

Michael Fairbanks Bio

Michael Fairbanks is the duly elected Tribal Chairman of the White Earth Band of Ojibwe in north central Minnesota. He is currently serving his second term. His education consists of two Associate of Science degrees: Business Management & Nutrition, Bachelor of Arts in American Indian Studies & Post bachelor's in the Naadamaadiwin Special Education Program. He has also completed a Master of Arts in Education from Augsburg University.

Michael has worked in tribal administration in various capacities for the last 20 years, including the Deputy Director of the White Earth Band of Ojibwe. During this time, he was committed to an expansive overview and gained valuable knowledge of the diverse programming and services provided for the members on and off the White Earth Reservation. This experience gave him the opportunity to work alongside tribal, state, and national leaders, program management, and leading staff by proactively addressing issues and concerns of White Earth Band members. Michael was also employed as the coordinator of a nonprofit organization, which protects our water and air at a local level on the White Earth Reservation. Chairman Fairbanks sits on several Minnesota Tribal boards to represent the White Earth Band of Ojibwe.

Chairman Fairbank's responsibilities include to protect and manage the White Earth Reservation's resources and environment by efficient and effective leadership to allow maximum usage while yet maintaining a population at a level capable of regeneration. The White Earth Band of Ojibwe firmly believes that the health and sustainability of its people is directly tied to that of the land. This refers not only to physical health, but the spiritual, cultural, and societal health of the people of White Earth. Taking all these aspects into consideration, they place respect as a core value in considering the use and development of their lands. Decisions about land use must place as a key priority respect for the land and environment, respect for culture and traditions, respect for residents and Tribal members, respect among neighboring jurisdictions, and respect for future generations. These considerations seek to strike a balance between wise and sustainable development and the continuation of important Tribal traditions. Central to these values is the recognition that the earth is not a resource to be used and depleted, but the source of all life, the sustainability of which is essential for the people of White Earth. Chairman Fairbanks believes it is critical to maintain and cultivate the Ojibwe tribal culture, language, and traditional ways of life ways so that the Ojibwe people can preserve their unique tribal identity.

White Earth Band of Ojibwe would like to meet long-range transportation goals that promote safety and mobility, provides economic support and opportunities for orderly growth, improves connectivity of roads, trails, and transit routes, identifies funding sources, and produces an overall strategy for prioritizing investments.

Michael believes we need to move forward on a variety of initiatives to ensure that our futures are positive and healthy. White Earth would like to create a White Earth Tribal Health system, that will provide better healthcare services as well as allow for improvements and services to be developed and implement that the Tribe determines is best for our communities and people.

Mii-Gwech bizindawiyeg noogom / Thank you for listening to me today.

Michael A. Fairbanks nindizhinikaaz zhaaganaashiimong.