. Ignace Tribal Health marked a year of major growth and achievement. The team successfully transitioned into a new 20,000-square-foot Medical Office Building on the MSHS campus, enhancing service delivery with upgraded medical, dental, and optical equipment, digitized records, and paperless billing and referrals. Despite the move, patient care continued with minimal disruption.

St. Ignace Tribal Health offers a wide range of services, including Medical, Dental, Optical, Pharmacy, Behavioral Health, Traditional Medicine, and Community Health. A variety of flexible care options are provided to meet the needs of our patients. These include telemedicine through off-site medical carts at satellite clinics, allowing patients to connect with providers remotely; telehealth via doxy.me, enabling virtual visits from the comfort of home; and telephone follow-ups. In addition to in-clinic ambulatory care, we offer quarterly off-site visits to the Hessel Community Center and operate a Mobile Medical Unit that travels to Romulus during the spring, summer, and fall to serve patients in that area. In 2024, the clinic recorded over 5,400 medical visits, 2,900 dental visits, and 900 optical visits, while processing more than 40,000 prescriptions.

Collaborations with universities and healthcare partners, including Sacred Heart for medication-assisted treatment (MAT), have expanded access to comprehensive addiction recovery services. The clinic also distributed home monitoring equipment to over 300 high-risk patients.

HEALTH DIVISION 2024 OVERVIEW, CONTINUED

CLINICAL SERVICES – SAULT STE. MARIE

The Sault Ste. Marie Tribal Health Center (STHC) is a major ambulatory facility that serves as the primary location for several key services, including Lab, Radiology, and Medical Records, which are provided to its satellite clinics.

In 2024, the Health Division’s Sault Ste. Marie Medical and Nursing Department continued its established standard of delivering high-quality medical care, ensuring consistent, patient-centered services. The medical providers at the Sault Health Center completed 18,566 patient visits. Additionally, nursing staff fulfilled 1,517 nurse only appointments, offering services such as immunizations, dressing changes, suture/staple removals, allergy injections, cerumen removal, other injectable medications, medication reconciliations, and EKGs for our patients.

The on-site Walk-In Clinic remained a vital resource. Open Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., it served 5,858 patients in 2024. The Walk-In Clinic is available to for acute, immediate needs such as colds, flu, Covid, sinus, sore throats, sprains and strains, urinary tract infections, simple lacerations and much more. The Walk-In Clinic providers can help bridge medical care with the primary care provider when certain health concerns arise such as elevations in blood pressure or blood sugars, and medication reactions.

A major accomplishment in 2024 for our tribe and community, was the addition of the MAT (Medication Assisted Therapy) Clinic. The Naandwejgegamiig (Healing Place), opened its doors on June 25, 2024, to all tribal and community members. There were 1,703 patient visits completed. The program continues to grow and help individuals struggling with substance abuse disorders to achieve and maintain long-term recovery. Hours of operation are Monday – Thursday, 8 a.m. – 6 p.m. Referrals are not necessary; the Healing Place can be contacted at (906) 635-8877.

The department also continued its academic partnerships by precepting nursing and nurse practitioner students. Despite ongoing challenges in recruiting physicians—a nationwide issue—efforts are underway to enhance provider recruitment in 2025.

The Sault Tribal Health Center Laboratory offers a wide range of services for patients who need blood tests or other specimens collected. Patients can have their blood drawn and tests performed at the STHC Laboratory, which is open from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Limited in-clinic lab testing is available from 4:30 p.m. until 7:30 p.m. (Rapid strep, influenza a & b, covid, RSV, blood glucose, urine pregnancy, and urinalysis). Patients who are fasting or have orders from outside providers should make an appointment by calling (906) 632-5230. Patients who are seen at STHC can have their blood drawn the same day without an appointment. In 2024, the STHC Lab performed over 230,000 in-house tests on specimens.

The Radiology Department continues to provide a full range



Traditional Medicine staff surrounded by medicinal swamp tea.

of diagnostic imaging services, including X-rays, mammography, and ultrasound. In 2024, the department completed 2,175 X-ray exams, 838 mammography exams, and 962 ultrasound exams. The department remains fully accredited by the American College of Radiology (ACR) and successfully passed its annual FDA inspection, ensuring continued compliance with national quality and safety standards.

COMMUNITY HEALTH EDUCATION

In 2024, the Sault Tribe Community Health Education program continued to deliver a wide range of health education services across the tribe’s seven-county service area, with a strong focus on prevention, wellness, and cultural relevance. The Nicotine Dependence Program (NDP) expanded its accessibility by offering early morning, evening, and weekend hours. A major success was the partnership with the tribal Housing Authority, which led to a 100% Smoke-Free Housing Designation across all established housing sites. NDP also engaged youth through e-cigarette and vaping education in schools and outreach at the Teen Health Fair at Sault High School, which reached over 700 students. Public awareness was further supported through a culturally tailored TV commercial and tobacco prevention billboards.

The Medical Fitness Program grew to include both clinic-based and in-home services, following ACSM’s Exercise is Medicine guidelines. Group classes such as the Fall Prevention Class Series and Elder Balance Class were introduced, along with outdoor activities like moonlight snowshoe walks, community hikes, and a medical fitness kayak excursion.

Through CDC-funded grants like GHWIC and TPWIC, the program supported trail-based wellness projects, including enhancements to the Downtown Lunch Loop and the installation of a bilingual Little Red Hen Storybook Trail. In Kinross, a walking trail was revitalized with Ojibwe-English signage featuring native plants, animals, and physical activity prompts.

Cultural workshops offered through TPWIC included Cultural Beading, Indigenous Breastfeeding, Tea Blending, Apple Cider Press, Healthy Meals

and Gathering, and a Canning and Preserving Series. Over 250 gitigaan (garden) kits were distributed in partnership with MSU Extension FRTEP, and the Indigenous Food Week Challenge encouraged community members to prepare and share meals using traditional foods via social media.

COMMUNITY HEALTH NURSING (Sault, St. Ignace, Hessel, DeTour)

In 2024, the Sault Tribe Community Health Program continued to deliver a wide range of services in clinical, home, and community settings for tribal members and their families. These services included patient health evaluations, chronic disease education, medication management, in-home case management, home safety checks, immunizations, foot care, in-home lab draws, and injections such as flu and COVID-19 vaccines. Additional programs supported car seat safety, incontinence care, hypertension education, and the Nike Shoe Program. Community Health Nursing also contributed to community gardens, telemedicine, CPR training, vision and hearing screenings, and annual health fairs, while also managing prescription pickups in DeTour and Hessel.

Outreach efforts expanded significantly in 2024. COVID/Flu Clinics were held in St. Ignace, Sault Ste. Marie, Hessel, DeTour, and Kinross. CPR certification was provided to staff across departments, and Breast Cancer Awareness giveaways were distributed at all main sites. The team also launched an Employee Wellness Challenge and led cooking classes for the Sault Tribe Summer Recreation Program and YEA Chomp classes for youth. Additional activities included Snowshoe Events, a Walking Club in St. Ignace, the Senior Health Expo, and nutrition education sessions at Lodge of Hope and Head Start. The team also supported the Big Bear Arena Family Fun Night.

DENTAL

In 2024, the Sault Tribe Dental Program provided 10,333 dental visits, including 5,215 in Sault Ste. Marie, 2,776 in St. Ignace, and 2,342 in Manistique. Services offered to eligible patients included exams, oral cancer screenings, x-rays, cleanings, preventive and periodontal care, fillings, crowns,

dentures, root canals, nightguards, pediatric care, oral surgery, and emergency dental services. A major milestone was the expansion of the St. Ignace Dental Department, which moved into a new facility equipped with state-of-the-art equipment and designed for patient comfort and safety.

The department also partnered with Skagit Valley College to host a Dental Therapy Extern. Tribal member Dana Obey completed her preclinical training and began working with dentists in Sault Ste. Marie in preparation for her board exam. Dental therapists focus on minimally invasive treatment and prevention, expanding access to care.

OPTICAL

Comprehensive optical care is available at the Sault Ste. Marie, St. Ignace, and Manistique sites. Services include cataract and glaucoma evaluations, diabetic and dilated eye exams, children’s eye exams, retinal and macular degeneration assessments, and emergency eye care. Additional services feature contact lens fittings and classes, visual field testing, Optical Coherence Tomography (OCT), and a full-service optical dispensary with eyeglass repair and Medicaid/UPHP eyewear options. Referral services are also provided.

In 2024, 3,427 optical visits were recorded across all three sites. A major highlight was the relocation of the St. Ignace clinic to the new St. Ignace Tribal Health building, now equipped with a state-of-the-art optical facility and modern equipment. The year also marked the retirement of Dr. Dale Johnson, a long-serving optometrist in Sault Ste. Marie.

PURCHASED REFERRED CARE

Purchased Referred Care (PRC) provides appropriate access for Sault Tribe Members to achieve high-quality care beyond what is available through Tribal Health facilities. PRC benefits are established by federal law and regulations and funded through appropriations from the federal government. Tribes establish priorities of coverage based on funding appropriated. Members should not rely solely on PRC for their medical coverage and should apply for alternate resources if eligible. PRC is the payor of last resort. Eligibility requirements for PRC include residing within the Purchased Referred Care Delivery area, consisting of seven counties, having a completed application on file, providing proof of income and residency, and being enrolled in PRC 90 days prior to an inpatient stay. It is the member’s responsibility to request assistance by contacting the PRC office directly. PRC can now text message your cell phone or email your voucher numbers for requested services. Contact PRC to update your contact information for this service if you have not done so already. After-hours/weekend coverage is available by calling the nurse triage line in your area where your primary care provider is located.

PHARMACY

In 2024, the Pharmacy Department dispensed 181,790

prescriptions, including 12,661 prescriptions mailed to elders (60-plus) and members with disabilities. In addition to high-quality medication dispensing, the pharmacy team provided medication counseling, medication therapy management (MTM), smoking cessation counseling, and supported an antimicrobial stewardship program. The Sault Ste. Marie location also maintained a medication disposal site in the medical waiting room lobby.

Pharmacy services included collaboration with Community Health and Elder Care for medication setup and delivery, mail-order refills via USPS, and delivery to rural community health sites. In 2024, the department underwent leadership changes, with the new team focusing on improving patient care, updating policies for regulatory compliance, and enhancing internal processes.

A major initiative underway is the pharmacy management software upgrade, expected to launch in fall 2025, which will expand services and improve efficiency.

TRADITIONAL MEDICINE

In 2024, the Sault Tribe Traditional Medicine Program actively collaborated across departments and communities to support the spiritual and cultural well-being of Anishinaabek members. The department received generous donations from tribal members, including bear fat, sage, red willow, bee hives, and shkitaagan (chaga), which were used in minigan recipes, salves, and other traditional medicines. Volunteers played a vital role in preparing fasting grounds, gathering medicines, hauling wood, and supporting seasonal ceremonies such as the Fall Fast and Winter Feast held at the Niigaanagiizhik building.

Traditional Medicine staff provided smudging, prayers, and pipe ceremonies throughout the year, including Sault Tribe Board of Directors invocations, home cleansings, elder visits, and end-of-life ceremonies. Gerard Sagassige represented the department at the MATRIX group in January and led teachings for youth and families at events such as the Big Bear snowshoe event, Tribal Youth Program, and Manistique powwow. The team also supported the tribal judicial court’s May talking circle and collaborated with Community Health by providing traditional teas.

Outreach included participation in the St. Ignace Senior Health Expo, Tall Cop event, and Family Night at the middle school.

Medicines were gathered from state and federal forests for clinic use, and sweat lodge ceremonies were held at the Sault Tribe Health Center for members who requested them through the passing of tobacco. The department also hosted a successful fasting camp and engaged in meet-and-greet events with tribal organizations to strengthen community ties. Traditional Medicine remains committed to preserving and sharing Anishinaabe healing practices.

The Sault Tribe Health Division is proud of its accomplishments in 2024 and looks forward to continuing its mission of promoting health and wellness for its members in 2025 and beyond.

SAULT TRIBE ELDER SERVICES 2024 OVERVIEW

Elder Services had an exciting year. A committed group of compassionate, caring team members provided a wide variety of services to our elders. Our goal is to provide tribal elders with the best possible programming to meet their needs, promote healthy living opportunities and improve their quality of life. By providing high quality in-home care, and access to community-based services, the goal is to help the elders have good health and independence within their own homes. Elder Services is grateful for the funding received through the Older Americans Act Title VI grant program, as well as the generosity of the tribe to be able to provide these services.

In 2024, over 50,000 meals were provided to elders across the seven-county service area. Our four meal programs located in Sault Ste. Marie, St. Ignace, Hessel and Manistique served over 24,000 meals in house, and brought 26,000 home delivered meals to homebound elders. Each meal site is staffed with two team members in the kitchen, and our Hessel site is fortunate enough to have an elder worker. The Sault also has a part-time team member dedicated to delivering all of the home delivered meals in that area. Meals were also provided to elders that attended one of the nine monthly elder sub-committee meetings across the service area. Sault Tribe elders residing on Mackinac Island were provided with vouchers to dine at two different restaurants throughout the year.

Elder Services has four full time Home Health Technicians that provide homemaker, personal care, and respite services across the seven-county service area. Referrals for services are made to our full-time Registered Nurse, who then performs an assessment to determine what services can be provided. Reassessments are completed on a regular basis to ensure the needs are still being met. The Elder Services Home Health Technicians are some of the kindest, most compassionate team members. Their dedication to the elders in their care is immeasurable. Elder Services is proud to partner with care agencies in the Upper Peninsula, and with funding from UPCAP, even more services can be provided to elders living in more remote parts of the service area. Between the Elder Services Home Health Technicians, and team members from the partner agencies, over 4,700 visits were made to Sault Tribe elders in 2024.

Non-emergency medical transportation is another service that Elder Services is proud to provide. Close to 1,000 rides were provided to elders across the service area to various locations in the Upper Peninsula, northern lower Michigan, and into Wisconsin. Under the guidance of the Transportation Coordinator, two full time drivers and one part time driver provided the bulk of the rides. It was not uncommon for any of our other wonderful team members to step in and assist with a ride to an appointment as well this past year. In the Sault, homebound elders within city limits were provided with

close to 1,300 medication deliveries in 2024. With the addition of two passenger vans to the Elder Services fleet of vehicles, larger groups of elders enjoyed traveling on social outings throughout the service area and into northern lower Michigan.

Elder Services has four full time Outreach Coordinators that cover the seven counties. Their main focus is establishing key relationships with tribal elders and their families by coordinating programs and services to help them continue to maintain a good quality of life, and age in place.

For some elders, the Outreach Coordinator is like family. An advocate when the elder may not have anyone else, this crucial member of the Elder Services team plays an important role in ensuring the elder has what he or she needs. The Outreach Coordinators have assisted with various open houses, tribally-sponsored health fairs, safety fairs, social events and community programs that promote social, cultural and intergenerational opportunities.

In 2024, more than 6,800 points of contact were made by the Elder Services Outreach team, whether it was a phone call or email to check in, home visit, assistance with an application, community outreach event, or anything else the elder may have needed.

The Elder Health Fund continues to assist elders with partial payments for various dental and vision needs provided by one of the Sault Tribe Health Centers, after insurance has been billed. In 2024, Elder Services processed 138 Elder Health Fund applications, which are required to be renewed annually. This income-based program provides various levels of assistance with the guideline being 150% of the Federal Registry Poverty Guidelines. The Outreach Coordinators process the bulk of the applications, and it is a fairly easy process to complete.

Elder Services was proud to provide five ramps to elders across the service area. In conjunction with a local, tribally-owned company, ramps are designed and built to assist elders with mobility issues, and have safer access into and out of their homes. Referrals for the ramp program are coordinated by our Registered Nurse.

A number of inter-tribal and community partnerships allowed Elder Services to bring a wide variety of resources and programs to its elders. The MSU Extension was able to visit a number of areas and assist elders with applying for the Senior Project Fresh program, allowing them access to locally grown fruits, vegetables and food products during the Farmers Market season. The Community Health Wellness Program provided exercise programs at both Nokomis-Mishomis in the Sault and the Elder Complex in St. Ignace.

The Environmental Program sent a team member and a wide variety of native plant species to the Sault, Hessel and St Ignace to provide education and share the plantings. Additional plants were distributed to elders in the

Manistique and Munising communities.

The EUPISD had two team members that provided five weeks of 13 Moons teachings to Elders in the Sault, St. Ignace and Hessel, with plans to expand to other areas in 2025.

A representative from the Michigan Indian Legal Services visited a number of locations across the service area to provide education on estate planning, and a Marquette-based insurance company traveled across the seven counties to provide information on supplemental insurance programs available to elders.

The Curtis Kids Fishing Coop Committee welcomed the Unit 2 Naubinway Elders to their home for a meal and meeting to celebrate the partnership between Sault Tribe and this local event that provides fishing education and opportunities to area youth.

The Mobile Secretary of State Office visited Nokomis-Mishomis, and established dates for 2025 to visit locations in St. Ignace, Manistique and Escanaba. The Sault Area High School Native Youth Council made cards thanking Veterans for their service. These cards were delivered to Veterans in the Sault, St Ignace, Manistique and Escanaba.

The Sault Women’s Auxiliary provided Christmas baskets for homebound veterans, which were distributed in Units 1, 2 and 3.

Food sovereignty was another highlight this year. Thanks to Chairman Lowes, the coordination of a generous donation by Indian Energy allowed the purchase of three bison to be processed and distributed to elders across the service area. Bison was incorporated into the menus in the meal programs, used at summer picnics, and distributed to elders that attended the Elder Sub-Committee meetings and meal programs. The Sault Fisheries program donated a large amount of local lake trout which was then distributed to other meal sites. A local farmer brought large donations of sweet corn and squash as well. We were grateful to have this food provided to share with the elders.

Nokomis-Mishomis parking lot received a much needed upgrade in the fall of 2024. The meal program continued despite the several weeks’ long construction project. The opening of the Escanaba Community Center provided a new home for the Escanaba Elder Sub-Committee meetings, and social and cultural gatherings for the elders.

Elder Services enjoyed gathering and celebrating throughout the year. The summer picnics provided a wonderful time to gather and enjoy each others company, and of course a wonderful meal. The holidays were celebrated in a big way throughout 2024. Halloween parties, Thanksgiving meals and family gatherings closed out the fall. Manistique and Munising elders enjoyed cookie decorating with their coordinating YEA programs in preparation for their holiday parties. A wide variety of holiday parties were planned across the service area for elders and guests to enjoy, with just under 800 in attendance altogether. The

Manistique meal program closed out 2024 with a special New Year’s Eve lunch and party.

Though it was a busy year, the Elder Services team is committed to reaching out to even

more elders in 2025, and bringing more services to those in our area. Miigwech to the hard working team members of the Elder Services Division for making this all happen!



Naubinway elders met in Curtis to celebrate partnership with Curtis Kids Fishing Coop.



Unit 1 elders celebrate Halloween: Brenda and Tom Cook, Judy LaJoie, Tim Lalonde and Aimee Penrose (L-R).



Unit 3 St. Ignace elders and guests enjoy lunch as part of the elder meal program.



3 Guys 3 Gals perform at Unit 4 Manistique summer picnic.



Sault Cook Phillip Nertoli Jr. admiring the processed bison.

ANISHINAABEK COMMUNITY & FAMILY SERVICES

Anishnaabek Community and Family Services has three primary components providing an umbrella of social services to tribal members and families throughout the tribe’s seven-county service area.

Child Welfare (Binogii/Family Services) provides all child welfare-related services offered through ACFS. For over 30 years, these services have supported Sault Tribe members through a wide range of family-centered programs. The mission of ACFS Child Welfare is to strengthen and empower families by offering culturally respectful opportunities for connection and healing, with a focus on improving safety and overall well-being. Binogii operates under Sault Tribe’s Child Placing Agency license and holds a contract with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) to deliver direct services to tribal children and families.

Child Welfare services are delivered through the following programs:

- Foster Care
- Adoption
- Foster and Adoptive Home Licensing
- Prevention
- Adolescent In Home Assistance (AIHA)
- Protective Services (Adult and Children’s)
- Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Monitoring
- Family Continuity
- In-Home Care
- Parenting

The Advocacy Resource Center (ARC) is a community-based victim service program with over 30 years of experience providing comprehensive, culturally honoring, and trauma-informed responses to those impacted by the abuse of power and control through the delivery of the following types of victimization-related support:

- Core Advocacy
- Safety Planning
- Financial Assistance
- Transportation Assistance
- Emergency Legal Advocacy/Personal Protection Order Assistance
- Criminal Justice Advocacy
- Crime Victim Compensation Assistance
- Accompaniment to Tribal, State, and Federal Court
- Outreach and Community Education
- Sexual Violence Services (SVS) Naanda Nswi Kidwenan
- Cultural Healing Community Support Activities
- Emergency Temporary Intimate Partner Violence Shelter Aakdehewin Gaamig (Lodge of Bravery)
- Missing or Murdered Indigenous People (MMIP) Sault Tribe Citizen Data Collection MMIP Advocacy and Financial Assistance
- Direct Services provides assistance to tribal members experiencing financial and other difficulties.
- Emergency Assistance
- General Assistance
- Native Employment Works
- Child Care Development Fund
- Funeral Assistance
- Employee Assistance

- Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- Elder Heating
- Emergency Housing Assistance
- Emergency Housing Shelter “Bgwasendam Gamigong” Lodge of Hope
- United States Department of Agriculture Food Distribution Program in Indian Reservations (USDA) Food Commodities

ACFS has approximately 90 team members working within the three components under the ACFS umbrella of services. The staff are committed to providing the best possible social services to members.

ACFS continues to manage over 42 grants, with funding from Sault Tribe, BIA, IHS, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Justice, USDA and the state of Michigan. The grants are utilized to provide the most efficient services within three primary components. ACFS has offices located in Sault Ste. Marie, Kincheloe, St. Ignace, Manistique and Munising.

DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS

During 2024, the ARC began participation in the Michigan Department of Attorney General’s (DAG) Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons Task Force. The DAG has assisted families of missing Sault Tribe citizens by facilitating contact with the Attorney General’s offices located in other states where the incident occurred.

ACFS opened the doors of “Bgwasendam Gamigong” Lodge of Hope on Aug. 2, 2023. The transformational shelter is a 21-room facility that provides homeless members throughout the seven-county service area with emergency shelter. The Lodge of Hope also provides intensive services to members that wish to work on barriers to obtaining housing. The facility is a 24/7 operation with a full staff. In 2024, The Lodge of Hope housed 46 tribal households (61 individuals). ACFS currently also serves numerous homeless members by providing financial assistance for local motels to provide shelter.

In 2024, the USDA Food Program building was dedicated to its first director, Anthony “Tony” Nertoli, in honor of his memory and service to the USDA Food Program and the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians.

ACFS continues to make warm winter clothing available for members through its Winter Gear Closet. They also had hats, scarves and mittens donated from community members. The items are donated by ACFS staff and other community members and are either new or gently used.

Child Welfare program has remained committed to advancing tribal priorities, strengthening families, and supporting community well-being through advocacy, legislative collaboration, recruitment, and outreach efforts.

One of the program’s most significant accomplishments was its involvement in the work that led to the passage of a Tribal Customary Adoption Code, an important, long-term goal of the tribe. This new code provides the court and families with an option



2024 Thanksgiving and Christmas gathering at The Lodge of Hope



for permanency that aligns with tribal customs and cultural practices.

In addition to tribal legislative successes, Child Welfare staff also played an active role in the development and passage of state legislation related to Michigan Compiled Law (MCL) 712b, which governs the Foster Care Review process. These legislative changes formally added tribal processes into state statute and codified the requirement that tribes receive notice when there is a change in placement involving tribal children.

Child Welfare staff further supported state-level policy by offering consultation and input on several additional legislative initiatives. These included proposed laws addressing confidentiality and the duty to investigate, Qualified Expert Witness (QEW) clarifications, CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates)

legislation, and efforts to eliminate the state licensing requirement for families requesting Guardianship Assistance Subsidy.

In operational areas, the program continued to maintain positive licensing, contract, and funding audits and reviews across a variety of state and federal funding sources. The Child Welfare ICWA Monitoring Program also remained active, working to ensure compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) by intervening in and participating in all known cases involving Sault Tribe children across the country.

The program also took part in the Breakthrough Series Collaborative – Cultivating a Sustainable Workforce initiative. Staff participated in several key learning opportunities, including an in-person Group Learning Session in Minneapolis, Minn., in April, a final virtual showcase



in June, and the Tribal Gathering in San Diego, Calif., in July. The internal ACFS team continues to meet and advance the goals developed during the collaborative.

Recruitment and retention of foster and adoptive homes remains a top priority. Efforts include publishing regular newspaper articles, attending community events, and partnering with local coalitions to offer training and recognition. Signature events this year included the Annual Foster Parent Training and Recognition Banquet and the Annual Foster/Adoptive/Kinship Picnic.

Finally, Child Welfare staff continued to engage in community outreach by partnering with other tribal programs and participating in numerous events across the service area. Outreach activities in 2024 included Career Day at Rudyard High School, multiple Family Fun Days, and several Housing, Health & Safety Fairs held in Escanaba, Manistique, Sault Ste. Marie, Marquette, Kincheloe, Wetmore, and Hessel. Staff also participated in seasonal farmers markets, resource fairs, and special awareness efforts such as Parenting Awareness Month, Child Abuse Prevention Month, and National Foster Care Month bulletin boards and events. Other notable involvement included the ARC Night of Wicked Awareness and the Foster Family Christmas Party. These efforts help raise awareness, connect tribal children and families to important resources, promote foster home recruitment, and ensure support is accessible when needed.

– Child Welfare (CW) provided services to 3117 children/families for 2024 as follows:

- 421 Family Services Cases
- 104 Relative, Licensing, and Adoption Home Studies
- 91 Foster Children
- 544 Monitoring Cases
- 367 Legal Intervention Cases
- 36 Adoption Cases
- 233 Children and Adult Protective Services Cases
- 1,321 ICWA Inquiries

Child Welfare participated in the Arts, Crafts, & Family Fun Fair in June—one of many recruitment events attended throughout the year.

Child Welfare staff participated in the Health Fair at the Big Bear in September to provide outreach, share resources, and recruit potential foster home providers from the community.

Child Welfare staff attended the in-person Group Learning Session of the Breakthrough Series Collaborative – Cultivating a Sustainable Workforce initiative in Minneapolis, Minn., in April.

ADVOCACY RESOURCE CENTER HIGHLIGHTS

The ARC’s Emergency Temporary Intimate Partner Violence Shelter, the Aakdehewin Gaamig—Lodge of Bravery (LOB), underwent renovations.

ANISHINABEK COMMUNITY & FAMILY SERVICES FOR 2024

ADVOCACY RESOURCE CENTER HIGHLIGHTS

The ARC’s Emergency Temporary Intimate Partner Violence Shelter, the Aakdehewin Gaamig—Lodge of Bravery (LOB), underwent renovation during 2024 that included installing additional exterior electric outlets, installing panic hardware on all of the facility’s exterior doors, replacing two residential doors with commercial-grade ones, and installing a security system at the Sexual Violence Services (SVS) building.

During 2024, the ARC participated in and facilitated numerous community education and outreach events. The ARC focused on victimization-related topics of Stalking, Human Trafficking, Teen Dating Violence, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Relatives, and Domestic Violence.

During 2024, the ARC began participation in the Michigan Department of Attorney General’s (DAG) Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons Task Force. The DAG has assisted families of missing Sault Tribe citizens by facilitating contact with the Attorney General’s offices located in other states where the incident occurred.

ADVOCACY RESOURCE CENTER 2024 STATISTICS

- ARC Casemanagers [Victim Advocates] provided 3,598 advocacy support units to 408 survivors, with 383 minor children as secondary beneficiaries.
- ARC staff provided 795 advocacy support units by delivering financial assistance to 261 survivors, with 268 minor children as secondary beneficiaries.
- \$210,346.06 in direct financial assistance was provided to survivors.
- \$116,720.43 in Supportive Housing financial support was provided to 22 adult survivors, which totaled 3,392 nights of rental assistance.
- ARC Legal Aid Program provided 455 advocacy support units to 41 survivors.
- ARC’s Aakdehewin Gaamig- Lodge of Bravery-Emergency Temporary Domestic Violence Shelter provided 684 shelter advocacy units during the 1,766 shelter nights provided to 38 adults and 14 children.
- ARC staff facilitated 31 shelter group talking circles provided to 15 adult and child shelter residents.
- ARC staff drove 18,465 miles, providing transportation assistance to survivors and their children while attending local community collaborative meetings and professional development events.
- ARC fielded 472 inquiries from community members seeking assistance locating available community supportive services.
- ARC staff participated in 37 community events and outreach activities, exhibited 57 educational displays reaching 344,615 individuals, and had a social media reach of 237,402 people.
- ARC has been collecting

MMIP data specific to Sault Tribe citizens. The ARC has documented 35 Sault Tribe citizens meeting the MMIP definitions. Of these 35 Sault Tribe citizens, 13 were reported missing, and three remain unlocated. Of these 35 Sault Tribe citizens, 22 were reported Murdered, and 10 of those were directly related to intimate partner violence.

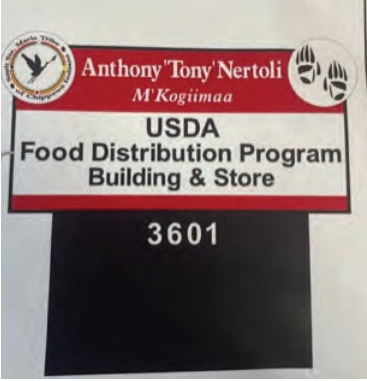
DIRECT SERVICES HIGHLIGHTS

– The Lodge of Hope received approximately \$1,250,000 from the State of Michigan for operational costs and upgrades to the shelter such as roof and flooring replacement and concrete sidewalk repair and parking area extension.

– Direct Services staff participated in Sault Tribe Housing Health and Safety Fairs in the 7-County Service Area.

SAULT TRIBE FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

– The FDPIR provides tribal households with fresh, nutritious foods. The program can serve 15 counties, including Alger, Cheboygan, Chippewa, Delta, Emmet, Luce, Mackinac, Marquette, Schoolcraft, Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix,



Grand Traverse, Leelenau, and Manistee.

– The FDPIR served an average of 675 family members each month, totaling 8,100 for the year. This corresponds to over 1.3 million dollars in food received from the USDA.

– The Sault Tribe Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) has received a \$200,000 Nutrition Education grant, which has enabled us to hire a Commodities Food Educator. This educator has been working diligently to teach healthy ways to utilize USDA foods, as well as safe storage practices.

– Our ITO has been selected to participate in the FDPIR Characteristics and SDDP Project Study.

– The Nutrition Education and Food Distribution program installed billboards in several locations.

– The new sign naming the building the Anthony “Tony” Nertoli, M’Kogiimaa Food Distribution Building and Store was completed at the end of May.

– New signs in our language are displayed in the store. We collaborated with BMCC’s language teachers.

– Starting June 1, 2024, the food offerings in the FDPIR Food Package increased. The number of vegetable units will



2024 Missing or Murdered Indigenous Persons (MMIP) Community Event in St. Ignace.



Child Welfare staff attended the ARC Night of Wicked Awareness event in October.

rise from 18 to 20, and the units of meat, poultry, and fish will increase from 5 to 6.

– Since late spring, Indian Tribal Organizations (ITOs) across the U.S. that operate the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) experienced significant disruptions in food delivery. These issues included not receiving scheduled food deliveries, receiving orders late, and receiving incomplete orders. Before September, we encountered some incomplete orders, but this did not affect our ability to distribute food to our families. However, we did not receive our scheduled truck delivery for September, and we need to monitor our inventory closely.

– The FDPIR received funding through the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act (CCC) of \$140,800 which will allow us to supplement any food that we may need due to the supply chain disruption.

– The Food Distribution Programs: Improving Access and Parity Final Rule has been approved to move forward. This final rule enhances access and promotes fairness in USDA’s food distribution programs,

aiming to support eligible populations while also simplifying requirements for program operators.

– New foods are a frozen vegetable stir fry blend, frozen turkey deli meat, and extra virgin olive oil.

DIRECT SERVICES 2024 STATISTICS

- CSBG Emergency Assistance 303 Households
- CCDF Child Care Assistance 518 Households
- Employee Assistance 66 Households
- Elder Heating 80 Households
- Emergency Housing 276 Households
- General Assistance 206 Households
- Low Income Housing Energy Assistance Program 815 Households
- Native Employment Works 90 Households
- Funeral 214 Households
- Tribal Emergency Assistance 478 Households
- USDA-Commodities 8,100 family members

CONTACTS
ACFS Main Office
2218 Shunk Rd.,
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783

(906) 632-5250, (800) 726-0093

USDA
3601 Mackinaw Trail
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
(906) 635-6076 or (888) 448-8732

Advocacy Resource Center (ARC)
2769 Ashmun St.
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
(906) 632-1808 or (800) 726-0093

ARC Sexual Violence Services (SVS)
1860 E. 16th Avenue
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
(906) 632-1808 or (800) 726-0093

Kincheloe Office
60 Kincheloe
Kincheloe, MI 49788
(906) 495-1232

St. Ignace Office
1140 N. State St.
St. Ignace, MI 49781
(906) 643-8689

Manistique Office
5698 W HWY US-2
Manistique, MI 49854
(906) 341-6993 or (800) 347-7137

Munising Office
622 W Superior St.
Munising, MI
(906) 387-3906

SAULT TRIBE HOUSING AUTHORITY IN 2024

The Sault Tribe Housing Authority’s mission is to “Improve the quality of life for tribal members through affordable and unique housing opportunities.” Their vision is to “Create and sustain housing programs that promote improved quality of life, economic self-sufficiency and future growth for members of the Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians.”

2024 HIGHLIGHTS
IHBG Competitive Grant
This project increased the overall STHA current housing stock by nearly 10% and increased the housing opportunities at the site by 55%. Housing’s force account crew and staff have done a phenomenal job with this grant. There are so many new families at Odenaang!

Home Ownership Assistance Fund
HAF was established to mitigate financial hardships associated with the coronavirus pandemic by providing funds to eligible entities to prevent homeowner mortgage delinquencies, defaults, foreclosures, loss of utilities or home energy services, and displacements of homeowners experiencing financial hardship after January 21, 2020, through qualified expenses related to mortgages and housing such as:

CATEGORY	TOTAL FUNDS EXPENDED IN 2024
Fees	\$3,758.86
Insurance	\$2,615.02
Internet	\$9,632.81
Lot Rent	\$13,594.50
Mortgage	\$940,190.40
Mortgage Arrears	\$108,156.29
Other	\$5,896.42
Tax	\$41,061.50
Utility	\$80,461.43
Utility Arrears	\$65,643.25
Grand Total:	\$1,271,010.12

- Property Charge Default Resolution
- Mortgage Default Resolution
- Mortgage Reinstatement
- Utility/Internet/Broadband Payment Assistance

The HAF program has assisted tribal members within the seven-county service area with the below funds:
This was the final year of the HAF program, as all funds were exhausted on Dec. 31, 2024.

Homeownership Department
The Housing Authority Home Improvement Assistance programs are managed by the Assistant Housing Director. Home Improvement assistance includes the Owner Occupied Rehab (OOR), Home Rehabilitation Program (HRP), Home Improvement Program (HIP) and Sanitation services for tribal members residing in the seven county service areas.

Down Payment Assistance
The Homeownership department provided education in basic financial skills, credit report knowledge and post purchase education. The Down Payment Assistance (DPA) selected seven recipients in 2024 to receive \$9,500 or 20% of the purchase price for down payment and/or closing costs.

Home Rehabilitation Services
The Housing Authority has designed the Home Rehab Program, Home Improvement Program, and Furnace and Water Heater Replacement programs



Happy resident of the Ohte Modular Homes on move-in day.

to assist eligible tribal members and families who are living in homes that are substandard, lacking energy efficiency, and unsafe or unsanitary. These programs provide funding to homeowners who lack the financial resources to secure other funding to repair their home. The Home Rehab program processed 30 applications and approved assistance for 13 homeowner families. Six received windows and doors, four received new roofs, and three received major rehabilitation, including but not limited to siding, foundations, bathroom remodels, and floor joist repairs. Three projects from 2023 were completed in the summer of 2024.

Energy Efficient Roof Replacement Project - SSM
Forty-four energy-efficient roof replacements were completed on the Sault Ste. Marie Housing site. This Energy Efficient Roof Replacement Project changed the viability of these housing units, resolved unsafe living conditions, and established a healthy living environment for tribal families. Due to the cost savings, STHA will be replacing additional roofs in 2025.

Operations and Maintenance
The Housing Authority provides residents with a 24-hour maintenance emergency phone line. The Operations Department provides daily management of routine and non-routine or emergency maintenance of all 567 Housing Authority units. The following statistics were completed for 2024:
— All safety issues addressed and corrected.
— 42 Units received moisture remediation services.
— 66 Units received energy efficient upgrades.
— 15 units received elder/handicapped adjustments.
— 15 Driveway and a mailbox cluster at the Ohte site replaced.
— Approximately 1,675 routine maintenance work orders.
— Approximately 900 non-routine work orders.
— There were 242 emergency work orders handled by maintenance staff.

Indian Housing Block Competitive Grant (IHBG-C)
The STHA was awarded a \$5 million Indian Housing Block Competitive Grant (IHBG-C) and utilized the award to further initiate the Odenaang Development Plan vision. STHA constructed 40 affordable housing units at the Odenaang Housing site located in Soo Township, Mich. This single purpose continued construction project took 5 construction years

to complete. The low-income rental units will be a combination of stick built and modular homes in a variety of sizes for tribal families. All of the tribal families occupying these newly constructed units meet the definition of low-moderate income families. 2024 was the fifth and final year of the grant and six units were constructed in the final year.

Resident Services Department
The Resident Services Department processed 499 interim and 252 annual recertifications for low-rent units. One hundred and sixty-six low-rent unit applications were processed and 77 homeownership applications were processed. There were 55 selected, and moved in. Homeownership and Resident Services made 1,735 home visits with rental and homeownership residents on all nine housing sites in 2024. The Housing Authority has designed the Rental Assistance Voucher Program to increase decent, safe, and sanitary housing opportunities for tribal members off the reservation, when low income rental units are not available for occupancy at the time of application. The housing authority provided 16 tribal families with a rental assistance voucher.

Emergency Housing Assistance
The Housing Authority in combined efforts with the Anishnaabek Community and Family Services provided emergency financial assistance to the tribal membership who is faced with homeless situations in the tribal community. This program assisted tribal members maintain current housing or secure safe and sanitary housing. The Emergency Housing Assistance program assisted 202 tribal households in 2024. Eighty-three families received financial assistance for hotel or motel stays to address homelessness and secure safe and sanitary temporary housing. One hundred and nineteen families received financial assistance for security deposits and first month’s rent, preventing evictions or foreclosures due to past-due rent, delinquent mortgage payments, and associated fees.

STHA Events
In an effort to raise public health and safety awareness, the Housing Authority presents their Health and Safety Fairs on all nine housing sites. Resource agencies from around the areas are invited to promote local assistance and resources to all participants. There were 22 events held in 2024. Some of these events include an AMERIND Fire Safety Poster Contest, Easter Community

Event, Elder Complex Bingo, Mini Site Clean-ups, Trash to Treasure Event, Family Fun Day events, Annual Site Health and Safety Fairs, and Back to School events. Housing Authority partners with 24 agencies to facilitate these events with 919 attending the events. Staff also participated in six off-site events including Family Fun Days, Recovery Walk, Marquette Community Resource Fair, Youth Education Activities, and Christmas events. The Housing Authority provided financial support for 11 tribal resident community events as follows: Forensic Interviewing Training, Veteran’s, Sugar Island, and New Year’s Eve Sobriety Powwow’s, Tribal Christmas event, Child Abuse Awareness, MATCP Annual Conference, Wellbriety events, and Recovery Gala. There were 12 in-person culture camps that Housing Authority financially assisted, which include YEA Full Day Trip, College Intern Cultural Training Day, University of Michigan Student Feast, Traditional Medicine Fasting Camp, Ojibwe Belt Making, Women’s Ribbon Skirt Making Retreat, YEA Rudyard Camp Crafting, and Sugar Island Powwow Cooking and Elders Overnight Respite.

2024 PILT
The Housing Authority has established cooperation agreements with many of the local cities and townships that have housing sites. Each year payments are made to the local municipality for emergency, fire and police services, road maintenance and snow removal. Total area 2024 PILT was \$67,800:
— Soo Township, \$15,150
— Schoolcraft County, \$5,700
— Pentland Township, \$3,450
— Kinross Charter Township, \$15,750
— City of St. Ignace, \$1,500
— City of Sault Ste. Marie, \$17,700
— City of Marquette, \$1,500
— City of Escanaba, \$4,200
— Alger County, \$2,850

2024 Full Staff Day
The Housing Authority hosted its annual full staff day dedicated to mandatory training, team building, and staff acknowledgement. This year, the full staff meeting was on Oct. 31, 2024, and was located at the Sault Casino conference rooms. There was mandatory training in the morning, staff were provided lunch, with team building activities and acknowledgement in the afternoon.

Odenaang Homes Tribal Enterprise
Twenty lease-to-purchase homes were completed. The newly selected residents were happy to



take occupancy and enjoy their new home. Any punch list items were completed while the units were freshly occupied.
All but one of the Ohte Trailer Home Replacement recipients were able to finally move into their new homes. Most were able to move in and celebrate Thanksgiving with their families in their new home — 22 very happy families.

STRATEGIC GOALS
The Housing Authority contracted Blue Stone Strategy Consultants to prepare a strategic plan for the next 5-10 years. As part of the 2024 Strategic Plan process, STHA conducted a Community Housing Needs assessment. The information collected was critical to the formation of goals for the next 5 years.

Blue Stone facilitated consultation sessions with the tribal Board of Directors, Housing Board of Commissioners, Housing Authority team members, and tribal community members to assist in developing the strategic plan. It was a great process that led to the development of a solid strategic plan.

Community Needs Assessment
— The tribal community needs over 2,500 low-income housing units.
— There are over 6,000 potential homeowners in the community.
— Tribal membership continues to grow, with an expanding number of tribal youth and elders.

Existing Conditions Assessment
— STHA’s housing sites need infrastructure improvements and expansion for new developments.
— STHA needs to expand the funding available for new housing development.
— STHA will need to increase staffing in the coming years as development expands.

2026 GOALS
The Housing Authority is excited to share the goals for 2026:
— Establish a mechanism to accept online payments via the new website.
— Feasibility study for solar panels on Housing homes.
— Construct a 26-unit apartment building for single tribal members at Odenaang.
— Complete construction of a quadplex in Newberry for elders.
— Complete construction of a duplex in Hessel for elders.
— Complete construction of six tiny homes in Wetmore.
— Submit application for a Low-Income Housing Tax Credit application with MSHDA for a supportive housing project.

SAULT TRIBE EDUCATION DIVISION 2024 HIGHLIGHTS

The Sault Tribe Education Division provides quality educational opportunities grounded in Anishinaabe traditions to our tribal members from infancy through adulthood. The division consists of several departments including Early Childhood Education, Youth Education & Activities (YEA), Higher Education, Adult Education and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) along with the Youth Development Fund (YDF), Summer Internship Program, and the Tribal Education Department (TED) Scholarship Program.

Through our various programs, we strive to instill all students with high expectations of academic success and competent thinking skills while fostering growth in social and emotional behaviors and positive attitudes.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT FUND

This program helps eligible families fund activities for their children in support of the strategic directions of the medicine wheel including academic/intellectual, physical, emotional, and cultural/spiritual activities. The program funds up to \$250 per eligible youth a calendar year. Eligible activities include, but are not limited to, sports registration, drivers education courses, sports equipment purchases, language lessons, educational and sports camps, class trips, and instrument purchases. In 2024, there was a total of \$73,785.71 in funding used to assist our tribal youth across the seven-county service area. For more information or the application, email youthdevelopment-fund@saulttribe.net.

SUMMER INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Established in 1997, the Sault Tribe Internship Program provides Sault Tribe college students with a valuable experience. In this program, they are able to apply their own skills while learning new ones as they work in a full-time position in their field of interest. Their experience with us helps them find permanent employment upon graduating college, with the hope that they come back and work at Sault Tribe. In 2024, we had 10 interns, placed in various departments across the tribe.

TED SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The TED Scholarship program is administered through the Tribal Education Department (TED) Grant and graciously funded by the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE). This is a \$1,000 scholarship, awarded to eligible recipients enrolled in university or trade school, per academic semester. In 2024, there were 841 scholarships awarded.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Head Start / Early Head Start / Child Care Center

The Early Childhood Education Programs provides a comprehensive, interdisciplinary approach to services which include education, health, nutrition, social services, and parent involvement to achieve successful child and family outcomes.

In 2024, Sault Tribe Early Childhood Programs served a total of 180 children including 126 preschoolers and 54 infants/

toddlers from 143 families. Head Start provided 20 part-day, part-year slots and 20 extended duration slots in Sault Ste. Marie, 20 full-day, full-year slots through its Child Care Center Partnership, and 20 extended duration slots in St. Ignace. Head Start and Early Head Start programs are federally funded through the Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start and American Indian and Alaskan Natives Program Branch with a tribal match grant.

The Child Care Center provided full-day, full-year services for 74 children and in Sault Ste. Marie. The Child Care Center partners with Head Start and Early Head Start providing before and after care services to children enrolled in the partnership. The Child Care Center is funded through the tribe and receives funding through ACFS Childcare Development Fund grant, Head Start, Early Head Start, and parent fees.

The Anne Suggitt Early Childhood Education Center is located in Sault Ste. Marie and houses Head Start, Early Head Start, and Child Care under one roof. It is attached to the existing Big Bear Arena. The center has seven infant/toddler classrooms and four preschool classrooms with the ability to enroll up to 134 children making it the largest child care center in the Eastern Upper Peninsula. St. Ignace center is operated at 225 WaSeh Drive and houses one pre-K classroom.

Program highlights in 2024 include a continuing partnership with Bay Mills Community College to provide financial support to our team members who are enrolled in Early Childhood Education courses through the HOPEE grant, which is funded through the Office of Head Start. About 30% of our team members were enrolled in college and continuing their education during the Fall 2024 semester. It was a busy year as our program hosted 15 family events and on-site hearing, vision, dental, and nutrition screenings. Progress was made in all areas of development towards school readiness goals. Lastly, our program provided monthly professional development to 52 team members in 2024 on topics that ranged from child development, health, safety, culture and language, mental wellness, administrative, and policy reviews.

YOUTH EDUCATION AND ACTIVITIES (YEA)

Throughout the year, the Youth Education & Activities Program offered services to a significant number of students and recorded numerous interactions, demonstrating our commitment to offering a wide range of support for our tribal students. In 2024, YEA served 3,459 students.

In 2024 the YEA Program was active in 21 schools, sharing our rich culture through classroom presentations, traditional crafts, and other engaging activities. Outside of school, we offer leadership opportunities through the Tribal Youth Council, some areas with a Junior Tribal Youth Council. We host a Youth Leadership Conference and take part in the United National

Indian Tribal Youth Conference. Additionally, we provide after-school programming that includes academic support, health and fitness programs, the Circle of Life Summer Program, and the Youth Empowerment Powwow. Nearly all sites offer classroom instruction for the schools within their service areas, focusing on cultural education and character building through the Seven Grandfather Teachings.

The Sault Tribe Board of Directors extended their support to Tribal Youth Council members, enabling students to attend the United National Indian Tribal Youth Conference held in Portland, Ore., from June 29 to July 3, 2024.

Beginning in 2024, the Youth Empowerment Powwow began rotating among the seven sites, starting in Hessel. YEA would like to say Chi-Miigwech to Indian Energy for their support of our Youth Empowerment Powwow. For the past three years, Indian Energy has donated \$5,000 towards our powwow or Youth Leadership Conference. We extend our gratitude to all parents, guardians, and grandparents for trusting their children to our amazing YEA staff. It is an honor to guide our future generations. Chi-Miigwech to the YEA team for their unwavering commitment to our youth.

Sault Ste. Marie

Sault Ste. Marie served 247 students across various activities and programs. Tribal Youth Council members attended the UNITY Conference and Youth Leadership Conference and assisted with the Children's Christmas Party, Halloween festivities, the Circle of Life Summer Program, held Family Fun Dance, conducted classroom presentations, the Little Learners program, After School Program, and Talking Circles. Additionally, Sault Ste. Marie (YEA) collaborated with the Cultural Department, USDA Program, and the Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan to enhance activities offered.

Rudyard

Rudyard served 256 students through various programs, including the after-school program. A lunchtime drop-in zone for students to receive extra academic support was also offered. Participants from Rudyard enjoyed attending the Bay Mills Round Dance, Community powwows, participating in the Circle of Life Summer Program, culture camp activities, regalia making, and much more. Rudyard has two Tribal Youth Councils: one for students in grades 8-12 and a junior youth council for students in grades 5-7. TYC representatives from Rudyard attended the UNITY Conference and the Youth Leadership Conference. Rudyard staff also assisted with UNIT 1's Children's Christmas party.

Hessel

Hessel served 214 students in 2024. Hessel YEA offered in-school tutoring from Monday through Thursday at Les Cheneaux Community Schools, and also provided after-school programming for our Drummond Island, Pickford, and Newberry



students. Hessel also has a very active Tribal Youth Council. Additionally, YEA Thursdays took place at the Hessel Tribal Center, providing students with extra academic support and opportunities to work on craft projects. Hessel YEA is also involved in several holiday events including the Unit

2 Children's Christmas Parties in Newberry and Hessel as well as Halloween and Easter festivities. Unit 2 YEA participates in various community powwows in addition to the Youth Empowerment Powwow.

St. Ignace

St. Ignace YEA had an active year, providing programming to

EDUCATION DIVISION 2024 HIGHLIGHTS, CONTINUED

482 students. The Act It Out Drama Program engaged students in the 2024 production of “The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe.” Tutoring was available to students during seminar hour and in the classrooms. Classroom presentations covering the Seven Grandfather teachings were also enjoyed by students. Additionally, Unit 3 participants hosted a sleepover with Unit 2, where students learned and practiced team-building skills, completed a craft project, and participated in a talking circle. Members of the Tribal Youth Council met weekly and participated in the Youth Leadership Conference.

In addition to the Act It Out, Unit 3 offered a diverse range of afterschool activities including an art and culture program, Health and Wellness program, and a Math Lab Exam Cram to help students prepare for exams. Participants also kept busy during the summer months with the Circle of Life Summer Program. Just in time for the powwow season, YEA Unit 3 hosted a regalia-making session. They also assisted with the Unit 3 Children’s Christmas party.

Manistique
Manistique YEA served 353 students in 2024. They provided tutoring at Manistique High School and St. Francis. Tribal Youth Council held weekly meetings for community service planning and participated in the Youth Leadership and UNITY Conferences. Classroom presentations on the Seven Grandfather Teachings were conducted in conjunction with a book club focused on Angeline Bouley’s book, “Firekeeper’s Daughter.”

Cooking classes were also offered featuring traditional foods. Students enjoyed the Circle of Life Summer Program and attended the Youth Empowerment Powwow, while Little Learners visited the Children’s Museum in Marquette.

Escanaba
Escanaba YEA served 1,487 students through multiple programs. They held the Little Learners program in Bark River, Danforth, Wells, Gladstone, and Escanaba and Culture Club in Gladstone and Bark River. Students participated in a food preservation class on Indigenous cooking. Additionally, they participated in the spring feast and health and safety events. Staff conducted classroom presentations throughout the school year. The Circle of Life Summer Program provided traditional teachings, camping opportunities, and attendance at the UP-State Fair. Escanaba participants also enjoyed a visit to JoAnne’s Aquatic Center and attended community powwows.

Other special events included the Young Author’s program, the Hannahville Powwow, the Youth Empowerment Powwow, the Youth Leadership Conference, and a senior cookout.

Munising
Munising YEA served 420 students. They offered classroom presentations to students at Munising Schools, Burt Township, and Mather Elementary. They facilitated Culture Club for participants in Wetmore and Superior Central.

Students received academic support during homework help sessions as well as tutoring sessions for those in grades 1-4. Members of the Munising Tribal Youth Council enjoyed attending the Youth Leadership Conference and contributed to planning the Grand Tribal Youth Council meetings. A graduation recognition event was held for graduating seniors in Munising. Participants in the Circle of Life Summer Program enjoyed camping trips and attended the Manistique Powwow and the Youth Empowerment Powwow. One of the Munising Tribal Youth Council members participated in the UNITY Conference. The Little Learners Program, designed for younger students during the summer, featured Medicine Wheel teachings, cultural crafts, a visit to the children’s museum, and attendance at the UP-State Fair.

Trainings
Our YEA Team received training to deliver the “Culture & Drugs Don’t Mix” curriculum delivered by Tribal Tech LLC. This curriculum can be tailored for the different age or grade levels. Coordinators also attended the Behavioral Health Conference sponsored by the Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan.

HIGHER EDUCATION
Sault Tribe Higher Education provides post-secondary education services and other financial support to Sault Tribe members. Services include, but are not limited to, assistance with Michigan Indian Tuition Waiver and FAFSA applications, the Sault Tribe Scholarship Program, Self-Sufficiency Incentive Award Program, and the Need-Based Grant Program.

The tribe’s Scholarship Program is announced every summer with scholarships released in the Fall. Those interested in applying are required to submit a complete application packet including essays and other required documents. Students must meet eligibility criteria as listed on the application. Scholarships are competitive with essays being blind scored by members of the Sault Tribe Higher Education Committee. Students enrolled in trade school or college full or part-time in the upcoming academic year at any accredited U.S. school are encouraged to apply.

The Need-Based Grant Program is a BIA funded program available to eligible Sault Tribe members enrolled as full-time undergraduate students (12 credits hours or more). The student must be attending a Michigan state-supported public college and be a resident of Michigan. These grants award students who have an unmet need as determined by their college’s financial aid office. They are available for the Fall and Winter semesters each academic year.

Self-sufficiency incentive awards are available for the Fall semester only. Students are required to submit their completed application and other required documents including their transcript, prior to the deadline. Available funding is divided by the number of eligible credit hours per students who apply. This is not a need-based program. The program awards funding only for grades earned of C or better and does not pay for repeat courses.

In 2024, the Sault Tribe Higher Education Program provided:

- Scholarship Program: 60 students
- Winter BIA Need Based Grant Program: 52 students
- Fall BIA Need Based Grants Program: 76 students
- Self-Sufficiency Incentive Award Program: 354 students with an accumulation of 4,096.80 eligible credits

ADULT EDUCATION
Sault Tribe, in partnership with Consolidated Community School Services (CCSS), provides alternative high school and adult education programs to residents in Chippewa, Luce and Mackinac counties. Regardless of a student’s prior education experience, these programs offer welcoming learning environments with individualized instruction, caring instructors and support staff and collaboration with the Intermediate School District and outside agencies. In 2024, 43 participants enrolled in this program, with 12 earning a GED credential. For more information, please visit: <https://www.saulttribe.com/membership-services/education/adult-education-program>.

WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA)

WIOA is a federally funded program designed to help Native American job seekers access employment, education and training services to assist them in obtaining and keeping productive employment. Sault Tribe has operated very similar programs throughout the years. In 2024, WIOA provided employment and training services to 99 participants. Training Services provided through WIOA include:

On-the-Job Training (OJT) - Provides opportunities for both employer and adult participants by reimbursing 50% of the trainee’s wages during a specified training period.

Work Experience - Short-term, temporary employment for youth; often referred to as after-school employment.

Summer Youth Employment - Provides up to 10 weeks of summer employment to eligible applicants.

Classroom training - Provides short-term skills training to adults in an institutional setting to obtain a license or certificate (i.e. Nurse’s aide training, CDL, heavy equipment, etc.).

Elder Employment - Provides part-time employment to Sault Tribe elders residing in the seven-county service area, ages 60 or over.

CONTACTS
General inquiries: education@saulttribe.net
Youth Development Fund: youthdevelopmentfund@saulttribe.net

TED Program: Rachel McKechnie, Project Specialist rmckechnie6@saulttribe.net
Stephanie Sprecker, Education Director – (906) 632-6797 or ssprecker3@saulttribe.net
Breanna Sliger, Executive Assistant – (906) 632-6797 or bsliger@saulttribe.net
Shondra Gervais, Early Childhood Programs Manager – (906) 635-7722 or sgervais@saulttribe.net
Lisa Burnside, YEA Manager



– (906) 635-4944 or lburnside@saulttribe.net
Diane McLeod-Maleport, Higher Education Specialist – (906) 635-7784 or highereducation@saulttribe.net
Tanya Pages, Adult

and Alternative Education Coordinator – (906) 495-5343 or tpages@eupschools.org
Brenda Cadreau, WIOA Program Manager – (906) 635-4767 or bcadreau@saulttribe.net.

RECREATION DIVISION 2024 HIGHLIGHTS

Big Bear

ARENA

Est. '96

The Recreation Division provides recreational opportunities for tribal members in the seven-county service area and for community members in Sault Ste. Marie and surrounding area through recreation agreements and tribally owned facilities.

RECREATION AGREEMENTS

To supplement tribal facilities and programming, the Sault Tribe has established recreation agreements in the following areas at minimal or no charge to tribal members:

- Escanaba-YMCA and Sullivan’s Health and Fitness
- Kinross / Kincheloe-Recreation Fitness Center
- Manistique-Yooper Fitness, High School Pool and Little Bear West Ice Arena
- Marquette-Northern Michigan University (NMU)
- Munising-Alger Parks & Recreation Center
- Negaunee-YMCA of Marquette County
- Newberry & Curtis-Helen Newberry Joy Hospital & Healthcare Center
- Sault Ste. Marie-Lake Superior State University (LSSU)
- St. Ignace-Little Bear East Arena

Most recreation agreements include full fitness centers with some facilities having swimming pool access as well as ice skating. In addition to a fitness center at LSSU, there are various athletic camps available at no charge to tribal youth as well as free tickets to LSSU hockey, basketball and volleyball games. Detailed information about recreation agreements throughout the seven county service areas can be found on www.bigbeararena.com, or by emailing tgraham@saulttribe.net.

TRIBALLY OPERATED FACILITY

The Sault Tribe owns and operates the Big Bear Arena in Sault Ste. Marie. This 150,000 square foot facility features two ice surfaces, a 6,000 square foot fitness center, a small and large gymnasium, aerobic room, meeting rooms, dance room, indoor track, playground, arcade, nature trail, concessions and vending machines.

The facility is home of the Sault High Blue Devils Hockey Club, Soo Michigan Hockey Association, Superior Storm Volleyball Club, Soo Coed Volleyball League, Sault Women’s Volleyball League and All Styles, All Occasions Dance Program. The gymnasiums and rinks also serve as a training center for the Soo Eagles Hockey Club, Soo Indians AAA Midgets Hockey Club and various Canadian youth hockey teams.

PURPOSE STATEMENT

The Recreation Division is dedicated to promoting wellness, athletic excellence, high principles and values and to creating bonds of mutual respect between individuals and communities.

DIVISION DEPARTMENTS

The Events Management Department develops and coordinates facility events and activities for tribal and community families as well as coordinate customer ice and space rentals. The department works closely



Sault Tribe members Ally and Kylee Meehan attended LSSU Women’s Individual Basketball camp through a Sault Tribe scholarship.



In fall 2024, the All Styles, All Occasions dance program relocated to the Big Bear Arena. The program offers recreation and competitive dance classes and performance opportunities for dancers of all ages.

with tribal and community programs on collaborative programming.

The Youth Program Department develops and coordinates the Summer Recreation Program for tribal and community youth, age 5-10 years old. The program is group-based and includes recreational activities such as sports, arts and crafts, organized games, field trips, guest speakers, water fun days, nutritional and cultural programming and much more.

The Concessions Department provides over-the-counter food and beverage services for activities and events held at the facility. The department also fulfills small food and beverage needs for trainings and seminars. Vending machines are also available throughout the facility. Limited hockey accessories such as tape, laces, pucks and mouthguards are available as well as skate sharpening in the Reception retail area.

The Administration Department oversees business operations, marketing, customer service strategies as well as safety and security of personnel and customers.

The Operations Department ensures facility equipment is operational, maintaining the ice and

dry floor surfaces, facility cleanliness and a safe environment.

The All-In-One Fitness Club, which is owned and operated by the Sault Tribe Health Center, is located inside the Big Bear Arena and offers free access to tribal members. The expanded fitness center includes state-of-the-art weight and cardio equipment, locker rooms, saunas, indoor walking track and fitness classes. Detailed club information can be obtained by email myoung3@saulttribe.net.

Additionally, the facility houses the Education Department, Youth Education and Activities (YEA) Department, Higher Education Department, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Community Health’s Medical Fitness program and Community Kitchen, Physical Therapy, the Language and Culture Division and is connected to the Anne Suggitt Early Childhood Center.

BIG BEAR SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

- Public Skating
- Learn To Skate
- Stick N Puck
- Drop-In Figure Skating
- Drop-In Basketball and Volleyball

- Summer Recreation Program
- Pickleball
- Fitness Classes
- Totzones
- Baby and Bridal Showers
- Birthday Parties
- Team Meals
- School Fun Days
- Meetings and Trainings
- Adult Volleyball Leagues
- Hockey Tournaments
- Hockey Leagues, Clinics and Tryouts
- Special Events
- Private Ice and Space

RENTALS

2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The following recreation accomplishments were achieved within the seven-county service area:

- 93 tribal memberships to NMU in Marquette
- 3,923 tribal member visits to the YMCA in Escanaba
- 22 tribal member visits to the pool at the high school in Manistique
- 502 tribal member visits to the ice rink at Little Bear West Arena
- 4,490 tribal member visits to the Little Bear East in St. Ignace
- 7,270 tribal member visits to the LSSU SAC and pool
- 2,021 LSSU athletic tickets distributed
- 105 Sault Tribe youth enrolled in LSSU athletic camps
- Updated and distributed the seven-county Wellness and Recreation Guide

Additionally, the following events and activities occurred at the Big Bear Arena with other Sault Tribe departments:

- 26 meetings, trainings, gym and skating sessions with the YEA Department
- 102 meetings, trainings, gym and skating sessions with the Language and Culture Department
- 67 meetings, trainings and gym sessions with the Early Childhood Education Programs
- 16,312 tribal member visits to the All-In-One Fitness Club
- 38 participants at the ACFS Child Abuse and Prevention Drive-Thru
- 150 participants at the Behavioral Health and Tribal Court Recovery Walk
- 200 participants at the Health Division’s Harvest Your Health Fair
- 180 attendees at the Advocacy Resource Center’s Halloween Party
- 750 attendees at the Children’s Christmas Party
- 700 attendees at the New Year’s Eve Sobriety Powwow

Furthermore, the following recreation events and activities served the community:

- 8,065 people provided food at the Feeding America Mobile Food Distributions
- 4,249 patrons participated in Public Skating
- 2,753 Rented Skates and 511 Rented Skate Aids
- 454 patrons participated in Stick N Puck
- 917 patrons participated in Totzones
- 88 basketball practices
- 85 volleyball practices
- 68 cheerleading sessions

- 385 dance sessions
- 199 birthday parties and celebrations
- 52 meetings and trainings
- 7 school and organization fun days
- 27 high school hockey games
- 11 youth and adult hockey tournaments
- 11 hockey tryouts, camps and clinics
- 268 players in the Youth Spring Hockey League
- 85 participants in the Summer Recreation Program

2025 GOALS

- Establish smart phone app and connect to facility website.
- Implement media screens throughout facility to promote programming, events, facility hours and operating information.
- Work with local agencies and the Sault Tribe Transportation Department to implement way-finding signs throughout city.
- Continue to collaborate with local agencies for inclusion of facility events via newsletters, website and emails.
- Scheduling bi-monthly training for team members.
- Develop training videos with the Human Resource Department.
- Update 5-Year Maintenance Plan and work with Facilities Management on maintenance projects.
- Implement maintenance scheduling software including work orders and preventive maintenance.
- Replace the existing HVAC system throughout the facility.
- Maintain high standards for facility operations, safety and cleanliness.
- Replace existing concessions countertops with stainless steel units and replace existing fountain beverage machine.
- Create designated area in lobby for food and beverage consumption.
- Implement food vending machines near the arcade, including hot beverage option.
- Install hockey stick and accessories vending machine in the lobby.
- Develop additional sports clinics and community drop-in events and programs.
- Work with other Sault Tribe departments to share resources to develop programming and events for the membership.
- Create online LSSU application for hockey, basketball and volleyball tickets and camps.
- Update Wellness and Recreation Guide seasonally or as needed.
- Collaborate with Education, YEA, Community Health, Fitness Center and the Language and Cultural departments to develop new events and activities for the community.
- Continue to perform routine maintenance through facility and renovate as necessary.

CONTACTS
Big Bear Arena
Two Ice Circle
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
(906) 635.RINK
bookthebear@saulttribe.net
www.bigbeararena.com

LAW ENFORCEMENT HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2024



Overview
Sault Tribe Law Enforcement (STLE) manages and oversees the general administration of police services and public safety, Treaty Rights and conservation licensing and enforcement, Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act (SORNA) responsibilities, and oversight of the Sault Tribe Youth Facility (STYF).

STLE also manages several federal grants from writing grant proposals to managing the awards, which includes budget development, compliance assurance, project implementation, and closing out once all objectives are achieved. STLE develops and manages approved budgets – in 2023, STLE was responsible for 12 separate budgets (department operations, grant awards, etc.) totaling \$4.9 million.

STLE is made up of a sworn police force of 25 officers that serve Sault Tribe’s seven-county service area and its 1836 Treaty Area for conservation enforcement activities, which includes the Chief of Police, four Sergeants and 19 patrol officers who are located throughout the service delivery area, one Administrative Manager, and two Emergency Dispatch / Licensing Coordinators.

Sault Tribe Youth Facility (STYF) operates a 25-bed correctional facility that houses youth ages 11-17. STYF employs a Facility Administrator, 12 Detention Officers, two Lead Maintenance staff, and two Lead Cooks.

STLE officers respond to a wide variety of complaints in addition to performing community policing services that include attending community events and providing educational services to local schools. An example of some of the responsibilities of our officers in the service delivery area include traffic safety, responding to complaints including but not limited to domestic violence, sexual assault, suicides or attempts, natural or suspicious deaths, driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, child abuse or neglect, and so forth. Officers also engage in community activities such as attending local fairs and events and going into area schools to provide educational presentations to children of various ages.

STLE officers provide conservation enforcement services as well by patrolling and enforcing Great Lakes (Tribal Code Chapter 20) and Chippewa Ottawa Resource Authority codes for commercial, subsistence/ gillnetting, recreational fishing, and Inland hunting, fishing, and gathering codes (Chapters 21 and 23). Almost every day of the year you will see a STLE conservation officer out on patrol, either on the road or on the water.

While conducting water patrols, officers check nets to ensure they are being placed code compliant and check fish on boats they encounter on the lakes to ensure daily catch limits are code compliant. STLE’s conservation enforcement duties are defined in the Tribal Code. Officers who conduct road



Officers Hiser, Sherlund, Jezewski and Menominee at a summer concert in St. Ignace.

patrols will stop and talk with fishermen, and check licenses and limits to ensure they are engaging in authorized activity. They patrol through campgrounds where camping permits were issued to tribal members engaging in treaty gathering rights, making sure there are no issues or questions members have regarding their treaty rights. They return phone calls to members who call with specific questions where they cannot find answers in tribal code. This is just a sampling of what our conservation officers do on a daily basis.

STLE’s licensing office handles so much more than just issuing treaty licenses. They accept and enter receipt of treaty licensing catch reports, accept and enter any court or prosecutor documents that are required to be entered into the Law Enforcement Information Network (LEIN) including warrants, bond conditions and personal protection orders. They are the first point of contact for any community members who come to or call STLE for any purpose, be it treaty licensing, filing a complaint, following up on a complaint, requesting police report copies, and responding to walk-in and phone questions regarding treaty licensing and ensure that officers respond to questions that are code related. They dispatch STLE officers to non-emergency calls. Emergency calls must be called in to 911.

- 2024 Highlights**
- In 2024, the law enforcement office
- Issued 4,349 Inland harvest cards with over 11,400 associated hunting tags
 - Processed 714 bear applications and 743 elk applications
 - Entered 2,637 inland harvest reports
 - Issued 40 commercial captain, one Small Mesh Permits and 65 commercial helper licenses
 - Entered 511 commercial catch reports
 - Issued 178 Great Lakes subsistence gillnet licenses and 142 subsistence licenses
 - Entered 2,740 subsistence catch reports
- They coordinate, assist and escort ACFS staff when they need to fingerprint possible foster parents. In 2023, dispatchers answered 8,765 phone calls.

- These are a sampling of what STLE’s front office takes care of each year for our membership.
- Some of STLE’s 2023 accomplishments include the following:
- STLE had some changes in staffing and we are happy to announce that Amber Horner took over as the Administrative Manager of STLE.
- STLE thrives to keep learning and growing, so in 2023 STLE was able to send multiple officers to different trainings including: ARIDE, Anti-Trafficking Operations, Human Trafficking, Armorer, Death Investigation, Interrogation, FTO (Field Training Officer), Taser Instructor Certification, Forensic Interview, K9 Patrol and Narcotics, Child Forensic Training, and Pistol Shoot/Taser.
- STLE’s SORNA Project Coordinator worked with many departments to make sure the public has the most up to date information regarding offenders in our areas and also participated in the SMART Office Regional Workshop in Minneapolis, Minn.
- In 2023, STLE also:
- Assisted with the Special Election and Advisory Election Ballot Count – picked up ballots, and stood by
 - Participated in the Team building event at Sherman Park, the 2023 Grand Assembly and powwow, Feeding America Food Distributions, Board of Directors Meetings, YEA and Kinross Trunk or Treat, Walmart Safety Event, St. Ignace, Sault and Kincheloe Housing Authority Health and Safety Fairs, Recovery walk, ACFS Foster Parents Appreciation picnic, and Domestic Violence walk
 - Purchased four new Police Durangos and two new Conservation trucks
 - Provided presence at multiple concerts at all of our Kewadin Casino sites
 - Provided safety/escort services for Bronco the Mac, Minis on the Mac and Jeep Parade
 - Celebrated the life of Officer George Parish, who passed away in November 2022, in July 2023 with his friends and family
 - Passed its 2023 Law Enforcement Information Network (LEIN) audit with the state of Michigan
 - Assisted Santa Claus with his visit to the Sault Tribe Daycare and a special family on our reser-



Officer TenEyck handing out Halloween candy.

- vation.
- Continued to support the goals and objectives of the Tri-County Drug Enforcement Team (TRIDENT) by dedicating one officer to serve on this team. Their main goal is to eliminate illicit narcotics trafficking in Sault Tribe’s and surrounding communities
 - Submitted conservation articles to be published in the Sault Tribe newspaper
 - STLE is active in the future of law enforcement by sitting on the Sault High Advisory Board, Lake Superior State University (LSSU) MCOLES Advisory Board, and hosting interns from LSSU and Sault High School
 - Ensured continued compliance with Sault Tribe’s Chapter 72-Sex Offender Registration and Notification Code which included ensuring that all offenders within Sault Tribe’s jurisdiction were registered, updated or verified
 - Completed their annual firearms qualifications under state and federal regulations and we strive to ensure they are meeting their 40 hours of continuing education under MCOLES licensing standards
 - Participated in the annual shop with a hero (STLE officers TenEyck, Menominee and Skinner)
 - Participated in “Breakfast with a Badge” with Malcolm High School students.
 - Made sure they are in every local parade in our local counties
 - Gave away 2 bikes at the Grand Assembly, congrats to our winners: Charlie McLeod and Meredith Jones
 - Participated in a Department of Homeland Security grant program which provides funding for STLE officers to assist the U.S. Border Patrol in providing increased border security along the northern border
 - Provided safety/escort services for the Law Enforcement Torch Run where Officer Menard and Lubben both ran for the cause
 - Participated in numerous 2023 Consent Decree negotiations (Chief of Police)
 - Closed out two grants and started two new (SORNA and COPS), they also wrote for three new grants and will be notified in 2024 if granted.
 - Developed and submitted annual budgets as required and

- held spending at or below those budgeted amounts
- Developed and submitted required grant reports
 - Continued to make progress with submitting repair and maintenance requests through the BIA’s Maximo program to ensure that required maintenance on the facility is completed in a timely manner and that the BIA reimburses STYF for eligible projects
 - Adhered to all BIA licensing and standards
 - Sent two new officers to Detention Facility Academy for certification
- 2025 Goals**
- Several of the goals and objectives STLE has for 2025 include the following:
- Will continue to focus on and enhance community oriented policing objectives within each community it serves
 - Will look to host additional Sault Tribe member youth for the summer of 2025
 - Will increase the training available to its officers in conservation enforcement
 - Will continue to streamline its standard operating procedures to increase efficiency and productivity
 - Will continue to ensure that it remains in continued compliance with the Adam Walsh Act/ SORNA requirements
 - Will continue to work with the Natural Resources Department and IT Security to develop an online treaty licensing and reporting website for Inland Hunting and Fishing licenses and Subsistence licenses, as well as online reporting for Inland, Subsistence, and Commercial required catch reports (Commercial fishermen will continue to schedule appointments to obtain their licenses as there are additional requirements that cannot be implemented online)
 - Will review, research, and implement various administrative and cost savings measures to increase efficiency at the youth center while providing the same level of care and services to its residents
 - Will ensure that all newly hired Detention Officers attend and successfully complete the Federal Corrections Academy
 - Will work with the youth in custody to develop and maintain a facility garden where the produce will be donated to community members
 - Will ensure that all training and certification requirements are met
 - Will continue to utilize BIA’s MAXIMO program for necessary repairs and enhancements at the facility focusing on those projects that the COVID pandemic prevented in 2021 – roof, siding, parking, etc.
 - Will maintain and enhance its relationships with agencies that it works with – tribes, county and state courts, etc.

SAULT TRIBE OF CHIPPEWA INDIANS FACILITIES LISTING

SAULT AREA BUILDINGS

Kewadin Casino Hotel & Convention Center
2186 Shunk Road
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
1-800-KEWADIN
(906) 632-0530
Kewadin Casinos Human Resource
Department office Sault (906)
632-5006
Government/Enterprises Human
Resource Department (906) 635-4937

Min Wabab Dan (Pleased with It) Sault Tribe Administration Building

523 Ashmun Street
531 Ashmun Street
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
(906) 635-6050
(800) 793-0660
Chief Executive Officer’s Office
Deputy Chief Executive Officer’s
Office
Legal Department
Prosecutor’s Office
Tax Office
Budget Department
Chairperson’s Office
Membership Liaison – Unit 1
Government Relations Department
Board of Directors
Finance Department
Chief Financial Officer’s Office
Payroll Department
Insurance Department
Internal Auditor
Planning and Development
Transportation Department
Communications Department
IT Department
Tamarack Business Center
Sault Tribe EDC
Sault Tribe, Inc.
Sault Tribe Thrive

Big Bear Arena
2 Ice Circle Drive
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
(906) 635-RINK (7465)
www.bigbeararena.com
Administration
Youth Programs
Events Management
Operations
Pro Shop
Concessions
TENANTS:
All-In-One Fitness Club: (906) 635-4935
Physical Therapy: (906) 635-4905
Community Health Medical Fitness
Program: (906) 635-4991
Education Division: (906) 635-7010
Higher Education: (906) 635-7784
Workforce Innovation and
Opportunities Act: (906) 635-4767
Language & Culture Division and
Anishinaabemowin classroom: (906)
635-6510
Repatriation and Historic
Preservation: (906) 635-6050, Ext.
26134
Ojibwe Learning Center and Library:
(906) 635-7746, Ext. 26497

Niigaanagiizhik Ceremonial Bldg
11 Ice Circle Drive
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
(906) 632-0239

Sault Tribe Mary Murray Culture Camp
266 Homestead Road
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
(906) 635-5604

Powwow Grounds
10 Ice Circle Drive
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783

Miskeke Gamig (Medicine Lodge) Sault Tribe Health and Human Services Building
2864 Ashmun Street
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
(906) 632-5200
(877) 256-0009
Laboratory

Medical
Medical Billing
Medical Records
Radiology
Administration
Dental (906) 632-5260
Patient Registration
Optical (906) 632-5218
Pharmacy (906) 632-5226
Behavioral Health (906) 635-6075
Community Health (906) 632-5210
Audiology, Traditional Medicine,
Nutrition, Home Health Aide, Diabe-
tes Coordinator
Purchased Referred Care (906) 632-
5220 or (800) 922-0582
Urgent Care Walk-In Clinic – Mon-
day through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 8
p.m. Closed weekends and holidays.

Naandwejgegami, or “Healing Place” Medication Assisted Treatment Clinic
Tamarack Cove Professional Center
2861 Ashmun St. Suite 5 & 6
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
(906) 635-8877

Shedawin Haven
2318 Shunk Road
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
906-632-2993

Anne Suggitt Early Childhood Education Center
4 Ice Circle Drive
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
Child Care/Head Start/Early Head
Start
(906) 635-7722 or (906) 632-5258

Joseph K. Lumsden Bahweting School Public School Academy
1301 Marquette Avenue
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 4978
(906) 635-5055

Mary Murray Building/Bonnie McKerchie Building
2218 Shunk Road
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
ACFS (906) 632-5250 or (800) 726-
0093

USDA/Food Distribution
3601 S, Mackinac Trail
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
(906) 635-6076

Advocacy Resource Center “Aakdehewin Gaamig” Lodge of Bravery
Sault Ste Marie, MI 49783
(906) 632-1808 or (877) 639-7820
Intimate Partner Violence Emergency
Shelter
Victim Advocacy Services

Advocacy Resource Center
Sexual Violence Services (SVS)
“Naanda Nswi Kidwenan”
Sault Ste Marie, MI 49783
(906) 632-1808 or (877) 639-7820
Victim Advocacy Services

“Bgwasendam Gamigong” Lodge of Hope
3901 I-75 Business Spur
Sault Ste Marie, MI 49783
(906) 632-5000

Nokomis/Mishomis Building
2076 Shunk Road
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
Elder Meals
Eldercare Services (906) 635-4971,
(888) 711-7356
Gaming Commission (906) 635-7042
Enrollment Department
Mailing address:
PO Box 1628
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
(906) 635-3396
(906) 632-8552
(800) 251-6597

Ezhi-inawendiyang Natural Resources Division

Fred Hatch Building
206 Greenough Street
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
Natural Resources Division main
office and NRD - Environmental
Program
(906) 632-5040

Natural Resources Department - Wildlife Program and Consortium for Cooperative Ecological Resilience (CCER)
2428 Shunk Road
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
(906) 6325040

Natural Resrouces Department - Fisheries Program
916 Ashmun Street
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
(906) 6325040

George K. Nolan Judicial Building
2175 Shunk Road
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
Sault Tribe Law Enforcement/
Conservation (906) 635-6065
For emergencies, dial 911
Sault Ste. Marie Chippewa Tribal
Court (906) 635-4963

Sault Tribe Construction
3375 South M-129
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
(906) 635-0556

MidJim Sault
2205 Shunk Road
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
(906) 635-4782

DeMawating Development – Portage Place-Onigaming
351 Portage Street
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
(906) 498-9800

DeMawating Development - Crane Industrial Suites
4539 S. Seymour Rd.
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
(906) 498-9800

DeMawating Development - Chippewa Storage
732 W. Spruce Street
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
(906) 498-9800

DeMawating Development - Odenaang Storage
1288 E. Bobcat Court
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
(906) 498-9800

DeMawating Development - Riverside Village Park
2210 Riverside Drive
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
(906) 498-9800

DeMawating Development – The Guest House-Nbwaachwegamigong
2049 Ashmun Street
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
(906) 498-9800

KINCHELOE AREA BUILDINGS
ACFS Kincheloe Office - Child
Placement
60 Kincheloe
Kincheloe, MI 49752
(906) 495-1232

Sault Tribe Housing Authority
154 Parkside Drive
Kincheloe, MI 49788
(906) 495-1450
(906) 495-5555
(800) 794-4072
Maintenance (855) 205-2840
Administrative Office
Public Works
Home Improvement/Weatherization
Program
Sanitation Program
Rental Programs
Home Ownership Programs
Resident Services

Emergency Rental Assistance Pro-
gram
Enji Bgosendaming Endaa’aad, “Their Home of Hope” Sober Living Homes
(906) 635-6075

DeMawating Development
42 Woodlake
Kincheloe, MI 49788
(906) 498-9800

Youth Education and Activities Program - Rudyard/Kinross
Rudyard Schools (Facility not
owned by Sault Tribe)
11185 2nd Street
Rudyard, MI 49780
(906) 440-1870

ST. IGNACE AREA BUILDINGS Kewadin Casino St. Ignace
3015 Mackinac Trail
St. Ignace, MI 49781
(906) 643-7071
1-800-KEWADIN
Kewadin Casinos Human Resource
Department Office St. Ignace (906)
6434176

St. Ignace Tribal Health Clinic & Human Services Center
1140 N. State Street, Suite 2805
St. Ignace, MI 49781
(906) 643-8689 or (877) 256-0135
Services:
Anishnaabek Community and
Family Services: By appointment
only. Call (906) 632-5250 or (800)
726-0093
Acupuncture (starting soon)
Administration
Advance Directives
After-hour Triage
Audiology
Case Management: (906) 643-4983
Clinical Medical Care
Clinical Nursing Care
Community Health Nursing (906)
643-8689
Dental Clinic: (906) 643-7202
Diabetes Care
DOT Physicals
Health Education
Hygienist
Immunizations
Laboratory Services
Mental Health
Nutrition Services
Optical Clinic: (906) 643-4995
Pharmacy: (906) 643-4996
Referral Coordinator: (906) 643-
0881
Smoking Cessation
Sports Physicals
Substance Abuse
Traditional Medicine
Triage Nursing
Wellness Exams (all ages)

Wellness Programs
St. Ignace Elder Housing Complex
3017 Mackinac Trail
St. Ignace, MI 49781
Elder Meals
(906) 643-6484

Lambert Center
225 WaSeh Drive
St. Ignace, MI 49781
Head Start (906) 643-9733
Membership Liaison (906) 643-2124

Enji Maawanji’ Iding
(Former McCann School)
399 McCann Street
St. Ignace, MI 49781
(906) 643-3189

Sault Tribe Youth Facility and Sault Tribe Law Enforcement
1130 N. State Street
St. Ignace, MI 49781
Sault Tribe Youth Facility
(906) 643-0941
Sault Tribe Law Enforcement
(906) 635-6065 or (906) 643-7210
For emergencies, dial 911

MidJim St. Ignace
3045 Mackinac Trail
St. Ignace, MI 49781
(906) 643-9906

DeMawating Development - Mackinac Trail Storage
6091 Mackinac Trail
St. Ignace, MI 49781
(906) 498-9800

Youth Education and Activities Program - St. Ignace LaSalle Middle School (Facility not owned by Sault Tribe)
860 Portage Street
St. Ignace, MI 49781
(906) 440-7667

Hessel/Cedarville Area Buildings
Kewadin Casino Hessel
3395 3 Mile Road
Hessel, MI 49745
(906) 484-2903
1-800-KEWADIN

Hessel Community Health Center
3355 N 3 Mile Road
Hessel, MI 49745
(906) 484-2727
Monday through Friday 8 a.m.-4
p.m.
Services:
-Nursing Services
-Telemedicine Services
-Prescription Pickup
-Lab Draws
-Registered Dietician Appointments
-Immunization (including flu shots)



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nicholas.kibble@lpl.com www.
sinceritywealthsolutions.com



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SAULT TRIBE FACILITIES LISTING, CONTINUED

Services:
Footcare
Nike Shoe Program
Incontinence Products
Diabetes Nurse Appointments
Car Seats
Wellness Programs
Elder Meals (906) 484-2710
Veterans Services Officer - Mike Redmond, VSO – Home visit requests. Office: (906) 643-9411
ACFS: the first and third Wednesday of every month. Hours vary.
(906) 643-8689 ask for Mikaela Gamble
Youth Education and Activities Program (906) 484-2298 or (906) 440-203-5278

Gchi Wajiwan Makwa (Bear on the Mountain) Golf Course
2061 N. Three Mile Road
Hessel, MI 49745
(906) 484-2107

Wequayoc Cemetery
2354 E M-134
Hessel, MI
(906) 484-2727

DeMawating Development - Hillcrest Properties
1429 E. M134
Cedarville, MI 49719
(906) 498-9800

DETOUR AREA BUILDINGS
DeTour Tribal Health Center
Sault Tribe Community Health
200 St. Mary’s Street
DeTour, MI 49725
Phone: (906) 442-0111
Monday through Friday 8 a.m.-4 p.m.
Prescription Pickup
Nursing Services
Lab Draws
Registered Dietician Appts.
Immunizations (including flu and COVID shots)
Footcare
Nike Shoe Program
Incontinence Products
Diabetes Nurse Appointments
Car Seats
Community Garden
Wellness Programs
TBA: Telemedicine Services
**After Hours Urgent Medical Care.
Contact the Tribal Health Clinic that provides your primary medical care for nursing triage to local clinics.

NEWBERRY AREA BUILDINGS
Newberry Tribal Community Health Center
4935 Zeez ba tik Lane
Newberry, MI 49868
(906) 293-8181
Fax (906) 293-3001
Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-5 p.m. (Closed for Lunch)
Telemedicine Services
Membership Liaison: (906) 643-2124
Community Gathering Space
Community Health Program
Services- Main Reception, Traditional Medicine, Nursing, Health Education, Nutrition, Immunization Clinics, Medication Pick-Up
Anishnaabek Community and Family Services: By appointment only. Call (906) 632-5250 or (800) 726-0093
Veterans Administration Services
**After Hours Urgent Medical Care.
Contact the Tribal Health Clinic that provides your primary medical care for nursing triage to local clinic.

MUNISING AREA BUILDINGS
Kewadin Casino Christmas
N7761 Candy Cane Lane
Christmas, MI 49862
(906) 387-5475
1-800-KEWADIN

Kitchi-Miniss Ednakiiyaang Gamig Grand Island Chippewa Center
Victor Matson, Sr. Community

Center
622 W. Superior Street
Munising, MI 49862
(906) 387-4721
(800) 236-4705
Fax (906) 387-4727
Administration
Board of Director’s Office
Membership Liaison (906) 450-7011
Veterans Administration Services
Elder Luncheon Meetings
Community Gathering Spaces
Maintenance
Health and Human Service Programs- Main Reception/Patient Registration, Medical, Traditional Medicine, Nursing, Medical Records, Medical Referrals, Pharmacist, Audiology, Community Health, Nutrition, Health Education, Behavioral Health
Anishnaabek Community and Family Services (906) 387-3906
**After Hours Urgent Medical Care
(906) 387-4721

White Pine Lodge and Convenience Store
E7889 W. State HWY M-28
Christmas, MI 49862
(906) 387-1111

Youth Education and Activities Program - Munising
Mather Middle School (Facility not owned by Sault Tribe)
411 Elm Street
Munising, MI 49862
(906) 387-2251 Ext. 180
(906) 379-7772

Wetmore YEA Building
6379 Atik Ameg Drive
Wetmore, MI 49895
(906) 387-1014

MANISTIQUE AREA BUILDINGS
Kewadin Casino Manistique
5630 W US 2
Manistique, MI 49854
(906) 341-5510
1-800-KEWADIN

Chigibig Ningabi An (Near the Western Shore) Manistique Tribal Community Center
5698W US Highway 2
Manistique, MI 49854
(906) 341-8469
(866) 401-0043
Fax (906) 341-1321
Administration
Sault Tribe Law Enforcement-For emergencies dial 911
(906) 635-6065
(906) 341-8317
Board of Director’s Office
Membership Liaison (906)341-8469
Veterans Administration Services
Elder Meals (906) 341-9564
Community Gathering Spaces
Maintenance
Health and Human Service Programs- Main Reception/Patient Registration, Medical, Traditional Medicine, Nursing, Medical Records, Medical Referrals, Pharmacy, Dental, Optical, Audiology, Community Health, Nutrition, Health Education and Behavioral Health
Anishnaabek Community and Family Services (906) 341-6993 or (800) 347-7137
**After Hours Urgent Medical Care
(906) 341-8469

Manistique Tribal Fitness Center
5696W US HWY2
Manistique MI 49854
(906) 341-7677

Housing Authority: Escanaba, Newberry, Manistique, Wetmore, Marquette
1176 North Chitoma Drive
Manistique, MI 49854
(906) 341-5145
(888) 353-9502
Maintenance-Eastern and Western

End
(855) 205-2840

Youth Education and Activities Program - Manistique
174 Zhigag
Manistique, MI 49754
(906) 341-3362
(906) 450-5183

MARQUETTE AREA BUILDINGS
Marquette Tribal Community Health Center
(Not owned by Sault Tribe)
1229 West Washington Street Suite 1
Marquette, Michigan 49855
(906) 225-1616
Fax (906) 225-1633
Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-5 p.m. (Closed for lunch)
Telemedicine Services
Membership Liaison (906) 450-7011
Community Health Program
Services- Main Reception, Traditional Medicine, Nursing, Health Education, Nutrition, Immunizations, Medication Pick-Up
Anishnnabek Community and Family Services: By appointment only. Call (906) 632-5250 or (800) 726-0093
Veterans Administration Services
**After Hours Urgent Medical Care.
Contact the Tribal Health Clinic that provides your primary medical care for nursing triage to local clinics.

MidJim University
301 W. Fair Ave.
Marquette, MI 49855
(906) 226-2456

Sawyer Village
250 Voodoo Avenue
Gwinn, MI 49841
(906) 346-3919

Harvey Properties
2250 US 41 South
Marquette, MI 49855
(906) 249-4223
(906) 346-3919

ESCANABA AREA BUILDINGS
Youth Education Activities - Escanaba Area
1226 Wigob
Escanaba, MI 49829
(906) 789-0972

Escanaba Community Center
3721 Jingob Street
Escanaba, MI 49829
(906) 203-5888

GLADSTONE AREA BUILDINGS
Gladstone Tribal Community Health Center
2002 Minneapolis Avenue
Gladstone, MI 49837
(906) 341-1836
Fax (906) 786-0944
Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-5 p.m. (Closed for lunch)
Telemedicine Services
Membership Liaison- (906) 450-7011
Community Health Program Services- Main Reception, Traditional Medicine, Nursing, Telemedicine Clinics, Health Education, Nutrition, Immunization Clinics, Medication Pick-Up
Anishnaabek Community and Family Services: By appointment only. Call (906) 632-5250 or (800) 726-0093
Veterans Administration Services
** After Hours Urgent Medical Care.
Contact the Tribal Health Clinic that provides your primary medical care for nursing triage to local clinic.

Gladstone Tribal Fitness Center
2002 Minneapolis Ave
Gladstone MI 49837
(906) 442-0103

Gas Stations
The following gas stations are offering the discount to Sault Tribe members.

Tribal owned gas stations offering gas and cigarette discounts:
MidJim Convenience Store
2205 Shunk Road
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783

MidJim Convenience Store
3045 Mackinac Trail
St. Ignace, MI 49781

White Pine Lodge and Convenience Store
7889 E. W. M-28
Christmas, MI 49862

Tribal owned gas station offering gas discount only:
MidJimUniversity
301 W. Fair Ave.
Marquette, MI 49855

Not Tribal owned stations offering gas discount only:
Kinross BP
4440 Tone Road
Kincheloe, MI 49788

Cedar Pantry
159 W M-134
Cedarville, MI 49719

Sunoco
13975 M-28
Newberry, MI 49868

Manistique Oil Company
216 Deer Street
Manistique, MI 49854

Carnes Eco Fuels
2300 Ludington Street
Escanaba, MI 49837

Law Enforcement
George K. Nolan Judicial Building
Sault Tribe Law Enforcement/Con-servation (906) 635-6065
For emergencies, dial 911
2175 Shunk Road
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
Law Enforcement Satellite Offices

Kincheloe - There is an officer for the Tribe on duty at this location.
For emergencies, dial 911
(906) 635-6065

Sault Tribe Youth Facility and Sault Tribe Law Enforcement
1130 N. State Street
St. Ignace, MI 49781
Sault Tribe Youth Facility
(906) 643-0941
Sault Tribe Law Enforcement
(906) 635-6065
(906) 643-7210
For emergencies, dial 911

Sault Tribe Law Enforcement Manistique Tribal Community Center
5698 W US-2
Manistique, MI 49854
For emergencies, dial 911
(906) 635-6065
(906) 341-8317

Help Shape the Future of Our Community’s Signage

Join us for Community Workshops in Sault Ste. Marie and Marquette to share your voice, ideas and perspectives. Your input will help guide the creation of new branding and wayfinding signage that honors Anishinaabe culture, language, art, traditions, values, and history—while celebrating our natural environment and band identities.

Oct. 21, 2025, Kewadin Casinos, 2186 Shunk Rd., Sault Ste. Marie, MI 5:30-7 pm
Oct. 22, 2025, Marquette Community Center, 204 Cherry Creek Rd., Marquette, MI 5:30-7 pm

Each participant will receive a \$50 Visa gift card for their time and contributions. Please contact Julia Keefe at julia.keefe@kauffmaninc.com with questions.

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SAULT TRIBE’S 2% PAYMENTS IN 2024

The Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians dispensed nearly \$1.8 million to local units of government in 2024 when figures from the spring and fall expenditures were combined. Under the current agreement with the state of Michigan for gaming revenue sharing, the tribe is required to disburse 2% of its slot revenue to local units of government throughout the seven-county service area. Short term funding is designed to meet specific needs as periodically requested by local units of government, while long-term disbursements are utilized to reflect recurring commitments.

The Sault Tribe contributed more than \$814,000 under the short-term funding mechanism in 2024 with nearly \$163,000 earmarked for each of the five units across the seven-county service area.

In Unit I, the Dafter Township Fire Department received \$25,000 towards a heated storage garage and another \$10,000 for specialized gear.

The City of Sault Ste. Marie received \$2,592.96 for temporary seating for its Art Center, \$20,000 for the Great Lakes recovery New Hope Houses and \$20,139.34 toward the purchase of a new ambulance.

Soo Township took in \$10,000 for radio upgrades and another \$5,000 for trail grooming.

Kinross Township received \$11,500 for Kids’ Fishing Day and another \$12,000 for the Rec Center Children’s Program.

Sugar Island Township received \$10,000 for the purchase of boots and helmets, presumably for the fire department.

Lake Superior State University was awarded \$1,777.77 for counseling services and \$7,905.45 for the Robotics Program.

Brimley Area Schools received \$17,500 to purchase new jerseys.

Bay Mills Community College took in \$10,000 for a project designed to celebrate Ojibwe Culture.

In Unit II, Clark Township received \$5,000 for the Snows Heritage Ballpark upgrades and \$2,150 for the Fireman’s Auxiliary Kid’s Night.

DeTour Township was awarded \$10,000 for a marina park canopy and \$8,813.87, with a similar expenditure for DeTour Village, all going to the Veterans Park. An additional \$15,000 was given to DeTour Village for water tower maintenance.

Hendricks Township received \$8,813.87 for a generator.

Hudson Township was given \$5,000 towards EMT equipment and camera upgrades and another \$4,200 for bathroom fixture replacement.

Pickford Schools received \$8,000 for a mural project while Pickford Township took in \$8,813.87 for the park pavilion and another \$4,800 for electrical upgrades at the museum.

Portage Township was awarded \$8,000 for a community GAGA pit.

Newton Township received \$21,000 towards a fire truck garage and \$8,813.87 for a Veteran’s Walk Project.

The Tahquamenon Area

Schools received \$5,000 to help furnish the library.

Trout Lake Township was awarded \$14,577.0 for a fishing dock, \$8,813.87 for ORV trail improvements and \$2,205 to assist with museum management.

In Unit III, the City of St. Ignace received \$5,000 for a security camera, \$3,000 for a waste water pump, \$5,000 for Straits EMS, \$15,000 for a water department pump, \$10,000 for a fire department foam system, \$2,500 for a city hall video upgrade, \$25,000 for the Ojibwe Museum, \$6,300 for the Huron Waterfront Boardwalk, \$3,000 for crosswalk signs, \$15,000 for CPR devices, \$10,000 dedicated to open skating at Little Bear East, \$15,474, for police patrol rifles, \$5,735.01 dedicated to fire

Manistique Township received \$36,983.22 for a fire tanker.

The Schoolcraft Medical Care Facility received \$9,545 for Memory Lane Life Stations.

Maple Ridge Township was awarded \$2,000 for little league playoffs.

Forsyth Township received \$6,900 for the Sawyer Community Building’s Holiday Events.

Mason Township was awarded \$8,200 for air pack replacement.

Thompson Township was awarded \$17,787.90 for EEG and EKG replacement equipment.

The City of Escanaba received \$4,000 for fire-fighting face masks, \$2,900 for fire-fighting gloves, and \$3,000 for the

Alger County received \$7,000 earmarked for senior service.

Marquette County received \$6,450 for Camp New Day UP, \$5,591.61 for the Superior Watershed, \$7,000 to fund Meals on Wheels, and \$15,815 from the Central UP CISM Mental Health Fund.

And Marquette Area Schools took in \$18,617 for the MAPS Title VI Program.

In total, the tribe committed \$969,388 in long-term funding in 2024. The recipients and the amounts received were as follows:

- Alger County Sheriff’s Office, \$16,000, lodging and law enforcement
- Au Train Township, \$5,000, general government services



- City of St. Ignace, \$5,000, grooming
- Mackinac County Sheriff Office, \$22,500, lodging and law enforcement
- Manistique Township, \$70,000, general government services
- City of Manistique, \$5,000, lodging and law enforcement
- City of Marquette, \$10,000, lodging and law enforcement
- City of Munising, \$32,000, general government services



Rudyard Area Schools received \$30,000 toward its pool in 2024.

hydrants and associated tools, \$14,223.89 to upgrade the waste water system, \$10,000 for the Michigan Historical Society and \$5,000 for fire department ventilation fans.

Mackinac County received \$7,583.22 for spaying and neutering via the animal shelter.

La Salle High School took in \$5,000 for its Robotics Program.

In Unit IV, there was \$3,000 apiece allotted to Gladstone, Escanaba, Manistique, Rapid River Big Bay de Noc, Ishpeming, Negaunee, Mid-Peninsula, and Gwinn Area Schools for Native American education.

Gladstone Area Schools also received \$1,500 dedicated to the Glockenspiels for All Program and an additional \$3,000 for other educational purposes and \$1,000 for drums.

Rapid River Schools was awarded \$2,000 for a Lego League and another \$2,000 for other educational purposes.

Escanaba Area Schools took in \$4,000 for educational purposes.

after school program.

The City of Manistique received \$5,000 for Little Bear West open skates.

Manistique High School took in \$10,000 for its pool, while \$16,000 was dispensed to Bay de Noc Community College for the YMCA gym and pool.

In Unit V, the City of Marquette received \$5,000 for the Children’s Museum and another \$5,000 for the Maritime Museum, plus \$9,185 for the police wireless modems for cars and \$3,460.98 earmarked for YMCA Youth Programs.

The City of Munising received \$25,000 for the Alger County Food Pantry, \$7,500 for the Munising Bay Trail Network and \$2,500 to put rubber flooring in the ice arena.

Au Train Township received \$10,165.61 for the Noquemanon Trail Network.

Munising Schools took in \$11,876 for Native American education\$3,686 for Mather Elementary Native American Education and \$18,968.92 for musical instruments.

- Chippewa County, \$30,000, general government services
- Chippewa County Probate Court, \$7,500, foster care
- Clark Township, \$7,000, general government services.
- Delta County Sheriff Office, \$16,000, lodging and law enforcement
- Bay De Noc Community College, \$16,000, Delta County YMCA
- City of Escanaba, \$10,000, law enforcement
- Kinross Charter Township, \$35,000, law enforcement
- Lake Superior State University, \$76,300, Gem of the North
- Rudyard Area Schools, \$30,000, pool
- Hulbert Township, \$5,000, snowmobile trail
- City of St. Ignace, \$10,500, Museum of Ojibwe Culture
- City of St. Ignace, \$13,000, road improvements
- City of St. Ignace, \$10,000, lodging and law enforcement
- City of St. Ignace, \$7,000, American Legion Park

- City of Munising, \$18,000, recreation program
- Munising Township, \$5,000, general government services
- Sault Area Public School, \$40,316, Title VII Advocate
- Sault Area Public Schools, \$30,000, PILT
- City of Sault Ste. Marie, \$300,000, general government services
- Schoolcraft County Sheriff Department, \$16,000, lodging and law enforcement
- St. Ignace Schools, \$18,900, student advocate
- St. Ignace Township, \$20,000, general government services
- Newton Township, \$7,000, Gould City Museum
- Clark Township, \$5,000, grooming
- Munising Township, \$5,000, grooming
- Schoolcraft County, \$5,000, grooming
- Consolidated Community Schools, \$86,372, GED completion.

SAULT TRIBE EDC & ENTERPRISES 2024 OVERVIEW

SAULT TRIBE EDC & ENTERPRISES

In 2024, Sault Tribe EDC experienced a positive shift in mission and structure, with a renewed focus on forming strategic partnerships with proven operators and streamlining processes to align with best commercial business practices. The organization continues to manage a diverse portfolio of non-gaming enterprises, including MidJim Convenience Stores, White Pine Lodge and C-Store, Gitchi Home & Auto Sales, a broad real estate portfolio, golf operations, and business development initiatives.

This past year, Sault Tribe EDC, in partnership with Community Housing Network (CHN) and other organizations, launched the Garfield Landing Housing Development, which held an open house in June 2024. The tribe is a limited partner in this initiative, which provides much-needed affordable housing in Sault Ste. Marie. The EDC plans on pursuing similar projects in 2025.

Another significant milestone was the release of federal grant funds from USDA-RUS under the ReConnect 3 program, totaling approximately \$24 million. These funds will support the development of broadband infrastructure spanning from Sault Ste. Marie to St. Ignace. To advance this initiative, the Sault Tribe EDC has formed a development and operational partnership with Cherry Capital Connections, a proven and successful operator with extensive experience managing networks below the bridge.

According to consolidated financial statements from the Sault Tribe Budget Department, combined revenue from non-gaming enterprises totaled more than \$23 million in 2024, contributing \$1,085,870 to the tribe through tribal tax.

COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISES

MidJim Convenience Stores

The MidJim Convenience Stores remain important community hubs on reservation lands, valued not only as gas stations and convenience outlets but also as gathering places. In 2024, the Sault MidJim introduced a hot dog roller, expanding food options and further enhancing its role as a social hub.

By utilizing the tribe’s tax-exempt status on fuel and tobacco, MidJim locations provided direct savings of \$895,755 to tribal members in Sault Ste. Marie and St. Ignace.

White Pine Lodge & C-Store

Located near Kewadin Christmas, White Pine Lodge remains a popular destination for snowmobilers and Upper Peninsula tourists. Occupancy rates reached 100% during peak seasons. The adjacent C-Store also provided \$30,452 in direct member savings through tax-exempt discounts.

MidJim University (Marquette)

In 2024, the Marquette location transitioned from a BP station to a MidJim, with all fuel pumps upgraded. Now aligned with other MidJim locations, the store partnered with S. Abraham & Sons to expand its product offerings.

Tribal members saved an additional \$43,814 through fuel and tobacco discounts.

All four C-Store locations also participated in the 2024 S. Abraham & Sons trade show, providing managers the opportunity to test new products and access merchandise at discounted rates.

Gitchi Home & Auto is a Class A vehicle licensed dealership offering a wide selection of products, including Genuine Scooters, quality used vehicles, Amish-built sheds, and more than 175 floor-plans of Champion and Fairmont HUD and MOD homes.

The year 2024 marked the first full year of operations at the new 3 Mile Road location, as well as Gitchi’s inaugural year as a member of the Michigan Manufactured Housing Association (MMHA). Membership provides valuable insights into the home-buying process, enabling Gitchi to serve as trusted consultants rather than simply sales representatives. This role strengthens Gitchi’s ability to deliver high-quality products and a positive customer experience at competitive rates.

Building on vehicle purchasing that began in 2023 with Clare Auto Auctions, LLC, Gitchi expanded in 2024 by adding West Michigan Auto Auction as a second vendor. This diversification, combined with increased visibility and foot traffic at the new location, allowed Gitchi to nearly double sales, from 45 vehicles in 2023 to 71 in 2024.

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT ENTERPRISES

DeMawating Development in Kincheloe and Sawyer Village in Gwinn continue to play a central role in the Sault Tribe’s commitment to providing affordable housing, storage, and commercial solutions throughout the Eastern Upper Peninsula. These enterprises remain strong and sustainable investments, meeting essential community needs while generating long-term value for the Tribe.

Sawyer Village managed 416 units in 2024, with its main office and residential community located in Gwinn. Of these, 228 were residential units, achieving an impressive 96% occupancy rate with 219 units filled. Housing options include 3- and 4-bedroom apartments, duplexes, and single-family homes, with monthly rental rates ranging from \$690 to \$875. Beyond its Gwinn operations, Sawyer Village also oversees residential and storage properties in Christmas, Manistique, Chocolay, Escanaba, and Gladstone. The portfolio includes 185 indoor and outdoor storage spaces and several commercial buildings available for lease, making Sawyer Village a comprehensive hub for housing and storage solutions across the Upper Peninsula.

DeMawating Development, headquartered in Kincheloe, managed a portfolio of 383 units in 2024, consisting of 301 residential units, 5 commercial spaces, 70 storage units, 3 industrial facilities, and 8 office units. Occupancy rates remained strong across most categories, including 93% for residential 100% for commercial spaces 62% for office space, and 86% for storage.

DeMawating Development



Above, Gitchi Home & Auto. Below, Portage Place.



manages three industrial units within the Crane Industrial Warehouse, located on the Odenaang reservation in Sault Ste. Marie. The facility consists of two 5,000-square-foot units and one 10,000-square-foot unit. As of 2024, all units are fully leased, with rental rates ranging from \$2,292 to \$4,583 per month.

While the main office is located in Kincheloe, DeMawating Development also manages properties in Cedarville, Hessel, St. Ignace, Naubinway, DeTour, and Sault Ste. Marie, extending its reach across the EUP. This wide distribution allows DeMawating to serve multiple communities while maintaining a balanced and sustainable portfolio.

Residential offerings include three- and four-bedroom duplexes, single-family homes, single- and double-wide trailers, as well as studios, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom apartments. Rental prices range from \$450 to \$1,200 per month, ensuring a wide variety of affordable housing options.

In 2024, DeMawating further expanded its portfolio with the acquisition of a 22-unit residential apartment building with three commercial spaces. Renovations are underway, with five residential units already updated, all windows replaced, and common areas refreshed with new paint and maintenance upgrades continuing into 2025.

DeMawating also offers a range of storage solutions, from small units to large drive-in bays, with rental rates ranging from \$65 to \$3,100 per month for

entire large facility. These facilities maintained a 90% occupancy rate in 2024, underscoring their importance as part of the portfolio.

GOLF OPERATIONS

In 2024, Tanglewood Marsh Golf Course in Sault Ste. Marie enhanced the golfing experience by introducing a virtual golf option inside the clubhouse. The course spans 145 acres with a 5,300-yard layout from the back tees. Well-regarded by local golfers and event organizers, Tanglewood Marsh offers not only an 18-hole course but also versatile indoor and outdoor event spaces, supported by dining, beverage, and catering services.

Bear on the Mountain Golf Course (formerly Hessel Ridge), located in Hessel, Michigan, covers 155 acres with a 6,300-yard layout from the back tees. Celebrated for its scenic views and high-quality greens.

Business Development

Sault Tribe Thrive continued its work under a Minority Business Development Agency grant, supporting more than 300 Tribal members or member-owned businesses since 2019. In 2024 alone there were 44 new additions to the Thrive network database of Sault Tribe member-owned businesses.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2025

— Broadband infrastructure construction will begin across the Sault Tribe broadband network, creating jobs and providing affordable high-speed internet.

— Sault Tribe Thrive transitions to U.S. Treasury funding through the State Small Business Credit Initiative, establishing a Capital Fund to provide loan support for Tribal member-owned businesses nationwide.

— White Pine Lodge will move to a seasonal operating model to maximize profitability.

— Sawyer Village will redevelop 42 long-vacant units from the former K.I. Sawyer Air Force Base, bringing new housing options to the community. Sawyer Village is a 30-minute drive from Marquette.

— MidJim University will collaborate with NMU’s Power Project to modernize infrastructure.

— The Enterprise Authority Code will be finalized, providing a governance framework to align operations fully with commercial standards.

— Additional real estate acquisitions, including the Guest House and duplex located on the property will be purchased in 2025.

— Complete renovations at Portage Place.

The past year reflects meaningful progress for Sault Tribe EDC and Enterprises. By aligning with strong partners, pursuing innovative projects, and maintaining a focus on community benefit, we have strengthened our businesses and created long-term value for the Tribe. As we move into 2025, we remain committed to balancing sustainable growth with providing revenue and tax base for services to our members.