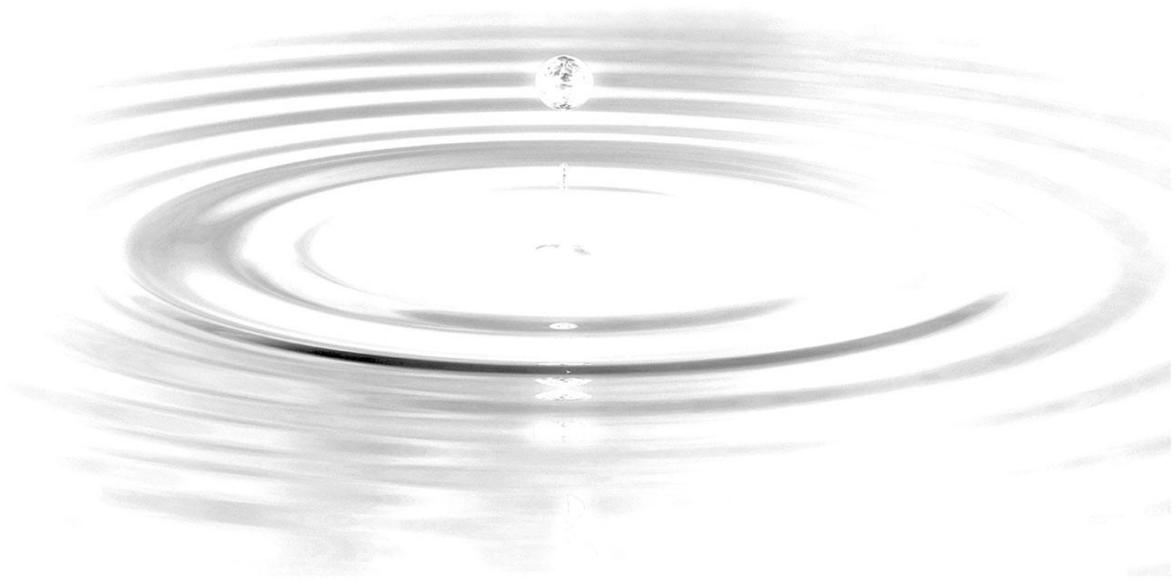


NWT Water Stewardship Strategy Action Plan Implementation

**Keeping up the Momentum Workshop
November 22-23, 2011
Yellowknife, NT**

**Final Summary Report
February 16, 2012**



The **waters** of the Northwest Territories
will remain clean, abundant and productive for all time.

Table of Contents

1.0 Introduction.....	2
2.0 Overview and Guiding Questions.....	2
2.1 Introduction and Background	3
2.2 Participant Input – Factors Influencing the Strategy’s Implementation	4
2.3 Responses to Guiding Questions	5
3.0 Work Together	7
3.1 Communication and Engagement Theme.....	7
3.2 Partnership Theme	9
3.3 Information Management Theme	11
3.4 Transboundary Negotiations Theme.....	12
4.0 Use Responsibly.....	12
4.1 Regulatory Theme.....	12
5.0 Know and Plan.....	13
5.1 Research and Monitoring Theme.....	14
5.2 Community-Based Monitoring Theme	15
6.0 Check Our Progress	17
6.1 Strategy Audit and Evaluation Process Theme.....	17
7.0 Closing Words	18
Appendix A: Workshop Participants	19
Appendix B: Background and Agenda	21

1.0 Introduction

Water partners met in Yellowknife for a two day workshop to provide updates on the implementation of *Northern Voices, Northern Waters: NWT Water Stewardship Strategy* (the Strategy) and share ideas on ways to collectively advance its implementation. Presentations and discussions were focused primarily on Keys to Success with deliverable dates for 2011 outlined in the *NWT Water Stewardship: A Plan for Action 2011-2015* (the Action Plan).

The workshop was organized collaboratively by the Government of the Northwest Territories, Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) and Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) and was attended by a diverse group of water partners including members of the Aboriginal Steering Committee, Aboriginal, federal and territorial government representatives, northern regulatory boards and agencies, industry representatives, environmental and research non-government organizations, and NWT community representatives (see Appendix A for a list of participants).

The purpose of this workshop was to:

1. Provide collective status updates on the implementation of the Keys to Success outlined in the Action Plan; and,
2. Identify and discuss opportunities and challenges for moving forward in the context of recent and emerging factors impacting our shared and individual operating environments.

Workshop participants left the meeting with:

- A re-energized commitment to the implementation of the Strategy's Action Plan;
- A greater knowledge of linkages among various programs and agencies' work as they relate to Strategy implementation;
- An understanding of what the Strategy is intended to achieve and the current status of the Action Plan;
- An understanding of progress that has been made on the Action Plan's Keys to Success by all water partners; and
- An understanding of outstanding challenges along with opportunities for addressing these challenges, ideas moving forward, particularly on specific Keys to Success in the Action Plan, and ideas for support for implementing the Strategy.

2.0 Overview and Guiding Questions

Participants were welcomed to the workshop by the Honourable Michael Miltenberger, GNWT Minister of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR), and Trish Merrithew-Mercredi, Regional Director General, NWT Region, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC).

The Minister thanked the water partners for their contributions to date and acknowledged AANDC and the Aboriginal Steering Committee for the critical role they played in the development of the Strategy. He reminded everyone that although the GNWT does not have the legislative mandate for water management, it is still their moral and political responsibility. With the 17th assembly underway, the Minister emphasized that water is still of the utmost importance, especially in the context of the transfer of water management responsibilities to the GNWT following devolution. He added that the Strategy is cutting edge and is critical to transboundary negotiations with Alberta. He acknowledged that funding will be an issue and that ongoing collaborative work by all water partners is integral to the successful implementation of the Strategy

Ms. Merrithew-Mercredi began by stressing that water is critical to life and culture in the NWT. She thanked the water partners for their dedication to the Strategy and pointed to partnerships and collaboration as being the key to achieving the vision of the Strategy. Ms. Merrithew-Mercredi was very positive about the work being completed now six months into the implementation phase and she stressed that there is still much to be learned and that everyone needs to continue to meet and share information. She emphasized that issues regarding water are critical to the NWT and Canada and asked everyone to continue to communicate the importance of water and the Strategy to their respective communities and organizations.

2.1 Introduction and Background

Overview of *Northern Voices, Northern Waters NWT Water Stewardship Strategy (the Strategy)* and *NWT Water Stewardship: A Plan for Action 2011-2015 (the Action Plan)*
Presenters: Michele Culhane (AANDC) and Erin Kelly (ENR)

After reiterating the purpose of the workshop, Michele explained that *Northern Voices, Northern Waters: NWT Water Stewardship Strategy* (the Strategy) was developed following the declaration of the Right to Water Motion in 2007 and in response to concerns of Northerners about their water due to growing pressures from climate change and increasing development. The Strategy was tabled at the NWT Legislative Assembly and jointly released by ENR and AANDC in May 2010. The development of the Strategy was a collaborative effort guided by the Aboriginal Steering Committee. This collaboration led to the creation of a unique and powerful vision statement: “*the waters of the Northwest Territories will remain clean, abundant and productive for all time*”.

Michele added that the *NWT Water Stewardship: A Plan for Action 2011-2015* (the Action Plan), tabled and released in May 2011, lays out a partnership approach to improve and enhance water stewardship at all levels. The development and implementation of the Action Plan is made possible by the collective support of the water partners. As defined in the Strategy, water partners include anyone that has a role in water stewardship.

Erin continued by describing the NWT Water Stewardship drum diagram (depicted below), which illustrates the four components of the Strategy with the Vision at its core.



The four components are Work Together, Know and Plan, Use Responsibly, and Check Our Progress. These comprise 38 Keys to Success, each of which have a number of associated action items and deliverable dates. For the purpose of this workshop, the four components of the drum were further divided into the following themes:

- Communication and Engagement
- Partnerships
- Information Management
- Transboundary Negotiations
- Regulatory
- Research and Monitoring
- Community-Based Monitoring
- Strategy Audit and Evaluation Process

Erin added that workshop presentations on each of these themes would provide status updates on the action items with 2011 deliverable dates, as well as some action items for with 2012.

2.2 Participant Input – Factors Influencing the Strategy’s Implementation

Following the introductory presentation the facilitator asked all water partners to respond to the following question:

What do you think are factors that influence (help or hinder) implementation of the NWT Water Stewardship Strategy?

Water partners outlined the following factors that can help the Strategy’s implementation:

- ongoing communication including consistent messaging
- improving information sharing
- improving collaboration, cooperation, and resource sharing among water partners
- ensuring commitment at the organizational and individual level
- getting back to the grassroots and working from the bottom up
- making communities full partners and getting individuals taking ownership
- prioritizing Keys to Success to address the most important ones first

- ensuring water partner roles and responsibilities are clearly laid out
- considering potential impacts on water from industry
- engaging more water partners from industry as well as continuing to engage communities, Aboriginal governments and other organizations
- linking existing initiatives and programs and ensuring consistent results/messages get back to communities in a coordinated way

Water partners outlined the following factors that could hinder the Strategy's implementation:

- capacity is a problem for all (limited staff and financial resources)
- competing but related priorities
- lack of political will for monitoring and research
- linear accountabilities within organizations (i.e., do not have mandate to work together with other organizations)

2.3 Responses to Guiding Questions

ENR and AANDC Responses to Guiding Questions

Presenters: Teresa Joudrie (AANDC – Director Renewable Resources and Environment) and Mary Tapsell (ENR – Director, Land and Water)

In advance of the workshop water partners were asked to consider three dialogue questions to be discussed throughout the workshop. Teresa Joudrie and Mary Tapsell responded to these questions on behalf of ENR and AANDC. Their responses are summarized below.

Q1: What are your roles and responsibilities with regard to the Strategy and specifically the implementation activities set out in the Action Plan's Keys to Success?

Teresa stated that as the primary water manager in the NWT the implementation of the Strategy is a priority for AANDC. For example, of the 38 Keys to Success outlined in the Action Plan, AANDC is the lead on 4 Keys and co-lead on another 25 Keys. AANDC is involved in a wide range of water activities highlighted in the Action Plan such as water quality and quantity monitoring, transboundary negotiations, guideline development, and municipal water licence compliance training. AANDC is pleased to be a member of the Aboriginal Steering Committee and is looking forward to continued collaboration with all water partners.

Mary explained that the GNWT has a moral and political responsibility with regards to water and sees itself as a conduit as it fields numerous calls regarding water-related concerns. The GNWT has a legislative responsibility for ensuring safe drinking water in the NWT. Like AANDC, the GNWT and ENR play an integral role in implementing the Strategy, as it holds the lead on 6 Keys and co-leads another 24 Keys. Currently, the three main areas the GNWT plays a role in are community-based monitoring, source water protection and transboundary negotiations.

Q2: What has changed in your organization's operating environment (positive or negative) that affects your involvement and contribution toward implementing the Action Plan since the Strategy's release in May 2010?

Teresa stressed that governments are facing challenging times fiscally and that capacity issues (staffing and resources) are not only limited to communities. However, even though resources are limited, people are interested in the Strategy. It is important to keep moving forward, to keep up momentum and make the Strategy and its implementation a success.

Mary stated that the new Legislative Assembly is emphasizing the people of the North, and the Strategy and its implementation remain a priority as it is linked with people. The GNWT is also facing challenges, namely a lack of financial and human resources, but will seek to overcome these challenges and work together with partners to implement the Strategy one step at a time. A major accomplishment is the release of the Action Plan which lays out a road map to follow over the next five years.

Q3: What opportunities exist to further collaborate on or link your organization’s work with the implementation activities set out in the Action Plan’s Keys to Success?

Teresa explained that the Strategy remains on AANDC’s work plan moving forward. It is imperative that water partners focus on collectively pooling resources to work together. As implementation progresses it is also important to include industry, as they can play a key role. There are still many opportunities to build and solidify partnerships, which highlights the need to come together regularly to report on progress on achieving the Keys to Success.

Mary added that ENR is continuing to develop partnerships with groups outside the NWT that are very interested in the Strategy. Developing partnerships with industry is also important. ENR wants to continue to assist water partners in applying for funding, wants to work with communities to help build capacity and will be releasing a calendar that identifies when to apply for funding opportunities in 2012. She stressed the Strategy’s implementation can only be achieved using a collective approach.

Following Teresa and Mary’s responses, the facilitator posed the following question to participants:

What has changed, not in your organization, but in the NWT as a larger geopolitical entity, that you feel has impacted the Strategy?

The following responses were provided by water partners:

- ENR now has staff working full time on water – this is beneficial.
- There have been more workshops in recent years to help communities build capacity and knowledge at the community level
- The Forum for Leadership on Water has showcased the Strategy in various provinces.
- Regulatory boards are taking the Strategy into account during decision making.
- AANDC’s Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program now has multi-year funding.
- All national Ministers of Environment have declared strategic directions related to water.
- On a national scale, there are thoughts about developing a federal water strategy.

3.0 Work Together

Work Together actions ensure a cooperative environment to support water partners in sharing information, building capacity and working together. These are summarized under four themes:

- Communication and Engagement
- Partnerships
- Information Management
- Transboundary Negotiations

3.1 Communication and Engagement Theme

Status update on Keys to Success related to communication and engagement

Presenter: Michele Culhane (AANDC)

Michele reported on the status of 2011 deliverables for Keys to Success 1.3A, 1.3B, and 1.3C.

For Key to Success 1.3A, internal communication among water partners, a brief summary of the results of a communication survey with water partners was presented. Highlights extracted from the survey responses included the following: most respondents would share updates with other water partners and would prefer these to be in the form of newsletters or workshops; for external communication, most wanted to be involved in approving new communication material and felt consistent messages would be helpful; and, most respondents would prefer the Strategy's website be independent from AANDC or ENR websites.

For Key to Success 1.3B, external communication/public education, a first step was introducing Canada Water Week through a student colouring contest in March 2011. Other steps currently underway include the development of the website (see below) and activities and events to promote water and the Strategy during World Water Day (March 22, 2012) and Canada Water Week (March 19-25, 2012). Targeting youth will be a specific focus.

For Key to Success 1.3C, engagement and collaboration to collectively achieve the vision of the Strategy, implementation has been ongoing in 2011 through presentations at meetings, workshops or conferences, such as the Dene Nation Leadership Meeting, Gwich'in Water Summit, South Slave Wildlife workshop and the NWT Geoscience Forum.

During the roundtable discussion water partners were asked to provide suggestions on communication, engagement and public education activities/approaches, as well as challenges and opportunities going forward. These are summarized below.

- World Water Day and Canada Water Week should incorporate water in all its forms (snow, ice, liquid), and activities should link to Rivers to Oceans Day (lead by Fisheries and Oceans Canada) in June.
- The NWT experiential high school science curriculum has several units related to water and these should be highlighted.

- The Canadian Water Network is interested in helping to implement the Strategy by working with Aboriginal governments beginning with a workshop in spring of 2012.
- The NWT Association of Communities, as a water partner external to government, can disseminate Strategy information to communities in a variety of ways.
- The importance of bringing the results of workshops and meetings back to the community, and ensuring these are translated into Aboriginal languages, was stressed.

Water partners were also asked if they would like to participate in a communications and engagement working group to explore future opportunities. This was an open invitation and partners were asked to contact Michele or Erin if interested.

Website Considerations

Presenter: Dawn Curtis (AANDC)

Dawn reminded everyone that the website will become the *de facto* face of the Strategy. Thus, the website will need to reflect the innovative quality of the Strategy and water partners will need to commit to keeping the content current. Dawn explained that the development of the Strategy's website is an action item under Key to Success 1.3B and will help deliver other action items, such as engaging youth and the public and increasing communication between water partners. Some points to consider in developing the website include:

- flexible architecture (i.e., categories of information) to accommodate changes
- template approach (i.e., consistency between pages and presentation)
- output format ensures information is available on the website in easily printable formats (i.e., downloadable newsletters)
- a link to the NWT Discovery Portal (see Information Management theme)
- a geomatics/mapping interface
- a "members only" section accessed by password for sharing non-public information
- release the website in phases (Phase 1 – March 31, 2012)

During the roundtable discussion the following points regarding the website were provided by water partners:

- include key individuals contact information
- provide a venue where the public can find information on water in their region and access end products (e.g., workshops held and monitoring/research results)
- include an "ask an expert" section
- capture traditional knowledge on the website
- link to social media, video, and YouTube to reach younger generations

3.2 Partnership Theme

Developing Partnerships to Support the Strategy

Presenter: Erin Kelly (ENR)

Erin reported on Key to Success 1.1B, the identification and facilitation of partnerships that promote the Strategy, and Key to Success 1.1C, the development of an extended network of partners prepared to commit resources to research and monitoring priorities. She highlighted the Forum for Leadership on Water (FLOW) workshop which took place in January 2011, where national water experts came to Yellowknife to discuss the Strategy and its implementation, as well as the Wilfrid Laurier-ENR Partnership (see description below) as examples of partnerships that have helped to promote and support the Strategy and work toward aligning values.

Jane McMullen (ENR) provided the following updates on national level partnerships:

1. Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME): a water agenda development committee exists within the CCME to work on water policy guided by national strategic directions on water. The watershed approach is emphasized and can include transboundary. One initiative focuses on integrated watershed management; another being investigated and of interest to the NWT is water security issues. There is also a project team on groundwater and one on climate change and water monitoring.
2. Canada Wide Strategy for Municipal Wastewater Effluent: the Northern Research Working Group involves representatives from the GNWT, AANDC and Environment Canada. NWT sits on the northern working group. National legislation being put in place under the *Fisheries Act* may become active in the North at a later date. Communities are concerned with this issue.
3. Council of Federation (does not involve the federal government): A Water Charter has been agreed to nationally by Premiers that reflects values relevant to the NWT.
4. National Roundtable on the economy: investigates water use.

Erin added that a group of academics that ENR and AANDC partnered with received funding from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council to support a project on contaminants in freshwater. This is one example of a partnership that has sought funding for research and monitoring priorities. Other examples of partnerships include ENR's work on source water protection with the University of Saskatchewan to help communities develop and implement source water protection plans (see Community-Based Monitoring theme).

Christine Wenman who works for the Wilfrid Laurier-ENR partnership, explained that the partnership is set up to provide infrastructure and expertise in the NWT for environmental research and education for the next ten years. The partnership is led by a science committee who will be meeting in December to develop a strategic plan with a focus on interdisciplinary work and encouraging thinking outside the box.

Lastly, Erin noted that the Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program (CIMP) is an important partner as they support the ENR Slave River Monitoring Program (see Community-Based Monitoring theme). She invited Marc Lange, AANDC, to provide an overview of CIMP.

Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program (CIMP) and Water Strategy – Better Integration Though Planning

Presenter: Marc Lange (AANDC)

Marc outlined CIMP's vision "*to watch and understand the land and use it respectfully forever*". To achieve this vision, CIMP has developed a draft five year Strategic Plan with two central program outcomes:

1. Standardize and consolidate environmental monitoring data and information
2. Create an accessible monitoring knowledge base to inform and support decision-making

Marc identified four areas of collaboration that CIMP is focusing on, along with key points provided at the CIMP Decision Maker's Workshop, held November 17-18, 2011 in Yellowknife.

1. Governance and partnerships – need to start cementing partnership, pooling resources, and ensuring accountability (through the development of memorandums of understanding with partners)
2. Collection, analysis and synthesis of information – want to develop a common monitoring approach for valued components through collaborative work. Water is a top priority valued component, thus there is a need to develop consistent approaches to monitoring (i.e., protocols) to be implemented in high priority geographic areas.
3. Information Management System – CIMP wants to establish a home that can link monitoring data. The NWT Discovery Portal is the first stage.
4. Report and communicate – to engage and inform decision makers

Lastly, he emphasized the need for related programs such as water strategy, CIMP, Northern Contaminants Program, and Protected Areas Strategy to share information and have joint meetings. Others agreed this was important due to capacity issues, particularly with overlapping steering committee representatives. Regulatory boards also noted they are now aware of CIMP priorities and how these tie to Keys to Success that they lead/co-lead and will align accordingly.

Roles and Responsibilities of Water Partners

Presenter: Erin Kelly (ENR)

To complete the Partnership theme, Erin addressed Key to Success 1.1D and stated the roles and responsibilities of the water partners can be found in Appendix E of the Strategy. She indicated that these will be routinely updated through a responsibility matrix, with input from water partners.

3.3 Information Management Theme

Michele introduced the information management theme and explained that the NWT Discovery Portal will help to address Key to Success 1.2D, to share monitoring and research program findings with partners and the public, and will be described in more detail by Marcy from CIMP.

NWT Discovery Portal

Presenter: Marcy MacDougall (AANDC)

Marcy introduced the NWT Discovery Portal as a virtual library of environmental information and knowledge. It is an ENR, AANDC, Fisheries and Oceans Canada and Natural Resources Canada joint initiative. Anyone can use it or contribute to it and it is user and contributor friendly. For example, the Portal can give communities a platform for hosting traditional knowledge studies or socio-economic data. It can also link to larger federal water monitoring program sites. Users can search for information by categories such as area, monitoring, research, or subject. Contributors have control over how much information they want to supply, if they want it to be downloadable, or if they just want to leave a contact name so that the interested party can call them directly.

Marcy added that an instruction manual is currently available for users online, but CIMP is working toward making this document more user friendly and providing training to those who need it. She welcomed additional suggestions via the ‘contact us’ link on the Portal website at <http://nwtDiscoveryportal.enr.gov.nt.ca>.

During the roundtable discussion several questions were raised. Marcy clarified that for larger organizations, a group manager would be assigned to approve data/information and then upload it. Some water partners were concerned about not having a formal data review process. Other partners expressed concern over the time needed to upload all their reports. Marc Lange added that this could be formalized in the memorandums of understanding with partners and that the Portal is only in the early stages of being populated. It was also stressed that the Portal will not replace the need for researchers to report back to communities.

Inventory of Traditional Knowledge Protocols

Presenter: Michele Culhane (AANDC)

Michele reported on Key to Success 1.2G, highlighting the following Aboriginal Government traditional knowledge protocols or policies currently in place, including:

- Gwich’in Social and Cultural Institute Traditional Knowledge Policy (2004)
- Dehcho First Nations Traditional Knowledge Research Protocol (2004)
- Tradition Knowledge Guide for the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, NT (2008)

The Northwest Territory Métis Nation and the Tlicho Government are in the process of developing protocols and no information was found to date on protocols in the Sahtu or Akaitcho regions. Michele will email the protocols to all water partners.

3.4 Transboundary Negotiations Theme

Update on Transboundary Negotiations

Presenters: Teresa Joudrie (AANDC) and Erin Kelly (ENR)

Teresa and Erin provided a status update on Key to Success 1.4A, transboundary negotiations. The present focus is on the Slave River watershed, with AANDC and ENR representing the NWT as one voice. This is the beginning of the learning phase with collected information being shared with Alberta. The Aboriginal and public engagement process is underway, with traditional knowledge workshops planned for December in Fort Resolution and Fort Smith. The Strategy provides the background for the negotiations and it outlines traditional knowledge as one of the components that will inform transboundary negotiations and agreements.

Teresa and Erin were asked how and when other Aboriginal governments such as the Inuvialuit would be engaged, and they responded that the engagement would be via the Strategy's Aboriginal Steering Committee and other suggestions would be considered.

4.0 Use Responsibly

Use Responsibly actions support sound water stewardship through the development and implementation of practices and guidance for regulatory and enforcement processes. These actions are summarized under the regulatory theme.

4.1 Regulatory Theme

Status Update on Use Responsibly Keys to Success

Presenter: Michele Culhane (AANDC)

Michele reported on Keys to Success 3.1B, 3.2A and 3.3A.

Key to Success 3.1B, developing, reviewing and implementing water-related regulatory procedures and guidelines, is led by the regulatory boards. As outlined in the first action item, regular updates of NWT mine site reclamation guidelines are to be completed. To this effect AANDC and Land and Water Boards of the Mackenzie Valley released draft guidelines for the Closure and Reclamation of Advanced Mineral Exploration and Mine Sites in the NWT in August 2011 and comments received are currently being reviewed.

Kathy Racher reported that as per the second action item the Water and Effluent Quality Management Policy released by the Land and Water Boards is being applied during water licence renewals and work is underway to develop specific guidelines.

For Key to Success 3.2A, evaluate and amend legislation in a consistent, transparent manner that enhances NWT water stewardship actions and decisions, Michele explained that AANDC is

currently focusing on the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act* amendments initiative as a way to improve northern regulatory regimes.

For Key to Success 3.3A, engage communities and other water partners to identify and address issues relating to water licence applications and compliance, several initiatives have taken place or are underway. The benefits of complying with water licences, as well as training communities to develop water licence applications and fulfil existing licence requirements have been and continue to be communicated to several Inuvialuit and Tlicho communities as well as Trout Lake through initiatives led by Regulatory Boards, Ecology North and AANDC.

Mark Cliff-Phillips added that the Tlicho initiative involves partnering with many organizations, as with the Strategy but on a smaller scale. He added that when communities have concerns, it is important to gather everyone together to answer questions and ensure the different roles of organizations are understood. Michele added that not all communities in the NWT have water licences and several are new to the water licencing process.

The following points were highlighted by water partners during the roundtable discussion, which focussed on exploring opportunities and challenges for moving forward:

- It is important to understand the whole community and to incorporate community concerns and not just meet the licencing requirements. Dealing with waste issues, and not only drinking water treatment, is critical.
- The NWT Association of Communities pointed out that they have resources to make this information available to the communities (i.e., webinars, newsletters) and that when involved, communities can become strong advocates. Outreach and engagement is very important.
- The concept of a monitoring economy was discussed as communities want long-term jobs and, even though individual agencies may not be able to pay for these positions, they can help to build the monitoring economy. Any agency could use a dedicated monitor for compliance or other monitoring and they could provide support for the community.
- The notion of individual responsibility under the Use Responsibly component is buried and needs to come to the forefront through communication and engagement.
- Linkages need to be made with schools i.e., school of community government operator certification. There should be more information on water in curriculum overall.

5.0 Know and Plan

Know and Plan actions ensure the implementation of collaborative aquatic monitoring and research programs, which incorporate traditional, local and western scientific knowledge. These are summarized under two themes:

- Research and Monitoring
- Community-Based Monitoring

5.1 Research and Monitoring Theme

Michele Culhane introduced this theme by highlighting the fact that ongoing research and monitoring is essential to more fully understand aquatic ecosystems, water quality and quantity in the NWT (including frozen water and groundwater). She went on to explain that in the longer term we need to identify knowledge gaps and set priorities for filling these gaps.

Water Monitoring Inventory and Related Keys to Success

Presenter: Annie Levasseur (AANDC)

Annie discussed Keys to Success 2.1A, 2.1F, 1.2D and 1.2F (the latter two are from the Work Together theme), pertaining to the collection and review of existing research and monitoring data, and sharing of this information. She explained that we are at the “know” phase and to begin to address these keys, AANDC has been developing a water monitoring inventory. It includes information on current and recent (completed within the past two years) monitoring programs and research activities in the NWT in spreadsheet format. This includes monitoring and research by Aboriginal, federal and territorial governments, academics, industry, communities and others.

The inventory is also intended to share information on water monitoring and research in the NWT. AANDC is documenting where people are storing their water data and to whom it is accessible. The next step will be determining the best way to share this data among partners; the NWT Discovery Portal will be an important venue for sharing program findings.

Annie responded to several questions and clarified that the draft inventory has not been shared with water partners to date but that a sample page could be provided. She added that a contact name, phone number, website or email will be provided for each entry. Erin Kelly added that the inventory will eventually be linked to the geospatial portion of the Strategy website such that a region on a map could be highlighted to find out about local monitoring and research.

Consistent Approaches to Undertaking Research and Monitoring

Presenter: Michele Culhane (AANDC)

Michele provided a brief update on Keys to Success 2.1C and 2.1D, stressing that collaborative research and monitoring programs are being initiated and these are being captured in the water monitoring inventory. She invited participants to provide summaries on specific programs.

Shawne Kokelj outlined the research and monitoring program investigating the relationship between stream flow, water chemistry, climate and permafrost in the Baker Creek area near Yellowknife. Mike Palmer discussed research and monitoring on environmental impacts of permafrost mega-disturbances along the Dempster Highway, NWT, and Erin Kelly highlighted an upcoming Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council funded study on NWT contaminant distribution in freshwater. Peter Lennie-Misgeld explained that the NWT Hydro Corporation’s role is to explore and develop a comprehensive understanding of the hydro and renewable energy potential in the NWT. A draft NWT Hydro Strategy has been developed, and they are working on implementing key goals such as installing water gauging stations and

conducting extensive traditional knowledge and field work on the Great Bear River to establish baseline data. NWT Hydro is willing to work as a water partner and in doing so could share the results from both of the projects mentioned.

The following points were highlighted during the roundtable discussion, which focussed on opportunities and challenges moving forward and the role of water partners:

- It is important that researchers talk to communities to tailor research programs to their questions and concerns, resulting in information that is relevant to the communities.
- It is important that research questions link to the needs of decision makers.
- The Strategy plays a key role in bringing together water partners that would normally work within a narrow mandate, to exchange information and pool resources to address ecosystem based issues and lead to improved decision making.
- Basic monitoring should not be forgotten; there is a need to monitor changes in the environment.
- Reach out to regional organizations e.g., NWT Association of Communities, Wek'eezhii Forum, Aboriginal governments.

5.2 Community-Based Monitoring Theme

Slave River and Delta Partnership and Community Capacity Building

Presenters: Tim Heron (Northwest Territory Métis Nation) and Erin Kelly (ENR)

Erin and Tim introduced Key to Success 2.2A, which focuses on the development of community-based monitoring and research programs, and Key to Success 1.1G, community capacity building.

Tim pointed to the Slave River and Delta Partnership as an example of a program that includes community-based monitoring and has strengthened community involvement. The Slave River and Delta Partnership was formed following a community workshop in Fort Smith identifying concerns about the health of the water, fish, and aquatic ecosystem. To date, it includes a vulnerability assessment project and state of the knowledge report, sediment core sampling, community fishing days/fish health study (Fort Smith and Fort Resolution). Traditional knowledge workshops will be taking place in December.

The Slave River and Delta Partnership is funded by CIMP. Fisheries and Oceans Canada's Aboriginal Aquatic Resources and Oceans Management (AAROM) program is also a partner. Deanna Leonard explained the AAROM program stems from the Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy and its purpose is to build capacity for water management in communities in unsettled land claim areas (two capacity building workshops have been completed to date). For example, the Dehcho region has AAROM funded coordinator and community-based monitoring in all communities.

Erin added that to further support community-based monitoring initiatives, ENR has monitoring equipment that can be loaned to organizations/communities within each region of the NWT and

will provide training in the form of videos and plain language instructions so that people in the communities can deploy the equipment.

The following points were highlighted during the roundtable discussion focussing on opportunities and challenges moving forward and the role of water partners:

- ENR has created a funding calendar soon to be released.
- Aurora College will be developing a proposal writing course. Another resource for proposal writing is the NWT Literacy Council's website.
- Water partners need to communicate more effectively to maximize resources and avoid duplication of work, community meeting conflicts, etc.
- A vulnerability assessment for the entire NWT would be beneficial to help identify priorities at an ecosystem level, and align water research and monitoring.
- Community-based indicators workshops in all NWT regions would be beneficial.

Community Source Water Protection

Presenter: Erin Kelly (ENR)

Erin reported on Key to Success 2.2B, explaining that community source water protection comes up regularly in community meetings as residents are concerned about what is happening upstream of their drinking water sources. In partnership with ENR, the University of Saskatchewan has developed a draft guidance document for source water protection planning tailored to the needs of the North that will be made available to communities. ENR will be able to help interested communities with developing source water protection plans.

The following points were highlighted during the roundtable discussion focussing on opportunities and challenges moving forward and the role of water partners:

- The Canadian Water Network wants to be involved at the community level.
- There are different interpretations of community-based monitoring. It is important to develop long-term monitoring around community needs. Community-based monitoring is still new and taking ownership of the monitoring can be a challenge.
- Training videos could be posted on YouTube.
- The Wek'eezhii Renewable Resources Board has begun small-scale community-based monitoring (fish and water quality), including traditional knowledge and western science.
- Academic institutions are keen to partner to address community-based concerns but it is important to ensure research is based on community needs.
- Aurora Research Institute has researcher guidelines including a timeframe for consulting with and reporting back to communities.
- Community-based research and monitoring priorities should be promoted to researchers.
- ENR's role is to promote community-based monitoring and encourage partnerships.
- Successful community-based monitoring projects all have a champion and focus on analyzing data, including traditional knowledge, and tell a story.
- Baseline data is needed along with the need to ensure its future availability.

- Research and monitoring being undertaken by industry should be combined with community-based monitoring in the future. Industry could be a funding source.

6.0 Check Our Progress

Check Our Progress actions ensure that water stewardship initiatives are effective and progressing toward the Strategy's vision. To do this, the evaluation process must be objective, accountable, and directly linked to desired outcomes. These actions are summarized under the Strategy Audit and Evaluation Process Theme.

6.1 Strategy Audit and Evaluation Process Theme

Status update on Keys to Success related to strategy audit and evaluation process theme

Presenter: Katarina Carthew (ENR)

Katarina Carthew reported on Key to Success 4.1A and highlighted the need to form a progress assessment team to oversee annual reviews of the Action Plan and develop an evaluation framework to measure progress and program success. To date the progress assessment team is composed of ENR and AANDC staff and is open to any interested water partners.

During past workshops, participants indicated that annual reports should inform water partners and the general public, avoid duplication, facilitate collaborative work between partners, and acknowledge community initiatives and achievements. Katarina gave examples of annual reports by other organizations for consideration by water partners.

Katarina briefly touched on Key to Success 4.2A, undertake formal audits, and stressed that the intention is not to complete an audit such as the 2010 State of the Environment Audit since the Strategy is not a regulatory requirement. Rather, the role of the five-year audit is to identify challenges in implementing the Strategy and actions required to address these during the next phase. Presently ENR and AANDC are looking for guidance on formulating an audit team.

Roundtable Discussion:

- It was agreed that audit may not be the right word, but rather evaluation.
- Given capacity issues, suggest forming one team to work on annual reporting and audit.
- The audit needs to be less cumbersome than the 2010 State of the Environment Audit.
- Use outside partners, such as the Forum for Leadership on Water, to help with the audit.
- The annual reports should set up the audit. Given that there are deliverable dates in the Action Plan, there needs to be an internal check to ensure these are met.
- One option is for annual reporting to be completed in collaboration with other programs, e.g., pool resources for one reporting event in each community and use regional contacts.

7.0 Closing Words

In closing some key points were reiterated by water partners including:

- Use existing programs/partnerships e.g., NWT Association of Communities, Wek'eezhii Forum, Land and Water Board working groups, Dene leadership meetings, etc.
- Water is critically important and should have standalone meetings. The need for meetings/workshop in different communities must be explored.
- The need to prioritize Keys to Success is evident as taking on all Keys at once is overwhelming; thus determining communities' water-related priorities is important.
- ENR is developing a tracking database that will serve to track progress on Keys to Success, thus regular reports from water partners will be required.

Mary Tapsell and Teresa Joudrie added that ENR and AANDC will endeavour to focus on factors that will help with the Strategy's implementation as well as seek to address factors that may hinder its implementation, as highlighted in Section 2.2 of this workshop report. They then thanked everyone for attending the workshop and for their work on the Strategy and its implementation to date.



Appendix A: Workshop Participants

Government of the Northwest Territories	
Honourable Michael Miltenberger – Opening Remarks	Minister of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR)
Mary Tapsell	ENR – Land and Water
Erin Kelly	ENR – Land and Water
Katarina Carthew	ENR – Land and Water
Katherine Trembath	ENR – Land and Water
Evangelos Kirizopoulos (Day 1)	ENR – Geomatics
Jane McMullen (Day 1)	ENR – Policy and Strategic Planning
Brian Sieben	ENR – Climate Change Programs
Perry Heath	Municipal and Community Affairs
Curtis Duffy	Municipal and Community Affairs
Federal Departments	
Trish Merrithew-Mercredi – Opening Remarks	Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) – Regional Director General
Teresa Joudrie	AANDC – Renewable Resources and Environment Directorate
Robert Jenkins	AANDC – Water Resources Division
Michele Culhane	AANDC – Water Resources Division
Andrea Czarnecki	AANDC – Water Resources Division
Annie Levasseur	AANDC – Water Resources Division
Juanetta Sanderson (Day 2 – AM)	AANDC – Water Resources Division
Shawne Kokelj (Day 2 – AM)	AANDC – Water Resources Division
Marc Lange (Day 1 – PM)	AANDC – Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program
Marcy MacDougall (Day 1 – PM)	AANDC – Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program
Mike Palmer (Day 2 – AM)	AANDC – Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program
Dawn Curtis	AANDC – Communications
Bruce Hanna	Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Deanna Leonard	Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Aboriginal Governments	
Peter Menacho (Day 2 – PM)	Sahtu Secretariat Inc.
Joe Acorn	Dehcho First Nations
Liz Gordon	Gwich'in Tribal Council
Richard Binder	Inuvialuit Game Council/Inuvialuit Regional Corp
Tim Heron	Northwest Territory Métis Nation
Chief Ted Tsetta	Akaiitcho Territory Government (Observer)
Regulatory Boards	
Angela Plautz	Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board
Jan Davies	Northwest Territories Water Board
Kathy Racher	Wek'eezhii Land and Water Board
Mark Cliffe-Phillips	Wek'eezhii Land and Water Board
Industry, Environmental Non-Government Organizations and Others	
Karin Clark	Wek'eezhii Renewable Resource Board
Christine Wenman	Ecology North and Wilfrid Laurier/ENR Partnership
Karen Hamre	Protected Areas Strategy
Jenn Dagg/Shaua Morgan	Pembina Institute

Sara Brown	NWT Association of Communities
Sarah Rosolen	Aurora Research Institute
Jason Charlwood	Ducks Unlimited Canada
Kevin Smith (Day 2)	Aurora College
Regina Pfeifer	Local Government Administrators of Northwest Territories
Helen (Hongjinj) Fu	Imperial Oil
Peter Lennie-Misgeld (Day 2)	Northwest Territories Hydro Corporation
Gila Somers	Canadian Water Network
Support Staff	
Andy Swiderski	Facilitator

Appendix B: Background and Agenda

NWT Water Stewardship Strategy Action Plan Implementation “Keeping up the Momentum”

November 22-23, 2011
Genesis Group Boardroom (Nunasi Building)
201-5109 48th Street, Yellowknife

Invitation

With your continued contribution, the *Northwest Territories Water Stewardship: A Plan for Action* (Action Plan) was released in May 2011, one year following the release of the *Northern Voices, Northern Waters: NWT Water Stewardship Strategy* (the Strategy) by the Government of the Northwest Territories, Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) and Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC). Now six months into the implementation of the Strategy, the purpose of this workshop is the following:

- (1) provide collective status updates on the implementation of the Keys to Success outlined in the Action Plan; and,
- (2) identify and discuss opportunities and challenges for moving forward in the context of recent and emerging factors impacting our shared and individual operating environments.

The workshop will provide a venue for sharing ideas and engaging in focused dialogue on ways to collectively advance the implementation of the Strategy over the current year (2011-2012) and upcoming fiscal year (2012-2013). Your continued commitment and support as a water partner will ensure the successful implementation of the Action Plan.

Participants

NWT water partners include members of the Strategy’s Aboriginal Steering Committee, representatives of federal and territorial governments, northern regulatory boards and agencies, industry representatives, environmental and research non-government organizations, and NWT community representatives. The Strategy broadly defines a water partner as anyone who has a role in water stewardship.

Guiding Questions

Water partners were asked to consider in advance of the workshop their respective views on the following three dialogue questions to be discussed throughout the workshop:

1. What are your roles and responsibilities with regard to the Strategy and specifically the implementation activities set out in the Action Plan's Keys to Success?
2. What has changed in your organization's operating environment (positive or negative) that affects your involvement and contribution toward implementing the Action Plan since the Strategy's release in May 2010?
3. What opportunities exist to further collaborate on or link your organization's work with the implementation activities set out in the Action Plan's Keys to Success?

Meeting Objectives

Participants should leave the meeting with:

- A re-energized commitment to the implementation of the Strategy's Action Plan;
- Established linkages among programs and among agencies' work as they relate to Strategy implementation;
- A common understanding of what the Strategy is intended to achieve and the current status of the Action Plan;
- A common understanding of progress that has been made on the Action Plan's Keys to Success by all water partners; and
- A common understanding of outstanding challenges along with opportunities for addressing these challenges, and agreement on a path ahead, particularly on specific Keys to Success in the Action Plan and on support for implementing the Strategy.

Working Agenda

Day 1: Tuesday November 22, 2011

8:45 Coffee with the Honorable Michael Miltenberger, Minister of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR), Government of the NWT and Trish Merrithew-Mercredi, Regional Director General, NWT Region, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC)

- 1) 9:00 Welcoming Remarks** – Honorable Michael Miltenberger, Minister ENR, GNWT and Trish Merrithew-Mercredi, Regional Director General, NWT Region, AANDC
- 2) 9:15 Roundtable Introductions** (Andy Swiderski, facilitator)
- 3) 9:30 Overview of *Northern Voices, Northern Waters NWT Water Stewardship Strategy and NWT Water Stewardship: A Plan for Action 2011-2015*** – Background and introduction to the four components and related themes followed by questions and discussion (Erin Kelly, Michele Culhane)

10:00 Health Break

- 4) 10:15 ENR and AANDC Responses to Guiding Questions (Mary Tapsell, Teresa Joudrie)**

Roundtable Discussion – Guiding Questions

- 5) 11:15 WORK TOGETHER: Communication and Engagement Theme**
Presentation on the status of communication related Keys to Success followed by roundtable discussion to explore opportunities and challenges for moving forward

12:00 Lunch (provided)

- 6) 1:00 WORK TOGETHER: Partnerships Theme**
Presentation on the development of water partnerships and the role of the Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program followed by a roundtable discussion to explore opportunities and challenges for moving forward
- 7) 2:00 WORK TOGETHER: Information Management Theme**
Update on the status of information management related Keys to Success, including a presentation on the NWT Discovery Portal, followed by a roundtable discussion to explore opportunities and challenges for moving forward

3:00 Health break

8) 3:15 WORK TOGETHER: Transboundary Negotiations Theme

Presentation on the current status of transboundary negotiations between Alberta and the NWT followed by a roundtable question and answer period

9) 4:00 USE RESPONSIBLY: Regulatory Theme

Presentation on the status of regulatory related Keys to Success followed by a roundtable discussion to explore opportunities and challenges for moving forward

10) 4:30 Wrap up Day 1

Day 2: Wednesday November 23, 2011

11) 9:00 Open meeting – Summary of Day 1 (Andy)

12) 9:15 KNOW AND PLAN: Research and Monitoring Theme

Update on the status of research and monitoring Keys to Success, including a presentation on the Water Monitoring Inventory, followed by a roundtable discussion to explore opportunities and challenges for moving forward

10:30 Health Break

13) 10:45 KNOW AND PLAN: Community-Based Monitoring Theme

Presentation on the Slave River and Delta partnership and community source water protection project followed by a roundtable discussion to explore opportunities and challenges for implementing future community-based monitoring programs

12:00 Lunch (provided)

14) 1:00 CHECK OUR PROGRESS: Strategy Audit and Evaluation Processes Theme

Presentation on the status of audit related Keys to Success followed by a brief discussion on water partner involvement in a progress assessment team

15) 1:30 Recap action items and next steps (Andy)

16) 2:00 Closing Roundtable

2:30 Aboriginal Steering Committee Meeting