

Behind the Greenwashing



WANI SKA TAN

An Alliance of Hydro Impacted Communities

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR EDITION

Greenwashing

The Facts

Muskrat Falls will “secure a strong economic future for successive generations of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.”

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Penney & Johnson-Castle

“For the future of which young people are these hydroelectric resources important? Certainly not Inuit or other peoples reliant on the Grand River and Lake Melville ecosystems. How will an additional project impact the bioaccumulation of methylmercury in Labrador’s food systems?”

“September 30 marked the inaugural National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. Our offices across the province were closed to observe this day of reflection and learning, and flags were flown at half-mast from sunrise to sunset.”

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Peter Penashue

“It’s just so revolting when I hear them talking about reconciliation and having to do the right thing for Indigenous Peoples in this province. [...] I can’t sit in that room and talk about those things because I know they are not being serious.”

Reconciliation measures have fallen short for Muskrat Falls. The Innu Nation signed an impacts benefit agreement with Nalcor Energy, but false promises and cost overruns will result in them receiving far less profit than initially projected.

“At Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro we are committed to being an Environmental Leader. We will help sustain a diverse and healthy environment for present and future Newfoundlanders and Labradorians by maintaining a high level of environmental compliance, responsibility and performance.”

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Penney & Johnson-Castle

“It is unacceptable to continue to build projects which harm the lives of future generations and to frame them as environmentally friendly when the scientific evidence and social impacts prove otherwise.”

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The Facts

According to Nalcor, Muskrat Falls would have no measurable impacts on the downstream Lake Melville, and could be left out of the project's environmental assessment.

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Ryan
Calder

“There's no scientific basis to say that there's no impacts. There's all kinds of data from Quebec and Brazil that show that in many cases downstream impacts are greater than from reservoirs.”

A 2014 study from Harvard University found that methylmercury from the reservoir could increase downstream mercury exposure by up to 1,500 per cent. This would force the Indigenous communities on Lake Melville to abandon their traditional food or risk suffering dangerous impacts to their health.

On their Muskrat Falls Project, Nalcor Energy boasted about their “work being performed safely, in an environmentally responsible manner to a high quality.”

Work on the Muskrat Falls Project was over budget and behind schedule. Nalcor Energy dismissed several options to reduce the dangerous levels of methylmercury that projected to occur as a result of the project. Instead, they adopted an irresponsible “wait-and-see” approach and will issue warnings to Indigenous hunters and trappers not to harvest if the mercury levels become too high.

“Nalcor Energy and the Lower Churchill Project team are committed to maintaining a high standard of environmental responsibility, and helping to sustain a diverse and healthy environment for generations of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.”

An independent study of the Lower Churchill Project by Harvard University found that Nalcor Energy's projections for methylmercury were flawed, and that the project's impacts to health and the environment would actually be much higher.

In response, the CEO of Nalcor Energy refuted the study's findings and cast doubt on proposed mitigation measures. By the time these measures were approved, it was too late to implement them.

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The Facts

“Providing public updates about important topics regarding the Muskrat Falls generation facility is a priority for us.”

An analysis of the Muskrat Falls project showed that its publicly-announced timeline had only a 1% chance of being met.

Instead of being transparent about this information, Nalcor Energy dismissed and de-emphasized it.

“We are leading the way to a green, sustainable future for our province.”

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**Penney &
Johnson-
Castle**

“The assertion of large hydroelectric projects as “green” does not line up with scientific evidence. The physical impact of dam construction and flooding leads to significant greenhouse gas emissions and methylmercury pollution, which impacts forests and marine life. Not to mention the fact that hydro projects have displaced communities and violated treaty rights.”

“We’re making great progress with the Muskrat Falls Project and it **remains the best option** to meet our electricity needs in our province.”

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**Richard
LeBlanc**

“...it is clear that [the government of Newfoundland and Labrador] and Nalcor **never seriously considered any option** other than the [Muskrat Falls Project].”

Nalcor presented Muskrat Falls as the least expensive option for provincial energy needs, but some of its alternatives were rejected for unjustified reasons. Nalcor’s economic assumptions were flawed, and the range of possible outcomes for Muskrat Falls were not fully explored.

“We’re pleased to provide continued support and to further our relationships with the Indigenous communities in which we live and operate.”

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**Caitlin
Urquhart**

“The government and Nalcor failed to act fairly with Indigenous groups as well as environmental issues [...]. They created this environment of mistrust and suspicion.”

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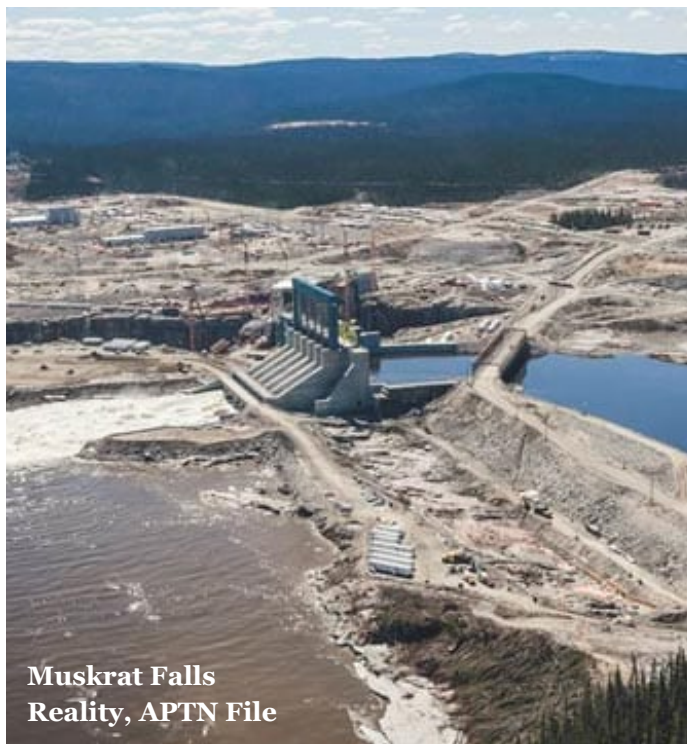
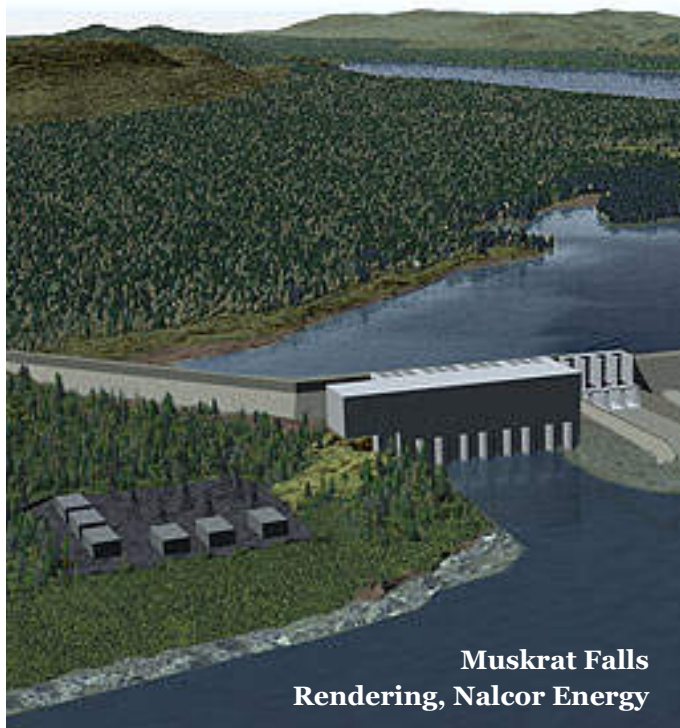
The Facts

“Participating in, and supporting, Indigenous community initiatives is an important part of showing [Newfoundland & Labrador Hydro] respect[s] what’s important to Indigenous communities throughout the province.”

Newfoundland & Labrador Hydro manages Muskrat Falls. This project does not respect what’s important to Indigenous communities:

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**Charlotte
Wolfrey**

“[The Muskrat Falls Project] is an attack on our way of life. It’s cultural genocide.”



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