Understanding Local Water Collaboration for the Potential to Enhance Community Source Water Protection at Chippewas of the Thames First Nation

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Rural Symposium OMAFRA

SCHOOL OF
ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN
AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

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Research Goal

To understand how collaboration between local water actors (municipalities and conservation authorities) can support First Nations community-level source water protection

The Problem

First Nations communities in Canada chronically lack water security

January 2021: 57 long-term drinking water advisories on First Nations communities in Canada

First Nations face higher rates of water insecurity as compared to non-First Nations communities in Canada

First Nation water is under Federal jurisdiction. First Nations have limited involvement in off-reserve water upstream of them which, calls for collaboration.

What is the research about?

WATER GOVERNANCE

SOURCE WATER
PROTECTION

COLLABORATION

What stakeholders were engaged?

- Chippewas of the Thames **First Nations**
- **City of London**
- Lower Thames **Conservation Authority**
- St. Clair **Conservation Authority**

Research Results

Perspectives of Water Actors Towards Collaboration

1. Understanding and Respecting One Another
2. Finding Commonalities
3. Agreeing on a Resolution
4. Working Together
5. Decisions that are Consistent with Each Party's Mandate
6. Commitment to Collaboration
7. Good Dialogue

Barriers to Water Collaboration

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1. Competing priorities
2. Perspectives of collaboration
3. Budgeting for collaboration
4. Navigating governance structures and uncertainty
5. Lack of impetus to collaborate
6. Historical mistrust

Takeaways

Sharing the Thames River means caring for the health and well-being of the river. When we secure ecosystem health, we create water security for humans. This involves building strong relationships and upholding responsibilities to the river.

Impacts of the project on myself

Visit a reserve and build relationships with local First Nations

Learnt to think critically and analyze research results

Exposure to different careers/potential employment opportunities

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Chippewas of the Thames First Nation Anishinaabeg of
the territory of Deshkan Ziibing

Research Contributors

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Thank You • **Miigwetch**

Questions?

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