



OUR KEY PROGRAMS

Asset Management

Conduct inspections and report on the condition of community infrastructure assets.

Circuit Rider Trainer Program

Provide training and support for water and wastewater treatment plant operators.

Environment and Lands Management

Provide environmental management and planning services, training and outreach.

Fire and Safety Protection

Provide fire prevention programming, inspection services, fire department assessments, strategic planning support and training opportunities for fire personnel.

Information Technology/ Telehealth

Deliver information technology services such as high speed internet, IT support, eHealth and Telehealth solutions.

Youth Initiatives

Facilitate learning and training opportunities to promote careers in science and technology.

About TSAG...

The idea of TSAG began in 1996 and was created from Chiefs of Alberta to develop, build and deliver core technical services to Alberta First Nation communities. TSAG has grown in programs, services and staff over the past 20 years and continues to provide quality technical services and training. Our staff of professionals are diverse in culture and knowledge, and understand the complexity of challenges facing First Nation communities today.

TSAG is mandated by the Chiefs of Alberta and takes direction from a Chiefs Steering Committee and Board of Directors made up of representatives from Treaty 6, 7 and 8.

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**First Nations Technical Services
Advisory Group Inc.
18232—102 Ave
Edmonton, AB T5S 1S7**

**Contact us:
Phone: 780.483.8601
Fax: 780.483.8632
Email: comm@tsag.net
Website: www.tsag.net
Facebook: @FNTSAG**



2019 ENVIRONMENTAL YOUTH CAMP



Students from all corners of Alberta arrived at Centre For Outdoor Education to meet Eagle, Rosey and Alex from TSAG. After seeing their loved ones off, everyone gathered in the Roundhouse for an opening prayer and review of the agenda. Journals, backpacks and TSAG jackets were gifted to each attendee and the evening was wrapped up with ice-breakers and time to decorate their journals; which would eventually be filled with material to fulfill their 2 CTS credits (ENS 1040, Environmental Stewardship and WLD 1010, Introduction to Wildlife) in the coming week.

The group met up with our Circuit Rider Trainer, Rod Badger. He taught students water chemistry tests—turbidity and dissolved oxygen content—that he utilizes in his job. Water was collected from a nearby high mountain stream and compare to water collected downstream near Rocky Mountain House.

The journey continued on to the Columbia Icefield Glacier Adventure where students explored the Learning Centre and learned shocking comparisons exemplifying the glaciers recent accelerated recession—speaking to the changes brought on by anthropogenic climate change. The group took the short journey up onto the actual glacier, which was very cool for students to notice the different glacier morphology and learn about the processes of accumulation and ablation (net ice melting). Following our lesson on water quality testing, students were very excited to collect some of the pure melt water from the glaciers surface.

Conservation Officer, Eric Brownrigg, along with Park Rangers, Rebecca Tigchelaar and Jason Duncalfe, stopped by to talk to the youth about the different training and daily job activities of these careers, which included but was not limited to; enforcing proper land use regulations around the area, dealing with intoxicated park/public land users, live bear trapping, and relocation and/or disposal of dangerous animals to name a few!

Beautiful weather allowed the group a trip to the Kooteney Plains Climbing area. After basic safety training and getting gear fitted they headed to the top-rope setups and students began scaling the cliffs to the top! Half of the group walked up the hill to a different location and repelled down a steep face with an overhang and drop, about 2/3rds of the way down.



An elder from Smallboy Camp spoke to the youth bringing a traditional cultural perspective to the lecture having grown up in the Kooteney plains some 60 years previous. He shared stories about roping wild horses across the meadow when he was a young boy and hiking most of the high mountain peaks surrounding Kooteney Plains as a child.

Larson and Juliann Yellowbird came by for a visit where Juliann taught the students traditional dance/active style moccasin making and decorating. Everyone made and was able to take home their very own pair of hand-made moccasins.



The group was divided into two and headed off for either Whitewater rafting, or Kayaking at Fish Pond and Biotic Water Testing: Invertebrate Survey at Haven Creek. During Kayaking the youth played water games—relay races, follow the leader and kayak water polo. The biotic portion of the water testing gave them a chance to do a survey of a local stream by catching, collecting, identifying and tallying all the bugs and invertebrate they could sample.

Tony Thepsouvanh, Health Canada, spoke with the youth about careers in Environmental Health and following him was a visit from Robert Grandjambe Jr. who showed his huge collection of furs that he has personally trapped. He talked about his experience as a trapper and his family's traditional trap lines located all the way to Northwest Territories from Lake Athabasca. He explained the dichotomy of colonial hunting and fishing regulations relative to Indigenous traditional land-use management practices and how ecosystems were managed by Nations.

Whitewater rafting was a fun adventure where the group was explained what source water is and provided with examples on riparian habitat and landscape changes as we moved downstream on the North Saskatchewan River. This activity tied together what they learned about the water cycle, how it is so integral to ecosystem form and function, and how it interconnects all life on earth. The group conducted a water sample on the North Saskatchewan River, and changes to the water were quite evident. Testing concluded increased turbidity, higher nitrates and phosphates as well as changes to pH, this showed youth the impacts of human activities on our source water.

The group went on a wildlife tracking and scat identification hike, and were very excited to learn some outdoor survival skills and test their knowledge of the local animals and ecosystems. Brown bear claw marks on a tree was one of the most exciting sightings!

As a recap and closure to the camp, youth do presentations to their parents when they are picked up. The presentations were amazing with the youth showcasing what they had learned, sharing their personal experiences and what they learned along with the journeys they shared with us at TSAG! One presentation was from the perspective of an ancient tree on the ecosystem changes that took place and what he observed around him since pre-colonization up to contemporary times. Very touching! We look forward to the next camp!

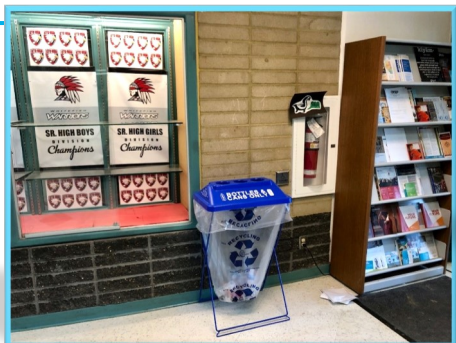
School Recycling Program

Alex, our Outreach Coordinator with the Sustainable Communities team spent some time in Whitefish Lake First Nation (Atikameg) at the end of June to help implement a full scale recycling system for Atikameg School. This coming school year the students will learn how to divert all refundable bottles, papers and plastics! They are now also signed up for the “School Recyclers Program” through Bottle Depot Alberta. This initiative will separate paper, cardboard, other plastics and metal in their specific waste streams for proper processing. It is hoped that this year the recycle project will be lead by the 6th graders by having them make sticker labels and do presentations on the importance of recycling to the other classes. Each class was also provided with small recycle bins, donated by TSAG.

Alex has also been working with Maskwacîs Education Schools Commission’s “Nanâtohk Mîciwin” (or Universal School Foods Strategy) to find a cardboard recycler for their cardboard recycling program. MESC is doing all of the collection and sorting for the 11 schools they service, and would like to eventually expand in the future to other recycling streams as well. TSAG is also providing educational signage and material for their composting system.

Keeping busy with the recycling program, Alex has been working with Saddle Lake Cree Nation to coordinate an Alberta Recycling Management Authority Electronics Fundraiser through a new school pilot program that will take place with teachers, students, staff and parents in Saddle Lake. Check out our Facebook page and website for details about this program.

If you would like to get your school, or community, involved in a recycle program—Pam, Aaron and Alex from our Sustainable Communities team would love to hear from you!





LEVEL II GRAVEL ROAD MAINTENANCE COURSE

TSAG held our first ever Level II Gravel Roads Maintenance course! This 3-day course was held at Olds College, where they offer a 12 week Heavy Equipment Operator Certificate Program. TSAG's partnership with Olds College offers this condensed opportunity to First Nation Grader Operators in Alberta who might be looking for additional training and experience specific to a Grader. This course was held August 26-28, 2019 and was offered to previous participants of the Gravel Road Maintenance course. It provided a more in depth look at actual and unique gravel road situations, along with more hands-on training with the graders.

For more information on the Grader courses offered by TSAG please contact Winslow or Jenn.

We were excited to welcome Yellowhead Tribal College to TSAG in July! Amanda, our Director of Lands and Environment, provided our guests with brochures and handouts on our programs and services and a tour of the office, while each Department Manager offered an overview of their staff's current activities and involvement with the YTC communities.

Fire Hydrant Operations & Maintenance Courses

John D'Or Prairie: Aug. 27 & 28

Paul First Nation: Sept. 26 & 27



Our Circuit Rider Troubleshooter, Blair is facilitating TSAG's new Fire Hydrant Operations & Maintenance course which have been held in John D'or Prairie and Paul First Nation this quarter. This two-day course provides hands-on and technical training with a focus on hydrant inspections, service, maintenance, and repairs. Participants are taught winterizing, breakaway repair, flow and pressure testing demonstrations and much more.

For the past 4 years Blair has been throughout Alberta repairing and services fire hydrants under our Fire Hydrant Operations & Maintenance Program and he is excited to now be offering this training in the communities. Water Treatment/Distribution System Operators and Public Works staff who are responsible for the operation and maintenance of their water distribution system are recommended to take this course. For more information on this course, contact our office or check the CRT calendar on our website.

Skills Link and Summer Internship

Through the Skills Link Program and a summer internship opportunity with Yellowhead Tribal College, this summer TSAG invited 3 students to join the team to gain work experience in our Environment and Administration departments. These three ladies were a pleasure to have in the office and were very helpful in all tasks and duties they were assigned.

"I loved the environment of the office. Everyone was so kind and made it easy to adapt to the workplace" ~ Braydee, 2019 Data Entry Clerk



Junior Forest Ranger Program

Right after her busy week at the Environmental Youth Camp, TSAG's Youth Outreach Coordinator, Eagle was off again to do surface water stream testing with the Junior Forest Ranger Crew! These one-day sessions offer Junior Forest Rangers education on abiotic and biotic factors that are used to determine the health of surface water in a given area. Eagle shows students how to conduct a site diagram, stream velocity assessment, water chemistry testing, and invertebrate surveys. At Hardisty Creek near Kinsman Park in Hinton, Alberta the group found all extra picky taxa of invertebrate including: mayflies, stoneflies and even one caddisfly—quite a rare find! One of the youth from Beaver First Nation, near High Level, even confessed to Eagle "You know...I thought this was going to be really boring, but this was actually fun"!

This surface water testing is also available to First Nation Schools. If you are interested and would like to know more, please contact our Environment Department or our Youth Outreach Coordinator, Eagle.

Sturgeon Lake Source Water Protection Plan

Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation (SLCN) has been working with TSAG since the fall of 2018 on the Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation Source Water Protection Plan. A source water protection plan is a proactive, community-driven document with the goal of keeping a community's drinking water safe from potential contaminants. Through the support of Chief and Council and the hard work of the SLCN working committee, the Nation's plan is nearly complete. Two community engagement events were held in August - one Elders' Meeting and one for the broader community. The events were a huge success, reaching over 100 people and gaining important insight into the community's concerns and priorities regarding water. SLCN is already seeing benefits from having a plan in place including an improved API score, enhanced access to information pertaining to on-reserve oil and gas activity, and leveraged money for conducting a study to look at the health of vegetation around the source of their drinking water. Healthy vegetation around a water body is able to act like a sponge taking up excess nutrients or contaminants better protecting the water. SLCN has taken an exciting step in protecting their water source, Sturgeon Lake

TSAG's Senior Management Planning Advisor, Laura Machial, worked with Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation to coordinate the Source Water Protection Plan's development and collect information from technical and cultural knowledge holders in the community.



PUBLIC WORKS SUPERVISOR TRAINING

We will be contacting Public Works employees to take part in this 3 Level Public Works Supervisor Certification designed to offer Work Experience Units (WEU) and Management Training Units (MTU).

If you would like more information on this program contact our office or watch for information on our website or Facebook page.



Rural Addressing System Project

Elaine was in Dene Tha' First Nation in August and provided an overview of the emergency road addressing system to a small group working on the project. The group discussed the process and steps needed to create a road addressing network. They then confirmed that all roads were identified on maps provided by TSAG and highlighted roads that were to be named. The next step is to establishing a committee in each of the 3 communities of Dene Tha' First Nation—Chateh, Meander River and Bushe who will be responsible for naming the roads.



During Alexander First Nations Treaty days, Elaine handed out fridge magnets to community members. Households were provided with their official addresses written on the magnet. It has been very exciting to see this project come full circle! For information on the Alexander Rural Addressing System project check out our April—June 2019 newsletter!

‘INTRODUCTION TO WATER AND WASTEWATER SYSTEMS’ FOR WATER/WASTEWATER SYSTEM OPERATORS

The Circuit Rider Trainer program is excited to announce the new ‘Introduction to Water and Wastewater Systems for Water/Wastewater System Operators’ course. This two-day course will provide 5 CEU’s to successful participants and is a complete manual and guide to being a Water and Wastewater Operator.

Contact your CRT or our office for more information, and check out the new CRTP calendar on our website!



Telehealth Program



History of ...

Looking back, the first decade was about establishing the connections. The second decade was about figuring out how to use the technology, and now the third decade has been about going beyond the Health Center and into the community. Recently we have introduced new technologies and new opportunities. Today, Telehealth is well established as an effective way to deliver high quality health services. It is being used by many First Nations as an important part of their Community Health Plan. The technology has improved, the connection has improved, and the support provided has improved. Importantly, the telehealth "system" from equipment to services, is under the control of TSAG, a First Nations entity. We are proud that the connection and the services are of a high quality and providing a benefit to the community.

More about the Program...

The First Nations Telehealth Network (FNTN) is a service that supports the First Nations communities use of videoconference equipment for clinical, educational and administrative purposes. Through the use of the FNTN, TSAG is able to provide exceptional Telehealth services such as: videoconferencing bridge management, session and endpoint configuration, support, and session scheduling & training for end users. Telehealth has seen unprecedented growth in Alberta due to the support of TSAG and First Nations in Alberta as well as other external partners.

The FNTN offers videoconferencing capabilities to health services such as hospitals, emergency rooms, doctor's office, mental health support and many more services. As well as health support, FNTN also provides access to ongoing education sessions of many varieties provided across Alberta. As of 2016, 52 First Nations Health Centres, Nursing Stations and Treatment Centres across Alberta have been equipped with videoconferencing equipment. This equipment allows for First Nations communities to connect with vital health resources and education services across Alberta and even Canada. Every Health Centre on the FNTN is equipped with a boardroom/general Health Centre unit. These units are used for connecting to education sessions, attending meetings and other Telehealth sessions. Some sites are supplied with a mobile clinical cart. These carts are primarily used for clinical sessions however, they can also be used to connect to education sessions, while also allowing patients to see practitioners in a safe and secure location while still getting the clinical care they need.



Contact Us

Website: www.firstnationsth.ca

Phone: 1-888-999-3356

Email: vchelp@firstnationsth.ca

TSAG Staff Spotlight—Samantha Houle

How long have you been an employee of TSAG? And what is your position?

I have been with TSAG for 4 1/2 years and I am the operations officer.

What is your favorite/the best thing about working at TSAG and being a TSAG employee?

The support that is given to the staff for training. Also being able to travel our beautiful province and see the land.

What experiences and knowledge have you gained from working at TSAG?

I have gained so much knowledge and experienced a lot in the 4.5 years I have been here. Initially I started out as a GIS data collector and I am currently now an operations office on the admin side. I have travelled all across Alberta either collecting data or presenting to students.

Share a story from your time at TSAG...

One of the highlights during my time with TSAG was attending the youth camp that we offered. Being out with the students as some experience new things and see their faces light up.

Tell us something that would surprise us about you... I carried the Olympic torch in 2010

What's one thing on your bucket list? To travel to Ireland

What are your hobbies and interests? Playing sports and watching my daughter play her sports



- ◇ Rod Badger, CRT Central—11 years!
- ◇ Winslow Davis, ACRS Manager—10 years!
- ◇ Sam Nelson, Web Developer—8 years!
- ◇ Rosey Radmanovich, Environmental Liaison—6 years!
- ◇ Ross Willness, Environmental Planning and Policy Analyst—3 years!
- ◇ Robert Avveduti, National HCAP Liaison—2 years!
- ◇ Gilbert Hamelin, CRT Northeast—2 years!
- ◇ Alex LaForce, Sustainable Communities Outreach Intern—1 year!







Our summer has been filled with laughs and fun memories!

We enjoyed a visit from a polar bear on one of the hottest days of the summer! He was our previous Housing Maintenance Trainer, Rick L. who decided to drop by for a very welcomed surprise visit.

Who doesn't enjoy a BBQ lunch?! We sure do! Staff enjoy coming together to share in a meal. What a nice way to show appreciation for all our hard work.

The 102.3 Now Radio truck-sicle even dropped by and paid us a visit with some yummy popsicles!

TSAG is proud to say that we have successfully passed our audit for safety and are once again COR Certified!

Upcoming Events & Reminders

October is Fire Safety Month!

**October 6—12, 2019—National
Fire Prevention Week**

<https://www.nfpa.org/Public-Education/Staying-safe/Preparedness/Fire-Prevention-Week>

#FirePreventionWeek



***Circuit Rider Training Program
upcoming courses for Water
Operators. Stay up-to-date with
information by checking out the
new CRTP calendar on our website
and following us on Facebook.***

www.tsag.net

Facebook: @FNTSAG

Our annual Water Conference is taking place in October! The conference provides information, workshops, and presentations all water related to those in the water field. Check our website for poster and registration forms, or contact the office.

TSAG
presents
**2019
Water Conference**
“Think Outside the Sink”

The First Nations Technical Services Group Inc. (TSAG) provides technical services and training for Alberta First Nations in the Treaty 6, Treaty 7, and Treaty 8 areas.

We invite staff from the following departments to attend:

- Public Works
- Water/Wastewater System Operators
- Environment and Lands

Who will be in attendance? Indigenous Services Canada, Alberta Environment and Parks, Health Canada, TSAG and more...

A few of the topics in discussion:

- Alberta Region Water & Wastewater strategy
- Operator certification and recognition
- Source Water Protection
- RWMS
- Fire Hydrant operation and maintenance
- Health & Safety in the Workplace


Daily prizes!

TRAVEL & ACCOMMODATIONS: Participants are responsible for making all of their own travel and accommodation arrangements. Bookings at **Home2 Suites** can be made by calling (780) 508-4230 and quoting code “TWMP” or by going to this link: <http://home2suits.hilton.com/en/it-groups/personalweb/VEGCMHT-TWMP-201901/index.htm>

NOTE: This event is for Alberta First Nation community employees and there is no cost for them to attend. Each Nation will be allocated 2 registration spots. Additional registration requests will be placed on a waiting list and allocated out after August 31st, 2019.

If you are registering from outside of Alberta, you will be put on a waiting list. **Breakfast and lunch are provided ONLY for participants of the Conference.**

REIMBURSEMENT: Reimbursement for travel and accommodation will be made directly to the First Nation. Only ONE participant from each Alberta First Nation community will be reimbursed to a maximum of \$1000.



DoubleTree by Hilton
16615 – 109 Ave
Edmonton, AB
October 22 – 23, 2019

Breakfast:
8:00 am – 8:30 am
Conference:
8:30 am – 4:30 pm
Breakfast and lunch are provided ONLY for conference participants.

For more information or to register:
waterconference@tsag.net
Phone: 780 483 8601
Fax: 780 483 8632
Online registration also available on our website
www.tsag.net

Did you know...

In May 2012 TSAG acquired 51% of SIS Strategic Information Systems. The merger was created to combine complementary strengths, diverse networks and shared missions, and to create a larger, stronger, more technically diversified company with a broad array of products and services.

Together, our companies will be better positioned to grow and provide greater value to our respective customer base by expanding technology, gateway, wireless and fiber services.

ATG Arrow Technology Group Ltd .

http://www.atg.net/about_arrow.html



First Nation Benefit Brokers Ltd. is available to get you the best benefit package available to your community. They will also provide education and training to your staff to better understand benefits and work with you navigate NIHB.

Do you have questions about retirement? Do you want benefit profits shared with your community?

Contact FNBB!

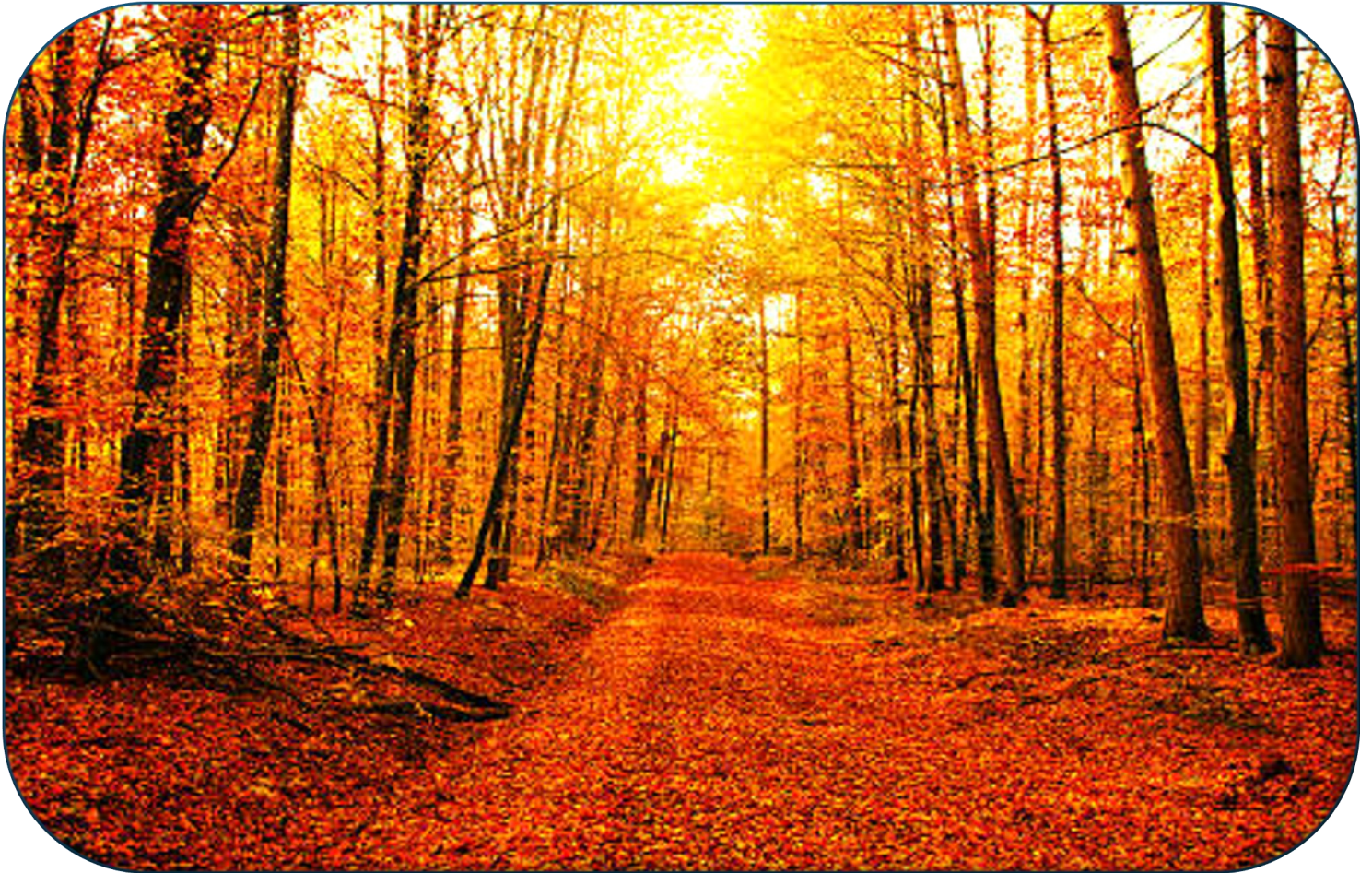


Your community is unique.

You should only pay for the benefits you actually need.

**Our experienced advisors
can help create the plan
that is right for you.**

780 988 8021 www.fnbb.ca



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