Nishnawbe Aski Nation
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NEWS RELEASE

Wednesday September 17, 2008 **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

NAN MOURNS PASSING OF ELDER

THUNDER BAY, ON: Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) Grand Chief Stan Beardy together with Deputy Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler, Deputy Grand Chief Terry Waboose and Deputy Grand Chief RoseAnne Archibald were saddened to learn this morning of the passing of NAN Elder Jeremiah McKay of Kasabonika Lake First Nation in his seventy-seventh year.

"Jeremiah will be remembered fondly and with great respect for his leadership and his tireless efforts to find ways to improve the lives of the people of Nishnawbe Aski, and our thoughts and prayers are with his family and his community," said Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) Grand Chief Stan Beardy. "Throughout his life, Jeremiah displayed wisdom and compassion as he championed many causes that not only strengthened his community, but communities across the Nishnawbe Aski territory."

Jeremiah McKay was a long-time chief of Kasabonika Lake First Nation. He served on the NAN Elders' Council for many years and was recognized as NAN's West Elder. He is survived by his sister, five daughters, three sons and many grandchildren. Visitation will be held Thursday September 18 at Blake Funeral Chapel in Thunder Bay from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Funeral services will be held Saturday September 20 in Kasabonika Lake First Nation at 1 p.m.

He was a strong advocate for health issues affecting First Nations, and served on a special committee in 2004 that lobbied on behalf of Sioux Lookout Zone First Nations to save programs and services while fighting for additional health resources.

"Jeremiah recognized the need for First Nations to have greater access to health care and provided valuable guidance and insight on several initiatives that greatly improved the well-being of First Nations people in his community and throughout Nishnawbe Aski," said NAN Deputy Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler. "His leadership and commitment to his people serve as an example for all First Nation leaders to follow."

Nishnawbe Aski Nation is a political territorial organization representing 49 First Nation communities within James Bay Treaty 9 and Treaty 5 territory – an area covering two-thirds of the province of Ontario.

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