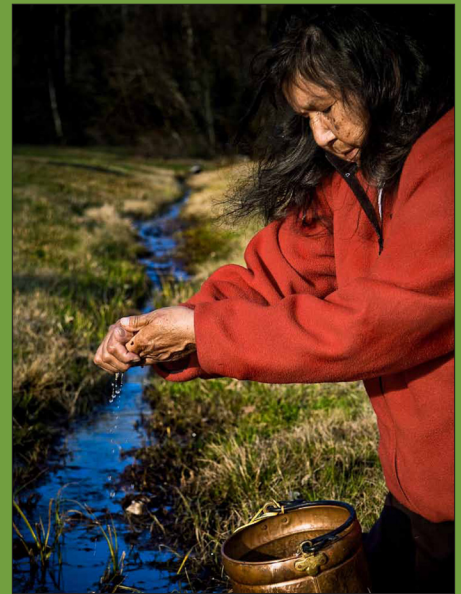


RESTORING THE LIFEBLOOD: WATER, FIRST NATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHANGE

SETTING THE STAGE

- More than 100 First Nations communities in Canada are under drinking water advisories
- 1 in 5 First Nations lack safe drinking water
- \$5 billion needed to upgrade First Nations water infrastructure
- 4 barrels of water to produce 1 barrel of oil from the oil sands
- Evidence of increased polyaromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) in Peace Athabasca Delta sediment
- 79 % of the Yukon staked for mining
- Individuals from First Nations communities represented 11.1% of H1N1 infections in 2009, while comprising less than 4.0% of the Canadian population
- First Nations communities receive only 80% of the operating and maintenance resources needed to maintain water treatment plants



RESTORING THE LIFEBLOOD: WATER, FIRST NATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHANGE

October 5-6, 2011



All photos courtesy of the Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources.

The Circle on Philanthropy and Aboriginal Peoples in Canada and the Canadian Environmental Grantmakers' Network hosted a two-day workshop in October 2011, entitled *Restoring the Lifeblood: Water, First Nations and Opportunities for Change*. The workshop was an important first step by both organizations in bringing together funders and representatives of First Nations to learn about critical water issues confronting Aboriginal communities across the country and to explore the opportunities for working together to address them. A total of 53 individuals attended, representing a range of philanthropic and non-profit

organizations, First Nations communities and institutions, and a small number of private sector interests.

The workshop was comprised of one day of presentations and discussions at the Native Canadian Centre in Toronto on October 5th and a day trip to the Six Nations of the Grand River on October 6th, providing opportunities for learning and sharing in a First Nations community. Introducing the workshop, James Stauch, Vice-President of the Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation and Chair of The Circle, noted that the workshop was designed to help funders better understand the sacred relationship between water and First Nations peoples, as well as the challenges faced

by Aboriginal communities with respect to fresh water. Another primary objective of the workshop was to engage funders in those challenges and opportunities. During the workshop's first morning, we heard from a number of individuals with different perspectives on First Nations water issues:

- Francois Paulette, a Dene Suline and member of the Smith's Landing Treaty 8 First Nation, spoke to the impact of oil sands development on the water resources of his home community, providing an historical perspective and underlining the relationship between First Nations communities and the water that sustains them.
- Jocelyn Joe-Strack, a Jane Glassco Arctic Fellow and a member of the Champagne and Aishihik First Nation from the south-western corner of the Yukon Territory who is currently working on her M.Sc. at the University of Northern British Columbia, spoke to the transformation of her Yukon homeland through resource development and the need to strike a balance between industry, economy, environment and maintaining culture. "Without the environment, we can't have any of it."
- Merrell-Ann Phare, Executive Director/Legal Counsel at the Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources (CIER), addressed water



governance issues. She pointed to the possibilities for collaborative governance which would allow for a combined vision for watersheds - a new approach that would implement shared, overlapping jurisdictions or 'layering' of federal, provincial, and indigenous borders. "Shared management would be based on skill and capability, rather than a power struggle." Merrell-Ann authored the foundational document for the conference *Restoring the Lifeblood: Water, First Nations and Opportunities for Change* which highlights a broad range of opportunities for program and project development vis-a-vis First Nations

water issues. She identified the following as critical areas needing attention: i) addressing knowledge gaps through research; ii) developing advocacy and leadership capacity; iii) tools and information for decision-making by First Nations; iv) Improving water quality in homes; v) local community leadership, learning and engagement; vi) creating sustainable economic opportunities in water; vii) leveraging water as a culture driver.

- Helen Fallding, Manager of the University of Manitoba's Centre for Human Rights Research, spoke of the northern Manitoba communities she had visited as a journalist with the *Winnipeg Free Press* and the resulting series of news reports titled "No Running Water." She contrasted the degree to which Canadian individuals and charities galvanize efforts to help Haitians and others in need outside of Canada, but the near absence of philanthropic efforts to address the lack of access to clean water and adequate sewage facilities on many of Canada's First Nations reserves.
- Irving Leblanc is an Odawa from the Wikwemikong Unceded Indian Reserve and a professional engineer who spoke to the federal government's engineering

assessment which cited the need for upwards of \$5 billion in water treatment and sewage infrastructure in First Nations communities. Irving regards the assessment as cursory and feels that the estimate is likely too low. He expressed other concerns with respect to resource gaps; the downloading of financial responsibilities; and the fact that funding for operations and maintenance of water infrastructure isn't based on the actual cost of running the plants.

- Bill Erasmus, a member of the Dene Nation and Regional Chief of the Northwest Territories for the Assembly of First Nations, spoke to the impact of climate change on the north and the current low water levels in the NWT. He attributed the latter to the huge draw on water caused by the oil sands development (4-5 barrels of water for each barrel of oil produced) and criticized the lack of regulation on water use in the oil sands. He stated his clear opposition to the expansion of the oil sands and to the proposed pipeline to Kitimat. Underlining the importance of the discussions that were underway that day, he noted: "By talking about it we are putting a face on it."
- Joanne Barnaby, a member of the Dene Nation and a consultant, urged the incorporation of traditional knowledge, as well as western

science, into training for people managing First Nations' water supplies, noting that "elders and community members need to be taken seriously." Calling it a "flaw in the Canadian system," Joanne spoke to the fact that First Nations communities lack the ability to challenge policy decisions made in other jurisdictions which impact their communities.

- Roland Willson, Chief of West Moberly First Nation, spoke of his community's concern over the proposed Site C Dam in northern B.C. which would result in extensive flooding of wildlife habitat and heritage sites.

The discussion following the presentations focused on how philanthropy might help improve First Nations water issues through such things as support for research, the creation of First Nation water issue network/s, and increasing media coverage of the issues through a targeted journalism award. With the recognition that philanthropic resources in Canada are relatively small in comparison to the enormity of the task, it was recommended that those problems that are most amenable to philanthropic intervention be identified and supported. With an eye to influencing policy, it was suggested that initiatives to motivate the public to put pressure on the federal government, as well as public education around policy needs,



would be useful. The attached schematic captures a number of specific recommendations coming out of the *Restoring the Lifeblood* workshop as to where philanthropic investment would advance key opportunities for change.

The 'mechanics' of philanthropic investment in First Nations communities were also the subject of discussion. There is confusion on the part of both funders and First Nations as to what extent First Nations are qualified donees as determined by the Canada Revenue Agency. James Stauch noted that the vast majority of First Nations communities are in fact qualified donees. The document *First Nations as Qualified Donees* by Susan Manwaring of Miller Thompson LLP provides guidance on this point. (The document can be found on The Circle's website and the link to it is provided in the Appendix.)

The presence of private sector representatives at the workshop sparked discussion about the possibility for collaborative efforts among First Nations, funders and corporations, with philanthropic dollars helping to catalyze joint efforts to address water issues. The second day of the workshop saw the group travel to the Six Nations Reserve near Brantford, Ontario. Paul General of Six Nations of the Grand River was our host and the visit included discussions with the Steve Lickers, manager of the water treatment facility, and a presentation by Linda Parker on Six Nations' approach to securing funds for projects. We enjoyed a terrific lunch at the Six Nations Tourism Centre.

There was strong agreement among participants of the need to continue the discussion and to focus it on solutions.

NEXT STEPS:

A survey following the workshop revealed that 86.7 % of participants viewed the workshop as being either useful or very useful to their work and that the same percentage would be likely to attend another event on the subject of First Nations water issues. Among the suggestions as to next steps were recommendations for more focused sessions on possible solutions and the establishment of a technical working committee to monitor and report on results of funding. The Steering Committee for the workshop is determining the next steps that The Circle and CEGN will undertake and welcomes additional feedback from all participants.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

The Circle on Philanthropy and Aboriginal Peoples in Canada is an open network designed to promote giving, sharing, and philanthropy in Aboriginal communities across the country. To learn more about the Circle, including the opportunities for membership, contact Elisa Levi at: elisa@circleonphilanthropy.ca or: 416-527-0345. Information about the Circle can also be found at: <http://philanthropyandaboriginalpeoples.ca>

The Canadian Environmental Grantmakers' Network (CEGN) is a membership group of private, community, public and corporate foundations, as well as government and corporate funding programs that provide environmental grants in Canada. To learn more about CEGN, contact Pegi Dover at: pegi_dover@cegn.org or at: 647-288-8891. Information about CEGN can also be found at: www.cegn.org

APPENDIX

1) *Restoring the Lifeblood: Water, First Nations and Opportunities for Change* by Merrell –Ann Phare, Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources
<http://philanthropyandaboriginalpeoples.files.wordpress.com/2011/09/first-nation-water-report-lo-res.pdf>

2) *First Nations as Qualified Donees* by Susan Manwaring, Miller Thompson, LLP
<http://philanthropyandaboriginalpeoples.files.wordpress.com/2011/01/firstnationsasqualifieddonees.pdf>

What are the opportunities?

INFRASTRUCTURE

- Sustain fish camps
- Engineer new systems
- Sinks and toilets

CAPACITY

- Support leaders
- Bring youth and elders together
- Training and education
- Technical skills development
- Language retention and preservation

GOVERNANCE

- Embed United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) principles into our governance structures
- Establish waterkeeper organizations across the country to make sure federal laws are upheld
- Challenge indicators of success
- Support goal-setting

PRAYER SPIRITUALITY CEREMONY

CONVENING

- Support national networks
- Bill Eramus: "By talking about it, we're putting a face on it."
- Support conferences, especially to create space to discuss human rights and the environment

COMMUNICATIONS

- Support storytelling
- Establish an award for journalists who provide good coverage of issues relevant to First Nations
- Government relations
- Public education
- Dispel myths, e.g. Aboriginal issues are not charitable

RESEARCH

- Fund policy development
- Support remote monitoring
- Gather baseline data
- Help define realities on the ground
- Support the development of studies and reports

RESTORING THE LIFE BLOOD: WATER, FIRST NATIONS, AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHANGE

PARTICIPANTS LIST

Wednesday 5 October 2011, Native Canadian Centre of Toronto

Thursday 6 October 2011, Six Nations of the Grand River

First Name	Last Name	Organization
Andre	Vallillee	Ontario Trillium Foundation
Bernadette	Conant	Canadian Water Network
Bill	Erasmus	AFN Regional Chief, Northwest Territories, Dene Nation
Briony	Glassco	Gordon Foundation
Dani	LaGiglia	Small Change Fund
David	Secord	Tides Canada
Derrick	Kamanga	3D-N Engineering Services Ltd.
Dona	Geagea	Waterlution
Elisa	Levi	The Circle
Frances	Bedford-Jones	RBC Foundation
Francois	Paulette	Smith's Landing Treaty 8 Nation
Gunilla	Creutz	Ontario Trillium Foundation
Heather	Caffrey	Environment Canada
Helen	Fallding	University of Manitoba
Ian	Macdonald	The United Church of Canada
Irving	LeBlanc	Assembly of First Nations
Izabela	Popova	Innovolve
Jacqueline	Ryan	RBC Foundation
Jacqui	LaValley	Shawanaga First Nation
James	Stauch	Gordon Foundation
James	Pepper	Okanagan Nation Alliance
Joanne	Barnaby	Consultant
Jocelyn	Joe-Strack	Aishihik First Nation

continued on back page

RESTORING THE LIFE BLOOD PARTICIPANTS LIST *continued from page 7*

First Name	Last Name	Organization
John	Waller	Monoxygen
Jumana	Vasi	Mott Foundation
Kalson	Abdi	Walter & Duncan Gordon Foundation
Kathleen	Padulo	Chiefs of Ontario
Kerry	Freek	Water Canada
Kerry	Black	Canadian Water Network
Larry	Innes	Canadian Boreal Initiative
Leon	Lous	Okanagan Nation Alliance
Lisa	Hardess	CIER
Marion	Gracey	The Circle
Matthew	Green	Hamilton Community Foundation
Merrell-Ann	Phare	CIER
Murray	Maracle	Scugog First Nation
Nancy	Goucher	Forum for Leadership on Water
Pamela	Perreault	B.C. First Nations Energy and Mining Council
Paul	General	Six Nations of the Grand River
Pegi	Dover	CEGN
Peigi	Wilson	Peigi Wilson, LL.M.
Peter	Forton	CAPE Fund
Ralph	Gerlach	
Roland	Willson	Moberly First Nation
Russell	Anthony	Gordon Foundation
Ruth	Richardson	Open Blue
Shaffina	Kassam	Environment Canada
Sharon	Charters	Hamilton Community Foundation
Stephen	Couchman	
Stephen	Lindley	SNC Lavalin
Suzanne	Van der Porten	Univeristy of Waterloo
Tim	Morris	Gordon Foundation
Tom	Axworthy	Gordon Foundation
Trudy	Millard	Ontario Ministry of Environment
Valerie	Courtois	Canadian Boreal Initiative
Victoria	Grant	Moving Red Canoe
Walter	Ross	Temagami Community Foundation
Zoe	Barrett Wood	University of Guelph