



Assembly of First Nations 4th Annual Water Symposium

February 17 -18, 2021

SYMPOSIUM AGENDA

Building upon the dialogue from the 3rd National Water Symposium and Tradeshow “First Nations Water Future Post-2021”, this year the theme is “Protecting Water During Uncertain Times”.

Objectives:

- Discuss the ongoing impacts of the pandemic highlighting the uncertainty facing First Nations with respect to water including Canada’s acknowledgment that their commitment to end all long-term drinking water advisories by March 2021 will not be met.
- Conduct a national dialogue on looming water legislation, questions around sustainable funding, and the implications of a new national water agency among other current issues.

Day 1 – Wednesday, February 17, 2021

Time	Agenda Item
10:45 a.m.	Log in to Virtual Symposium <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Technical assistance available
11:00 a.m.	Opening Ceremonies/Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hand Drummer Awema Tendesi, Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg• Opening Prayer by Nookomis Roberta Oshkabewisens• Water Ceremony by Sally Gaikezheyongai• Welcome Remarks from Chief Dylan Whiteduck, Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg
11:20 a.m.	Address by National Chief Perry Bellegarde
11:35 a.m.	Symposium Opening Remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regional Chief RoseAnne Archibald, Ontario• Regional Chief Kevin Hart, Manitoba, Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Housing and Infrastructure Portfolio Holder
12:00 p.m.	Setting the Context for the Symposium <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Irving Leblanc, P. Eng., Director of Housing, Infrastructure, Water and Emergency Services, Assembly of First Nations
12:15 p.m.	Keynote Presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tanya Talaga, Award-winning Journalist/Author
1:15 p.m.	Wellness Break
12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.	Operator Training (<i>registration required</i>)





Day 1 – Wednesday, February 17, 2021

Time	Agenda Item
1:30 p.m.	The Honourable Marc Miller, Minister, Indigenous Services Canada
2:00 p.m.	<p>Panel Presentation: First Nations Women and Water <i>Moderator: Kerry Black, University of Calgary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Emily Whetung, Curve Lake First Nation • Chief Doreen Spence, Tataskweyak Cree Nation • Melanie Debassige, Ontario First Nations Technical Services Corporation • Ashley Daniels, AFN Youth Council <p><i>Question and Answer Period</i></p>
3:00 p.m.	<p>Workshop Period #1</p> <p>Waterfall Room – Class Action Litigation on Drinking Water Advisories in First Nations (Simultaneous Interpretation Available) <i>Presenter(s): Chief Emily Whetung - Curve Lake First Nation, Chief Doreen Spence - Tataskweyak Cree Nation, Chief Chris Moonias - Neskantaga First Nation, Harry Laforme – OKT LLP, Kevin Hille – OKT LLP and John Brown – McCarthy Tétrault LLP</i></p> <p>The presentation will be an open discussion session to answer delegates questions about these class actions, including: why and how First Nations should join these class actions; why joining these class actions should not adversely affect any existing water funding from Canada, or any current negotiations for this funding; how this litigation will pursue the specific claims of each First Nation that joins these class actions; and, why individual members of First Nations are already members in the class actions.</p> <p>Reservoir Room – Collaborative, “Just Do It” Approaches To Water Governance <i>Presenter(s): Regional Chief Norman Yakeleya (NWT) and Merrell-Ann Phare</i></p> <p>The Dene Nation is supportive of collaborative, “just do it” approaches to water governance. The presentation will share their ideas on how they implement their inherent, treaty rights and land claims by working with other governments in Canada to create laws and institutions in Canada that work in partnership with Dene law, meet their needs and support their approach to self-determination in Denendeh.</p> <p>Lake Room – Engagement and Innovation – Small Community, Big Story <i>Presenter(s): Gerson Neiva, P.Eng. and Megan Wood, P.Eng.</i></p> <p>WSP’s small and innovative water treatment project with the Tl’azt’en Nation received 5 engineering awards in 2019, 2 with ACEC BC, including the Lieutenant Governor’s Award; and 3 with ACEC Canada, including the prestigious Schreyer Award. The presenters from WSP will discuss how the engagement strategy that focuses on innovation through meaningful partnership and systematic engagement with the community and all partners, was the key to the success of this project.</p>





Day 1 – Wednesday, February 17, 2021

Time	Agenda Item
3:00 p.m.	<p>Ocean Room – Saskatchewan First Nations Water Association <i>Presenter(s): Treena Cottingham - Northern Inter-Tribal Health Authority</i></p> <p>The presentation will be an introduction to the SFNWA: who they are, who they represent and their goals and objectives. They believe a coordinated, inclusive approach with first person solutions from First Nation communities will lead them into the post-2021 Boil Water Advisory world and provide more long-term solutions to safe, sustainable drinking water.</p> <p>River Room – Environment and Climate Change Canada Presentation <i>Presenter(s): Michael Goffin - Environment and Climate Change Canada</i></p> <p>Environment and Climate Change Canada is leading Canada's efforts to create a Canada Water Agency. The presenter will provide an overview of the project, including why a Canada Water Agency is being developed, an update on the process to date, a description of the Discussion Paper – Toward the Creation of a Canada Water Agency, and opportunities for First Nations' engagement. A question and answer period will follow the presentation.</p>
4:00 p.m.	Symposium adjourned for the day

4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. Networking Event

*Join us in the Networking Lounge and meet your colleagues and chat about the day's events!
Entertainment, Games, Prizes*





Day 2 – Thursday, February 18, 2021

Time	Agenda Item
10:45 a.m.	Log in to Virtual Symposium <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical assistance available
11:00 a.m.	Welcome/Recap of Previous Day/Introduction to the Day/Announcements
11:15 a.m.	COVID-19 Panel Presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carol Hopkins, Thunderbird Partnership Foundation • Mike McKay, Nishnawbe Aski Nation • Judith Eigenbrod, Assembly of First Nations • Jonathan Riberdy, Zhiibaahaasing First Nation • Mohamad ElRafihi, Prince Albert Grand Council <p><i>Question and Answer session</i></p>
12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.	Operator Training (cont'd)
12:15 p.m.	Keynote Presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Chris Moonias, Neskantaga First Nation
12:45 p.m.	Workshop Period #2 <p>Waterfall Room - Beyond Engagement: Understanding the legislative process in Canada <i>(Simultaneous Interpretation Available)</i> <i>Presenter: Jennifer Esdaile - Indigenous Services Canada</i></p> <p>Once engagement processes are concluded, how is input used to develop laws? This breakout session will focus on the steps that are taken following engagement; from the policy development stage, right through to Royal Assent.</p> <p>Reservoir Room – Importance Of Community-Based Monitoring Of SARS-Cov-2 In Wastewater To Reduce Public Health Risks In First Nations <i>Presenter(s): Gabriela Jimenez - Carleton University</i></p> <p>This presentation will focus on proposed community-based monitoring in First Nations and the potential risks to public health of discharging emerging pathogens in water environments. As well, it aims to contribute to a further understanding of the importance of wastewater surveillance methods to monitor and potentially prevent outbreaks of COVID-19 in First Nations, by informing public health policies at local, provincial and national levels.</p>





Day 2 – Thursday, February 18, 2021

Time	Agenda Item
12:45 p.m.	<p>Lake Room – Having Data Alone Isn't Enough</p> <p><i>Presenter(s): Dr. Madjid Mohseni - RES'EAU Centre for Mobilizing Innovation, Mr. Shawn Bennett- Siska Indian Band, Ms. Brenda Thomas – Lhoosk'uz Dené Nation and Doug Neff – Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council.</i></p> <p>In this session, the presenter will draw on evidence from four (4) different drinking water improvement projects commissioned at four First Nations communities during the pandemic, to show what changes are impacting the water industry culture the most.</p> <p>Ocean Room – O&M Gaps and the Insufficiency of Federal Funding/ A High Level Look at Nationwide Capital and O&M Shortfalls</p> <p><i>Presenter(s): Mr. Craig Baker, P. Eng., Taylor Martin and Kevin L. Martin, First Nations Engineering Services Ltd.</i></p> <p>There is a significant disparity between what First Nations receive for O&M and what the actual costs are to properly manage a water treatment plant. The presenters will provide information on the O&M gaps that were calculated during the recent Nationwide AFN Asset Management Planning Pilots that FNESL assisted in coordinating and on our recent experiences calculating the anticipated lifecycle O&M costs for running a brand new water treatment plant. In addition, the Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) approached FNESL in determining what the capital requirements are for the schools and teacherages in the 49 First Nations NAN represents. FNESL developed a model based on current CAIS, ICMS, and ACRS data for each facility that allowed for a high level estimation of the capital needs. The capital costs were determined by reviewing similar recently completed construction projects by ISC. FNESL is currently carrying out a similar endeavour to determine O&M costs using ACRS data and RS Means. The results and procedures of these projects will be discussed as well as how the methodology can be used to provide a solid representation of all First Nation infrastructure capital and O&M costs nationwide.</p> <p>River Room - Essentials of Source Water Protection: How to Build your Source Water Protection Plan</p> <p><i>Presenter: Robert Patrick, PhD, MCIP, RPP - University of Saskatchewan</i></p> <p>Source water protection is the first barrier in the multi-barrier approach to safe drinking water. Source water protection is a land and water planning process aimed at the protection of your drinking water supply. This workshop presentation will provide a full overview of this planning process explaining how your First Nation can develop your own source water protection plan. Topics to be covered include setting up your working committee, completing your drinking water assessment, completing a risk assessment and developing management actions to reduce risk. The goal of the workshop is to bring greater awareness to the importance of source water protection and the necessary information so that you can begin to protect your source water.</p>
1:45 p.m.	Wellness Break





Day 2 – Thursday, February 18, 2021

Time	Agenda Item
2:00 p.m.	<p>Workshop Period #3</p> <p>Waterfall Room – Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality <i>(Simultaneous Interpretation Available)</i> <i>Presenter(s): Stéphanie McFadyen - Health Canada</i></p> <p>The Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality are established by Health Canada in collaboration with the Committee on Drinking Water. This presentation will give a brief overview of the principles behind these health-based guidelines, including how they are developed and priorities are identified. Current activities will be discussed.</p> <p>Reservoir Room - Testing in Wastewater - How it Can Help Communities <i>Presenter(s): Dr. James Brooks, Dr. Chand Mangat and Dr. Michael Mulvey - Public Health Agency of Canada</i></p> <p>COVID-19 infection does not always cause symptoms and many people may be unaware of their infection. How do you detect COVID-19 in a community where people may only have mild symptoms or might not be able to access testing? One answer is through testing the wastewater (sewage). PHAC has developed an accurate and reliable test for finding COVID-19 in wastewater. Testing can be used as an early warning test for communities where there are no infections, to follow trends over time or in congregant living settings, quickly identify the virus and prevent transmission. As new variants of COVID-19 are emerging, wastewater testing can be used to understand the emergence of these new strains.</p> <p>Lake Room – tân’ses wakhôtamahk nipy – our relationship with water <i>Presenters: Mario Swampy, Dale Saddleback and Florence Saddleback - Samson Cree Nation, Sarah Skinner - Battle River Watershed Alliance, Ayla Lauret - University of Calgary and Kerry Black - University of Calgary</i></p> <p>This session will explore community-based approaches to water management, emphasizing Indigenous ways of knowing and doing, Indigenous rights and mutually respectful partnerships. Through the lens of collaboration, the example of Samson Cree Nation will explore shared practices in reconnection with language and culture, a focus on rights, education-centered approaches, and successful partnerships with allies.</p> <p>Ocean Room – Water Movement <i>Presenter(s): Deon Hassler - File Hills Qu’Appelle Tribal Council and Bitia Malekian - Water Movement</i></p> <p>It is without a doubt, that COVID-19 has presented extraordinary challenges to the already difficult and essential roles of First Nations water operators. Non-profit organization, Engineers without Borders, has devoted a venture called Water Movement to help bridge the connection between Indigenous water operators and experts nationwide. Water Movement is an online interactive space designed for Indigenous Water Operators by Indigenous Water Operators.</p>





Day 2 – Thursday, February 18, 2021

Time	Agenda Item
2:00 p.m.	<p>River Room – Breaking New Ground: History and Next Steps in the Development of the Atlantic First Nations Water Authority</p> <p><i>Presenters: James MacKinnon, Atlantic First Nations Water Authority</i></p> <p>This workshop will discuss the history and development of the Atlantic First Nations Water Authority, culminating in the signing of a Framework Agreement with Indigenous Services Canada in June 2020. The workshop will also discuss the work that is underway and to be completed to ensure full autonomous operations in the Spring of 2022.</p>
3:30 p.m.	<p>Closing Plenary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regional Chief RoseAnne Archibald, Ontario• Regional Chief Kevin Hart, Manitoba, AFN Housing and Infrastructure Portfolio Holder <p>Closing Prayer</p> <p>Nookomis Roberta Oshkabewisens</p>
4:00 p.m.	Symposium adjourned

