LAC DU FLAMBEAU BAND
OF LAKE SUPERIOR CHIPPEWA INDIANS
TRIBAL POLICE DEPARTMENT

T.J. Bill
Chief of Police
Phone: 715-588-7717
Fax: 715-588-3461
Email: TBill@ldftribe.com

Gilbert J. Chapman, Sr.
Ojibwe Judicial Center
P.O. Box 337
623 Peace Pipe Road
Lac du Flambeau, WI 54538

MISSING PERSON UPDATE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LAC DU FLAMBEAU, WI – The Lac du Flambeau Tribal Police Department continues to search for MELISSA BESON, age 37, who was last seen on the afternoon of Monday, March 17, 2025, in the vicinity of Indian Village Road and Chequamegon Forest Trail, in Lac du Flambeau. When last seen, MELISSA was wearing red sweatpants, a black sleeveless shirt and a gray sweatshirt. MELISSA BESON is a Native American female, 5'7", with a medium build, brown hair and brown eyes. She has numerous tattoos, including on her neck, arms and legs.

Since MELISSA was reported missing by concerned family members on March 23rd, finding her has been the number one priority of the LDF Police Department. We have conducted extensive ground searches on foot, even in severe weather conditions. Our officers have even come in on their days off, to search for her. The dedicated members of Newbold Search and Rescue have once again come to our aid and have assisted us by searching with their specially trained canines. The dogs have shown interest and appeared to pick up MELISSA's scent in the area of her last known sighting.

The LDF Police Department has two high-quality drones, purchased with grant funds, and personnel have been trained in their use. Extensive searches have been conducted using the drones, which enabled us to observe the bed of the open water portion of the Bear River. Today we will be conducting a search using an underwater drone to delve under ice shelves.

Although we are expending monumental efforts in searching the area in which MELISSA was last seen, we are in no way ignoring the possibility that she may be elsewhere. Our officers are working non-stop, during every shift, to follow up on every lead and tip that we receive. We have combed through countless hours of surveillance footage, have interviewed dozens of people, and have reached out to law enforcement agencies in various areas of the State of Wisconsin, who have assisted us by contacting persons with possible information and even conducting searches of residences in their jurisdictions.

We would like to extend our sincere appreciation to LDF Emergency Management, LDF Tribal Roads Department, LDF Economic Support Department, Newbold Search and Rescue, the Vilas County Sheriff's Department, and Vilas County Dispatch for their vital assistance to our investigative and search efforts. We would also like to thank everyone in the community who has provided assistance to our Department and been supportive to MELISSA's family during this difficult time. We ask that anyone having any information about MELISSA or her possible whereabouts, please call:

Lac du Flambeau Tribal P.D. at 715-588-7717 or
Vilas County Sheriff's Office at 715-479-4441

Release Date: April 1, 2025

Approved By: T.J. Bill, Chief of Police