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**NOVA SCOTIA NATIVE
WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION**

STATEMENT FROM NSNWA RE: VICTORIA HENNEBERRY

Truro, Nova Scotia, March 3, 2020 — Statement from Annie Daisley, President, Nova Scotia Native Women's Association:

“On behalf of the Nova Scotia Native Women's Association, I would like to express our deepest concern regarding Victoria Henneberry. Victoria Henneberry is currently serving a life sentence for the second-degree murder of Loretta Saunders. Recently, Victoria Henneberry was given a temporary pass from prison that allows her to attend an Indigenous women's sharing and drumming circle. She had a four-hour escorted pass from prison. Documents obtained from the Parole Board indicated that Henneberry now identifies as American Cherokee. Our concern lies in the word 'identify' and how conveniently and easily she can utilize that word to gain access to our Indigenous ceremonies. We hold ceremony very sacred and feel this is extremely disrespectful to Loretta, Loretta's family and our Indigenous people. Has Ms. Henneberry ever practiced ceremony or ever identified as Indigenous before? Our plea is with the Parole Board, who is responsible for this decision and to the Minister of Justice, to overrule this decision. The National Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls resulted in 231 calls for justice. We strongly feel that the court decision has disregarded the plan on moving forward with these calls to justice.”

The Nova Scotia Native Women's Association has been in existence for 47 years, founded in 1972. On May 12, 1977, it was officially incorporated as a not-for-profit association under the *Societies Act* of Nova Scotia. With a main office in Millbrook and a sub office in Sipekne'katik, the NSNWA offers programs, services and advocacy supports to Indigenous women and girls across the province. The NSNWA are comprised of 16 local chapters across Nova Scotia; the 13 First Nations communities and three off reserve zones of Halifax, Sydney and South Shore. The NSNWA is governed by a Board of Directors that consists of 16 chapters and two elders and the Executive. We are one of the few Nova Scotia Indigenous organizations that are not governed by an elected Chief and Council and as of November 2019, our staff is 100% Indigenous women.

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