



**Nishnawbe Aski Nation**

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## **NEWS RELEASE**

**Monday December 1, 2014**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **NAN MOURNS PASSING OF ELDER JONAS FIDDLER**

**THUNDER BAY:** Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) Grand Chief Harvey Yesno, on behalf of the NAN Executive Council, expressed condolences following the passing of long-serving Elder Jonas Fiddler, from Sandy Lake First Nation, who passed away peacefully on Sunday.

“It is with heavy hearts that we mourn the loss of this great friend and respected leader, and our prayers go out to his family, friends and the entire Sandy Lake community,” said NAN Grand Chief Harvey Yesno. “Jonas dedicated the majority of his lengthy career to improving the lives of First Nations people in the Sandy Lake community and across our Nation, especially children and youth, and while we mourn his loss we honour and celebrate his life of leadership and friendship.”

Jonas Fiddler was one of NAN’s longest serving Elders at the time of his passing and was very active with the NAN Elders Council. He was widely known for his efforts to improve access to health care for First Nations, and dedicated much of his life to improving the health and well-being of community members and people across NAN territory.

He became Chief of Sandy Lake First Nation after his father Thomas Fiddler passed away in 1987. He served on council for 25 years and has supported the community for nearly 60 years in a variety of capacities including health, education, housing and infrastructure.

“Jonas made tremendous contributions to improve the quality of life for his community and our Nation and will be fondly remembered as a champion for our people,” said Yesno. “And while his loss is immeasurable, we take comfort that his spirit will live on through our youth and the future generations that he worked so hard to create a better future for.”

Jonas Fiddler served both as a member and chairman of the Sandy Lake Board of Education, the NAN Elders Council, the NAN Chiefs Committee on Health, and helped guide NAN’s discussions with the Government of Ontario on resource development. He was awarded NAN’s Emile Nakogee Award for Outstanding Leadership in 2009.

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