

ON NEWS

YOUR ONTARIO NORTHLAND EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER



A Closer Look at the Kapuskasing Bridge Rehabilitation Project

If you've ever visited Kapuskasing, you've likely noticed the bridge where Ontario Northland rail crosses the Kapuskasing River. After several years of construction, that bridge is now in the final stages of receiving a major upgrade.

Led by the Structures team, the Kapuskasing Bridge Rehabilitation is a capital project that involves replacing five large sections of the bridge that support the railway tracks across the river. These sections, called spans, are the main bridge parts that stretch from one support to the next.





“Most of our bridge work involves minor steel repairs,” says Ryan Pelletier, Structures Program Manager, who is leading the project. “With this project, we’re replacing entire spans. It’s a big job.”

Work began last year when crews chipped away up to 10 inches of concrete to repair the piers and abutments, which are the foundational parts of the bridge. Piers are the vertical supports in the water, while abutments are the supports at each end of the bridge on land. In one area, a watertight dam was built around the base of the bridge so workers could pump out the water and safely access areas that are usually submerged. In places where that wasn’t possible, professional divers completed repairs underwater.

This year, the focus has shifted to steelwork and Ontario Northland is using a new piece of equipment: a gantry crane system. Running on tracks, the crane lifts out old bridge spans and lowers the new ones into place. “It’s the first time we’ve used a system like this,” says Pelletier. “It’s pretty impressive to watch.”

With 96 bridges and over 2,300 culverts in our network, maintaining infrastructure like this is no small feat. But thanks to careful planning, an experienced, dedicated team leading the project and innovative solutions, the Kapuskasing Bridge is on track to be fully rehabilitated in 2026.

Ontario Northland Takes on the Plane Pull for United Way

Ontario Northland participated in the Pull for United Way where teams of 10 hauled a 32,000-lb aircraft 100 feet. The event raised over \$15,000 to support local United Way programs in Nipissing and Parry Sound.



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.

Carolyn Harris

Carolyn Harris received a Safety Star Award for playing a vital role as a management representative on ONTC's policy for the Health and Safety Committee. This is a role that goes above and beyond her management responsibilities. Harris contributed to the development of Health and Safety policies, data and program monitoring, and facilitating employee awareness.



Car shop operations

A group of employees were recognized for enhancing safety operations in the Car Shop. These employees wore air monitoring equipment to measure particulate in the air, with the goal of ensuring the facility remains free of silica; a natural compound that can pose health risks upon inhalation. This work has made sandblasting operations safer.

This group is comprised of Andrew Belanger, Edward Milton, Greg Hilton, Joe Kingsbury, Kurtis Munnings, Michael Greco, Owen Closs, Rob Francis, Roger Houle, and Steph Carswell.

Additionally, Chris Contant was recognized for participating in multiple initiatives aimed at providing employees with clean and breathable CSA approved supplied air while assisting in capital projects. These initiatives will increase the hygiene of the paint shop, keeping the office and lunch areas clean.

Chris Lafleur was an instrumental link between safety systems and the Workplace Health and Safety Committee. Through his participation and learning CSA testing for supplied air systems, he showcased the knowledge and understanding of how to certify everyone's safety and provided training for other staff, teaching them how to ensure air boxes are properly calibrated.





From the CEO:

As we enter into the cooler fall season, I am pleased to share the third edition of the 2025 ON News. We continue to make progress on some major projects – Enterprise Asset Management, Metrolinx bi-level rail cars, as well as the completion of major infrastructure and capital projects - I want to recognize the hard work and dedication of all our staff, which continues to bring these milestones to life.

The months ahead represent an exciting time for our organization, as we prepare to receive the first of three new trainsets for the Northlander service. This is an incredible milestone for the agency and

for the future passengers to/from northern Ontario. I will keep you updated about the testing and commissioning process once it gets underway.

I encourage all employees to continue to collaborate and work together. We are fortunate to have such skilled, dynamic teams working for our organization. Relying on the expertise of one another will be crucial to our success as an organization as we continue to evolve.

I look forward to another exciting northern Ontario winter ahead.

- Chad

Northlander Update:

The new era of the Northlander passenger rail service will fundamentally shift how people move across the province, creating a more connected, integrated transportation network.

Preparation for the Northlander service is well underway! Equipment is currently being manufactured. If you haven't had a chance to check out the virtual rendering of the Northlander trainsets, head over to the Dispatch or our social media to check it out. With seating to accommodate 169 passengers, the new trainsets are designed for comfort and accessibility.

Recent project milestones include the start of construction at the Timmins-Porcupine Station, and the completion of the North Bay bypass track, which will save passengers approximately 15 minutes of travel time.

Looking Ahead

Track upgrades, including continuous welded rail and curve elevation work, as well as stop construction and shelter installation continue to progress.

Construction to the interior of the Cochrane, Englehart and North Bay stations will also ensure passengers have a safe, accessible and modern space to wait for the trains.

The first of three trainsets is expected to be delivered in 2026. The equipment will then undergo testing along the corridor, before launch of service.

Employees are reminded to keep an eye on the Dispatch App for the latest news and updates about the new era of the Northlander.



How Employees Working in the Field Stay Connected

Maintenance of Way employees keep our rail infrastructure safe and reliable across Ontario and into Quebec. Because their work happens almost entirely in the field, often in remote areas, it has been difficult for them to stay connected to corporate systems and communications.

That changed this year, with more than 140 phone or tablets now deployed, to Maintenance of Way employees across our service territory. These tools help employees stay informed, connected and better supported while on the job.

The project began in 2022 and was shaped by employee feedback gathered through surveys and focus groups. It was also important due to

new legislation requiring electronic logging devices in CVOR-rated vehicles.

“This was a complex project,” said Cindy Bradley, Standards, Compliance and Training Manager. “We coordinated with teams across the organization including IT, Motor Coach Service Trainers and the Organizational Change Management team. It’s been rewarding to see it all come together,” she adds.

With these devices, employees now have ready access to safety-critical communications such as track standards updates and operating bulletins as well as Microsoft Teams and corporate email for easy communication with managers and colleagues.

These devices also offer employees the opportunity to complete training virtually or through ONLearn, review new policies on MyPolicies and submit completed job briefings and track work orders.

Going forward, these devices will also play a role in supporting the Enterprise Asset Management program. This change improves how employees access information and complete their work, while also meeting regulatory requirements and encouraging a stronger safety culture.

New employees now receive their device and training during orientation, giving them immediate access to the tools and information they need to work safely, stay compliant and remain connected no matter where the job takes them.





Behind the Scenes at the RRC: Station 10

At the North Bay Remanufacturing and Repair Centre, each GO Transit bi-level coach goes through a detailed refurbishment process. The train moves through multiple stations, spending two weeks at each station as it's rebuilt. Station 10 is the reconditioning station, and what makes it unique is that the team works on all 11 cars that are currently in the car shop at the same time.

When a new car arrives at the RRC, it starts at Station 1.0, where it's stripped down to the frame. Over 1000 components are then tagged for reuse. These include windows, ceiling panels, roof hatches, side skirt panels, and other useful parts.

Those parts are then evaluated by Station 10 to determine what work is needed. Some parts only require cleaning, while others need repainting, repairs, or complete replacement. This often requires close coordination with other departments like the Fabrication or Paint Shop but many of the repairs are done by the team right at Station 10.

Because they support all cars in progress, Station 10 has to stay on top of what each station needs and when. If parts aren't ready on time, it can cause delays across the entire refurbishment process. Their coordination helps keep everything moving smoothly. Here's to celebrating the great work of this team!



A Seamless Journey on the Polar Bear Express

By Matthew Sookram, Writer and Strategic Content Advisor at Ontario Northland

Behind every journey on the Polar Bear Express is a dedicated team of Ontario Northland employees who make it all possible. From the early-morning staff at The Station Inn, to the conductors and on-board staff, each person plays a vital role in delivering a seamless experience rooted in care, pride, and Northern hospitality.

As a growing agency, many employees at Ontario Northland haven't had the chance to visit Cochrane or ride the Polar Bear Express. Here's what I noticed on my very first trip north.

Starting the trip by spending a night at the Station Inn in Cochrane makes the morning departure much easier as you're able to step right out of the hotel and onto the platform. The rooms were clean and comfortable, and for employees, booking is simple: just call or email the Customer Service line to access the staff rate. Leadhand Customer Service Sales Agent, Michael Pelikan, helped me book everything over the phone and told me to make sure I booked early because rooms do fill quickly, and I was glad I did.

Once on board, I was surprised at how much space there was. The seats recline, have footrests, and are wide enough that you don't feel cramped—even on a full train. I saw families moving easily between cars, and many people took the time to stretch their legs or visit the dining car.

The dining car itself was one of the biggest highlights. The food is all prepared and loaded by Ontario Northland's commissary team in Cochrane before the trip, and then cooked fresh by chefs and stewards on board. The atmosphere reminded me of a busy local diner; there was a line-up within minutes of departure. On-Board Services staff recommended the Western sandwich for the breakfast trip and it did not disappoint. On the return trip for dinner the cheeseburger was just as impressive. The positive energy of all our On-Board Services staff created a warm and welcoming environment for all passengers.

It was also easy to make use of the onboard Wi-Fi and entertainment portal. Logging on is a simple process and I was able to catch up on a few emails and put together some finishing touches on a project for the Gathering of Our People event I was heading to in Moose Factory. Once the work was done, there was a huge selection of movies, tv shows and local content to keep passengers entertained for the entirety of the ride.

Overall, the Polar Bear Express is an experience you don't want to miss.

If you are taking your first trip up, share a picture on the Dispatch App! It's an experience you won't soon forget.



Employee Appreciation BBQ

Every summer, the Human Resources Department hosts Employee Appreciation BBQs to recognize and celebrate the contributions of Ontario Northland's employees. These events are more than just a seasonal tradition, they're an expression of gratitude, connection and community.

This year, the BBQs were organized and facilitated by the newly formed People and Culture group within the HR Department. With a renewed focus on engagement and recognition, the team set out to bring appreciation directly to our people.

Over the course of several weeks, the People and Culture team visited

key locations across our network. In Cochrane, they hosted BBQs at 11:30am, 6:00pm, and 2:00am to ensure that evening and night shift employees were included in the celebrations.

In Sudbury, the team made a point to host the BBQ at the Tisdale Bus Terminal, continuing to nurture the valued relationship with that company.

North Bay saw multiple BBQs at the Bus Garage, the Corporate Head Office and at the RRC, where we hosted a formal BBQ during the day, and coordinated pizza deliveries for the evening and night shifts.

In some of our smaller or more remote locations, the members of the HR Team hand-delivered custom appreciation packages. These packages were designed to bring a personal touch and a message of thanks to every employee, regardless of location or schedule.

Thanks to everyone across the organization that attended and assisted the team in set-up and cleanup.

ON VIEWS

Scan this QR code for online photo galleries and more.



Meet the Reception Team: Andrew Robinson, Megan Rifou, Joel Gauthier, Micheline Rochefort and Nasya Leduc (missing).

Meet the Reception Team at the RRC

The Corporate Service Centre team has expanded! Our Reception Team is now available full-time at the new RRC Reception Trailer. They're here to welcome visitors, provide safety information and PPE, manage deliveries, register employee vehicles, and issue RRC parking passes. The team can also assist with employee resources such as HR and ClaimSecure forms or help direct you to the right contact if you have other questions.

The Reception Trailer is open Monday to Friday from 8:00am to 4:30pm. If you have any questions, feel free to stop by and say hello or reach out by email at Reception-ONTC@ontarionorthland.ca.

Reminder: All visitors including employees from other work locations must sign in at the Reception Trailer first when visiting the RRC.

Upgrades at the Wheel Shop

Ontario Northland is proud to unveil an important upgrade to the Wheel Shop: a new semi-automated axle lathe.

Axles are the heavy steel rods that connect train wheels and help carry the weight of the train. Over time, they need to be cleaned up and reshaped to keep everything running smoothly. That's where the lathe comes in.

This new machine replaces the shop's previous axle lathe, which had been in service since the early 1970s. "The new lathe will enhance our team's ability to make detailed, precise cuts," says Howard Faulker, Supervisor at the Wheel Shop. "Some parts of the axle must be shaped within just two-thousandths of an inch.

The new machine uses joystick controls and built-in automation to make smooth, consistent cuts with less manual effort," he adds.

The new equipment can also work on both ends of an axle at the same time, which saves time and boosts productivity. "While one end is being cut, the operator can start sanding or polishing the other," Faulker explained. "It's already cutting down our operating times."

These upgrades are part of a larger investment in the Wheel Shop with more to come. A second, fully automated lathe is on its way. These improvements are part of our greater effort to achieve excellence, with modern, dependable equipment that safely enhances our operations.



Years of Service Awards

Recognizing long-standing commitment is a cornerstone of Ontario Northland's appreciation culture, and the Years of Service Awards are a proud celebration of the dedication and loyalty shown by our employees over the years. These awards are more than just milestones, they reflect the time and passion our people have invested, helping our organization grow and thrive.

Traditionally, Ontario Northland has celebrated employees reaching 25 and 35 years of service. This year, we were excited to introduce a new milestone: the 15-Year Service Award, allowing us to recognize even more of our team members earlier in their careers. This addition reflects our evolving approach to employee engagement and our desire to celebrate meaningful contributions at every stage.

We were proud to honor the following individuals who celebrated milestone years of service in 2024:

15 Years: Carrie Lynn Carpenter, Marilyn Carey, Steve Fortier, Troy Hurrell, Aaron Ploughman, Claude Charette, Andrew Paquet, Dave Lallier, Craig Smith, and Ian Westerberg

25 Years: Chad Martin

35 Years: Chris Beadman and Trevor Murphy

Each of these employees have played a vital role in shaping Ontario Northland's workplace, and their continued dedication is deeply appreciated.

Congratulations to all recipients! Thank you for your commitment to our continued success and excellence.

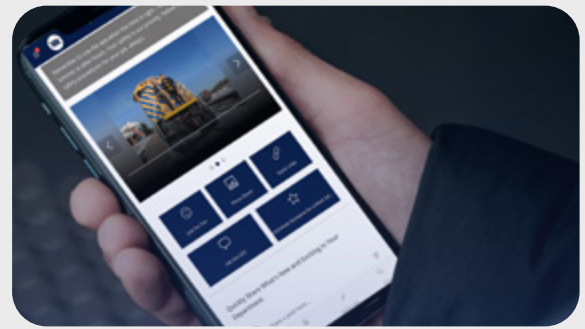


Gathering of Our People

At the end of every July, the community of Moose Factory hosts thousands of people from across the province for the annual Gathering of Our People festival. A group of Ontario Northland employees attended the event to promote our services for the Polar Bear Express and the Northlander.



Pictured Kendra Chirico, Matthew Sookram, Angela Girard



How to Access The Dispatch

The Dispatch is Ontario Northland's employee app which provides you with exclusive access to employee content, news, contests and events!

1. Download the App



To download the Dispatch app, visit your phone's app store (ex. Apple App Store or Google Play Store) and search 'ON Dispatch'.

OR Open the Dispatch Website

If you are using a web browser on your desktop or phone, you can access the Dispatch by visiting <https://dispatch.ontarionorthland.ca>.

2. Sign In

To sign in, click the green 'Sign In' box at the top of the home screen. Then, click the blue 'Sign in with Microsoft account' and enter your Microsoft login (i.e., your work email, in the format of firstname.lastname@ontarionorthland.ca, and password – this is also the same password used to sign into a computer or Terminal Server). After entering your Microsoft credentials, you will be prompted to verify the sign-in using whatever authentication method has been set up for your account.

You are now ready to access the Dispatch App!

If you need assistance with your Microsoft login, please contact the IT Service Desk at Ext. 500 or servicedesk@ontarionorthland.ca



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