



# Regional Snapshot: Ontario

AFN National Water Symposium

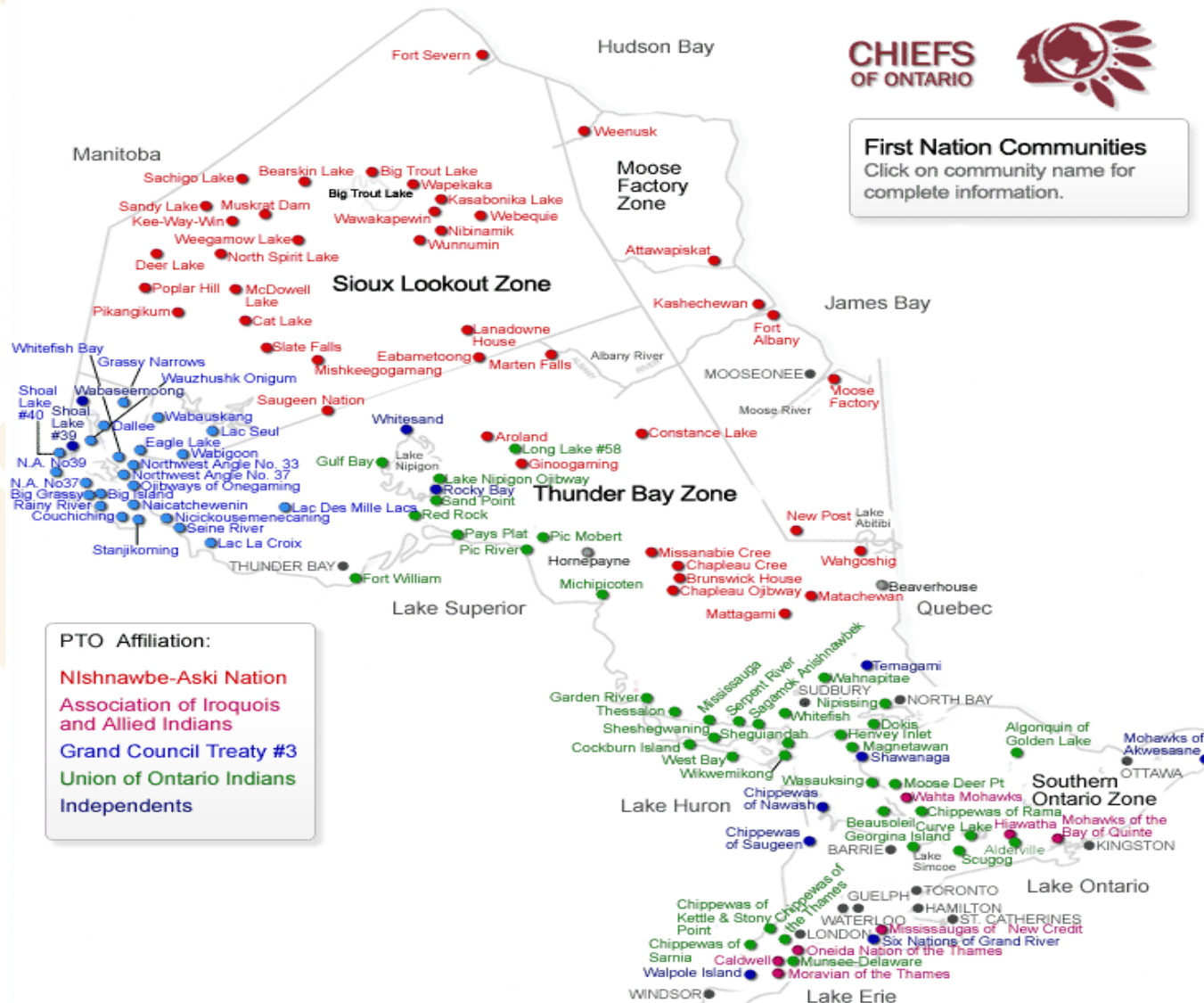
Niagara Falls, Ontario February 26-28<sup>th</sup>, 2019



**CHIEFS  
OF ONTARIO**



**First Nation Communities**  
Click on community name for  
complete information.



# Overview - Outline

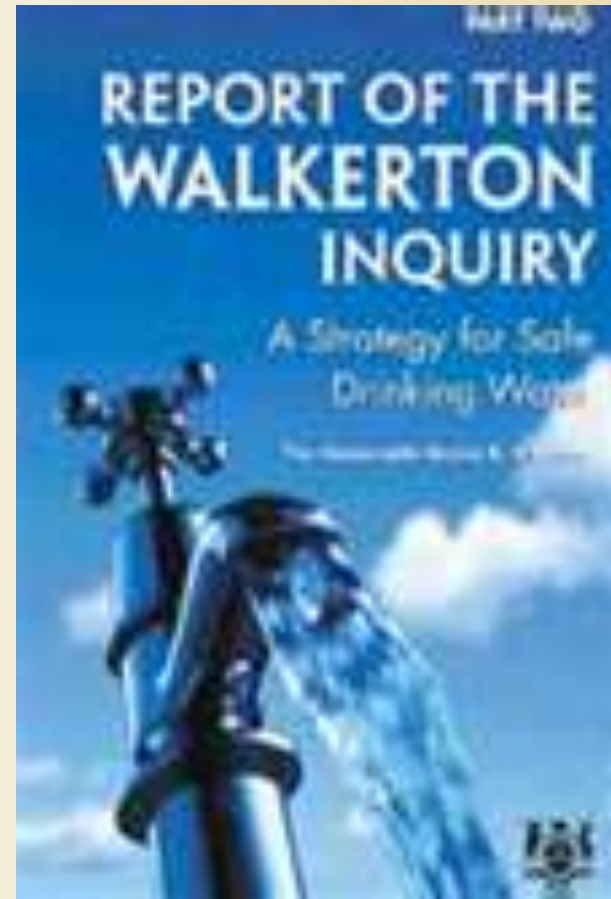
- Walkerton
- Water Declaration
- Human Rights Watch Report
- Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act
- Resolutions – AFN and COO
- Information Sessions
- AFN Engagement Sessions



# Walkerton

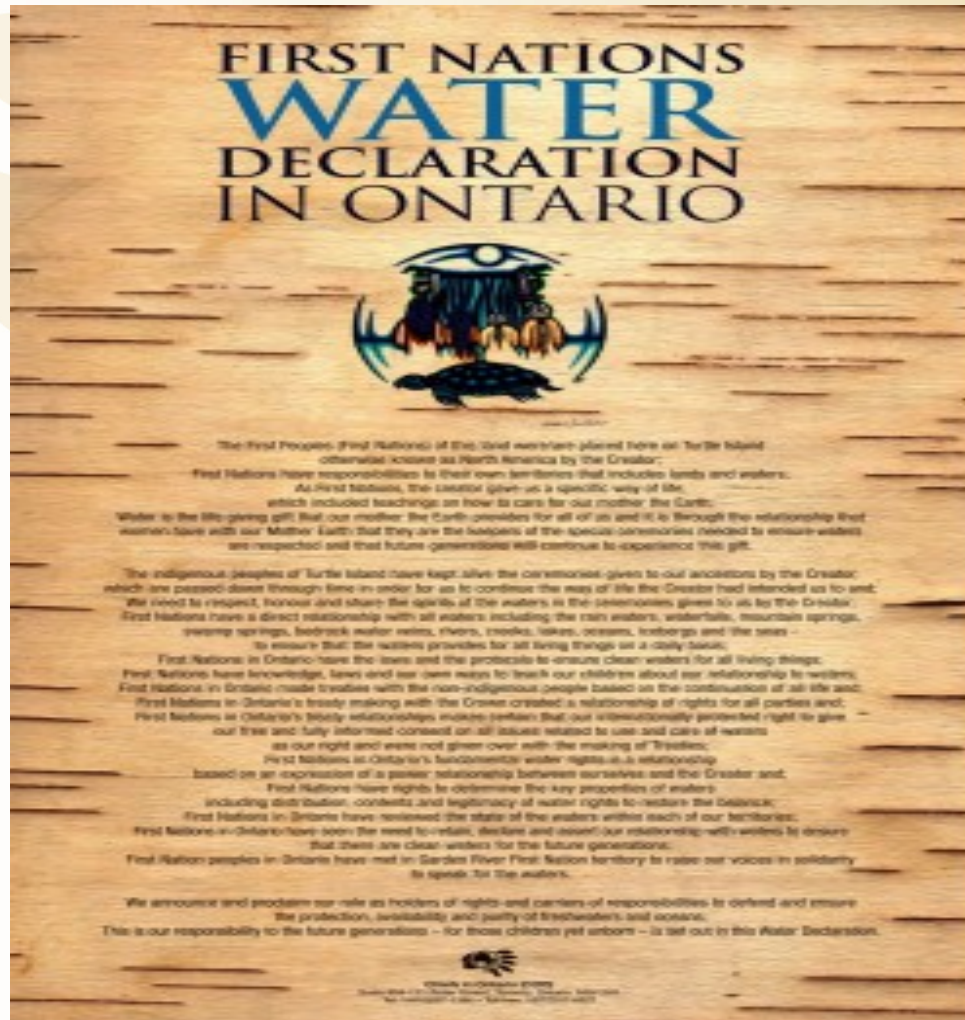
May 15, 2000 –

Walkerton,  
population less  
than 5,000 at the  
time, saw 2,300  
people fall ill, and  
seven die, after  
e-coli breakout





# Water Declaration in Ontario



# Human Rights Watch Report Make It Safe: Canada's Obligation To End The First Nations Water Crisis (2016 Geneva UN)



# Current Status: Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act (SDWFNA)

- Currently the Act is in force, however there are no regulations developed
- The Act was created and brought into force without consultation and despite extensive First Nations resistance and challenges
- Engagements for modification of the SDWFNA by INAC began in mid June 2017 and proceeded until September 2017 despite calls for those engagements to cease by First Nations
- The federal government has made clear commitments to ensure First Nations have equity with non-First Nations in terms of water quality standards and equity in water access: in 2017-2018 they have now acknowledged that a First Nations led process to deal with the current legislation is needed



# Safe Water Resolutions 2017-2018

- Four AFN resolutions were passed on safe drinking water related matters in 2017-2018 reflecting substantial results of sustained First Nations advocacy which shifted the approach of the federal government on the SDWFNA.
- Resolution 26/2017: Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act repeated the call for repeal of the SDWFNA and immediate cessation of the federal governments engagement sessions for amendment of the Act, and instead called for the federal government to develop in partnership with First Nations the next steps in engaging with the SDWFNA.





# Safe Water Resolutions 2017 - 2018

- Resolution 88/2017: First Nations led Engagement Process for Safe Drinking Water Legislation
- Resolution 01/2018: First Nations Led Process to Develop New Federal Safe Drinking Water Legislation



# Information Sessions

- The Chiefs of Ontario Environment Unit are organizing two water information sessions March 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> in Thunder Bay and 7 and 8<sup>th</sup> in Toronto.
- These sessions will compliment the Ontario regional engagement sessions organized by the AFN that will take place in the spring of 2019.



# AFN Engagement Sessions

- Objectives of the regionally led engagement sessions with First Nations are to ensure that the development of new legislative framework for First Nations safe drinking water and sanitation is endorsed, informed and supported by meaningful feedback and dialogue on the many issues.





# Thank you

Kathleen Padulo, Chiefs of Ontario

[Kathleen.Padulo@coo.org](mailto:Kathleen.Padulo@coo.org)

