

# QUARTERLY

TURTLE PRESS

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## Together As One

Discover the story behind the re-establishment of the Bodéwadmi Confederation.  
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## Investing in Wellness

Learn about FireKeeper's pharmacy debut and plans to open a clinic to improve healthcare access for FKCH team members.  
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## Michigan's Tribal Liaison

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NOTTAWASEPPI HURON BAND OF THE POTAWATOMI

A FEDERALLY RECOGNIZED TRIBAL GOVERNMENT

## Business Update

Article and Photos Provided by Waséyabek



In February, Waséyabek acquired Great Lakes Warehousing and 156 acres of surrounding property in Holland, MI.

Since the last Quarterly Turtle Press in fall 2024, much has transpired at Waséyabek, leading to what has been a prosperous 2025 to date.

In February, we completed the acquisition of Great Lakes Warehousing in Holland, Michigan, along with 156 acres of surrounding property. A collaborative effort with portfolio companies Zip Xpress and Green Transportation, the acquisition paves the way for future business expansion and economic growth opportunities at the site. The Waséyabek team continues to work with our leadership team and Board of Directors to identify opportunities at the site that best support our family of companies, future acquisitions, and the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi (NHBP) Tribe in alignment with our strategic plan.

Just a few months later, in April, Deidra Mitchell, Waséyabek President and CEO, traveled to Harvard University to provide a guest lecture for students in the Kennedy School's "Nation Building II: Native Americans in the Twenty First Century" course. For the third straight year, Mitchell engaged in a dynamic discussion with students on the guiding principles of our economic development approach and how we

integrate the Harvard Project on Indigenous Governance and Development into our everyday operations. Dyami Harris, Waséyabek intern and NHBP Tribal Member, initiated the discussion by sharing a cultural moment that touched on portions of NHBP's history.

May marked the kick-off of our new quarterly reporting format, which is based on feedback Waséyabek received from Tribal Members via a survey distributed in 2024. The new format,



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which is delivered to membership via presentations conducted at Tribal Council meetings, offers more insight into our financials and performance against goals identified in our strategic plan. The next quarterly update will be offered during the Tribal Council meeting on Nov. 20. The most recent presentation, (given during the



17 interns joined the Waséyabek family of companies this summer. Pictured from left to right are Waséyabek corporate interns: Dyami Harris, Strategic Engagement Department (NHBP Tribal Member); Viktorria Debeliuk, HR Department; Colin Callahan, IT Department; and Elizabeth Kucharek, Marketing & Communications Department.

Tribal Council meeting on Aug. 14) along with a wide variety of other resources and tools, can be accessed on the Waséyabek page on the Members Only website.

In the second quarter of the year, Waséyabek Federal Group (WFG) secured several meaningful wins. Fed95 won a significant contract with Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR), representing \$37.5 million over five years. The contract includes support and services for NAVAIR and Commander, Fleet Readiness Centers (COMFRC). Additionally, Waséyabek Federal Services (WFS) was awarded a Site Operations Support (SOS) services contract from the National Energy and Technology Laboratory (NETL). This contract represents a five-year agreement and has a total value of \$205 million. WFS's Professional Services Group also captured a \$15 million contract with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's ReConnect program, which supports rural broadband internet expansion across the nation.

During the summer, 17 interns joined the Waséyabek family of companies across our portfolio. Interns performed work at Waséyabek, Baker Engineering, RSI Manufacturing, Safari Circuits, and VES, operating within the fields of finance, human resources, marketing, engineering, information technology, supply

chain, and more.

In August, we announced a passive investment with Michigan Capital Network. The \$5 million investment targets key advanced technology industries within the defense sector and is aligned with our five-year strategic plan to expand NHBP's portfolio while strengthening our position in defense initiatives. The investment will help Waséyabek identify emerging companies that are poised to offer innovative goods and services to the federal government. Also in August, Crain's Grand Rapids published its list of the largest minority-owned businesses in West Michigan. For the second straight year, Waséyabek topped this list, an honor that reflects the continued resilience and tenacity of the NHBP Tribe.

While we have seen much success in 2025, we recognize that more work always remains to be done. Please continue to follow along with our progress throughout the year by visiting [waseyabek.com](http://waseyabek.com) and accessing the Waséyabek page on the Members Only website at [members.nhbp-nsn.gov/waseyabek](http://members.nhbp-nsn.gov/waseyabek).

# 2024 Michigan Non-Gaming Tribal Economic Impact Study

## Highlighting Tribes' Critical Contributions to Statewide Economy

Article and Cover Photo Provided by Waséyabek

In late August, Waséyabek, with support from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), published the 2024 Michigan Non-Gaming Tribal Economic Impact Study. The report contains the most comprehensive review of non-gaming economic growth and impact to date involving Tribal Nations in Michigan.

The study updates data previously collected in 2019. It contains information submitted by all 12 of Michigan's federally recognized Native American Tribes. Project management for the work was conducted at Waséyabek by three Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi (NHBP) Tribal Members – Jessi Goldner, project lead, Heather TePastte, project manager, and Dyami Harris, project team member. aLocal.ai, a Native-owned business that performs economic impact analysis, assisted with data gathering and analysis.

The study found that 78 Tribal Business Entities (TBEs) across the state generated a total economic impact of \$1.24 billion last year, a significant increase from the \$288.76 million reported for 2019.

“The economic power of Tribal businesses is growing exponentially each year and delivering great benefits to Tribal communities and the entire state,” said Deidra Mitchell, President and CEO of Waséyabek. “Economic diversity provides a path to future sustainability, sovereignty, and self-governance for Tribes that engage in non-gaming business development. Proof of

that is clear to see in this report.”

Additional data shows the TBEs, on average, have been in operation for 15.3 years, with an average revenue of \$10.32 million per entity. Additionally, Michigan Tribes collectively employed 2,819 workers (direct), with an average wage for those employees of \$59,971.

The results of the study indicate just how critical Tribal Nations are to progressing and sustaining Michigan's economy. Non-gaming business enterprises have grown considerably over the past five years, bringing prosperity to communities throughout the state along with greater economic sovereignty to indigenous peoples.

“Guided by the principle of Seven Generation Thinking, we are called to make choices that protect our culture, our people, and our future. This report shows how non-gaming economic development is helping us do just that,” said Jessi Goldner, Vice President of Strategic Engagement at Waséyabek and project lead for the study. “While Tribal sovereignty is supported by many pillars, expanding economic opportunity is a critical one. By investing beyond gaming, our communities are building greater economic independence and strengthening the foundation for long-term self-governance and self-determination.”

# 2025 LEAD Program

## Represents Largest Cohort to Date

Article and Cover Photo Provided by Waséyabek

For several years, Waséyabek's Leadership and Exploration (LEAD) program has provided Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi (NHBP) Tribal Members with a pathway to enhance professional skills, achieve personal goals, and realize career aspirations. In 2025, for the first time, the program also included members of other Tribal Nations, including the Oglala Lakota, Yakutat Tlingit, and Diné (Navajo).

With 10 participants, the 2025 cohort represents the largest LEAD group to date. Starting in late May and throughout June, participants engaged in a series of immersive sessions exploring Waséyabek's operations and diverse portfolio of companies. Professions and industries covered during the sessions included:

- Business Consulting & Business Development
- Electronics Manufacturing
- Environmental Consulting and Remediation
- Executive Management
- Finance
- Government Contracting
- Human Resources
- Information Technology
- Legal
- Logistics, Trucking, & Warehousing
- Manufacturing & Engineering
- Marketing & Communications
- Real Estate Management
- Tribal Engagement

The cohort also took part in teambuilding activities and site visits to Michigan-based Waséyabek portfolio companies Baker Engineering, Zip Xpress/Green Transportation, and Safari Circuits.

Jessi Goldner, Vice President of Strategic Engagement at Waséyabek and NHBP Tribal Member, led the program alongside Heather TePastte, Waséyabek Strategic Engagement Project Manager and NHBP Tribal Member, and Dyami Harris, Waséyabek Strategic Engagement Intern and NHBP Tribal Member.

“Each year in the LEAD program is special, but this one was particularly so due to having the opportunity to not only support NHBP Tribal Members, but those from other Tribal Nations as well,” said Goldner. “Seeing the participants interact and form bonds while gaining so much from Waséyabek team members and our portfolio companies further solidifies just how beneficial LEAD can be.”

Traci Pelton, NHBP Tribal Member and participant in this year's program, noted that she enjoyed the deep level of insight into Waséyabek she obtained through LEAD.

“As members, we get presentations covering everything going on at Waséyabek, but this gives you a front-row seat and the intimate experience of seeing it in person,” she said. “I left the program feeling super excited about our economic development and wanting to play a role. It was also a great way for me to network with the Waséyabek team, portfolio companies, and other Tribal Members.”

Waséyabek is proud to offer the LEAD program annually. The next sessions will take place in summer 2026, with sign-ups opening early in the year. More information is available at [waseyabek.com/lead](http://waseyabek.com/lead).

Ten participants successfully completed the Leadership Exploration and Development (LEAD) program in 2025, representing the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi, Oglala Lakota, Diné (Navajo), and Yakutat Tlingit. Pictured, clockwise from top-left: Dyami Harris, NHBP (staff member), Traci Pelton, NHBP; Leo Mandokla, NHBP; Alex Rogers, NHBP; Kevin Harris II, NHBP; Anzhenni Dandridge, NHBP; Jessi Goldner, NHBP (staff); Heather TePastte, NHBP (staff); Matthew Koeman, Yakutat Tlingit; Rachel Wenzlaw, Oglala Lakota; Eron Caserito, Diné (Navajo); Deyn TePastte, NHBP. Not pictured: Jim Mrađ, NHBP (Elder).

