

NWT Water Stewardship Strategy

As northerners, we value our water. We care about the water we drink and the water flowing in our rivers and lakes. We understand water is important for fish, plants, wildlife and people. We know our water is our future. Water stewardship recognizes people are part of the environment and everyone who uses water has a duty to make sure their actions safeguard the water.

Northern Voices, Northern Waters: NWT Water Stewardship Strategy (the Water Strategy) was created in response to concerns about our water. The Water Strategy sets out what we need to work on together to keep the waters of the Northwest Territories (NWT) clean, abundant and productive for all time.

The goals of the Water Strategy are to make sure:

- Waters that flow into, within or through the NWT are substantially unaltered in quality, quantity and rates of flow;
- Residents have access to safe, clean and plentiful drinking water;
- Aquatic environments are healthy and diverse;
- Residents can rely on water to sustain their communities and economies;
- Residents are involved in and knowledgeable about water stewardship; and
- All those making water stewardship decisions work together to communicate and share information.

Development and implementation of the Water Strategy is led by the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT), Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC), and the Aboriginal Steering Committee. The Water Strategy belongs to all residents. All NWT water partners are committed to achieving its goals and vision.

The Water Stewardship Report Card summarizes progress to date on the *NWT Water Stewardship: A Plan for Action 2011 - 2015*. Actions are divided into four areas as represented in the drum diagram. For more information see the *NWT Water Stewardship Strategy Implementation Progress Report April 2011 - March 2013*.

Successful actions and areas where there is room for improvement are highlighted.



Successes
to date



Room for
improvement



Work Together

Share information about water and work together towards the goals of the Water Strategy



- Partnerships continue to be built between Aboriginal governments, NWT communities, universities, colleges, schools, territorial and federal departments, regulatory boards, non-governmental organizations and industry. These partnerships help achieve the goals and vision of the Water Strategy.
- The water stewardship website was developed to provide information about NWT water stewardship and related activities. Visit www.nwtwaterstewardship.ca.
- Canada Water Week and World Water Day have been celebrated in the NWT every March since 2011. Activities include public presentations, school visits, the development and implementation of water education material and water activities for kids. Visit our website for more information.
- Protocols on how Aboriginal organizations want traditional knowledge to be collected and used in their regions have been gathered. The protocols are available on our website.
- The NWT Discovery Portal was launched by the GNWT and AANDC in 2012. It contains environmental monitoring knowledge including traditional knowledge, scientific research, and baseline studies. Visit www.nwtdiscoveryportal.enr.gov.nt.ca for more information.
- Progress has been made on transboundary water agreement negotiations with Alberta to ensure water entering the NWT remains clean and abundant.



- There is a need to visit more communities to share and discuss Water Strategy objectives and activities. To support these visits, a review of communication and engagement tools including social media will be undertaken.
- Increasing the understanding of the water environment using traditional, local and scientific knowledge will contribute to sound decisions about water use now and in the future.

Use Responsibly

Ensure people have the necessary tools to make informed decisions about water



- Capacity building in a number of small communities took place to ensure water licence monitoring occurs and compliance requirements are met. Visit our website for more information.
- AANDC and the Land and Water Boards of the Mackenzie Valley are in the final stages of completing the Guidelines for the Closure and Reclamation of Advanced Mineral Exploration and Mine Sites in the NWT. These will be available at www.mvlwb.com.



- The national strategy for municipal waste water in the NWT continues to be implemented.

Check Our Progress

Review our work to date and the path forward



- *The NWT Water Stewardship Strategy – Progress Report April 2011 - March 2013* has been completed.



- An independent process to review the implementation of the Water Strategy needs to be developed.

Know and Plan

Monitor and better understand the aquatic environment and changes in the quality and quantity of water



- The Slave River and Delta Partnership was formed as a result of the Water Strategy. The main goals of the Partnership are to make sure communities have the opportunity to be actively involved in community-based research, monitoring and planning initiatives along the Slave River and Delta. They also support and coordinate local community-based research and monitoring programs grounded in traditional knowledge and western science.
- Additional community-based monitoring activities to increase local participation have led to increased interest, knowledge and capacity.
- Partnerships have been formed to improve research and monitoring programs on the health of the aquatic environment.
- Residents have learned about community drinking water at community source water protection planning workshops.



- Gaps in water quality and quantity monitoring in the NWT are being identified. Approaches to address these areas will need to be determined.
- The summary of ongoing water quality and quantity monitoring programs in the NWT needs to be completed.

Trevor Dwyer



John McKay



Mike Vassal



Steve Schwarz



Steve Schwarz



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

Key Priorities for Ongoing Water Strategy Implementation

- Continue supporting community-based monitoring and research through partnerships with interested organizations.
- Support the development and implementation of community source water protection plans.
- Finalize a bilateral transboundary water agreement with Alberta and initiate negotiations with other jurisdictions in the Mackenzie River Basin.
- Continue to engage water partners to advance water-related activities.
- Communicate the importance of water stewardship and results of water-related initiatives to NWT residents.

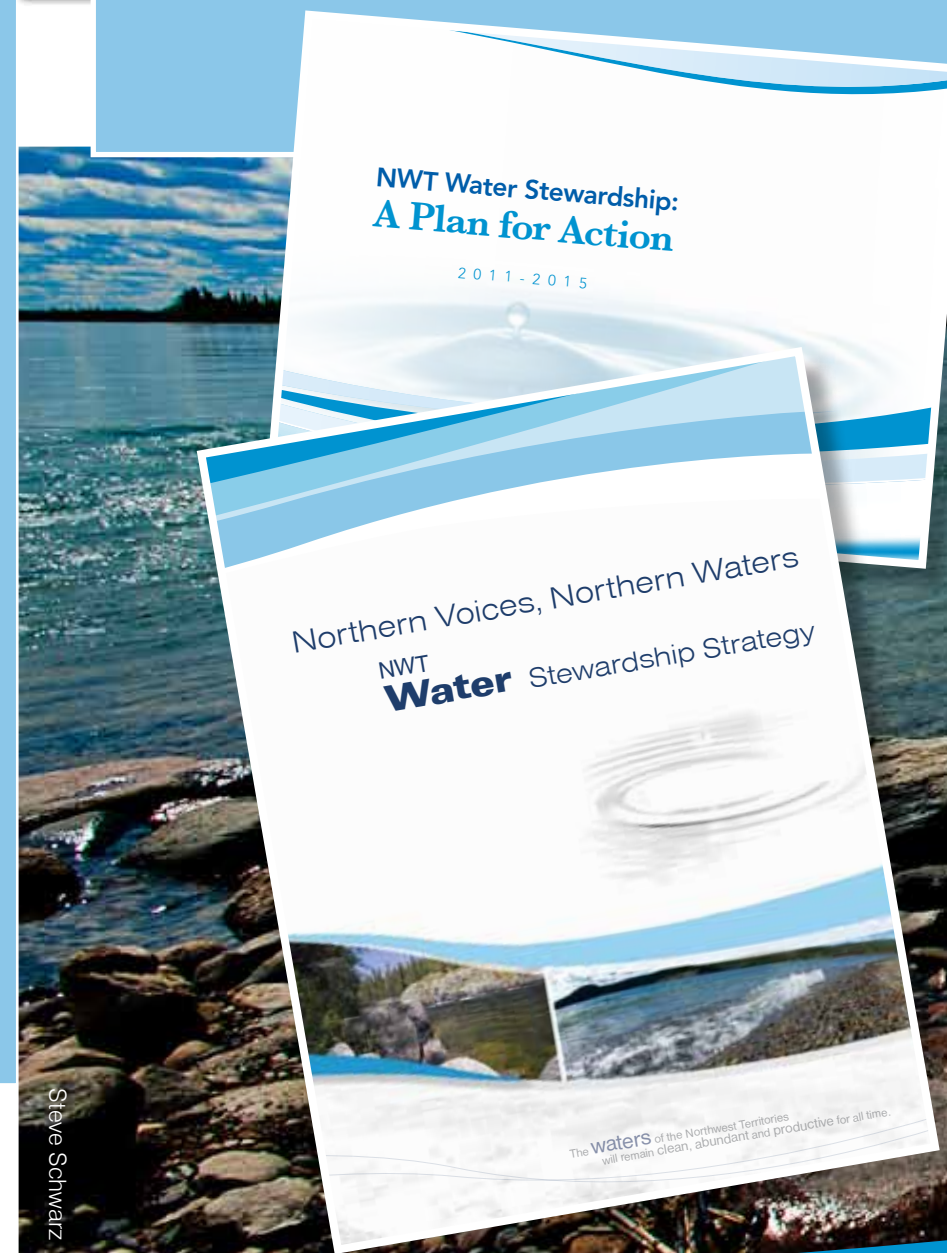


Miki Enlich

For a copy of the 2013 Water Calendar - NWT Source Water Protection Planning, and to learn how your community can assess and protect their water, visit www.nwtwaterstewardship.ca or call (867) 920-6339.

Northern Voices, Northern Waters: NWT Water Stewardship Strategy (the Water Strategy) was released in 2010 by the GNWT and AANDC. In 2011, the *NWT Water Stewardship: A Plan for Action 2011-2015* (the Action Plan) was released.

The Action Plan outlines the steps needed to implement the Water Strategy and achieve its vision and goals. This report card is based on the *Progress Report April 2011- March 2013*, which shows how NWT water partners are working towards the goals of the Water Strategy. To read the report, visit www.nwtwaterstewardship.ca



Steve Schwarz

NWT Water Stewardship Report Card

April 2011 - March 2013

www.nwtwaterstewardship.ca

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