ISSUE 3 / 2026

ON NEWS

YOUR ONTARIO NORTHLAND EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER



Employees Board the Northlander

Ontario Northland employees had the opportunity to experience the future Northlander service first-hand during two employee test trips held on August 15, 2026 (Cochrane to Englehart, return) and September 13, 2026 (North Bay to Englehart, return). As teams continue operational readiness activities, both trips gave staff valuable hands-on training ahead of service launch.















Message From the CEO

Throughout this fall edition of the ON News, you will see examples of employees strengthening safety, supporting one another, preparing for future services, modernizing operations and finding new ways to connect the communities Ontario Northland serves.

This ON News highlights the care and professionalism employees bring to work every day. From Work Safe Award nominees and recipients, to teams supporting regulatory readiness, infrastructure improvements, employee wellness, Indigenous engagement and the return of passenger rail service, each story reflects a shared commitment to safe, reliable and respectful service.

Thank you to everyone whose efforts are featured in this issue, and to all employees who continue to deliver for Ontario Northland. The work taking place across our organization is making a difference for colleagues, customers, partners and communities across the North.

- Chad



Celebrating Our People

This year, Ontario Northland recognized **157 employees with 15+ years of service** through the Long Service Awards program. This was an incredible milestone that reflects the dedication, experience, and commitment of employees.

These service milestones embody Ontario Northland's value of **Never Stop Caring** through the lasting contributions of employees to their colleagues, customers, and communities every day.

Congratulations and thank you to all 157 recipients on this well-deserved recognition.

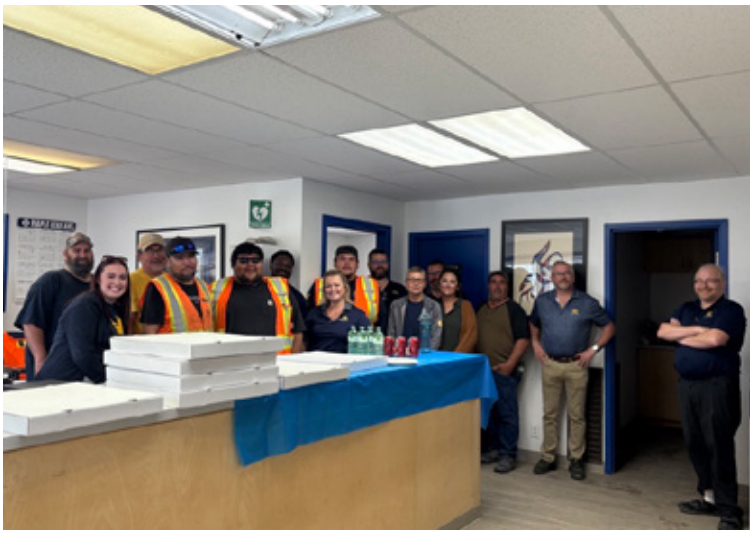
Scan the QR code to see the full photo gallery.



















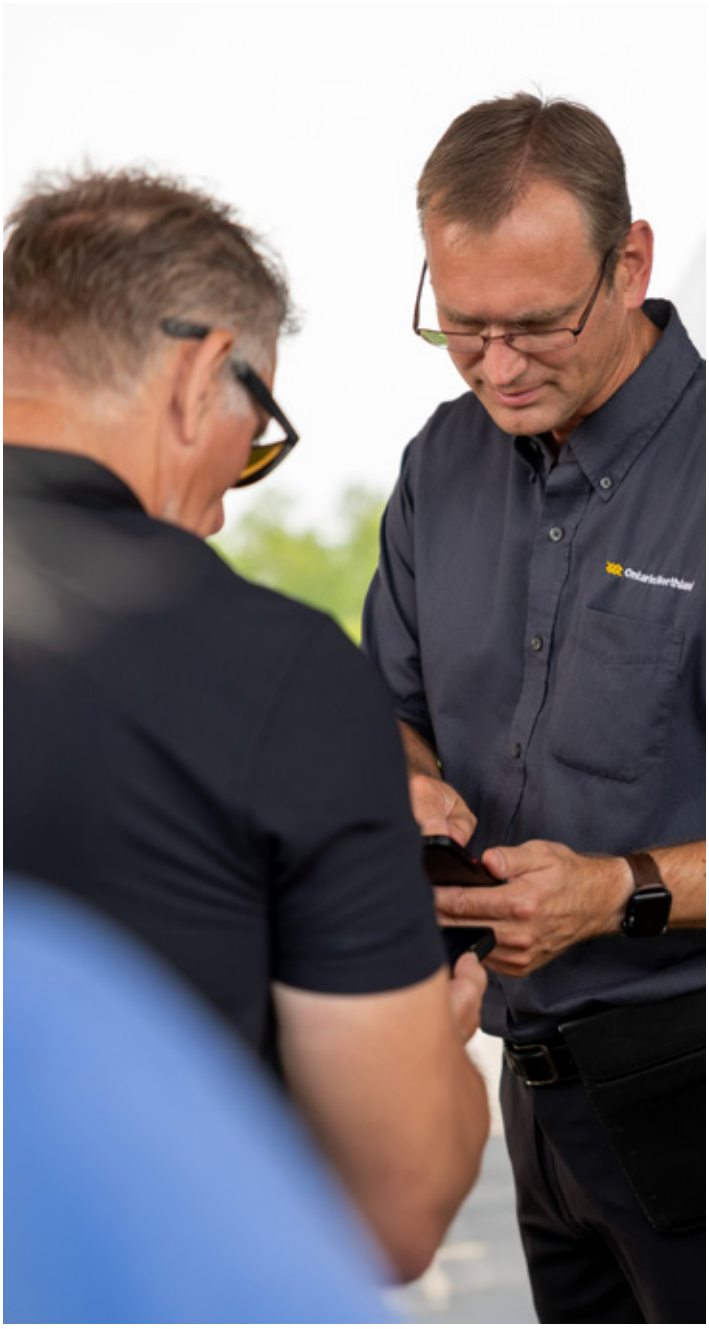


Exciting Updates About Ontario Northland's Employee Pass Policy

Great news! Ontario Northland is excited to share that the Employee Pass Policy has been updated to better support employees, pensioners, and families when travelling with Ontario Northland.

Ontario Northland employees and their eligible dependents can now travel free of charge on all Ontario Northland-operated bus and rail services, including the future Northlander service.

Here are a few things to keep in mind when planning your next trip.



Travel includes the future Northlander service

Employees and their eligible dependents can travel for free on the future Northlander service in Economy Class. If you are looking for an upgraded experience, Northlander+ tickets will be available at a 50% discount.

All pass travel must be booked in advance

Tickets must be reserved before travel either by phone at 1-800-461-8558 or in person at an Ontario Northland station. Online booking is not available for employee or pensioner pass travel.

A limited number of employee pass seats are available on each trip

To help ensure fairness and maintain availability for all travelers, only a limited number of travel pass seats are available on each trip.

Transaction fees still apply

A transaction fee applies to all travel pass tickets.

Plan ahead

Travel pass bookings may be booked no more than 14 days prior to departure to help prioritize bookings from the public.

Please refer to the Employee Pass Policy in My Policies for the full policy document.

Blackout dates apply during peak travel periods

Travel pass bookings are not available during certain high-demand travel periods, including major holidays, when services experience increased demand.

Blackout periods include:

- December 19 through January 3
- Family Day weekend (Friday through Monday)
- Easter weekend (Good Friday through Easter Monday)
- Labour Day weekend (Thursday through Monday)
- Thanksgiving weekend (Thursday through Monday)

PAD Successfully Moves to a New Location in North Bay



The Planning and Development (PAD) team is settling into its new home at 1350 Fisher Street following a successful relocation that brought together employees and partners from across the organization.

Nearly 40 employees from across five functions were involved in the move.

Project Manager with the Project Management Office, B.M. Adnan, took a leading role in coordinating the planning and execution of the move. Working closely with Facilities, IT, Procurement, and other stakeholders, he managed the many moving pieces involved in relocating an operational team and helped ensure the transition stayed on track.

Tracy Shannon, Change Management Specialist, also played an important role in the move's success, keeping employees informed and engaged throughout the process.



The move was a true team effort. The Facilities team prepared the new space through leasehold improvements, furniture installation, signage, and safety planning. Procurement supported sourcing, approvals, and vendor coordination, while IT and other corporate partners worked through technical requirements and logistical details behind the scenes.

The successful move to 1350 Fisher Street highlights the value of strong project management, clear communication, and cross-functional collaboration.

"The clearest measure of this project's success was the confidence people had in the plan and the smooth way it was carried out," said Sudharshan Raj, Director of Planning and Development. "That did not happen by accident. I want to thank everyone for the hard work, the long hours, and for making this transition a good experience for the whole team."



Ontario Northland Introduces New Indigenous Brand Elements

Ontario Northland is continuing to strengthen connections with Indigenous communities across its service territory through the development of a new Indigenous style guide and marketing framework.

Created in collaboration with an Indigenous-owned design agency, the work introduces an expanded visual identity that reflects the landscapes, cultures and communities served by Ontario Northland's network.

"This work gives Ontario Northland another way to reflect the people, places and relationships that shape us as an organization," says Janie McLeod, Indigenous Engagement Coordinator. "The stories we tell, the images we use and the way we represent the communities we serve all matter. When we make those choices thoughtfully, we can help build understanding and strengthen relationships."

The Indigenous brand expansion includes a collection of visual elements such as flora, animal tracks and flowing pathways that represent journey, learning and continuity. Each element is rooted in species and symbols found throughout the region and informed by knowledge shared among Cree and Anishinaabe communities.

When used together, the imagery creates a visual narrative of place. Pathways echo rail lines and waterways, flora anchors the brand in the living environment, and animal tracks symbolize presence and relationships to the land. The result is a visual identity that complements Ontario Northland's role in connecting people and places while respectfully acknowledging the cultural and ecological contexts in which these journeys occur.

As part of this initiative, Ontario Northland's Marketing and Communications team participated in a workshop.

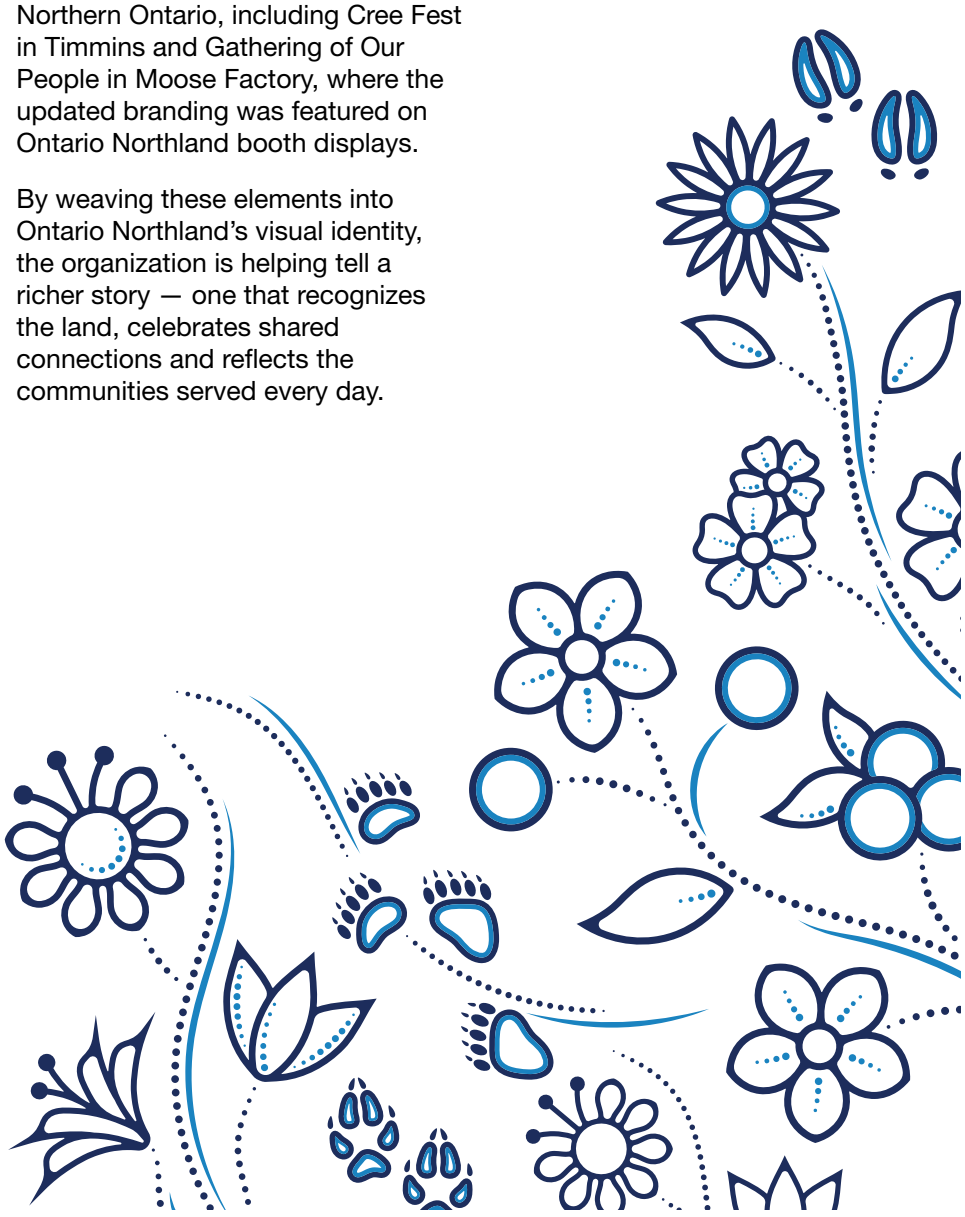
Through discussion, real-world examples and practical exercises, team members explored important considerations in Indigenous communications and learned how to apply these principles in their day-to-day work.

"The training is just as important as the visual elements themselves," says McLeod. "It gives employees a chance to ask questions and think about the impact of the messages we share."

Employees may have already noticed the new visual elements at several community events throughout Northern Ontario, including Cree Fest in Timmins and Gathering of Our People in Moose Factory, where the updated branding was featured on Ontario Northland booth displays.

By weaving these elements into Ontario Northland's visual identity, the organization is helping tell a richer story — one that recognizes the land, celebrates shared connections and reflects the communities served every day.

"Reconciliation happens through everyday actions," says McLeod. "Each of us has a role to play, regardless of our position. This project is a reminder that even something as simple as the images we choose or the stories we tell can help foster understanding and respect. When we all make those choices intentionally, the collective impact can be significant."



Safety Walkabout

On June 24, more than 30 employees and managers took part in Ontario Northland's latest Safety Walkabout, with over 20 safety topics and improvement opportunities discussed across multiple operational areas.

The walkabout provided an important opportunity for employees and leaders to connect with the focus on workplace safety, shared observations, recognizing positive practices, and identifing areas where continued attention or follow-up may be needed. Topics discussed included training, communication, equipment, emergency preparedness, workplace conditions, and employee well-being.

What stood out most was the value of the conversations themselves. Employees shared that they appreciated the continuation of the walkabout process and the opportunity it creates for open dialogue between employees, supervisors, and management. These discussions help strengthen communication, build trust, and reinforce that safety is a shared responsibility across Ontario Northland.

The information gathered will now be reviewed to identify appropriate follow-up actions, support opportunities for improvement, and reinforce positive safety behaviours.

The Safety Walkabout reflects the company value *Safety Full Stop* by creating space to listen, learn, and act on employee feedback. It is one way Ontario Northland continues to build a safety culture where employees feel encouraged to speak up, leaders remain connected to frontline experiences, and everyone plays a role in keeping themselves, their coworkers, and our workplaces safe.







New Incentive Encourages Work Safe Award Nominations

Ontario Northland's Work Safe Awards recognize employees who go above and beyond to support a strong safety culture across the organization. Now, a new incentive is giving employees even more reason to take part in the nomination process and help shine a light on safe work practices happening around the organization.

Through the ONLearn portal, employees can now receive ONLearn points when they are nominated for or receive a Work Safe Award. The incentive is designed to increase awareness of the program, encourage more nominations, and keep safety conversations active across teams and departments.

"The Work Safe Awards are about celebrating employees who make safety part of their everyday work," said Laurie Laronde, Manager of Health and Safety. "By adding this incentive through ONLearn, we are encouraging more people to recognize their colleagues and help build awareness of the great safety practices already taking place across Ontario Northland."

Employees who are nominated but not selected receive 50 ONLearn points, equivalent to $5 in the company merch store. Employees who receive a quarterly Work Safe Award receive 100 ONLearn points, equivalent to $10 in the Promo Store. Those who are named Work Safe Champions will earn 150 ONLearn points, equivalent to $15 in the Promo Store.

The incentive connects the Work Safe Award program with the ONLearn portal, giving employees another reason to participate while continuing to recognize the safe choices, positive attitudes, and everyday actions that support a safer workplace.

"We know there are employees across the organization who show leadership, positivity, and genuine care for the well-being of their coworkers, customers, and the public," said Laronde. "The nomination process gives everyone an opportunity to celebrate that commitment."

Employees are encouraged to nominate a colleague who has gone above and beyond for safety through the Work Safe Award nomination form on the Junction.

Work Safe Recognition and Awards Program

Online Nomination

If you know someone who has gone above and beyond for safety, nominate them for a Work Safe Award on the Junction.



Mitchell Simmens absent.



Mitchell Simmens and Brandon Gowlett

While travelling southward on train no. 414 in October 2025, Mitch and Brandon noticed that the new station platform at Kirkland Lake appeared to extend closer to the main line than the previous platform. Recognizing the potential risk, they approached slowly to determine whether the equipment they were handling would clear the platform. Thanks to their careful observation and quick action, they identified the issue before it became a potential major incident.

Patrick Lavigne

Recognizing the potential risks within the powerhouse, Patrick took proactive steps to improve safety by installing carbon monoxide and condensation detectors. Given the number of high-pressure steam systems in the building, these enhancements provide critical monitoring and notification support for employees working in the area. Thanks to Patrick's expertise and initiative, everyone in the powerhouse is better protected now and into the future.

Work Safe Champions



Brad Bossert and Vince Gagne

Brad Bossert and Vince Gagne earned Work Safe Champions awards for setting an example of what it means to keep safety top of mind every day.

Brad is an Engineman in North Bay and says he believes employees need to act when they notice a concern. “If I see something, I say something. Nothing’s going to change if it doesn’t get pointed out.”

“I want to see everyone being safe out there. You’ve got to be a champion for your own safety and the safety of others.”

Vince is a Supervisor-Maintenance of Way from North Bay to Temagami and says he brings “a wide-lens approach to each workday.”

“I tell everyone to keep their head up, and their eyes open and look at the bigger picture.” Vince says receiving the Work Safe Champion Award is meaningful because it reflects the standard he tries to help set every day.



Emergency Preparedness for Northlander

Ontario Northland welcomed emergency service providers for an overview of key emergency preparedness information and a guided tour of the new Northlander equipment in August.

The tours gave first responders an opportunity to become familiar with the train layout, review key safety features and access points, and learn more about emergency operations, staffing and contact information. Building this familiarity helps ensure our first responders are prepared to support safe operations along the route once service launches later this year.

Thank you to the Ontario Northland employees who supported these sessions and all employees who continue to contribute to safe, reliable operations.









Ontario Northland Completes Transition to Transport Canada

In the spring of 2026, Ontario Northland completed the transition to become a federally regulated railway, under Transport Canada oversight. This marked an important milestone for the organization and all employees, whose work keeps the railway operating safely every day.

Ontario Northland remains an agency of the Province of Ontario but recently became subject to federal rail safety requirements across the entire rail network and rail service offerings. For employees, this has brought formalized processes and oversight to operations across the system and a more stringent regulatory structure for standards, training, expectations and documentation.

Vice President of Regulatory and Compliance, Michael Rennie, said teams have been working within the Canadian Rail Operating Rules and many Transport Canada standards for years. “This transition brought that work together under one consistent framework and reflected the safety-focused approach our employees already brought to their work every day,” he added.

The work to complete the transition was several years in the making and involved many teams across the organization. It involved important support from employees at all levels who helped with process reviews and auditing inspection plans, training programs, and reporting templates that resulted in improvements and other behind-the-scenes work required to complete the transition.

“We’ve learned a lot as an agency in the last few months,” said Rennie. “Our teams have now become much more familiar with Transport Canada processes and observations. We continue to value this important partnership and its role in keeping our railway safe.”

Going forward, this work involves continued strengthening of systems, processes and employee guidance that support safe, consistent work across facilities, departments and operations. Employees can expect more training, more engagement with regulatory processes and continued reinforcement that all employees have a role to play in workplace safety by following all of the applicable rules and procedures all the time.

“This transition highlights the dedication, and diligence employees must bring to their worksites each day to keep themselves, their coworkers and the communities we serve safe,” said Rennie. “It reinforces Ontario Northland’s ability to deliver safe, reliable and sustainable transportation solutions.”









Advertising Opportunities Create New Revenue Potential Across Ontario Northland

Employees may soon notice more advertising in Ontario Northland stations, on board services and even on some equipment as the organization continues to grow a new revenue opportunity across its transportation network.

The work is being led by Caela Doyle, Sales and Partnership Coordinator, who has been building relationships with prospective advertisers and helping them understand the unique audiences Ontario Northland reaches every day. With services spanning from Toronto to Moosonee and Ottawa to Winnipeg, Ontario Northland offers advertisers access to a broad and diverse audience across the province.

For many people in smaller communities, including First Nation communities, bus and train service is an important connection to health care, education, employment and other services in larger centres. That reach is part of what makes Ontario Northland's advertising program different from many traditional ad placements.

"A lot of clients or potential clients I've talked to have been surprised about all the opportunities we have, mainly our entertainment system and digital ads," said Doyle. "Our opportunities present a unique reach that not a lot of other advertisement placements have."

Advertising opportunities are available in several formats, including in the Northlander Magazine, inside Northlander shelters, on-board entertainment, ticket ads, interior station screens, station ads and bus wrap advertising. Custom placements may also be considered when a prospective advertiser has a unique idea that fits Ontario Northland's services and available spaces.

The placements are part of a broader effort to look at Ontario Northland's stations, vehicles, digital platforms and passenger communications in new ways.

Spaces that employees and customers pass through every day can also become valuable advertising opportunities for organizations looking to reach people travelling across the North and beyond.

Doyle says employees can also help by thinking about businesses, tourism operators, community organizations or industry partners in their own networks that may benefit from advertising with Ontario Northland.

"If employees have people in their network that may be interested in ad placements with Ontario Northland, they are encouraged to reach out to me for more information," says Doyle.



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Peer Support: Employees Helping Employees

At Ontario Northland, the Peer Support Team is a confidential employee resource for employees who have experienced a critical incident during Ontario Northland's operations. Made up of specially trained employees, the team provides emotional, practical, and informational support to colleagues and plays a key role in building supportive relationships among coworkers who understand the unique challenges of the workplace. For team member Robert Macpherson, supporting coworkers has been a passion for many years. A perspective that was fostered through work on the Health and Safety Committee.

"I was a member of the Critical Incident Stress (CIS) team and wanted to continue this work," explained Macpherson. "I was trained in CIS and felt I could be a support to others and help keep a program like this growing. It's a great feeling to offer support to fellow coworkers."

The team serves as a confidential employee resource for anyone who has experienced a work-related incident or is coping with stress, burnout, or trauma.

Peer support differs from professional counselling because it is based on shared experiences and is provided by trained peers rather than licensed mental health professionals. While team members can offer guidance, practical tools, and understanding, they do not diagnose or treat mental health conditions. When additional support is needed, team members can help connect employees with professional resources such as the Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP).

"The skills we receive through training have helped me read emotions, know when enough outreach has happened, and understand when it's time to ask someone else to step in and offer support," said Macpherson.

Although the Peer Support Team is still relatively new to Ontario Northland, Macpherson believes it is already having a positive impact across the organization.

"I think the program brings positive energy, greater understanding of what others are going through, and shows support for our coworkers. I believe it will continue to grow and thrive."

Employees are encouraged to reach out to any member of the Peer Support Team using the work email addresses provided on the Peer Support Junction Page. You do not need to contact someone from your own division. While your identity is not anonymous when reaching out, team members are committed to creating a safe, supportive, and respectful environment where employees can seek help and connection when they need it.



Metrolinx Test Train

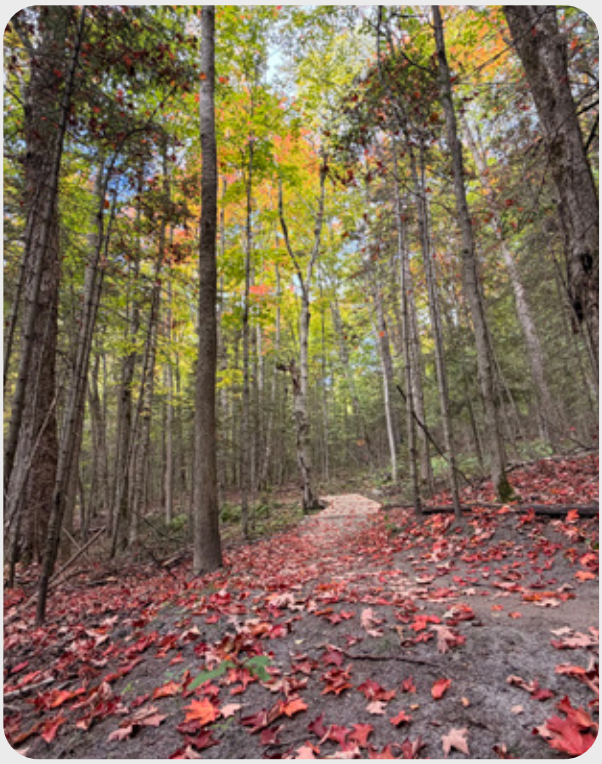
In June, Ontario Northland returned three newly refurbished bi-level GO Transit coaches and the first refurbished F59 locomotive to Metrolinx. The three coaches brought the total delivered to 33 of 56, while the locomotive marked the first of 13 being refurbished. Before returning to Metrolinx, the equipment was put to the test on Ontario Northland's track network, an important step in preparing the refurbished fleet for its return to service.











Where's Your Favourite Fall Escape?

Crisp air, colourful leaves and cooler temperatures make fall a great time to get outside and get moving. Whether it's a walk through your favourite park, a hike along a scenic trail or a day spent exploring somewhere new, getting outdoors is a simple way to stay active and support your wellness this season.

Fall also gives us a chance to discover some of the incredible places our communities have to offer. Maybe you have a go-to trail you visit every year, a quiet spot with the perfect view, or a hidden gem that deserves a little more attention.

Post a photo of your favourite autumn spot and tell us in the caption where it is and why you love it. It could be somewhere close to home, a favourite weekend destination or a memorable stop from your fall travels.

Share your fall escape and help inspire your coworkers to get outside, get moving and discover somewhere new this season!

Scan To Enter Your Photo!

CORPORATE EVENTS TEAM

Throughout the summer, Ontario Northland's Corporate Events team connected with community partners, industry stakeholders and future Northlander passengers at events across the province. The team represented Ontario Northland at a variety of community and industry events, including the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters conference in Toronto, Creefest in Timmins, Englehart Day in the Park, Boats, Bikes, Mics, and Lights Educational Fun Fair in Timmins, Gathering of Our People in Moose Factory, the Tall Pines Festival in Gravenhurst and TRACCS Rail Day in Toronto.






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Building a Connected Future for Rail

Northern Ontario is no stranger to remote landscapes and the unique challenges they pose to rail operations. Earlier this year, a trial involving new technology illustrated how existing infrastructure can be used to address these challenges and support a safer, more connected rail network.

In January 2026, Ontario Northland partnered with Ondas Networks to complete a proof-of-concept project along the Kirkland Lake Subdivision between Swastika, Ontario, and Rouyn-Noranda, Quebec. The project demonstrated how Ontario Northland can use the same railway radio frequencies that have carried voice communications for decades to also support a modern, high-capacity data network, without replacing existing infrastructure.

During the trial, the new network successfully supported four real world railway applications, with all test sites connecting and communicating reliably with the base station. The results showed that existing railway communication assets can do much more than support voice communication, creating opportunities to introduce new digital tools and technologies across the rail network.

“Ontario Northland is committed to innovation and excellence especially in the interest of safety and service. This technology gives us the foundation to connect our critical safety systems across some of the most remote territories in Canada,” said Director of Rail Infrastructure Paul-Andre Lajeunesse. “That’s a game changer for our operations and for the communities we serve.”

Across North America, railways have access to the same 160 MHz spectrum, making it one of the most widely available and reliable communications resources in the industry. By demonstrating that modern data applications can operate effectively on this network, Ondas Networks is helping pave the way for railways of all sizes to modernize their communications infrastructure, enhance safety, and prepare for future operational needs.

ONDAS Networks’ Chief Solutions and Operations Officer, Guy Simpson, said that the tests conducted on Ontario Northland’s rail network showed great promise. “What we demonstrated on the Kirkland Lake Subdivision is that the 160 MHz spectrum railroads already own are far more powerful than most realize. We’re turning a legacy voice network into a modern IP backbone, and Ontario Northland has been an outstanding partner in making that vision a reality.”

As preparations continue for increased traffic on Ontario Northland’s mainline, technologies like this have the potential to strengthen communications capabilities, support future innovations, and help ensure the entire network remains safe and well-connected for years to come.





RRC Parking Lot Upgrades

Improvements continue at the Remanufacturing and Repair Centre, with upgrades focused on creating a safer and more efficient workplace. The RRC parking lot has been repaved and new lighting has been installed to improve parking, safety and enhance the site for employees.








Northlander
930
Stop.
Look.
Listen.

Track Three Pit Renovation

The renovated track three pit provides employees with better mobility and access underneath railcars while reducing the need to reposition equipment. These upgrades support day to day operations and the continued growth of the RRC.







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Certified Financial Planner®
LLPG, Partner

(705) 707-5574 Ext 203
(705) 707-1018
michael@llpg.ca



109-1350 Fisher St
North Bay, ON
P1B 2H1

Life Long Planning Group Ltd.