

# Wa Ni Ska Tan:

Cross-Regional Research Alliance on the  
Implications of Hydro Development for Environments  
and Indigenous Communities in Northern Canada



SSHRC Partnership Grant Application

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## Abbreviations

CARC – Canadian Arctic Resources Committee  
CFI – Canada Foundation for Innovation  
CNP – Cree Nation Partners  
CURA - Community-University Research Alliances  
FLCN – Fox Lake Cree Nation  
GETS - Graduate Enhancement of Tri-Council Stipends  
HQP – Highly Qualified Person  
ICCH – Interchurch Council on Hydropower  
IHA – International Hydropower Association  
IR – International Rivers  
KM – Knowledge Mobilization  
kWh – Kilowatt hour  
MH – Manitoba Hydro  
NEB – National Energy Board  
NGO – Non-Governmental Organization  
OCAP – Research Principles: Community **O**wnership, **C**ontrol, **A**ccess, and **P**ossession  
PO - Pimicikamak Okimawin  
SIL – South Indian Lake  
SSHRC – Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council  
TWh – Terawatt hours  
TK – Traditional Knowledge  
TRC – Truth and Reconciliation Commission  
TRG – Thompson Research Gathering  
USEIA – United States Energy Information Administration  
WCD – World Commission on Dams  
WHA – Wa Ni Ska Tan Hydro Alliance  
YFFN – York Factory First Nation



## Executive Summary

Hydropower has become an essential source of energy around the world over the last 50 years and now plays a crucial role in energy development for both domestic use and export in Canada. Proponents argue that hydropower takes advantage of otherwise wasted energy potential in rivers, cuts greenhouse gas emissions, results in low-cost power for consumers, and is a source of local employment. However, hydropower has also been the focus of much public controversy around the globe and has been accused of contributing to widespread social and environmental injustice. Some of the largest rivers across Canada have been dammed and diverted, sometimes resulting in the dislocation of entire Indigenous communities. Changes in land use can result in declines of natural habitat and wildlife, traditional economies, and cultural wellbeing of affected Indigenous communities. However, the implications of and community responses to hydropower are still poorly understood, especially as related to cross-regional and cumulative impacts, and are the focus of this formal partnership.



**The overall goal of this cross-sectoral research alliance is to better understand the positive and negative implications of hydropower for environments and Indigenous communities, in Manitoba and in other affected regions across Canada.**

Our specific objectives are to describe:

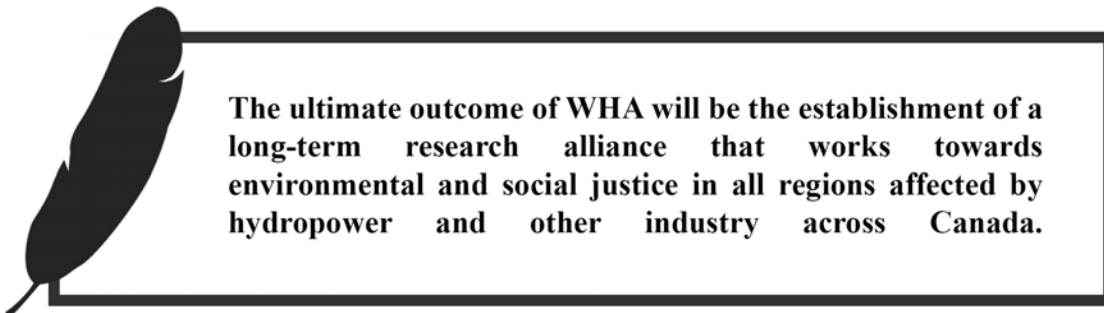
1. Project-level and cumulative impacts of hydropower on the environment and social and cultural wellbeing of Indigenous communities;
2. Community and stakeholder responses that have helped reduce the impacts of these changes;
3. Cross-community action projects that will act on local priorities and help mitigate any such impacts and further desirable change into the future;
4. Comparison between changes in Manitoba with those occurring with hydropower and other relevant industrial projects elsewhere across Canada;
5. Effectiveness of Aboriginal and treaty rights as tools of Indigenous community empowerment; and
6. The evolution of the research alliance itself and its relationships with outside stakeholders.

The Wa Ni Ska Tan (Cree for 'Wake Up') Hydro Alliance or WHA emerged out of three meetings and two tours of hydropower-affected communities in northern Manitoba. The Alliance is shaped by the priorities of impacted Indigenous communities. It consists of representatives from 24 Cree (Ininew/Inniniwak), Anishinaabe, and Métis nations; 22 researchers; 14 social justice and environmental NGOs; nine universities from Canada and the US; and multiple levels of government.

Principles underlying the WHA center on transparency, accountability, cross-cultural sensitivity, mutual respect, and consensus in decision-making.

Its six central pillars of activity are:

1. Participatory research;
2. Documentation and archiving;
3. Grieving and reconciliation;
4. Education and mentorship;
5. Advocacy and support; and
6. Evaluation and communication.



Immediate outcomes will be:

- Increased understanding of the social and environmental implications of hydropower;
- Increased capacity to assess and respond to any impacts; and
- Multi-way exchange of knowledge within WHA and with outside stakeholders.

Long-term outcomes will be:

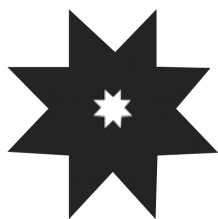
- Increased public awareness of and responsibility towards hydro and other development in Canada;
- Increased ability of Indigenous communities to shape decision-making regarding this and other related development; and
  - Increased awareness and policy support regarding these issues by all levels of government, hydropower corporations, NGOs and the general public as a whole.

## Goals & Project Description

On January 20, 2015, Manitobans were surprised when Premier Selinger travelled 750 km north of Winnipeg to Pimicikamak territory in order to deliver a high-visibility, formal apology to those adversely affected by northern hydropower. The apology acknowledged “environmental effects of such projects” and noted “the interests of the Aboriginal peoples, particularly in the north, were not fully considered” (Selinger 2015). This was a direct response to the six-week occupation of the Jenpeg Generating Station complex by Pimicikamak members. It accompanied a “Process Agreement” which will guide the relationship between Pimicikamak, the province, and Manitoba Hydro into the future (PO 2014). The apology was presented (and received) in the spirit of reconciliation. Selinger stated, “we recognize that reconciliation is an ongoing process and are committed to work with communities toward building respectful relationships.” Chief Cathy Merrick responded by saying the apology “symbolizes a new relationship” and is an important symbol of a “shift from hurt to healing.” While the apology does not exonerate past actions of the government, it helps “create the foundation for a better future,” and recognizes that we all need to “build that future together” (Merrick 2015). Members of Sagkeeng First Nation, Tataskweyak Cree Nation and Black River First Nation are now also asserting their treaty rights and insisting that Manitoba Hydro better reflect their own community priorities and values (TRG 2014).

Our Wa Ni Ska Tan (Cree for ‘Wake Up’) Hydro Alliance is similarly grounded in this spirit of renewed hope and action, in part looking back and documenting impacts on affected environments and Indigenous peoples and in part facing forward, supporting and helping provide opportunities for these same communities into the future. The parallels between this apology and another much better known one offered by Prime Minister Harper in 2008 regarding the impacts of Residential Schools on Indigenous people across the country are clear. Also clear are the parallels between the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) on one hand and the sharing and healing that we are now facilitating among participants in our Alliance and the general public on the other.

## Truth and Reconciliation



Indeed, community participants in our December 2014 and June 2015 gatherings repeatedly drew powerful parallels between the sharing and healing that is now already occurring in our Hydro Alliance and those emerging out of the just-completed TRC. It was unanimous that Truth and Reconciliation be adopted as a central pillar of our work as a network and, as indicated below, that Truth and Reconciliation inform the first of three cross-community action projects housed by the Alliance. The TRC represents part of a negotiated settlement regarding the traumatic experiences of 150,000 child survivors of the residential school system. Its intent has been two-fold: to help survivors document and share their experiences with one another and the larger Canadian public and to gain some sort of redress through reconciliation. Through this victim-centered approach, truth was treated as a multifaceted and experiential reality that was best revealed through the many diverse survivor voices in panels that were held across the country (James 2012). It contrasts with most other truth and reconciliation processes (e.g.

South Africa, Rwanda, Sierra Leone) since the state responsible for these atrocities is still in power (Alfred 2009a). Some argue that the faultfinding and investigative mandate of the TRC was thus fatally and even deliberately restricted (James 2015). Its approach was also seen by some as too ambiguous, especially regarding reconciliation (Weiss 2015) and, by restricting the mandate to residential schools, unable make links to other atrocities such as missing and murdered Indigenous women, natural resource appropriation and the larger context of colonial violence and oppression (Stanton 2013, Nagy 2014).

However, there is no doubt that many of the former students who testified, including many participating in our Alliance, saw the process as survivor-driven and as cathartic and healing. Using a truth and reconciliation frame in this Partnership allows us to reflect these important themes and parallels as they have emerged out of the two gatherings to build on the momentum and promise of the TRC (Storrie 2015), and also to reflect the role of the National Center for Truth and Reconciliation as a key Partner in our Alliance, it also allows us to explore how the trauma associated with the residential school experiences affects trauma related to hydropower projects and other factors including gendered violence. Finally, it allows us to address another shortcoming of the TRC, the significant absence of non-Indigenous Canadians at its events (Robinson 2015). In conducting our public outreach in Manitoba and beyond, we will extend the work of the TRC and show decision-makers and the public alike that all Canadians need to engage in an allied solution to past and ongoing oppression.

The overall goal of this Partnership is to explore both the positive and negative implications of hydropower for nearby environments and Indigenous communities in Manitoba and other affected regions across Canada, and to further explore how and to what degree this Research Alliance might enable healing as well as meaningful and desirable social and environmental change. The Alliance is located in both the SSHRC Insight and Connections program objectives and will have substantial benefits for communities, civil society, governments, utility companies, and indeed all Canadians.

## Hydropower



Hydropower constitutes 16.9% of electricity production globally (USEIA 2008) and 61.9% of production in Canada. In contrast, it only accounts for 7.9% of the electricity produced in the US (Anon 2013). Indeed, in 2013, only China produced more than Canada's 388 TWh of hydro-electricity (IHA 2013). British Columbia, Quebec, Newfoundland and Manitoba all derive the majority of their electricity from hydropower (IHA 2013). In Manitoba, over 95% of electricity generation is hydropower (MH 2015). Canada is also the world's third largest exporter of hydropower, with the bulk of its 59.2 TWh of electricity exports, this worth \$3.0 billion, coming from hydro dams (NEB 2014). Yet, existing production only represents ~45% of Canada's total technological hydropower potential (SUSS 2012). Manitoba's hydropower export revenues totalled \$439 million in 2013, with 89% and 11% of sales to the US and other provinces, respectively (MH 2015). Since 2005, export sales in Manitoba have amounted to \$5.2 billion and will likely exceed \$16 billion by 2035 (MH 2015). Hydropower is, thus, of key economic importance to Manitoba, and to Canada as a whole.

The controversy surrounding hydropower has grown with its resurgence in importance over recent years. Proponents argue that benefits arising from hydropower projects are substantial and undeniable. Consumers and business benefit from inexpensive power; thus, the price per kWh in Winnipeg (\$0.07) and Montreal (\$0.07)—both serviced by hydropower—is about one-half that in Halifax (\$0.13) and one-third that in New York (\$0.23) (Pagliaro 2014). Proponents also argue that dams are an environmentally friendly as a renewable resource that takes advantage of flows that would otherwise be wasted (MH 2015). Hydropower is seen as a low-carbon “green” energy source that can displace “brown,” more carbon-intensive sources such as coal and natural gas (Demirbas et al. 2004). Indeed, over the last 20 years, exports of hydropower by Manitoba are reported to have displaced 170 million T of greenhouse gas emissions in the US (SUSS 2012). The role of dams in mitigating climate change has contributed to renewed global interest in hydropower (Braun 2011). Yet, hydropower is also internationally condemned for its adverse impacts on environments and people (WCD 2000, IR 2015).

### Environmental and Social Impacts



Hydropower projects generally result in the flooding of large expanses of terrestrial and riparian habitat, especially in the undulating landscapes of northern Canada (Kourgialas and Karatzas 2013). The James Bay Project in Quebec flooded 11,300 km<sup>2</sup> whereas the smaller WAC Bennett Dam in BC and the Grand Rapids Dam in Manitoba still flooded 1,650 km<sup>2</sup> and 1,157 km<sup>2</sup> of upland habitat, respectively (CARC 1992, Sebastian et al. 2003, ICCH 2012). Microbial activity in submerged sediments is stimulated, resulting in increases in the production and availability of methyl mercury in invertebrates and zooplankton, which is further concentrated at higher trophic levels. At their peak, mercury levels in predatory fish such as pike and walleye in La Grande 2 Reservoir were about 7X (Bodaly et al. 1997) and in South Indian Lake (SIL), 2-3X (Bodaly et al. 1984) those of permissible human consumption limits in Canada. Elevated levels are also observed for other aquatic wildlife including muskrat, ducks, and moose (McLachlan 2014a) and gull and tern eggs (Hebert et al. 2013) in northern Alberta. Postimpoundment mercury levels generally take 25-30 years to decline to background levels, such that levels in zooplankton declined in 10-15 years and in fish 20-30 years in SIL, although levels in Quebec were still higher for some fish species 40 years later (Schetagne and Therrien 2013).

Flooding also erodes shorelines, resulting in the collapse of permafrost and riparian forests. Although it was predicted that pre-existing bedrock conditions would be re-established within 35 years on shorelines of SIL, this degradation still shows no sign of abating 40 years later (McLachlan pers. obsv). Cumulative impacts of flooding also cause declines in the productivity and biodiversity of downstream deltas as well as estuarine and coastal areas (Rosenberg 1997), as flooding shifts in timing from the biologically active springtime to the winter (Neu 1982). Rare or endangered species that are especially vulnerable to these changes include lake sturgeon and woodland caribou in northern Manitoba (Peterson et al. 2007, Scurrah and Schindler 2012) and salmon in the Pacific Northwest (Nehlsen et al. 1991). Most of these environmental impacts have been poorly predicted, when impact assessments were conducted at all in the past, and social impacts have received even less attention (Berkes 1988).

Indeed, many such environmental changes have had dramatic implications for nearby Indigenous communities in BC (Loo 2007, Peyton 2011), Manitoba (Waldram 1993, Hoffman and Martin 2012), Quebec (Desbiens 2004; Carlson 2008, Niens 2013), and Newfoundland and Labrador (Feehan and Baker 2007, Feehan 2011). In the most extreme cases, entire communities including the Cheslatta T'En and Sekani First Nations in BC (Larsen 2003) and Chemawawin and SIL in Manitoba (Waldram 1987) were forcibly relocated, with greatly adverse impacts on traditional economies and cultural wellbeing. Much of the affected wildlife including muskrat, ducks, and moose are also “cultural keystone” species that have been hunted, trapped, and consumed since time immemorial (McLachlan and Miller 2012). Whitefish populations in northern Manitoba also collapsed with impoundment, resulting in substantial declines in income for communities that were once prosperous. Per capita incomes in SIL dropped from levels that were 5X the average of northern communities in 1967 to ones where the majority of fishers are now on Social Assistance (Kamal et al. 2014, Dysart pers. comm.). Post-impoundment mercury levels in fish harvested in Grand Rapids and SIL were soon high enough that they were no longer safe to consume, much less to export (Hecky et al. 1984), a situation that has also been observed in Alberta and BC (McLachlan 2014a). High mercury levels also typically erode community confidence in traditional foods (Loney 1995), accelerating a nutrition transition from still-healthy, wild-caught foods to highly processed, store-bought foods rich in fats, sugars and salts (Waldram 1985). This transition in turn contributes to increases in diabetes, obesity, and heart disease (McLachlan 2015). Declines in water flow and shoreline erosion contributes to algal blooms, and debris interferes with fishing and makes transportation risky, even resulting in loss of human life (R. Spence, pers. comm.).

When surveyed, the majority (78%) of respondents from SIL felt that hydropower projects had reduced community health and wellbeing (Loney 1995). Respondents from hydropower-affected Norway House showed greater concern about health and other impacts including suicide, domestic abuse and substance abuse than non-hydropower communities such as Island Lake and Poplar River (Loney 1995). These changes, which have occurred within one generation, further erode the wellbeing of families and communities already decimated by residential schools, and indeed, centuries of exploitation and colonization (Usher 1981). Impacts including the decimation of traditional fisheries, flooding of hunting territories, and declines in health and wellbeing are widespread, and were visible in most of the 14 communities affected by hydropower across Canada (Knight et al. 1994).

Although the many adverse impacts are recognized by most affected communities (McLachlan 2014b), about one-third of those in Manitoba have decided that hydropower projects will proceed regardless, and it is only by becoming actively involved that they will be able to finally benefit from these projects as “limited” Partners (Primrose 2006, CNP 2012, FLCN 2012, YFFN 2012). The implications of these impacts and changes are still poorly understood by scientists and policymakers, especially as they relate to the recent and innovative agreements such as Wuskwatim and Keeyask in Manitoba (Foth 2011), the Tshash Petapen in Labrador (Samson and Cassell 2013) and Cree communities signatory to the La Paix des Braves in Quebec (Scott 2008, Martin 2011). Yet, most hydropower research, especially as it relates to the environment, still has inadequate community input, largely reflects corporate and government priorities, and does little to compare the implications of different hydropower projects across affected environments and communities. Moreover, it ignores the larger context of colonization that gives rise to the



disproportionate adverse effects that hydropower has on Indigenous Peoples around the world (Cameron 2012).

### Decolonization, Indigenous Resurgence, and Cross-Cultural Alliances



The literature on “settler colonialism”, whereby newcomers claim land inhabited by Indigenous Peoples as their own (Tuck et al. 2014), represents an important starting point for understanding the relationships between these two groups, although it is still denied by many political leaders, including Stephen Harper who claimed that Canada had “no history of colonialism” (Walia 2009). Colonialism is multigenerational, multifaceted, and works toward a self-serving common good that acts to undermine and suppress every aspect of Indigenous existence, transcending economics, culture, social organization, governance and wellbeing (Alfred 2009b). It is also constantly evolving or “shape shifting” (Alfred and Corntassel 2005), ever-creating novel ways of erasing Indigenous cultures, past and present or recasting current-day colonial narratives of “antiquation”, “victimization”, “grievance”, or “corruption” (Alfred and Corntassel 2005). Across Canada, this has been achieved by systematically destroying environments and traditional food systems, forcibly restricting communities onto reserves, undermining and assimilating Indigenous cultures through residential schools and forced adoption, and ignoring promises reflected in the numbered treaties thereby compromising wellbeing and creating dependency at every turn (Rudolph and McLachlan 2013). Implicit throughout has been a modernist assumption that these Indigenous cultures are obsolete, and in need of saving or, as “traditional”, should be preserved and dissuaded from evolving. Kulchyski (2004) and Hoffman (2008) argue that corporations including Manitoba Hydro, BC Hydro, and Quebec Hydro still exercise this colonial power through the continued introduction of new hydropower projects (e.g. Wuskwatim and Keeyask in Manitoba, Site C in BC).

Colonialism (and decolonization as resistance) is obviously an essential frame for understanding and responding to the subjugation and control of Indigenous Peoples, but it is also seen by some as inadequate (Alfred 2005). The emphases on human and even Aboriginal rights are premised on the importance of state-recognized rights and self-determination, but will not in-and-of-themselves restore or regenerate these cultures. Audre Lorde (1984) argues that “the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house” (p13), realizing that such demands for recognition will reconstruct the “very configurations of colonial power” (Coulthard 2007, p437) that Indigenous Peoples and other oppressed groups seek to replace. State-centered approaches to decolonization that focus on land claims and desires for self-government amount to “illusions of inclusion” that are dependent on the primacy of a state-defined constitution and ultimately act to deter more radical transformations from occurring (Alfred and Corntassel 2005, Corntassel 2012). Moreover, such dismantling does little to inform the subsequent rebuilding of Lorde’s houses (Simpson 2011). Thus, many Indigenist scholars are exploring ways that this renewal might take place, as these Peoples reconnect with and affirm their cultural traditions.

The foundations of such Indigenous “resurgence” are generally founded on the importance of family and community, as well as deep connections to land, language, storytelling and spirituality (Anderson 2000, Craft 2014). The goal is to commence “renewal” or “reconstruction” as a process that begins with the self, based on original teachings and values. Every-day practices

of “resurgence” arise from individual actions and in turn extend to include the family, the clan, and the community. Renewing pre-Treaty relationships can, in turn, foster co-existence and help build solidarity among First Nations, and can affirm cross-regional political alliances most recently celebrated by the national ‘Idle No More’ movement (Simpson 2012). This focus on family and community also creates opportunities for land-based education opportunities for children (Tuck and Yang 2012). Such resurgence efforts work to affirm and restore Indigenous presence on traditional homelands and revitalize traditional harvesting practices, emphasize the importance of traditional foods in diets, strengthen the importance of family, and affirm the importance of Indigenous institutions in governance (Alfred 2009a). Although approaches focusing on decolonization and resurgence are not mutually exclusive, implied is a shift from a strict dependence on rights-based discourses that ultimately affirm the importance of the state to ones that also affirm the importance of place-based cultural practices (Corntassel 2012); together, these ultimately merge into “a deliberate act – a direct act of resurgence, a direct act of sovereignty” (Simpson 2012).

Clearly such emphases on resurgence center on the importance of Indigenous people playing the key role in healing and renewal, which begs the question: what, if any, role might settlers play in these processes? Undoubtedly, the assertion of Indigenous rights and traditions is “(un)settling” for many “newcomers” and it is important that settlers are not able to deny this destruction or reconstruct it as being limited to the past (Tuck and Yang 2012). Yet, cross-cultural alliances between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples have played important roles in supporting progressive social change and in overcoming longstanding mistrust between these groups (Grossman 2005). Historically, Indigenous communities arguably had to depend on gaining the support of a distant and privileged non-Indigenous public (Ashini 1996), although this apparent dependency is now eclipsed by more recent shifts toward wide-scale Indigenous power and influence. Successful alliances include the Friends of Grassy Narrows and Asubpeeschoseewagong First Nation around the longest standing blockade in Canadian history (Wallace 2010); the Coalition for a Public Inquiry into Ipperwash surrounding the death of Dudley George (Davis et al. 2007), the Six Nations Solidarity Network regarding their claim of the Haldimand tract in southern Ontario (Kellar 2012), and the recent, national Idle No More movement (Barker 2015).

When successful, such alliances affirm the voices and priorities of Indigenous partners and facilitate progressive social and political change. Non-Indigenous participants, in turn, become aware of and sensitive to complex colonial forces as they play out in the present as well as gaining insight into traditional cultures and spirituality (Barron 2000). Yet, there are also many examples of how such alliances can actually work against Indigenous interests, especially ones that reflect romanticist views of Indigenous People as “ecological Indians” who are necessarily “anti-development” (Davis et al. 2007). Some, including those emerging from the political left, also reproduce dominant colonial worldviews and resist challenges by Indigenous peoples and activists to address colonial injustices (Choudry 2010). *However, it is our intent that this cross-cultural Research Alliance will create the space and processes for Indigenous participants to assert their leadership and influence, that any research and support will be shaped by and reflect their values and priorities, and in so doing, that we as Indigenous and non-Indigenous Partners will work together and at once further decolonization and Indigenous resurgence.*



## Originality, Significance and Contribution to Knowledge



Despite the multiple billions of dollars of investment into hydropower infrastructure in Manitoba alone, little is known about the long-term implications (good and bad) of these projects. Many of these projects have been in place for over 50 and some even 100 years, and there is a long history of impacts that can be documented as well as new community agreements with Manitoba Hydro that deserve further exploration. Studies are often motivated by new projects and are thus limited in duration or are ad hoc in nature. Importantly, northern Manitoba represents an integrated system that incorporates Lake Winnipeg (the world's 10th largest freshwater lake), massive river diversion projects, many generating stations and dams and channels on multiple rivers, all of which function and respond as a larger and integrated whole. Changes in one component often have unknown implications for the hydrology and biota of another as well as nearby Indigenous communities, yet even less is known about the combined and cumulative effects of such changes, including ongoing management actions by Manitoba Hydro.

Traditional Knowledge (TK) and community based monitoring programs that incorporate both TK and western science can provide much unique and much needed insights into cumulative impacts and what the combined impacts of ongoing management have had and will have on this larger system (McLachlan 2014b). Moreover, little is known of the role that alternative energy, Indigenous food programs, education and mentoring programs, cross-community culture camps, language programs, and Aboriginal and legal rights have on mitigating local much less regional and cross-community scale impacts in Manitoba or for other comparable regions that have been affected by hydropower projects.

The great diversity in research expertise represented by the co-applicants and collaborators as well as the other Partners in this Alliance will play a strong role in supporting multi-disciplinary initiatives and the key role of training and mentoring. Our Alliance represents a valuable opportunity to extend the important work of the TRC and to explore how impacts of residential schools combine with and are aggravated by other stressors including hydropower and gendered violence. We will also explore how to better engage with the general public in sharing these insights, this facilitated by our emphasis on high-impact and innovative knowledge mobilization at all stages of the project. Finally, the Alliance itself represents an important opportunity to explore how the Partnership evolves over time and to what degree reconciliation occurs among Partners that once may have even been at conflict with one another.

### Wa Ni Ska Tan

Much of the sustained research and education activities conducted through the Alliance will focus on hydropower projects across Manitoba. However, this work will also extend to include comparable projects in BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan Quebec, and Labrador as well as networking with Indigenous and other Partners in these provinces at national gatherings in order to facilitate multi-way sharing and support. Six primary pillars of research activity were identified by our Research Alliance at the earlier gathering in Thompson in December 2014 and a second gathering held in The Pas in northern Manitoba in June 2015. The latter was our fourth meeting (and the second in the North) and was attended by 75 people, including members from 16 Cree and Anishinaabe First Nations, 11 NGOS, and 13 researchers. Importantly, the meeting

represented the first opportunity for many of these communities to share their experiences as well as to identify ways of grieving these losses and to move forward. These six pillars of activity are:

- 1) Participatory and community-driven research;
- 2) Documentation and archiving of community and environmental impacts and responses;
- 3) Sharing and responding to these impacts in ways that parallel the Truth and Reconciliation Commission;
- 4) Education and mentoring for both university students and community youth;
- 5) Support and advocacy for Partner communities; and
- 6) Evaluation of the Partnership as it evolves and knowledge exchange among Alliance Members and with other outsider stakeholders and the wider public (Fig 1).

These activities are seen as occurring along three major dimensions: environment, social and cultural wellbeing, and food. It was also agreed that all research would be culturally appropriate, accountable to communities, and reflect OCAP principles (i.e. community ownership, control, possession, and access of data) (Schnarch 2004).

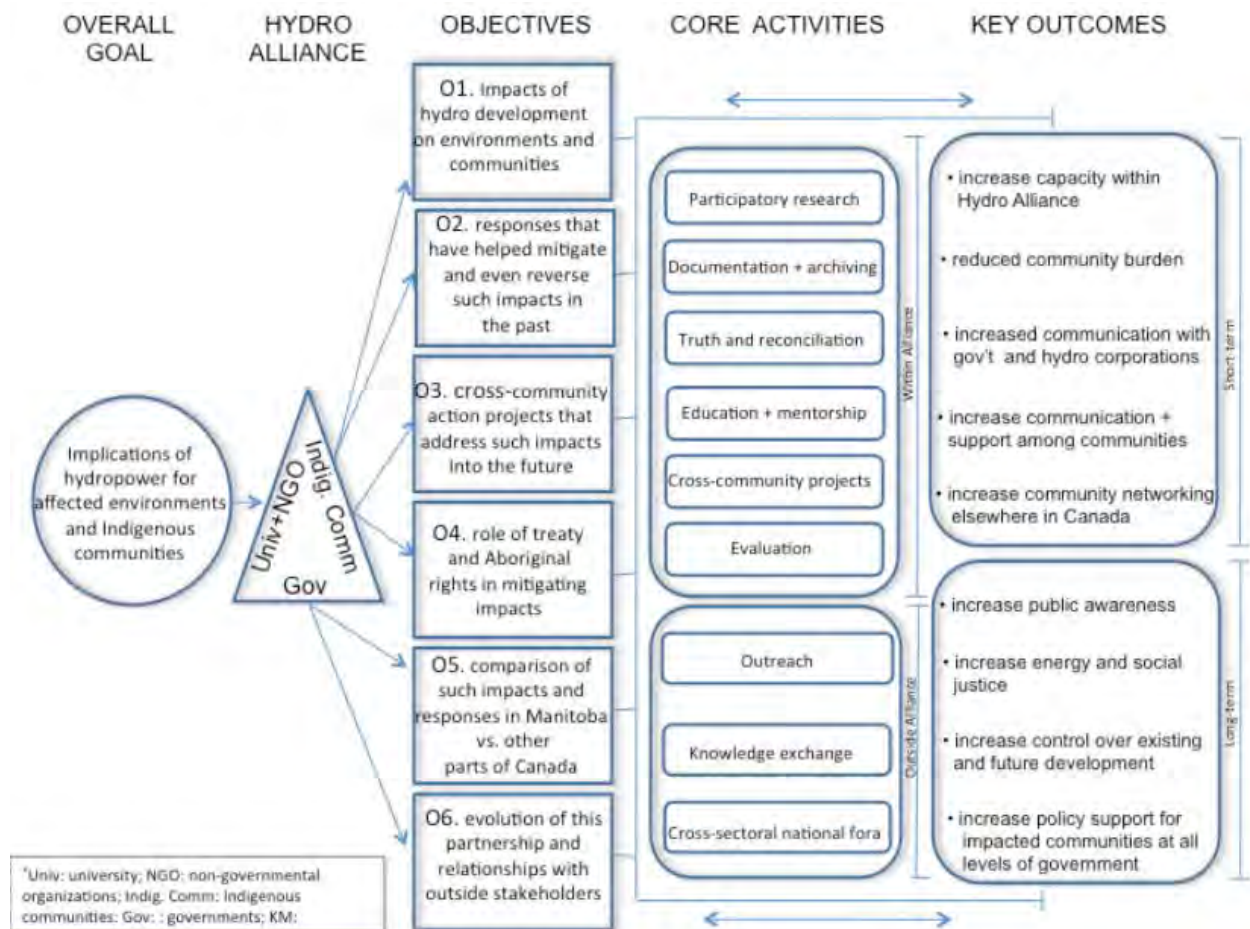


Fig. 1. Logic model for the Wa Ni Ska Tan Hydro Alliance showing objectives, core activities and outcomes

Six objective-based research themes and associated activities also emerged from the small-group discussions at the Thompson and Pas gatherings in northern Manitoba that will inform all core activities. These themes are:

- 1) Project-level and cumulative impacts of hydropower on the environment and social and cultural wellbeing of nearby Indigenous communities;
- 2) Community and stakeholder responses that have helped reduce the impacts of these changes and in some cases resulted in beneficial outcomes;
- 3) Cross-community action projects that will support local capacity and priorities and that will help mitigate any such impacts and facilitate desirable change into the future;
- 4) Comparison between such impacts and responses in Manitoba and those occurring with hydropower and other relevant industrial projects elsewhere across Canada;
- 5) Effectiveness of Aboriginal and treaty rights as tools of Indigenous community empowerment; and
- 6) The evolution of the Research Alliance itself and its relationships with outside stakeholders and factors that underlie any such socio-cultural and political change.

All funded research projects will reflect at least one of these six research themes and also the research strengths and interests of co-applicants and community members. University students and community youth will play a central role in all activities. Research projects that cut across multiple hydropower-affected communities in and/or outside the province will also be central to the Alliance. These will resonate with the research themes and community priorities and also involve university students and community youth. It is anticipated that 3-4 cross-community projects will be funded each year, although some might be longer in duration. A similar approach succeeded in our SSHRC CURA, although those projects were limited to a community scale. Submitted projects will each range from \$20-40,000, and be evaluated by a Strategic Adjudication Committee representing communities, NGOs, and researchers.

Three such projects were identified at the June gathering and will be funded in Y1:

**Project 1** will document and archive past and ongoing changes to environment and wellbeing, and a “living archive” (Lougheed et al. 2015) will be created at University of Manitoba in collaboration with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation that is easily accessible to and searchable by Alliance members, stakeholders and general public. An application to the Canada Foundation for Innovation’s Innovation Fund will be submitted in 2016 to help support the project.

**Project Two** will coordinate and support tours of hydropower-affected communities by members of other communities in collaboration with the Lake Winnipeg Indigenous Collective, where affected sites will be visited and any related impacts and responses will be discussed and recorded.

**Project Three** will establish a cross-community cultural resurgence program. Based out of Maple Lodge, it will connect high-risk youth and Elders from at least four communities (e.g. Norway House, Grand Rapids, Pimicikamak, and Nelson House) through cultural and harvesting programs.

Outcomes of such projects would be shared at each annual gathering. A national research gathering will be held in Y2, where representatives from hydropower-affected communities and outside stakeholders from other provinces will share priorities and experiences and broaden the Alliance, and again in Y7 when major accomplishments of the Alliance will be shared widely with all attendees. Successes and challenges of these projects and the Alliance will be monitored using a participatory and empowerment evaluation approach (Fetterman et al. 2014), which will inform any progress regarding the Alliance as a whole. Details will be finalized at Spring-2015 meeting in Brokenhead Ojibway Nation





## Evaluation framework for the Hydro Alliance

Our evaluation is participatory and mixed methods in approach. By using performance indicators (Table 1) as well as individual and focus group interviews, we will assess our ability to achieve our major Alliance outcomes (Fig 1). At each annual gathering, we will critically evaluate progress of community projects and the Alliance as a whole as represented by a summary report, videos and project presentations. Successes and shortcomings will be identified in small groups, and reported back to and discussed by the larger membership. Gaps will be addressed and highlighted in subsequent projects, outreach, and processes that better facilitate participation in and outside the Alliance. These will also be highlighted on our project website ([www.hydroalliance.ca](http://www.hydroalliance.ca)) and with new social media, enabling any and everyone to provide feedback. This adaptive and inclusive approach to evaluation reflects the democratic nature of the Alliance and our recognition that this network begins and ends with people.

**Table 1. Performance indicators and outputs across seven years of SSHRC Partnership Grant funding**

Performance Indicators	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Total
<i>Product Indicators</i>								
Employment (community youth)	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	20
Employment (students)	9	9	9	9	9	8	7	60
Cross-community proposals (funded)	3	5	4	3	3	3	3	24
Undergraduate students/theses	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	19
Graduate students/theses	-	3	-	6	-	3	5	17
Peer reviewed papers / books	-	2	2	2	5	6	7	24
Case Studies	3	5	7	7	8	4	3	37
Skill-based workshops	1	3	3	4	5	5	4	24
Mentorships	2	5	7	7	7	7	7	42
National gatherings	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	2
Regional gatherings	-	1	1	1	1	1	-	5
Research film	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Annual reports to partners	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7
Press releases, media releases	5	10	10	12	15	10	10	72
New project funds leveraged (cash \$)	200K	200K	300K	300K	300K	300K	500K	2.1M
New project funds leveraged (in-kind \$)	200K	300K	300K	400K	400K	400K	200K	2.2M
<i>Progress Indicators</i>								
AGM attendance	80	90	100	100	120	120	200	810
New partners	5	5	10	10	5	5	5	45
Workshop attendance	10	20	40	40	40	40	20	210
Outcomes of participatory evaluation	+	+	++	++	+++	+++	++	+++
Web site visits ( <a href="http://www.hydroalliance.ca">www.hydroalliance.ca</a> )	500	1000	5K	10K	20K	50K	100K	180.6K

## Challenges

A primary challenge will be how to navigate the inevitable contention surrounding hydropower in Manitoba and other provinces, in ways that are sensitive to and reflect a wide diversity of community priorities but also meet the sometimes-conflicting expectations of other Alliance Partners including NGOs, government, and industry. This will in part be achieved by allowing for a variety of roles for organizations within the Partnership, but which also grounds the network in community priorities. Another challenge is how to balance academic and community expectations within such a wide diversity of academic disciplines. This will in large part be facilitated by a combined focus on cross-community projects and HQP, again reflecting a wide diversity of community and outsider stakeholder priorities, and by a focus on inclusive and accountable decision-making within and outside the Alliance.

Other challenges include geography, and will be partially addressed by alternating the meeting locations between northern and southern First Nations and also emphasizing the importance of accessible communication among Partners. Language will also be a challenge, and thus summaries will be provided in Cree and Ojibway. Any barriers to cross-cultural communication will in part be addressed by an emphasis on cultural sensitivity. Barriers regarding effective outreach will be addressed by plain language communication. Ultimately, the relatively long seven-year duration of this Partnership Grant will allow this Alliance to evolve and adapt to any of these and yet unanticipated challenges.



## Relevance and Significance to Partners

This cross-sectoral Alliance represents a valuable opportunity to engage with isolated Indigenous communities that have been adversely affected by a multitude of factors including hydropower projects but also residential schools, gendered violence, and colonization. It is often difficult for urban actors to identify shared interests, much less to act upon these. Most communities are also distrustful of the federal and provincial governments and especially hydropower corporations. In contrast, the Hydro Alliance has emerged over the last two years as an unmatched opportunity to affect change that at once reflects the needs and priorities of the affected communities and the concerns of outside stakeholders.

The nascent trust and productive working relationships that are emerging out of this Alliance will no doubt affect communication between communities and outside stakeholders, but importantly they will also facilitate communication and support among communities and for that matter among outside stakeholders. There is an excitement among the various Partners that grows stronger with every gathering. This building momentum in-of-itself acts as a powerful attractant to additional potential Partners, but we will also build on this momentum by strategically inviting potential Partners from out-of-province to become involved. In so doing, this Alliance represents a high innovative cross-cultural network of support and communication for all Partners, one that promises to become a best-practices model for cross-cultural partnerships in Canada but also in other parts of the world including the US, Australia and New Zealand. This opportunity builds on the tremendous momentum of the TRC, which importantly is a key Partner. The Alliance represents a rare multi-win opportunity for all Partners, and an even more valuable opportunity to redress existing wrongs in a meaningful and effective way.



## Influence and Impacts

Our Research Alliance will provide both short and long-term benefits. There is still little understanding regarding the long-term and cumulative impacts of hydropower projects anywhere in Canada. It is our central thesis that communities and Partners can collaborate in a sustained way and together play a lead role in documenting such environmental, socio-economic, and cultural impacts and share these outcomes within the Research Alliance but also with outside stakeholders including government and industry. These insights will focus on Manitoba but will also be compared to those of hydropower projects in other parts of Canada including BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Quebec. Most related research has thus far focused solely on impacts, and very little has focused on how communities, governments, and industry are responding to these challenges much less benefitting from any changes.

Part of this work will also focus on institutional responses and in part it will document and enable communities to better adapt to these challenges, as they negotiate with multiple levels of government and with project proponents. The evolving agreements with Manitoba Hydro will in turn be compared to those for hydropower projects in other provinces. As importantly, the Research Alliance will provide independent research and technical advice to any interested communities, and foster a strong network of support among communities affected by and responding to such hydropower projects.

The Research Alliance will support and mentor research skills for HQP and Indigenous community groups, especially youth, and in so doing foster a new generation of university and community researchers interested in conducting culturally appropriate, accountable and high-impact work regarding these issues. It will also provide a context and model for and support other scientists interested in conducting environmental and health research regarding these issues in Manitoba and with other community Partners in this Alliance. Our focus on effective KM will also help ensure that all outcomes have maximum benefit for affected communities, other Partners, many levels of government, industry, and the public. This cross-cultural Partnership will function as a best practices-model related to impacts of and responses to hydropower and other industrial projects in northern Canada and the world.



### Budget – Requested Funds from SSHRC

[illegible]

## Budget Justification – Funds Requested From SSHRC

Total Budget: \$2,500,000

### Personnel Costs

#### ***Total \$1,261,000***

- 50.4% of the total project costs will be used to pay and actively mentor undergraduate and graduate students, post-doctoral research associates, and community research assistants, reflecting our continued commitment to education and training as well as to HQP throughout the project.
- **Student Salaries and Stipends: Total \$631,000.** In total, the Alliance will provide \$631,000 of stipend support for undergraduate and graduate students, amounting to 25.2% of the budget. Thus, 39 students (19 undergraduate, 11 Masters, and six PhD student) will be supported over the seven years of SSHRC funding. They will be registered in programs of study at all the partner universities, including those in Manitoba (University of Manitoba, Brandon University, University College of the North, University of Winnipeg), Saskatchewan (University of Saskatchewan), Quebec (McGill University) as well as universities in the US (University of St Thomas, Indiana University) and in the UK (Coventry University, Durham University) depending on the nature of the project as well as student and advisor availability. They will be encouraged to collaborate with and provide mentorship and support for one another and with community research assistants and researchers.
- **Undergraduate students: Total \$76,000.** Funding will support 19 fourth year undergraduate students. These summer employment positions will extend over 14-week terms at 35 hrs/week at \$10.70/hr in accordance with standard pay rates for senior undergraduate research assistants at University of Manitoba. Matching cash contributions (\$5.00/hr: \$2,500/student) will be applied for from student employment programmes such as Canada Summer Jobs and the Manitoba Green Team. Students will lead their own honours research, but will be closely mentored by their faculty and community advisors. They will contribute to and facilitate community projects, and thus work with community partners in project planning and research design. In addition they will develop skills in project management and cross-cultural communication; conduct literature scans; analyze their data, and write up their research. They will also play a strong role in communicating the outcomes of these projects, within and outside the communities in the form of photovoice, video, and websites. All students will be asked to co-present the outcomes of these projects with community members at the Annual Gatherings.
- **Masters students: Total \$240,000.** Funding will support 11 Masters students, each for two years and a last Masters student for one year, who will all be receive a Masters stipend rate of \$12,000 per year from SSHRC, which will be topped up to at least \$15,000 from other funds including the GETS at University of Manitoba. The students will play the lead role in their research, collaborating with community members on community projects. They will design their research projects with the active mentorship of academic advisors and community partners, ensuring that they address community

priorities and the larger goals of Wa Ni Ska Tan. Thesis projects will reflect qualitative or mixed research methodology and project activities (Fig 1). Typical activities will include: collaborating with community partners to identify research and education priorities; critically evaluating literature; identifying case studies to highlight these priorities; reviewing existing data and collecting and analysing further data to inform those objectives; at once contributing to an improved understanding of the questions that underlie that research while working towards addressing impacts of and responses to hydro in Manitoba and other appropriate regions; and writing theses; presenting their findings in a to their advisory committee and community members; and reporting outcomes the larger membership at the Annual Gathering and publicizing any outcomes through media and international journals.

- **PhD students: Total \$315,000.** Funding will support six PhD students (three over four years and three over three years) who will receive a PhD stipend rate of \$15,000 per year from SSHRC, this topped up to at least \$20,000 from other funds including the GETS at University of Manitoba. Reflecting their greater research experiences, these students will take a primary leadership role in designing projects that at once make a theoretical and pragmatic contribution. Although student initiative is clearly encouraged, these projects will also work towards the priorities of community and organization partners and the broader objectives of Wa Ni Ska Tan. They will generally pursue activities that are similar in nature to Masters students. Yet, because of their longer engagement with communities and extended projects, the PhD students will be able to conduct longitudinal studies and to answer questions generated by their initial phase of research in an iterative manner. They will also have opportunities to build extended and in many cases more sustained relationships with community partners involved in their work, thus ensuring their projects are useful and appropriate.
- **Post-Doctoral Fellow (Alliance Coordinator): Total \$350,000.** A post-doctoral fellow will be hired as a full-time Alliance Coordinator and will play a fundamental role in the Alliance. They would be paid \$24.00/hour plus vacation pay and benefits and levy for a total salary of \$50,000 per year (total \$350,000), reflecting the pay of other experienced Research Associates at University of Manitoba. The successful applicant will have a PhD in a field related to environmental and social justice, and have experience in project management and outreach activities in the Canadian north, especially as it related to Indigenous and action research. They will oversee the operational activities of Wa Ni Ska Tan and interact frequently with and receive active guidance from the Wa Ni Ska Tan co-facilitators (McLachlan and a community member of the Steering Committee as indicated in 'Governance'). The Coordinator will liaise with community partners, establish new partnerships, promote the activities of Wa Ni Ska Tan within and outside the organization, and coordinate activities that facilitate multi-way exchange of knowledge among partners and beyond. They will play an active role in providing information and support to community co-applicants and to student and community researchers and provide overall coordination for Wa Ni Ska Tan. They will also be asked to contribute as researchers, in ways that reflect their own research expertise and co-publish with Wa Ni Ska Tan co-applicants. Finally, they will be responsible for logistics including travel and event space, student pay forms, travel claim forms and other bookkeeping. The Alliance Coordinator will receive mentorship by the Principal Applicant and will be provided

office space at University of Manitoba.

- **Community Coordinator: Total \$210,000.** A half-time Wa Ni Ska Tan Community Coordinator will also play a fundamental role in Wa Ni Ska Tan. They would be paid \$27.00/hour plus vacation pay and benefits and levy for a total salary of \$30,000 per year, reflecting the pay of other experienced Research Associates at University of Manitoba and the relatively high costs of living in the north. They would act as community-liaisons, and visit these communities on a regular basis. This would enable them to provide regular support, and help with outreach and communication within the Alliance, but also with outside stakeholders. They would need at least a college diploma and have substantial lived experience in the North.
- **Community research assistants: Total \$84,000.** In total, 21 high school students from partner communities will be hired over the seven years. Three students each year (one from each of three communities) will participate in Wa Ni Ska Tan, these communities rotating each year among all the community partners. These summer employment positions will extend over 14 weeks at 35 hrs/week at \$10.70/hr, in accordance with standard pay rates for junior undergraduate research assistants at University of Manitoba. Matching cash contributions (\$5.00/hr: \$2,500/student) will be solicited from student employment programmes such as Manitoba Green Team and Canada Summer Jobs. Each pair of students will be hired to facilitate a subset of cross-community projects and to facilitate outreach within their community. This in part reflects the widespread desire on the part of community partners to providing training opportunities to young community members. Elders, community leaders, co-applicants, and any graduate students working in their communities will actively mentor students. In addition to providing support on any cross-community projects, they would also be encouraged to develop their own local community project, if possible in coordination with their local schools.

#### Travel and Subsistence Costs

##### ***Total \$309,000***

- Funds will be used to travel to visit partner communities in Manitoba and other appropriate regions in Canada. They will also be used to help subsidize travel to conferences and other workshops within Canada and internationally.
- **Co-Applicant Canadian travel: Total \$173,000.** Of this, \$15,000 each year (and \$14,000 in Y7) would be made available to return-visit community partners, mostly in Manitoba. Most of this would be used for road travel (~\$600/rental vehicle including gas for four researchers/vehicle), although some fly-in communities (e.g. Island Lakes) are also partners (~\$800 return flight for each researcher). Another \$5,000 would be available for co-applicants and other team members to draw upon to attend conferences and workshops in Canada (e.g., Canadian Association of Geographers, Canadian Environmental Studies Association, SSHRC Congress) to present research findings. A budget of \$500 has been allocated per conference for each participant and matching funds amounting to \$1,000 per participant would be provided by the university partner and/or faculty member. Thus opportunities for up to 10 co-applicants per year would be made available, and would be rotated among the co-applicants and also reflect need.

- **Co-Applicant international travel: Total \$34,000.** Funds will allow Wa Ni Ska Tan co-applicants and team members to actively partake in international conferences (e.g. International Risk Society, Rural Sociological Association). A budget of \$1,000 has been allocated per conference for each participant and matching funds amounting to \$2,000 per participant would be provided by the university partner and/or faculty member. Thus opportunities for up to five co-applicants per year (and four in Y7) would be made available, and would be rotated among the co-applicants and team members and also reflect need.
- **Student and Community Research Assistant Canadian travel: Total \$68,000.** \$8,000 each year (and \$6,000 in Y7) would be available for university students and community research assistants to return-visit community partners, mostly in Manitoba. Again, most of this would be used for road travel (~\$600/rental vehicle including gas for four researchers/vehicle), although some fly-in communities (e.g. Island Lakes) are also partners (~\$800 return flight for each researcher). Another \$2,000 would be available for these HQP and research assistants to attend conferences and workshops in Canada (e.g., Canadian Association of Geographers, Canadian Environmental Studies Association, SSHRC Congress) to present research findings. A budget of \$500 has been allocated per conference for each participant and matching funds amounting to \$1,000 per participant would be provided by the university partner and/or faculty member. Thus opportunities for up to four co-applicants per year would be made available, and would be rotated among the co-applicants and also reflect need.
- **Student and Community Research Assistant international travel: Total \$68,000.** \$8,000 each year (and \$6,000 in Y7) would be made available for university students and community research assistants to attend conferences and workshops outside Canada (e.g. International Community-Based Film Institute) to present research findings. A budget of \$1,000 has been allocated per conference for each participant and matching funds, amounting to \$2,000 per participant would be provided by the university partner and/or faculty member. Thus opportunities for up to five co-applicants per year (four in Y7) would be made available, and would be rotated among the students and also reflect need

#### Other Expenses

##### ***Total \$100,500***

- **Professional/technical services: Total \$10,500.** We will purchase an annual subscription for Go-To-Meeting (seven years@\$500/yr: \$3,500), which we have found to be an invaluable large-scale conferencing tool that provides both Internet and telephone support for partners. We also budget \$1,000/yr or \$7,000 total in printing and mailing charges, as again few northern communities have adequate access to the internet; funds will be used for paper copies of posters and newsletters, DVDs etc.
- **Supplies and field costs: Total \$90,000.** Funds will pay for field travel costs and honouraria (focus groups, interviews, etc.), for field travel to visit communities for university students, and for subsistence and accommodation during research. In total, there will be 60 return field trips over the seven-year period (Y1-5: 9/yr; Y6: 8; Y7: 7).

Estimates are calculated based on \$1,500/visit field cost for each student to spend in northern communities once a year or a total of \$90,000. We expect a minimum of two months fieldwork each year of their study for undergraduate, Masters and PhD students. Although students may help cover their own living expenses and would normally be further subsidized by their university thesis advisors, project partners may also contribute to accommodation.

#### Non-Disposable Equipment

##### ***Total \$8,500***

- **Computers: Total \$7,500.** Two MacBook Pro computers will be purchased for the Alliance Coordinator and the Community Coordinator for a total of \$7,500.
- **Cameras: Total \$1,000.** Eight digital cameras (Sony X167-L) will be purchased in Y2 (\$1000) for use by community research assistants in environmental monitoring, in photo-voice projects, and for recording cross-community projects.

#### Other Expenses (Specify)

##### ***Total \$807,000***

- Almost 50% will be allocated for expenses that facilitate the exchange of ideas and skills, and make the impacts of and responses to hydro development more visible, within the Alliance and outside. These include cross-community projects, an annual gathering, a research film documentary, and new social media.
- **Cross-community projects: Total: \$495,000.** Community members in coordination with co-applicants and HQP will submit cross-community projects. The Community Projects Committee as well as the Steering Committee will vet all submitted projects. In total a maximum of \$80,000/yr would be available for Y1, \$90,000/yr for Y2-5, \$75,000/yr for Y6 and \$20,000 /yr for Y7. It is anticipated that any successful projects would receive up to \$30,000 funding that year. An initial discussion around potential projects has already been undertaken this year to help guide our proposal writing and to refine our outreach so we can solicit a wide diversity in our last gathering in The Pas and has been further discussed with the Steering Committee. These projects are briefly described in this proposal and would be implement in Y1. The cross-community projects will form the basis for most undergraduate and graduate student research and will help ensure that outcomes of Wa Ni Ska Tan are tangible and meaningful at the community level. Submitted project proposals will be evaluated within each region and then outcomes reported back to the membership at each Annual Gathering. All rules established through the Tri-Agency Financial Administration Guide will be followed and no equipment will be purchased.
- **Documentary research film. Total: \$74,000.** McLachlan has made three high-impact research film documentaries (Seeds of Change, wanorazi yumnezi, One River, Many Relations) that have been used to make the outcomes of associated research projects available to community partners and outside stakeholders. All the necessary equipment already exists, as purchased through the previous SSHRC CURA, and so the funds

(\$20,000/yr: Y1-Y3, \$14,000: Y4) would be used to pay for travel, food and lodging, honouraria, and community screenings on draft versions.

- **Annual gatherings (as part of Communication). Total: \$175,000.** \$25,000/year will be used subsidize an annual gathering that allows the general membership to interact and share with one another, and to give feedback to the Steering Committee and Strategic Committee. The Gathering will be rotated between a northern community and a southern community each year. Since our last gathering took place in The Pas, the next is scheduled for Brokenhead Ojibway Nation in Spring 2016. On average, costs for road travel would total \$590/person (\$200/person) and lodging (\$120/night\*2 nights: \$240/person/yr) and per diem (\$50\*3=150/yr) will cover the costs of attending the annual gathering. The annual gathering will thus allow 42 Alliance members @ \$590/person to attend the annual gatherings. Funds for another 40-50 participants would be solicited from other sources. Participants in the gatherings would help assess progress, evaluate community projects, and to network and build collaborative projects with another, especially ones that are cross regional in nature.
- **New social media (as part of Communications). Total: \$63,000.** In total, \$3,000/yr of these funds would be used to create and maintain a project website and to create and maintain new social media (Facebook, Twitter). Another \$6,000/yr of these funds would be used to create and print a newsletter that would be distributed to all community partners and then made available to outside stakeholders and also uploaded onto the website.

### Matching Funds

Total: \$2,434,986 (or 97.4% of the \$2,500,000 requested from SSHRC)

### Cash Funding

#### ***Total \$492,229***

- University of Manitoba makes the most important cash contribution (\$420,000 or 85.3% of the total cash contribution) over the seven-year course of this project. These contributions are provided by the Clayton H Riddell Faculty of Environment, Earth, and Resources for graduate and undergraduate education (\$105,000) as well as by the Faculty of Graduate Studies in the form of enhanced graduate scholarships for PhD students in this Alliance (\$315,000).
- Other university Partners that make substantial cash contributions include: University of Winnipeg (\$34,500), McGill University (\$10,000), Canadian Mennonite University (\$4,500), and University of St Thomas (\$3,229) all of these further supporting their respective HQP through the Alliance. LUSH, an environmental charity has committed up to \$20,000 to support community Partner projects in northern Manitoba. It is anticipated that further undergraduate and community student employment will be subsidized by successful applications to Summer Jobs Canada (\$75,000) and Green Team Manitoba (\$75,000).



## In-kind Funding

***Total: \$1,942,757***

- The National Center for Truth and Reconciliation makes the most substantial contribution of in-kind funding (\$455,000 or 23.4%), which will be used for training and providing technical support for archival work. University of Manitoba also makes a substantial contribution of in-kind funding (\$370,000 or 19.1%), this in the form of video-editing suites and equipment that will be used to make the research documentary film and to support the 'living archive' project.
- Other important university contributors of in-kind support include the University of Winnipeg (\$85,582), University of Saskatchewan (\$11,500), and University of St Thomas (\$11,425).
- Indigenous organizations also provide much in-kind support, mostly in the form of travel, technical services and hosting of students. Of these, Indigenous governmental organizations provide a total of \$269,000 of in-kind support whereas Indigenous grassroots organizations provide a total in-kind contribution of \$302,500.
- With respect to non-Indigenous organizations, environmental organizations provide a total in-kind contribution of \$298,000, social justice and legal justice organizations a total in-kind contribution of \$149,500, and food-related organizations a total in-kind contribution of \$29,750.





## Expected Outcomes

This Partnership, the Wa Ni Ska Tan Hydro Alliance or WHA, examines the implications of hydropower for nearby environments and Indigenous communities. Focusing primarily on northern Manitoba, it will also compare any impacts and responses to those seen in other hydro and industry affected regions and communities across northern Canada.

Hydro development plays a central role in the economy of Canada, which is now the third largest exporter of hydropower in the world. This is especially true for Manitoba, whose annual exports to the US and other provinces totaled \$439 million in 2013. Hydropower is widely promoted as a green and renewable source of energy, and as taking advantage of the otherwise wasted energy potential of rivers. Yet hydro dams have also been widely criticized for their adverse impacts on nearby environments and communities. There has, unsurprisingly, been a substantial amount of research on these impacts, especially while or soon after the dams have been built. However, most of this research focuses on the hydrological impacts, little of it is cumulative or comparative in nature, and virtually is culturally inappropriate, much less driven by communities. In contrast, our partnership represents an exciting opportunity to address these longstanding gaps.

This partnership includes 24 affected Indigenous communities, 20 NGOs, 22 researchers from nine universities, and representatives of Indigenous and provincial governments in creating a network that will document the impacts of hydropower development on nearby environments and Indigenous communities, but also explore the ways that such impacts have already been and will be mitigated. We will do so in a way that enables these communities to shape and drive the research priorities from beginning to end, as reflected by the governance, as well as the documentation and evaluation of impacts and responses, and Knowledge Mobilization of outcomes that arise from the partnership. More so, all the research activities will be three-track in orientation, not only documenting the impacts and responses using both western science and Traditional Knowledge (TK), but actually integrating the two worldviews when moving forward. The outcomes of these activities will be substantial and far reaching.

The most immediate benefits will be accrued by the adversely affected communities, some of which have been forcibly relocated and all of whom have watched their ability to live traditionally off the land decline due to hydropower. That they play such a central role in shaping every aspect of this partnership, from design to governance to activities, will act to affirm the importance of their livelihoods and traditions. That they play a central role in the governance and activities of the partnership will act to affirm the importance of their TK and more generally their livelihoods. Yet this cross-sectoral partnership, involving affected communities as well as NGOs and governments, will act to ensure that the documented impacts and responses will be constructed in a way that is credible to all those involved and that allows them to be acted upon by all these actors. Part of this reflects the absence of information regarding cumulative and long-term impacts of these developments. But it will also, in part, be facilitated by the trust-based relationships that emerge from this partnership as an effective network and our emphasis on Knowledge Mobilization.

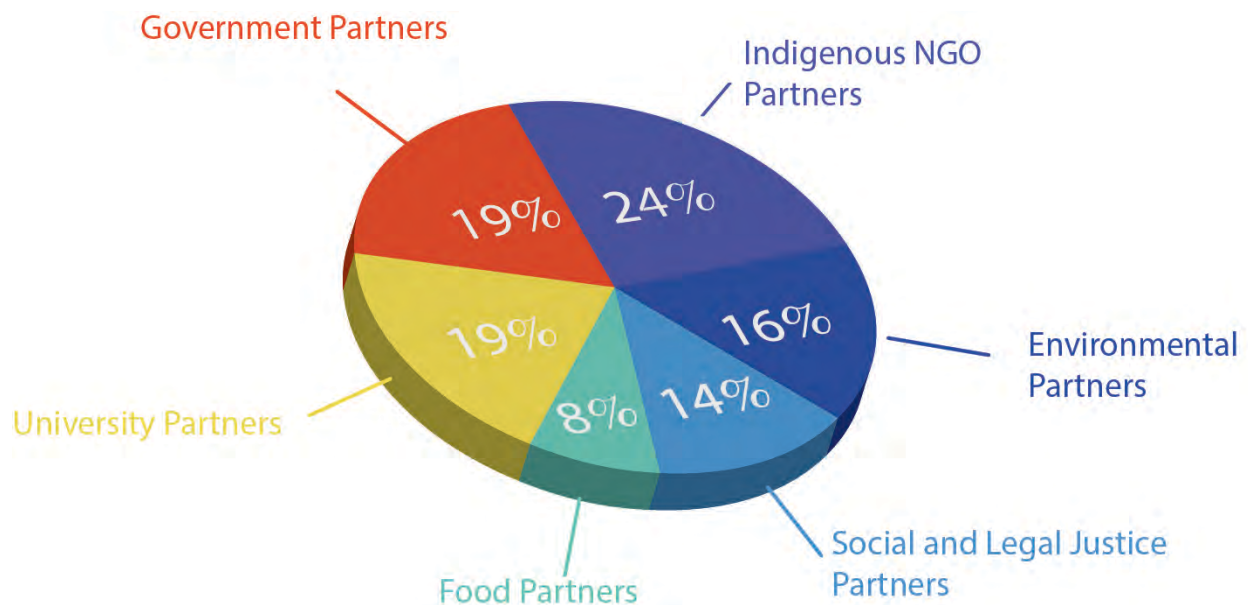
High-impact outcomes will also arise from the multi-scale nature of this partnership. Firmly grounded in the experiences of Manitoba, the most hydropower-dependent province in Canada, our partnership also reaches out to and includes communities and stakeholders from other provinces, and the general public as a whole.

Expected Outcomes		
Benefits	Rank	Outcome
Scholarly	1	Enhanced Research Collaboration
	2	Knowledge Creation/Intellectual Outcomes
	3	Student Training/Skill Development
Social	1	New or Enhanced Partnerships
	2	Social Outcomes
	3	Enriched Public Discourse
Audiences	1	Aboriginal Peoples
	2	Federal Government
	3	Provincial/Territorial Government
	4	Students
	5	Academic Sector/Peers, Including Scholarly Associations



## Description of Formal Partnership

The Partnership reflected in this Research Alliance is cross-sectoral in nature and groundbreaking in its diversity, scope, and ability to provide meaningful direction and support for this project (Table 2). This is especially true for the many Indigenous (Cree and Anishinaabe) community Partners that have been affected by hydropower in Manitoba. Indeed, this is the first time, in Manitoba at least, that there has been such strong and wide-ranging representation and leadership by Indigenous communities and organizations in such a cross-cultural research Alliance. This reflects the great need for this kind of work given the impacts of hydropower in this region, but it also reflects an opportunity to affect positive and meaningful change. The latter, in turn, reflects the essential and recent cross-country work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, a recent recognition by the Manitoba government that hydropower-related wrong has been committed, and a growing insistence on the part of affected communities that these wrongs must be addressed and that affected communities need to play a key role in any changes. The balanced representation among the different stakeholder groups (these reflecting affected communities, legal and social justice NGOs, environmental and food NGOs, multiple levels of non-Indigenous and Indigenous governments, most of the universities in Manitoba and universities from elsewhere in Canada and the US) seen in this Alliance represents a moment of opportunity where we can meaningfully affect decision-making and facilitate desirable social change now and into the future.



## Indigenous NGO Partners

Many of the Indigenous NGO Partners are grassroots community organizations that have arisen to address hydropower-related concerns within their own Nations, and these will play a central role in shaping all Alliance activities and keeping it accountable to local priorities.

***Justice Seekers of Nelson House***, as represented by Carol Kobliski, has played a strong advocacy role as that community contends with the implications of the Conawapa Dam. It will participate in the Steering Committee and will play a strong role in the leadership and direction of the Alliance.

***Tommy Thomas Memorial Health Complex and Community Care***, as represented by Rene Linklater, is a community health centre that provides support to residents of O-Pipon-Na-Piwin Cree Nation including traditional food and culture programming. It will participate in Strategic Committees, attend annual gatherings, and provide advice on projects related to cultural wellbeing.

***Concerned Fox Lake Grassroots Citizens*** arose in response to the then proposed Keeyask Dam and acted to support and represent community concerns about the impacts that it would have on the environment and traditional livelihoods. Represented by Noah Massan and Ivan Moose, it will play a role on the Steering Committee and in shaping the direction of the Alliance, and help direct monitoring as dam construction proceeds.

***Community Association of South Indian Lake*** played a key role in representing the rights of O-Pipon-Na-Piwin Cree Nation, a community that was dislocated by the Churchill Diversion Project. Represented by Les Dysart, it too will sit on the Steering Committee, playing a leadership role in the Alliance while also advising research activities as they seek to assess any impacts and changes in the Diversion project on this community and its fishery.

***Sagkeeng Alliance*** plays a strong advocacy role in Sagkeeng First Nation, a community affected by the regulation of Lake Winnipeg. Brad Courchene, as its representative, will provide leadership on the Alliance and attend gatherings.

***Lake Winnipeg Indigenous Collective***, as represented by Gordon Bluesky, will play a key role in the Alliance, sitting on the Steering Committee, taking a lead on the cross-community visitation project and helping guide future environmental monitoring.

***Aki Energy***, as represented by Shaun Loney, has emerged as one of the most effective voices for alternative and sustainable energy in Manitoba. It will provide technical advice and student mentorship over the seven years and will provide workshops and collaborate on energy related projects.

***Center for Indigenous Environmental Resources***, as represented by Jesse Degrave, has emerged as one of the most effective Indigenous environmental organizations in Canada, and will provide advice on technical projects and technical expertise and also attend gatherings.

***Honor the Earth***, as represented by Winona LaDuke, has a well-deserved international profile as it create awareness and support regarding Indigenous environmental issues and provides political resources to help support affected communities. It will provide mentorship, provide networking within the US and internationally, and attend Alliance gatherings.

### Environmental Partners

Many of the Partners are also environmental NGOs, most of which have a provincial mandate.

***Manitoba Eco-Network***, as represented by Curtis Belton, is a strong voice for environmental sustainability in the province and will play a valuable role in communicating environmental outcomes with the broader public and decision-makers.

***Boreal Action Project***, as represented by Susanne McCrae, has a long history of working effectively with Indigenous communities regarding the boreal conservation around the world. It will participate in Strategic Committees, and share our Alliance outcomes with its large international network.

***Green Action Centre***, as represented by Peter Miller, plays a strong role in environmental and community education in Manitoba and will participate on Strategic Committees and give advice and share resources on community education initiatives.

***Manitoba Wildlands***, as represented by Gaile Whelan Enns, is a strong advocate for the environment and Indigenous communities affected by hydropower and other intensive resource extraction activities. It will provide information and resources on educational materials and monitoring.

***LUSH*** is a highly successful cosmetics company with retail outlets around the world, while showing a strong commitment to environmental conservation, animal welfare, and human rights through its charity work. As represented by Erika Edwards, it will provide funding opportunities for community projects, and will promote the Alliance through its international network of outlets and clients.

***Tides Canada*** is a national charity that helps Canadians secure a healthy environment in ways that promote social equity and economic prosperity. As represented by Julie Price, it will help support community projects within the Alliance, provide technical feedback and advice on proposals, and attend gatherings.

### Social and legal justice Partners

Many of the Partners are social and legal justice NGOs.

***Interchurch Council on Hydropower***, as represented by Will Braun, has provided substantial support and technical resources for many hydropower-affected communities in northern Manitoba. It will play a strong leadership role in the Alliance, participating in the Steering Committee and sharing information and resources.



***Keewatin Public Interest Research Group***, as represented by Ryan Duplassie, is a network of established Manitoba-based university researchers who are providing advice to communities, especially regarding hydropower-related regulatory and environmental hearings. It will provide resources and technical support to hydropower-affected communities within the Alliance.

***Public Interest Law Centre***, as represented by Byron Williams, is a strong legal advocate for hydropower affected Indigenous communities in Manitoba and elsewhere in Canada. It will provide resources and technical support to affected communities within the Alliance especially regarding environmental and regulatory hearings.

***Jerch Law***, as represented by Michael Jerch, is also a strong legal advocate for Indigenous communities in Manitoba. It will provide technical support for the Alliance, and meeting space and communications support.

***Social Planning Council of Winnipeg*** works for sustainable communities that are caring, just and equitable and that provide opportunities for better health and shared prosperity. As represented by Kate Kehler, it will provide advice and facilitate networking with urban groups regarding migration between Indigenous communities and Winnipeg.

## **Food Partners**

The food-related NGOs reflect another important category of Partners, in part reflecting the previous incarnation of this Alliance as a food-justice SSHRC CURA (i.e. Manitoba Alternative Food Research Alliance or MAFRA) and the implications of hydropower for food security and food sovereignty in many Indigenous communities.

***Food Matters Manitoba***, as represented by Stefan Epp-Koop, is the most influential food NGO in Manitoba and will provide feedback on food related projects and research and attend gatherings.

***Manitoba Alternative Food Research Alliance***, as represented by Kelly Janz, provides research and education support regarding food justice for northern, rural, and urban communities across Manitoba. It will continue to provide such support for communities involved in this Alliance, and will share outcomes with its network of collaborators and researchers.

***Canadian Association of Food Studies***, as represented by Rachel Engler-Stringer, is the primary national academic network for researchers interested in food-related scholarship in Canada. Participants in the Alliance will attend its workshops and conferences, which will facilitate networking with groups in other parts of Canada and will make outcomes of our work available to its membership

## **University Partners**

Many of the Partners are universities and have a mandate and interest in supporting their researchers and students in the Alliance.

***University of Manitoba***, as represented by Barb Crutchley, will house the Alliance and will provide financial management and budgetary support, additional financial support for HQP as

well as in-kind support regarding communications, video cameras and editing suites, and student workspace. It will also support the activities of the many researchers whom are co-applicants (i.e. Bonnycastle, Bonnycastle, Brownlie, Desai, Thompson, Thorpe), and those whom are also members of the Steering Committee (i.e. McLachlan, Cariou, Craft, Kulchyski).

**Canadian Mennonite University**, as represented by Dietrich Bartel, will provide support for its co-applicant (Buckland), and provide financial resources and also meeting and workshop space for Alliance activities while promoting Alliance outcomes within its student body.

**University of Winnipeg** as represented by Jino Disastio will provide additional financial and in-kind support for students and also provide support to its many researchers whom are co-applicants (Diduck, Mauro, O’Gorman).

**National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation**, as represented by Aimée Craft, will provide support for the truth and reconciliation pillar of the Alliance, and provide technical support and advice for one of the cross-community projects, the living archive. It will also partner with the Alliance on a 2016 Canada Foundation for Innovation’s (CFI) Innovation Fund application to provide the infrastructure for the creation of a national database and archive that documents impacts of hydropower for Indigenous communities across Canada.

**Global Institute of Food Security** (University of Saskatchewan) will better enable its co-applicant (Natcher) to support graduate students and interact with other scholars regarding Alliance priorities.

**McGill University** (Quebec) will provide financial resources for its co-applicant (Scott) and students, and enable linkages between Manitoba and Quebec communities affected by hydropower.

**University of St. Thomas** (Minnesota), as represented by David Steele, is located in Minneapolis, one of the major export markets for Manitoba Hydro. It will provide in-kind support for its co-applicant (Hoffman) and students and provide meeting spaces for and host any Alliance visits to that state.

## **Government Partners**

The final sector in the Alliance is government, at four spatial scales: Indigenous, regional, provincial and federal. There are many Indigenous government Partners in the Alliance. A number of hydropower-affected communities are located in southern Manitoba and are located on the shores of Lake Winnipeg. Northern Indigenous communities have also been affected by the Churchill River diversion and a number of hydropower dams in the region.

**Black River First Nation**, as represented by Patricia Mitchell, has been adversely affected by the hydropower-related regulation of Lake Winnipeg, and will play a strong leadership role in Alliance by participating on the Steering Committee, providing technical advice, and attending gatherings.

**Brokenhead Ojibway Nation** has also been adversely affected by the regulation of Lake Winnipeg for hydropower. As represented by Gordon Bluesky, it too will play a strong role will

play a strong leadership role in Alliance by participating on the Steering Committee, hosting the next gathering in spring 2016, providing technical advice, and attending gatherings.

***Swan Lake First Nation***, as represented by David Scott, has also been adversely affected by flooding associated with changes in rural land use. It will play a strong role in the Alliance by providing advice, and participating in gatherings.

***Norway House First Nation***, as represented by Deputy Chief Gilbert Fredette, has been adversely affected by the regulation of Lake Winnipeg for hydropower and by the Jenpeg generating station. It will play a strong leadership role in the Alliance by participating on the Steering Committee, providing technical advice, and attending gatherings.

***Pimicikamak Cree Nation***, as represented by Chief Cathy Merrick, has also been adversely affected by the Jenpeg generating station. It too will play a strong role in Alliance by participating on Strategic Committees, providing advice, and attending gatherings.

***Provincial Government*** will be represented by Rob Altemeyer (NDP MLA for Wolseley), and will provide communications support with its membership regarding the positive and negative implications of hydropower, as well as helping Alliance members network with decision-makers in Winnipeg.

***Four Arrows Regional Health Authority*** represents regional government and provides support and service for health and wellbeing for many of the northern hydropower-affected communities. Represented by Byron Beardy, it will participate in gatherings, provide staff, and support community projects, especially those related to traditional foods system and food sovereignty. The size of the Partnership and the nature of Partner involvement will likely change over time, as relationships and trust among the Partners grow, and as the emergent characteristics of this cross-sectoral network become evident. As indicated in the ‘Potential Partner Organizations’ subsection, some of this growth will be strategic and will address gaps in representation – focusing mostly on hydropower-affected communities in other provinces and also on organizations that operate at national and international scales. Some of this growth will be opportunistic and build on networks held by existing Partners or will reflect our growing profile as we become more established as an Alliance.

Finally, some of this growth will, in turn, reflect an increased trust that develops among Partners over time, and thus we anticipate that some of the existing suspicion towards utility corporations and some governments will likely thaw over the course of the Alliance. There is no doubt that the challenges that confront hydropower-affected communities are poorly known across the province, to say nothing of the country, and these will become much more evident as the combined activities of the wide diversity of government, industry, university, civil society, and of course community Partners grow. As importantly, the ability to respond to emerging information, whether as funded educational and research-based responses within the Alliance or as targeted responses on the part of outsider stakeholders and decision-makers will also grow. These accomplishments will benefit all of those involved and, indeed, all Canadians.



**Table 2. Partners in the Wa Ni Ska Tan Hydropower Alliance** Note: colour codes match up with those shown in Fig 2, in the ‘Potential Partner Organizations’ subsection.

Organization	Contact Person	Function	Scope	Role
Justice Seekers NH <sup>1</sup>	Carol Kobliski	Indigenous NGO	Community	Leadership, advice
TTMHCCC	Rene Linklater	Indigenous NGO	Community	Leadership, advice
CFLGC	Noah Massan	Indigenous NGO	Community	Leadership, advice
CASIL	Steve Ducharme	Indigenous NGO	Community	Leadership, advice
Sagkeeng Alliance	Wayne Fontaine	Indigenous NGO	Community	Leadership, advice
LWIC	Gordon Bluesky	Indigenous NGO	Community	Leadership, advice
Aki Energy	Shaun Loney	Indigenous NGO	Community	Leadership, advice
CIER	MA Phare	Indigenous NGO	National	Advice, networking
Honor the Earth	Winona LaDuke	Indigenous NGO	International	Advice, networking
MB Eco-Network	Curtis Belton	Environment NGO	Provincial	Infrastructure, info
Boreal Action	Susanne McCrae	Environment NGO	International	Advice, info exchange
Green Action Centre	Tracey Hucul	Environment NGO	Provincial	Advice, info exchange
Manitoba Wildlands	G. Whalen Enns	Environment NGO	Provincial	Advice, info exchange
Tides Canada	Julie Price	Environment Charity	National	Advice, possible funds
LUSH Cosmetics	Erika Edwards	Environment Charity	International	Advice, possible funds
SPCW	Kate Kehler	Social Justice NGO	Provincial	Feedback, networking
ICHP	Ellen Cook	Social Justice NGO	Provincial	Feedback, leadership
KPIRG	Ryan Duplassie	Social Justice NGO	Provincial	Networking, feedback
PILC	Byron Williams	Legal Justice NGO	National	Advice, training
Jerch Law	Michael Jerch	Legal Firm	National	Advice, training
FMM	Stefan Epp-Koop	Food NGO	Provincial	Networking, feedback
MAFRA	Kelly Janz	Food NGO	Provincial	Networking, feedback
CAFS	R.Engler-Stringer	Food NGO	National	Networking
Univ. of Manitoba	Barb Crutchley	University	Provincial	Funding, infrastructure
Univ. of Winnipeg	Jino Distasio	University	Regional	Funding, infrastructure
CMU	Dietrich Bartel	University	National	Funding, infrastructure
NCTR	Ry Moran	University	National	Funding, infrastructure
McGill	R.Narasimhadevara	University	Regional	Funding, infrastructure
Univ. of Sask – GIFS	David Natcher	University	Provincial	Funding, infrastructure
Univ. of St. Thomas	David Steele	University	Regional	Funding, infrastructure
Black River FN	Chief K. Sheldon	Government – Indig.	Community	Advice, policy
Brokenhead ON	Paul Chief	Government – Indig.	Community	Advice, policy
Swan Lake FN	Chief F. Meeches	Government – Indig.	Community	Advice, policy
Norway House CN	Gilbert Fredette	Government – Indig.	Community	Advice, policy
Pimicikamak CN	Chief C. Merrick	Government – Indig.	Community	Advice, policy
Four Arrows RHA	Laurie Ducharme	Government	Regional	Advice, networking
Manitoba NDP	Rob Altemeyer	Government	Provincial	Policy, networking

<sup>1</sup> NH: Nelson House NGO: Non-governmental organization; TTMHCCC: Tommy Thomas Memorial Health Complex and Community Care; CFLGC: Concerned Fox Lake Grassroots Citizens; CASIL: Community Association of South Indian Lake; LWIC: Lake Winnipeg Indigenous Collective; CIER: Center for Indigenous Environmental Resources; Internat: International; SPCW: Social Planning Council of Winnipeg; ICHP: Interchurch Council on Hydropower; KPIRG: Keewatin Public Interest Research Group; PILC: Public Interest Law Centre; FMM: Food Matters Manitoba; MAFRA: Manitoba Alternative Food Research Alliance; CAFS: Canadian Association of Food Studies; CMU: Canadian Mennonite University; NCTR: National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation; GIFS: Global Institute of Food Security; ON: Ojibway Nation; Indig: Indigenous; FN: First Nation; CN: Cree Nation; RHA: RHA: Regional Health Authority.

## Evidence of Formal Partnership

A Charter for the Wa Ni Ska Tan Hydro Alliance was developed and distributed to representatives of the Partners that comprise the Acting Steering Committee. The Charter describes the background that provides a context for the Alliance, the Vision and Mission of the Alliance, its Program Structure, its Governance, and a series of General Provisions. A draft of the Charter was circulated to Committee Members for feedback. When ultimately approved, all eight of the Community Partner representatives and two of the four university co-applicants sitting on the Acting Steering Committee of the Alliance signed the Charter.

At the Spring-2016 gathering in Brokenhead Ojibway Nation, we will share and discuss the Charter with everyone attending, and welcome all participants to sign so that they can indicate their formal support for the Wa Ni Ska Tan Hydro Alliance.

In the interim, the Charter of the Wa Ni Ska Tan Hydro Alliance is included here along with the signatures of majority of the Acting Steering Committee in order to indicate our 'Evidence of the Formal Partnership'.



## The Wa Ni Ska Tan Hydro Alliance Charter

### ***Wa Ni Ska Tan Hydro Alliance Background***

Wa Ni Ska Tan means ‘wake up’ in the Ininew/Ininiwak languages. This Alliance developed as a group of university-based researchers, community leaders, social justice and environmental NGOs, began to engage with each other, first through a community tour in the spring of 2014, then in large follow-up meetings in late summer (Winnipeg) and fall (Thomson) of 2014 and in the early summer (Opaskweyak) of 2015. At these meetings, stories were shared and trust relations began to be established. In broad strokes, there was agreement that a major research initiative would be a crucial tool for communities to express their perspectives on the past, present and future impacts of Hydro development; that it would help make these experiences and impacts better available to communities, decision-makers and the general public; and that a vehicle for First Nations community members to meet with each other was an essential tool of long term empowerment.

### ***Wa Ni Ska Tan Hydro Alliance Vision and Mission***

We are dedicated to working together as Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to at once further truth and reconciliation, decolonization, and Indigenous resurgence;

We will work towards healthy Indigenous communities and environments in Manitoba;

We will offer particular attention and support to Elders, traditional harvesters and landbased families who hold knowledge and culture of the people;

We will work with outside stakeholders including governments and corporations who assert control over traditional lands in order to become more accountable and to ensure they better engage in respectful and meaningful relations with Indigenous communities;

We will empower Indigenous communities and others Partners within the Alliance by providing relevant research outcomes, expertise and opportunities for community leaders to dialogue and strategize with each other and with outside stakeholders.

We will explore both the positive and negative implications of hydropower for nearby environments and Indigenous communities in Manitoba and also in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Quebec, and Labrador, and further explore how and to what degree this Alliance might enable meaningful and desirable social and environmental change.

### ***Wa Ni Ska Tan Hydro Alliance Program Structure***

We will draw upon six distinct programming areas which will frame and co-ordinate all our activities. These are:

- i) Participatory research; in which we will match faculty, graduate and undergraduate students, and community research assistants from a variety of academic disciplines to Indigenous community based research needs, following the protocols of decolonizing and participatory action research, in which we include the OCAP (Ownership, Control, Access and Possession) principles.
- ii) Documentation and archiving; in which we will develop a bank of relevant historical and contemporary documents and testimonies, will ‘witness’ testimonials of affected communities, document their conditions and struggles, and ensure this material is appropriately housed.
- iii) Grieving and reconciliation; in which we will recognize the traumatic nature of past and ongoing events, and allow or encourage space for public grieving and reconciliation, modeled on the recent Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada on Residential Schools.
- iv) Education and mentorship; in which education of communities regarding the stories of their neighbors, education of the public regarding the impacts of Hydro development, education of scholars, artists, writers and other professionals will take place, as well as individual mentorships in bush life and in scholarly or research approaches will also be developed.
- v) Advocacy and support; in which we will participate in public decision-making and licensing processes and will organize and participate in public events and sponsor and produce educational materials in a variety of formats.
- vi) Evaluation and communication; in which we will reflect upon and assess all the foregoing and develop communication tools for the Alliance; will make these available to communities and stakeholders from other provinces two national fora; and will make these broadly available to the general public through the Internet.

### ***Wa Ni Ska Tan Hydro Alliance Governance***

Governance will be structured around three major subgroups: a Steering Committee and Associated Steering Executive and Strategic Committees as well as a broader General Membership. The principles underlying governance of the Alliance center on transparency, accountability, cross-cultural sensitivity, mutual respect, and consensus in decision-making.

#### ***Steering Committee:***

A Steering Committee consisting of eight to twelve people, chosen at Annual General Membership meetings, shall act as an oversight body, meeting at least twice per year. A majority of Steering Committee members will be representatives of Indigenous communities. Each member will serve for two years. Terms are renewable, though it is desirable that at least one third of the Steering Committee is composed of new members every two years.

The Steering Committee will oversee the Steering Executive, will review and approve budgets and major budget decisions, will set dates and places for General Membership Meetings, set

broad priorities, timelines and agendas for program work, and will oversee the work of the Alliance as a whole.

*Steering Executive:*

The Steering Executive, consisting of three to five people drawn from the Steering Committee, will meet as needed, though likely on a monthly basis, and will make operational program decisions. It will allocate funding within parameters established by the Steering Committee, co-ordinate the work of Strategic Committees, organize Annual Membership Meetings, provide organizational support for projects, programs and committees of the Alliance, recommend strategic undertakings to the Steering Committee and manage the administrative support and daily operations of the Alliance.

*Strategic Committees:*

Strategic Committees may be established by the Steering Committee or Steering Executive in each of the program areas or in any area as seen appropriate by the two Steering Bodies. Such Committees will report to the Steering Executive and General Membership on an Annual basis or more frequently (as determined by the Steering Executive). Members of Strategic Committees may be drawn from the General Membership though it is desirable to have at least one Steering Committee member on each such committee. Strategic Committees will plan, develop and administer specific projects or programs. The size and frequency of meetings of each Strategic Committee will be determined by the Steering Executive or, in the absence of guidance, by the Committee itself.

*General Membership:*

The Membership of the Alliance shall consist of university or non-university based researchers who support the Vision and Mission of the Alliance, and Indigenous community members who support the Vision and Mission of the Alliance. Membership is open to all such individuals. Members may attend and participate in Annual General Membership Meetings, have one vote at such meetings (though every attempt will be made to ensure such Meetings operate on a consensus basis), and be eligible for election to the Steering Committee or Steering Executive or Strategic Committees. Members will conduct themselves according the Indigenous principles of mutual respect and ethical engagement.

***Wa Ni Ska Tan Hydro Alliance General Provisions***

The ultimate outcome of the Alliance will be the establishment of a long-term public engagement and research Alliance that works towards environmental and social justice in all regions affected by hydropower and other industrial development across Canada. Its immediate outcomes will be an increased understanding of the social and environmental implications of hydropower; increased capacity to assess and respond to any impacts; and multi-way exchange of knowledge within the Alliance and with outside stakeholders.

Long-term outcomes will be increased public awareness of and responsibility towards hydro and other development in Canada; increased ability of Indigenous communities to shape decision-making regarding this and other related development; and increased awareness and policy support regarding these issues by all levels of government, hydro corporations, civil society as well as the general public.

To this end, the Alliance will sponsor collaborative and culturally appropriate research that examines:

- i) Project-level and cumulative impacts of hydropower on the environment and social and cultural wellbeing of nearby Indigenous communities;
- ii) Community and stakeholder responses that have helped reduce the impacts of these changes and in some cases resulted in beneficial outcomes;
- iii) Cross-community action projects that will support local capacity and priorities and that will help mitigate any such impacts and further desirable change into the future;
- iv) Comparison between such impacts and responses in Manitoba and those occurring with hydro and other relevant industrial development projects elsewhere across Canada;
- v) Effectiveness of Aboriginal and treaty rights as tools of Indigenous community empowerment; and
- vi) The evolution of the research Alliance itself and its relationships with outside stakeholders, and factors that underlie any such socio-cultural and environmental change

***Steering Committee Signatures***

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

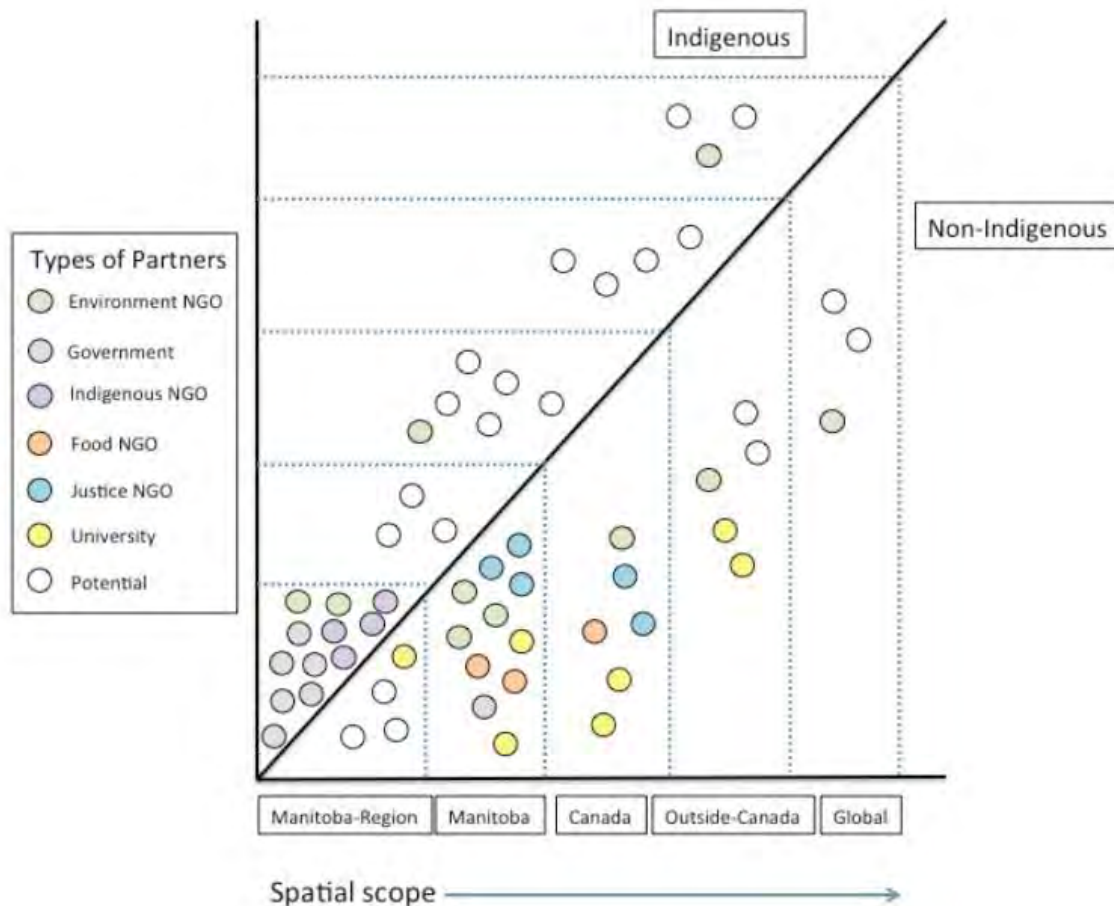


## Potential Partner Organizations and Other Contributors

The Partnership reflected in this Research Alliance is already impressive in diversity, scope, and ability to provide meaningful input into and support for this project. This is especially true for the many Indigenous (Cree and Anishinaabe) community partners that have been affected by hydro development in Manitoba. The already-existing quality of this Partnership is also testament to the great need for this kind of work given the impacts of hydropower in Manitoba and elsewhere in Canada. This need and willingness of affected communities to communicate and work with communities in other provinces as well as outside stakeholders such as researchers but also NGOs, governments, and hydropower corporations is truly impressive and represents an opportunity to grow the Partnership in strategic and outcome-focused ways. Over time, we will build on these strengths and address some of the existing gaps in representation in other provinces, nationally and even internationally (Fig 2, as indicated by empty circles). However, it is also important to evolve the Partnership in a considered manner over time, grounding it initially in Manitoba-based experiences that can then be built upon in ways that make sense to the Membership. This is especially important when approaching hydropower corporations.

Currently there is only one Indigenous Partner originating from outside Manitoba, representing an international mandate (Fig 2). In addition to a continued growth in interest of Manitoba based Indigenous communities and organizations, we anticipate that there will be much interest in participating in this high-impact, cross-cultural Alliance on the part of hydropower-affected communities from other provinces. These provinces would include British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Quebec and Labrador where hydropower plays a dominant role in energy production and exports. This networking and sharing of experiences and opportunities is a cornerstone of this Partnership. Indigenous communities have already been contacting us before each gathering, having heard about the Partnership through word-of-mouth and have of course been welcomed. We anticipate that process will continue to occur in Manitoba and will build on this momentum by inviting communities and other Indigenous organizations to participate in the Partnership, especially at our national gatherings in Y2 and Y7.

Some co-applicants already work with hydropower- affected communities in Alberta and NWT (McLachlan, Kulchyski), Quebec (Scott), and Saskatchewan (Belcher), and those connections and trust-based relationships will help facilitate further outreach. We have been already in discussion with other university researchers doing similar work in BC and in Labrador, which we will then pursue once the funding is in place. We have already partnered with the US-based Honor the Earth (Winona LaDuke), which has a high international profile and which will help us network with Indigenous organizations in the US and elsewhere. We will also conduct strategic outreach with other Indigenous organizations that reflect relationships that communities and leaders already have in place. Such organizations include the Manitoba Uske (Lands) (<http://www.nalma.ca/uske>) and the National Aboriginal Land Managers Association (<http://www.nalma.ca/board>), which Gordon Bluesky (Brokenhead) is the Chair and Vice Chair – Western Region of, respectively. We will also contact other Indigenous organizations with which we have no existing relationships and, in so doing, build on the profile and short-term accomplishments of the Alliance. Such international Indigenous organizations include the Indigenous Environmental Network (<http://www.ienearth.org>) and Survival International ([www.survivalinternational.org](http://www.survivalinternational.org)).



**Figure 2: Confirmed and potential Partners of different types and at different scales or organization (also see Table 2 for more detailed information)**

We have already begun a community-led discussion within the Alliance as to whether and to what degree Indigenous political organizations with a provincial or national mandate should participate as Partners in our network. These include organizations such as the Assembly of First Nations and also key Tribal Councils in Manitoba and other provinces, such as the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, the Saskatchewan Federation of Indian Nations, and the Grand Council of the Crees in Quebec (Eeyou Istchee) amongst others. When there is consensus as to the role of these political organizations on the part of the existing community Partners, we will then contact these additional groups if appropriate.

If we receive approval from community Partners, we will also approach hydropower corporations and the government ministers responsible for hydropower in each of the provinces to explore their interest in becoming Partners. Many of these relationships are changing, reflecting their own evolving partnerships with affected communities (e.g. Keeyask and Wuskwatim Limited Partnership Agreements in Manitoba (McLachlan 2014a), La Paix des Braves in Quebec (Desbiens 2013), and the Tshash Petapen or New Dawn Agreements in Labrador (Samson and Cassell 2013), and a spirit of reconciliation that is beginning to permeate at least some of these relationships.

There are also opportunities to build some select partnerships with universities from other countries, especially in the US, Australia and New Zealand that have shared colonial histories with Canada regarding Indigenous Peoples and a reliance on hydropower. Partnerships with hydropower affected Indigenous communities in these other countries will also be explored. As a collaborator in the Alliance, Derek Kornelsen will begin this process in Winter 2016. Environmental organizations that have an international and even global mandate notably including International Rivers will also be contacted. (<http://www.internationalrivers.org/>).

Although all Partners are valued members of the Alliance, the existing or potential roles that each plays in the Alliance will vary depending on their past demonstrated working relationships with other Partners, especially community Partners and interest in engagement. Some Partners will play relatively peripheral albeit important roles (e.g. 6<sup>o</sup>: information provision) whereas others will play much more central roles (e.g. 1<sup>o</sup>: leadership) (Table 3). We are fully sensitive to the long history of adverse impacts and mistrust, and controversial nature of hydropower in many regions of Canada, especially with respect to governments and hydro corporations. However, it is our hope that this Alliance will help facilitate communication among actors who would normally be at odds with each other, recognizing that the absence of communication only acts to place affected Indigenous communities further at risk. We anticipate that these relationships will change as the Partnership evolves, and that this will reflect increases in communication and trust that emerge from the spirit of truth and reconciliation that permeates this entire Alliance. Strategies that give rise to this bridge building will be explored at the next gathering in Spring 2016 at the Brokenhead Ojibway Nation.

**Table 3: Six different Partnerships types and the differing activities that will be reflected in each type.**

Partnership Types	Types of Partnership Activities					
	Information Provision	Information Exchange	Support Advice	Capacity Building	Collaboration	Leadership
1 <sup>o</sup>						
2 <sup>o</sup>						
3 <sup>o</sup>						
4 <sup>o</sup>						
5 <sup>o</sup>						
6 <sup>o</sup>						

## Governance of Partnership

Governance will be structured around three major subgroups: a Steering Committee and Associated Steering Executive, Strategic Committees, and the Broader Membership. The 14-member Steering Committee (SC) is made up of six community representatives (all Indigenous), four university researchers (two Indigenous, one non-Indigenous, and the Project Director), two HQP (one Indigenous and one non-Indigenous), and two NGOs (one Indigenous and one non-Indigenous) as well as a maximum of two non-voting Members from government and industry as is deemed appropriate by the community collaborators (Fig 3). Thus, of the 14 voting members, the majority (10 or 71%) will be Indigenous and almost half (six or 43%) will be community representatives. It is important that the Alliance reflect Indigenous values structurally and functionally, and that the largest block of participants be community members.

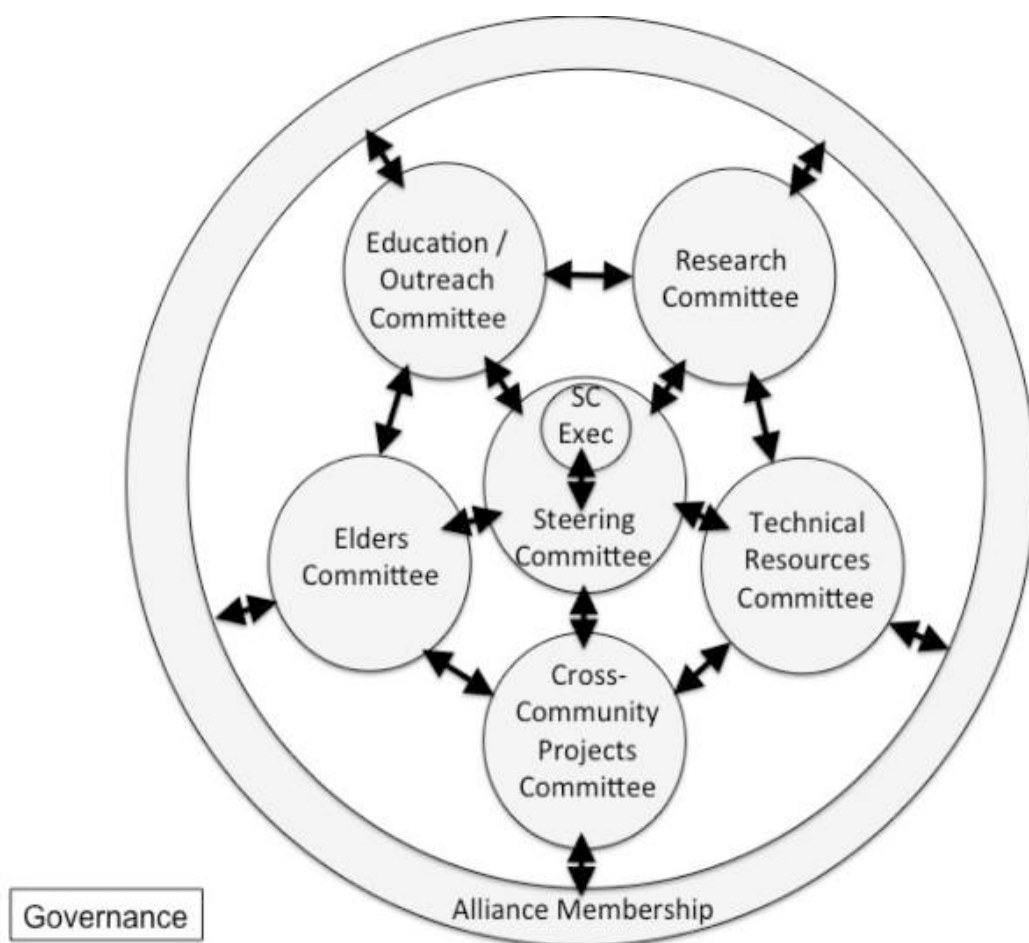
The Steering Committee will meet every four months, and represents the primary decision-making body of the Alliance. It will help shape the overall direction of the Alliance; help evaluate cross-community projects and other research projects and also progress; make policy decisions; allocate budgets; and facilitate project implementation and outreach. Consensus decision-making will inform all interactions within the Steering Committee and a conflict resolution process mediated by Elders will be initiated should this process fail. An Alliance Coordinator will orchestrate all these activities and be hired on a full-time basis, whereas a Community Coordinator will play a primary communications and liaising function on a half-time basis.

Over the last year, we have established an Acting Steering Committee, whose membership we would finalize once we received the SSHRC funding. It is composed of the Project Director (McLachlan) and an acting Alliance Coordinator (Kelly Janz, also the Project Coordinator of our SSHRC CURA, the Manitoba Alternative Food Research Alliance); three additional university researchers (two Indigenous: Craft (National Research Centre for Truth and Reconciliation), and Cariou (UM) and one non-Indigenous: Kulchyski (UM)); six community representatives, including Les Dysart (O-Pipon-Na-Piwin), Gilbert Fredette (Norway House Cree Nation), Gordon Bluesky (Brokenhead Ojibway Nation), Patricia Hill (Black River First Nation), Ivan Moose (Fox Lake Cree Nation), and Gerald McKay (Grand Rapids). Two NGO representatives, Will Braun, (Interchurch Alliance on Hydropower, non-Indigenous) and Carol Kobliski (Justice Seekers of Nelson House, Indigenous) are also members. Key participants in the last SSHRC-funded Gathering in Opaskwayak Cree Nation volunteered to serve on this Acting Steering Committee and have since corresponded regularly and given repeated feedback on this proposal as it evolved. All members save the Project Director, Alliance Coordinator, and Community Coordinator will serve on two-year terms, allowing for a rotating membership if other Partners are interested in serving on the Steering Committee. It is anticipated that this Acting Steering Committee will become the founding Steering Committee in its entirety and serve that first two-year period once the SSHRC funding is confirmed.

A subset of the Steering Committee will comprise the Steering Committee Executive, which will make day-to-day decisions. It will be composed of the Project Director (McLachlan), community representative (Les Dysart) and an Indigenous researcher (Craft), and the Alliance Coordinator and Community Coordinator, when they are hired. The Executive will meet regularly, at least on

a monthly basis. Hiring of both the Alliance and the Community Coordinators will occur once the SSHRC funding is confirmed, and a six-person Ad-hoc Hiring Committee reflecting the membership of the Steering Committee will interview and select the successful candidates.

In turn, the Steering Committee and the Steering Committee Executive will report back and be accountable to the Broader Membership. The latter will be made up of Partner representatives, co-applicants and collaborators, and anyone else interested in joining the Alliance and attending an annual gathering. This Membership will meet at each spring gathering, which will alternate between a northern and a southern location. In all cases, the gatherings will occur in Partner First Nations that have the infrastructure to support a 100-person meeting. Our last (SSHRC LOI-funded) gathering was held in Opaskwayak Cree Nation in The Pas in June 2015. Our next gathering will be held in Brokenhead Ojibway Nation in Spring 2016. Updates will be presented to and the Broader Membership will ratify any decisions made by the Steering Committee at that time and at subsequent spring gatherings. Members interested in participating in the governance of the Alliance will be invited to do so by serving on any Strategic Committees that reflect their own interests.



**Fig 4. Depiction of the governance structure of the Wa Ni Ska Tan Hydropower Alliance**

These Strategic Committees will be established once SSHRC funding is confirmed, using a community-based model that was highly successful in our SSHRC CURA. The Strategic Committees (Fig 4) will generally meet twice a year and consist of community members, outside stakeholders and university researchers and HQP, and will be constructed in a way that Indigenous participants in each committee will always represent a majority.

### **Education/Public Engagement Committee**

Made up of community members, outside Partners, and university researchers and HQP. It will generate ideas for education and mentoring within the Alliance and will develop approaches and tools for engagement with the broader Canadian public. It will play an essential role in increasing the visibility of these impacted Indigenous communities with decision-makers and the public, and also facilitate knowledge exchange with outside stakeholders.

### **Research Committee**

Evaluate and provide feedback on any research proposals submitted by co-applicants and HQP, and also find ways of enabling researchers to better collaborate with one another.

### **Technical Resources Committee**

Represents a portal for community Partners interested in accessing technical scientific expertise already reflected in the Alliance (e.g. GIS, economic development, environmental monitoring, legal) but will also reach out to identify and solicit support regarding expertise that is not currently reflected in the Alliance. Such support will be used internally for community projects but also regarding outreach and public engagement (e.g. environmental and regulatory hearings) as is required.

### **Cross-Community Projects Committee**

Solicit and provide feedback from other community researcher groups interested in submitting cross-community project proposals. Our SSHRC CURA funded over 35 community projects in this manner, although based on SSHRC reviewer and Partner feedback, these proposals will now focus on cross-community projects and, thus, be larger in scale. This committee will adjudicate and award funds as is deemed appropriate in order to support successful projects, and will liaise with the Researcher and Education/Public Engagement Committees, to ensure that they also provide relevant opportunities for training and research support.

### **Elders Committee**

Made up of Cree, Anishinaabe, and Métis Elders and provide cultural mentoring and advice that will act to ground and give shape to this Alliance, hold cultural ceremonies and provide feedback as is required for the activities of the other committees, and also help resolve conflict if and when it arises.

All decision-making and outreach will be culturally sensitive, collaborative and democratic in nature, and remain accountable to community Partners and the Alliance as a whole.



## Participant Involvement

The participants in this Partnership reflect a tremendously wide diversity of expertise and experience that encompasses research and teaching, advocacy, policy and government, traditional land use, and different Indigenous cultures. They will meet regularly at the annual gatherings but also in Alliance-related committee work and through collaborative research and cross-community projects. Building a cohesive and multidisciplinary team remains a strong priority in this Alliance, one that will be engaged in research and education activities, but also in governance and outreach.

### Co-applicants

Currently there are 22 co-applicants who work in nine universities in Canada and the US, and as a whole they represent a tremendously diverse team of interdisciplinary researchers at many different stages of their careers. Fifteen (68%) of the co-applicants are Manitoba-based universities, reflecting the importance of hydropower in this province, the core role that hydropower plays in this Partnership and the extensive experience that these researchers already have with related Indigenous and environmental issues in the region. Indeed, all five of the universities in Manitoba are reflected in this Alliance (i.e. University of Manitoba, Brandon University, Canadian Mennonite University or CMU, University College of the North, and University of Winnipeg) and three are Partners (Manitoba, Winnipeg, and CMU). This reflects our intent to make this Partnership and the associated research, education, and outreach as sustainable as possible and a recognition that such proximity will better enable us to regularly collaborate with hydropower-affected communities across Manitoba.

### University of Manitoba, Project Director:

***Stéphane McLachlan*** (Environment and Geography) will be the Project Director, and will sit on the Executive, Steering, and Strategic Committees in the Alliance. He will provide oversight and leadership and regularly advise both Coordinators. He has collaborated with Indigenous communities in western Canada for over 15 years. He works on issues related to environmental justice as well as energy and food justice. His Alliance work will examine spatiotemporal environmental and social impacts of hydropower, how communities are adapting, and the evolution of the Alliance and its associated cross-sectoral network over time.

### University of Manitoba, Steering Committee:

***Aimée Craft*** (Law) is Director of Research at the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation and a lawyer. Her research and legal practice is on Treaty and Aboriginal rights as well as Indigenous legal traditions. She will participate on the Steering Committee, and her Alliance work will examine Indigenous normative values, decision-making and governance.

***Peter Kulchyski*** (Native Studies) will also sit on Steering and Strategic Committees and has worked with Indigenous communities across Canada for over 20 years. He works on Aboriginal and legal rights and land claims and his Alliance work will focus on the historical impacts of hydropower on communities, looking at treaties, water rights and resistance to hydropower in affected communities.

**Warren Cariou** (English) is Director of the Centre for Creative Writing and Oral Culture and a Canada Research Chair in Narrative, Community and Indigenous Cultures. He will participate in the Steering Committee and his Alliance work will focus on Indigenous Elders, artists and community members to help indigenize concepts of energy, by studying the relationships between traditional Indigenous stories, land and energy-gathering practices.

**Other co-applicants from University of Manitoba:**

**Colin Bonnycastle** (Social Work) who works on policy, social justice, poverty and domestic violence, will document the impacts of hydropower on families, particularly as it relates to wellbeing, housing, urban migration and homelessness in Thompson. This work will be done in collaboration Bonnycastle and Simpkins (both below).

**Jarvis Brownlie** (History) is a historian who works on Aboriginal treaties and colonization and his Alliance work will examine the oral and archival history of hydropower impacts for Aboriginal communities in Manitoba and BC.

**Jocelyn Thorpe** (Women's and Gender Studies) works on gender, colonialism and environmental justice and her Alliance work will examine gendered effects of hydropower and relationships between environmental and social changes in northern Manitoba.

**Marleny M. Bonnycastle** (Social Work) who works on university community engagement regarding homeless and violence against women, will document the impacts of hydropower on families, particularly as it relates to wellbeing, housing, urban migration and homelessness in Thompson. This work will be done in collaboration with Bonnycastle (above) and Simpkins (below).

**Radhika Desai** (Political Studies) is a political economist and her Alliance work will examine the historical conditions giving rise to Manitoba Hydro's current hydroelectric capacity and its recent planned expansion into wider North American and world energy markets.

**Shirley Thompson** (Natural Resources Institute) works on food sovereignty, participatory video, and community development and her Alliance work will examine impacts of hydropower on land use.

**Other Manitoba-based co-applicants:**

**Alan Diduck** (Environmental Studies and Sciences, University of Winnipeg) works on social learning and environmental governance and his Alliance work will examine how to enhance learning across generations, regions and sectors.

**Doug Ramsey** (Rural Development, Brandon University) works on rural and northern tourism and his Alliance work will document how opportunities for tourism have been affected by hydropower.

**Ian Mauro** (Geography, University of Winnipeg) works on participatory film, climate change, industrial development, and environmental justice, and his Alliance work will develop a video

project focused on community perspectives on hydropower and any larger implications for the Boreal Forest.

***Jerry Buckland*** (International Studies) based in the Canadian Mennonite University and University of Winnipeg, works on community economic development, and his Alliance focus will examine the consequences of hydropower dams on Indigenous community and economy to identify more effective means to meet both southern electricity and northern community needs.

***Maureen Simpkins*** (Aboriginal and Northern Studies) based in the University College of the North, works on PAR and collaborative research and her Alliance focus will examine how hydropower affects families with Bonnycastle and Bonnycastle as described above.

***Melanie O’Gorman*** (Economics, University of Winnipeg) works on economic development and political economy issues, and her Alliance work will result in a comprehensive analysis of Impact Benefit Agreements signed between Indigenous communities and hydroelectric projects across Canada and internationally.

#### **Other co-applicants based in Saskatchewan, Quebec, Indiana, and Minnesota:**

***Alexandria Wilson*** (Aboriginal Education Research Centre, U of Sask.) works on land-based education, anti-oppressive education, and social action and justice. Her Alliance work will examine the implications of traditional land-based programming for cultural wellbeing.

***Colin Scott*** (Anthropology, McGill University) works on the environmental implications of hydropower in the James Bay and will focus on the cumulative regional impacts on the James and southern Hudson Bay ecosystem of Hydro-Québec and Manitoba Hydro projects.

***David Natcher*** (Indigenous Land Management Unit, U of Sask.) works on economic and economic anthropology and his Alliance work will examine cross-community spillover effects of hydropower and more specifically the Limited Partnerships

***Ken Belcher*** (Bioresource Policy, Business and Economics, U of Sask.) works in resource and environmental economics, and his Alliance work will integrate economic and other valuation tools to help understand impacts and trade-offs associated with changes in land and resource availability caused by hydropower in Manitoba and Saskatchewan

***Stephanie Kane*** (International Studies, Indiana University) works on environmental justice, and will work to establish appropriate legal baselines for implementing the precautionary principle in hydropower projects.

***Steven Hoffman*** (Political Science, University of St Thomas in Minnesota) works on hydropower-related environmental injustice and will explore prospects for renewable, community-based energy projects, providing lower cost electricity while enabling participatory energy planning.

## Collaborators

The collaborators in this Partnership play an essential and leadership role in every facet of the Alliance. Eight of the 11 collaborators are Indigenous and from northern Manitoba, and two are HQP. Most will actively participate in the Steering Committee and most will play an essential role in ensuring that the Partnership continues to work in ways that reflect community needs.

### **Community collaborators are:**

**Gordon Bluesky**, Lands and Resources Manager at Brokenhead Ojibway Nation, which has been adversely affected by flooding on Lake Winnipeg, and who will sit on the Steering Committee and provide advice and mentorship.

**Les Dysart**, a fisher from O-Pipon-Na-Piwin Cree Nation, which was forcibly relocated by flooding arising from the Churchill Diversion Project, will sit on the Steering Committee and provide advice and mentorship.

**Gilbert Fredette**, the Deputy Chief from Norway House Cree Nation, which is affected by related changes in Lake Winnipeg, will sit on the Steering Committee and provide advice and mentorship.

**Gerald McKay**, a fisher from Grand Rapids, which has been affected by the operation of the Grand Rapids dam since 1962, will sit on the Steering Committee and provide advice and mentorship.

**Patricia Mitchell**, from Black River First Nation, which has been adversely affected by related changes in Lake Winnipeg, will sit on the Steering Committee and provide advice and mentorship.

**Ivan Moose**, from Fox Lake Cree Nation, which is a Limited Partner on the Keeyask hydropower project with Manitoba Hydro, will also sit on the Steering Committee and provide advice and mentorship.

### **Other collaborators include:**

**Will Braun**, from the Interchurch Council on Hydropower, who will serve on the Steering Committee, provide advice on research projects, and facilitate outreach and engagement with civil society and the general public.

**Derek Kornelsen**, a Research Associate at the Manitoba First Nation Centre for Aboriginal Health Research, will examine impacts of hydropower on cultural wellbeing and traditional livelihoods and extend our network into Australia and New Zealand in Winter 2016.

**Charles Levkoe**, a Post-Doctoral Fellow at Wilfrid Laurier University, will examine the implications of hydropower for food justice and traditional food systems.

## Training and Mentoring

The training and mentoring of students and community research assistants as well as university researchers and community leaders plays a fundamental role in this Hydro Alliance and takes the form of multi-way learning and mentorship throughout.

Both undergraduate and graduate students will play a central and integrated role in all of the Alliance activities, whether this is governance (Steering Committee, Strategic Committees), research, education or Knowledge Mobilization. Students will receive their degrees from the partner universities. Some of these will become part of a supportive research community, Environmental Conservation Lab (ECL), at the University of Manitoba. McLachlan's ECL houses many related projects, and currently there are four PhD, six Masters, and one undergraduate student working under his mentorship. Indeed, he has graduated seven PhD, 18 Masters, and 32 undergraduate students over the last 15 years. Other co-applicants (e.g. Ramsey, Kulchyski, Natcher Thompson) are also established mentors of much student research, collectively graduating 13 PhD, 25 Masters, and 18 honours students in the last 5 years. Newly hired faculty (e.g. Mauro, Thorpe) will also be strong mentors of HQP through this work.

Undergraduate students will be active and highly valued members of the Hydro Alliance and will be actively mentored by university researchers and community members and organizations throughout. Whether this reflects capacity building in the form of formal classes and research related workshops or funding to help document and evaluate community based research as part of thesis work, they will have crucial roles in their research projects but also play key roles in many other facets of the Alliance. There will also be opportunities for undergraduate students at all the partner universities to participate in cross-community tours and projects.

Graduate students will encounter many ideal opportunities to engage and learn with and from communities over extended periods of time. They will play leadership roles in their individual projects and make contributions to these ideas and those of the larger Alliance as investigators. Their projects will generally be community-based, and they will spend extended periods of times within and building relationships with communities. Partner communities and organizations will also play an active role in evaluating whether students will be a good fit, as the host communities, and in some cases as part of the Steering Committee. Students will benefit greatly from these relationships and the opportunities for experiential learning and for applying and further developing some of their research and education skills. Experiential learning will be supplemented by more formal learning such as workshops and coursework, and by active mentorship on the part of university researchers and community members.

High school students from each of the Partner communities will also be provided with employment and learning opportunities through the Alliance. They will be actively mentored by co-applicants, community leaders, Partner organizations and, importantly, university students. These latter relationships can result in life-long friendships. Moreover, they can act as stepping-stones of support for community members interested in exploring post-secondary education opportunities.

This training will reflect a great diversity of methodological approaches, this in turn reflecting the remarkable diversity of co-applicant research strengths in the Alliance. Students will be trained in use of quantitative (questionnaires, bio-monitoring), qualitative (participant observation, individual and group semi-directed interviews, video, photovoice), archiving, and mixed methods of research and data analysis, data interpretation, and writing in the social sciences with the ongoing and active input of their primary advisors, other co-applicants, and community mentors. Research-focused workshops will also be provided for these students and interested community members regarding technical (e.g. websites, new social media, video, radio, culture camps, water sampling) skills. A larger number of workshops will focus on participatory video, given its emphasis as a form of data analysis and high impact communication. Skills in interdisciplinary research, spoken and written communication, and cross-cultural communication will be fostered, and HQP will be encouraged to present results in national and international conferences as well as the annual gatherings. These skills increase student competitiveness in job markets where specialist training, strengths in crossing discipline boundaries and in team research teams are essential for success. These interdisciplinary skills are also highly marketable and are in high demand in working in northern environments, consulting, and academia.

Beyond that, every community youth and student will be actively mentored and treated as a highly qualified and respected member of the Alliance, one whose insights and community relationships contribute directly to and reflect the success of the kind of research and education promoted by this Partnership.





## Knowledge Mobilization Plan

This cross-cultural and multi-tier Knowledge Mobilization (KM) plan focuses on the many social, economic and environmental issues confronting Indigenous communities affected by hydropower across Manitoba. With the exception of some hydrological and biological research conducted in South Indian Lake in the late 1970s, the great majority of other research has been conducted in conjunction with new dam development, most has been funded by Manitoba Hydro, and little has meaningfully involved any affected communities. Although the local impacts have deep ramifications for nearby communities, when it comes to outside stakeholders, little about any social or environmental impacts and none about cumulative impacts are known. Surprisingly, there is also little communication about these impacts or possible mitigative responses among affected communities. A major focus of this Partnership will address these gaps in communication and knowledge exchange – in part focusing on facilitating sharing and support among impacted communities, among Partners within the Alliance, and with communities, civil society, government, industry, and the general public outside the Alliance. Thus, KM permeates every aspect of our Wa Ni Ska Tan Alliance., and is categorized into three tiers.

The first tier of KM focuses on communication, sharing and support and increased awareness among Indigenous communities within the Alliance. It is anticipated that some communication initiatives will only involve Indigenous Alliance members. Most KM will focus on affected communities within Manitoba, although there will be opportunities to share with affected communities from other provinces, notably those in Quebec, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia. It is clear from our two previous membership gatherings in northern Manitoba and multiple smaller meetings that many of these hydropower-related impacts have been and continue to be traumatic in nature and that cross-community communication about these impacts has been difficult when it has occurred at all. The use of a Truth and Reconciliation approach to communication emerged from the Indigenous participants as an appropriate way of moving forward. This builds on the groundbreaking work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) from 2009-2015, and will be reflected in our key Partnership with the National Center for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR).

The important sharing and healing that emerges from face-to-face interactions has already occurred and played a central role in our December-2014 and June-2015 gatherings, and will continue to do so in upcoming gatherings. At each gathering, communities have selected a representative to update the membership about any changes in circumstances and there have been formal presentations by community members who have been particularly adversely affected by hydropower. All three of the cross-community projects identified and selected in our June-2015 meeting for funding focus on this first-tier KM. The first will create a ‘living archive’ in collaboration with the NCTR, where a multimedia display that shows the nature of the impacts will circulate among Partner communities. Members of those communities will also be invited to share their own experiences, which will then be recorded and add to the archive. This archive will likely be centralized at the NCTR, but will have portals within each of the Partner communities and also at the Environmental Conservation Lab. The archive will be easily accessible to community members, and will be largely maintained by staff in the NCTR. The second cross-community project takes the form of cross-community tours, where community members will be invited to learn about impacts and responses from other affected Partner

communities, and where opportunities for further cross-community collaboration will be explored. This builds on and supports the existing innovative work of the Lake Winnipeg Indigenous Collective who began organizing such tours in 2015. The third cross-community project focuses on the development of cross-community culture camps designed to link at-risk youth with Elders from at least four of the Partner communities. These “resurgence” camps will focus on language, culture, and harvesting across all four seasons. It is anticipated that such cross-community generation and sharing of information will play a key role in future projects, and so that this first-tier KM will remain a priority over the lifetime of this Alliance.

A second tier of KM will arise from this project and enable cross-cultural communication and knowledge exchange among Partners within the Alliance. This has already occurred at the past two northern gatherings, within the Steering Committee and the larger Alliance membership, and where exchanges between community members and university researchers and HQP, and representatives from NGOs as well as politicians created opportunities for knowledge exchange and learning among all. This cross-cultural communication is facilitated by the central role that Indigenous cultural traditions play in all aspects of the meetings, these including a fish fry on the opening night of the gathering, fiddle music and hoop-dancing, prayer and other ceremony to open and end each day or the meeting, the sharing of traditional foods in all meals, the hiring of Indigenous-owned and run organizations to house the meetings, and our holding all the meetings in Partner First Nations. Thus, the June-2015 meeting was in Opaskwayak Cree Nation and the spring-2016 meeting will be held at Brokenhead Ojibway Nation. Highlighting the importance of these traditions, places, and livelihoods acts to Indigenize the Alliance, whether this is reflected in governance, cross-community projects and research or KM.

The ~100 participants in each of the gatherings are situated around one large circle, which facilitates interpersonal communication and accountability. Breakout group discussions are also facilitated, often by the students and co-applicants, which enables community members and other Partners to play a key role in generating and sharing ideas. Simultaneous English-Cree translation makes the proceedings widely accessible, especially to Elders, and will occur in all three major languages when we meet in Brokenhead. All proceedings are audio-recorded and transcribed in their entirety, and shared with all participants. The proceedings for each gathering are summarized in a high-impact format that incorporates major outcomes, quotes, and photos - all communicated in accessible plain-language format.

These efforts will continue in the future through the use of newsletters that are distributed to all the Partner communities and the Alliance as a whole. Thus, 6,000 copies of our recent Fall-2015 issue were distributed to the 25 Partner communities (200 copies to each) in addition to other Partner organizations. The social events (land-based fish fry, hoop dancing, music, prayers etc.) act to welcome the non-Indigenous participants in a culturally rich and embracing environment that facilitates meaningful exchange and communication. This also takes place in our Steering Committee meetings, which include Indigenous and non-indigenous participants and both community members and co-applicants. At these meetings, ideas are exchanged and evaluated freely. And at both gatherings and committee meetings, co-applicants and other outside Partners are highly respectful of the Indigenous traditions and experiences that permeate the Alliance. This creates an ideal platform for cross-cultural KM around cross-community projects and research, where everyone’s insights are shared, accommodated, and valued.

A third tier of KM will emerge from the cross-cultural outreach with stakeholders that are not Partners in the Alliance. These will include NGOs, municipal, provincial and federal governments, utility companies, and the general public across Canada and the US but also in other parts of the globe. This KM will act to make the nature of the impacts and responses as widely accessible as possible but also act to create a larger network of support. The nature of this communication and knowledge exchange will be primarily digital in nature and make extensive use of the Internet. Tools such as the project website ([www.hydroalliance.ca](http://www.hydroalliance.ca)) and associated Facebook page and multi-media versions of the newsletters will enable interaction and exchange between Alliance members and outside parties.

A news website will be developed in order to make the outcomes of this Alliance and other related research to outside stakeholders in a topical manner. Such a site ([www.onerivernews.ca](http://www.onerivernews.ca)) was created for another project related to the Oil Sands, and has been visited by over 200,000 viewers from around the world over the last year. A high-impact documentary research film will also be created as an essential outcome of this Alliance, and be used to facilitate KM with outside stakeholders. Such films act to increase the visibility of and to facilitate knowledge exchange regarding research outcomes, and to highlight the importance of Indigenous voices that are normally excluded from discourse and decision-making.

We recently completed another such research documentary film on the implications of the Oil Sands for downstream Indigenous communities, which is similarly available on its standalone website ([www.oneriverthefilm.ca](http://www.oneriverthefilm.ca)) and which we are now taking on a cross-Canada tour. It is anticipated that the film emerging from the Hydro Alliance will be screened at festivals and made available for purchase, as we have done with our other research documentary film projects. These outside stakeholder-focused outcomes will complement those normally associated with university-based Partnerships (e.g. journal publications and conference presentations etc.). Another digital form of KM that will play a core role in our Hydro Alliance is the 'living archive' that emerges from our Partnership with the NCTR. As with the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, an essential component of our work here is to make the hydropower-related impacts and the proactive responses and collaboration with outside Partners readily available to the general public.

This multi-tier KM plan will increase the accessibility and impact of outcomes emerging from our Partnership within and outside the Alliance. This wide diversity of approaches will act as a best practices model of effective cross-cultural KM within and outside all Research Alliances, which will, in turn, help mitigate the impacts of a longstanding communication crisis that confronts Indigenous communities in this region and across northern Canada. The benefits of the KM and an associated (inter) national network of communication have much promise to promote awareness regarding these issues and will provide support for these and other northern Indigenous communities beyond the duration of this project funding and long into the future.

## Proposed Contribution Plan

Overall, the cash and in-kind contributions of our existing Partners total \$2,434,986. This, in turn, amounts to 97.4% of the \$2,500,000 budget requested from SSHRC for this seven-year Partnership.

### Universities

Universities represent the first class of partners, and their contributions will generally be used to support Highly Qualified Personnel (HQP) and to provide infrastructure needed to support these students, this amounting to 31% of the total matched support.

**University of Manitoba** is the greatest contributor overall (32.4%) as well as the largest cash contributor (85.3%). A cash contribution of \$315,000 will be used to support three PhD students over the seven years through the Graduate Enhancement of Tri-Council Funding program. Moreover, the Clayton R Riddell Faculty of Environment, Earth, and Resources will provide an additional \$105,000 for both honours and Masters students over this time period. In-kind contributions of \$370,000 will be used to provide video cameras and associated equipment to HQP and community participants as well as access to work stations and video editing suites in the Environmental Conservation Lab, which will be used to complete the research film documentary and to work on the living archive.

**University of Winnipeg** will contribute \$34,500 in cash over the duration of the project and in-kind support of \$85,582, which will provide additional access to video equipment and production, travel funding, teaching releases, and research support.

**Canadian Mennonite University** will contribute \$2,000 towards travel expenses and also access to a \$2,500 internal research grant.

**Global Institute of Food Security, University of Saskatchewan** will provide \$11,500 of in-kind support, \$10,000 of this for travel.

**McGill University** will provide \$10,000 in cash contributions: \$7,000 of this towards PhD students and \$3,000 towards knowledge exchange.

**University of St Thomas University** in Minnesota will provide a \$3,229 cash contribution for undergraduate research assistants and another \$11,425 as in-kind support for teaching releases.

**National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation** will provide \$455,000 of in-kind support, \$245,000 as technical services for data base creation and management and \$210,000 that will be used in training and technical assistance for the 'living archive' cross-community project

## Community Partners

Many *environmental NGOs* are also Partners in the Alliance, and play a strong role in supporting its activities since many of the hydro-related impacts relate directly to the environment and many of the social and livelihood impacts are mediated through the environment. Support is generally in-kind in nature, and takes the form of attending meetings, providing feedback on documents as well as advising projects and participating in the Steering Committee as is seen appropriate and as reflected in the various letters of support.

*Social justice and legal justice NGOs* play a strong role in supporting the Alliance since Aboriginal and treaty rights occupy a central pillar of the Alliance. This support generally amounts to attending meetings, providing feedback on documents, as well as advising projects and participating in the Steering Committee as is seen appropriate.

*Food-related NGOs* similarly play a strong role in supporting Alliance reflecting the tremendous impacts that hydro development has on traditional food systems, notably the social fisheries. This support generally amounts to providing feedback on documents as well as disseminating information and research through conferences and communications. These organizations will play a strong role in large-scale outreach and communications.

*Governmental organizations* likewise play a strong role in the Alliance, reflecting their desire to represent these Indigenous communities in an effective manner. This in-kind support generally amounts to attending meetings, providing feedback on documents, knowledge sharing, and advising projects and participating in the Steering Committee.

In turn, *Indigenous governments* are often also highly supportive of the Alliance, especially those that have no direct partnerships of their own with Manitoba Hydro, this reflecting the tremendous importance of hydropower for their respective traditional territories.

Finally, *Indigenous community organizations* play a core role in the Alliance reflecting the proactive leadership role they play in representing the interests of the grassroots. This support generally amounts to cultural advice, translation services, attending meetings, providing feedback on documents as well as participating on the Steering Committee.

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