



NWT Water Strategy Roles and Responsibilities:

Summary of Water Partners' Responsibilities in the Action Plan 2016-2020



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Introduction

[*Northern Voices, Northern Waters: The NWT Water Stewardship Strategy*](#) (Water Strategy) and its Action Plans ([*NWT Water Stewardship: A Plan for Action, 2011-2015*](#); and [*NWT Water Stewardship Strategy: Action Plan 2016-2020*](#)) were developed collaboratively by water partners¹ in the Northwest Territories (NWT).

Action Item 1.1 B in the 2016-2020 Action Plan calls for a summary of water partners' Action Plan responsibilities: *create and routinely update a plain language document outlining water partners roles and responsibilities for the Water Strategy and Action Plan*. This document addresses Action Item 1.1 B by summarizing lead, co-lead and supporting water partners' roles and responsibilities for the 2016-2020 Action Plan.

All Action Items fall within one of the four components of water stewardship in the NWT: Work Together; Know and Plan; Use Responsibly; and Check Our Progress (see Figure 1). The number of Action Items and associated components for which each lead and co-lead water partner is responsible is highlighted in each section. The 2016-2020 Action Plan gives more detailed information about the specific Action Items. The Action Plan is available at nwtwaterstewardship.ca.

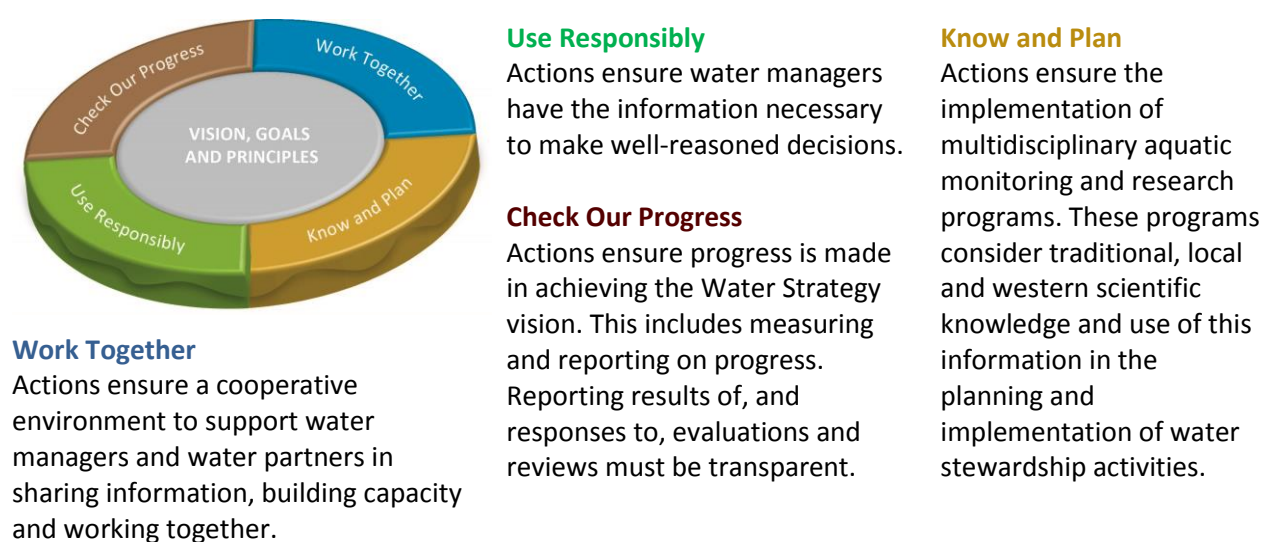


Figure 1: The Four Components of Water Stewardship in the NWT

¹ Water partners are any person or group who has a role in water stewardship, including all levels of government, Indigenous governments and organizations, regulatory boards, non-governmental organizations, academia, industry, NWT communities and others.

Lead and co-lead water partners

Twenty-one lead and co-lead water partners are committed to working and reporting on specific Action Items in the 2016-2020 Action Plan. Most water partners are lead and/or co-lead partners for multiple Action Items. Lead and co-lead water partners' Action Plan responsibilities are summarized below.

Aboriginal Steering Committee (ASC)

The Aboriginal Steering Committee (ASC) comprises designated representatives from Acho Dene Koe First Nation, Dehcho First Nations, Gwich'in Tribal Council, Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, Kátłodééche First Nation, Nahanni Butte Dene Band, North Slave Métis Alliance, Northwest Territory Métis Nation, Sahtu Secretariat Inc., Salt River First Nation, Tłı̨cho Government and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR), Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT).

ASC members serve as the liaison between their respective Indigenous governments and the Water Strategy and provide guidance on Water Strategy implementation. This ongoing responsibility includes reporting on Water Strategy activities to their communities and leadership. The ASC also provides advice to water partners on relevant engagement with Indigenous governments, organizations and communities. This advice includes guidance related to traditional knowledge and technical research, youth engagement, implementation of Bilateral Water Management Agreements, public communication and other Water Strategy initiatives.

Number of Action Item Responsibilities

Lead Partner:	6
Co-lead Partner:	0
Components:	Work Together (1.2 D; 1.3 B)

Academic Partners

Academic partners include several universities (see below) that play lead, co-lead and supporting roles in Water Strategy implementation. Collectively, academic partners work to improve community participation and leadership in aquatic research projects. This responsibility includes ensuring that NWT communities are provided with information about research activities, and that NWT communities have opportunities to share and/or lead research responsibilities. As a co-lead partner with Aurora College, academic partners also work with community monitors to build community capacity for research participation.

Number of Action Item Responsibilities

Lead Partner:	2
Co-lead Partner:	1
Components:	Know and Plan (2.2 B)

Brock University – supports research aimed at understanding the hydrologic regime in the Taiga Shield region of the North Slave. The Brock University-based Water Economics, Policy and Governance Network also works with other academic institutions and ENR to undertake research about NWT residents' perceptions and practices related to water consumption.

Carleton University – supports water-related research aimed at understanding the hydrologic regime in the Taiga Shield region of the North Slave.

McGill University – supports water-related research projects aimed at understanding the hydrogeology and permafrost changes in the Lac La Martre region of the NWT.

Trent University – collaborates with various partners, including other academic partners, Indigenous governments and organizations, and ENR, to support community-based aquatic monitoring activities through the Slave River and Delta Partnership.

Université de Montréal – supports research to better understand the interaction between groundwater and permafrost in the NWT related to climate change.

University of Alberta – collaborates with various partners, including other academic partners, Indigenous governments and organizations, and ENR, to support community-based aquatic monitoring activities through the Slave River and Delta Partnership. The University of Alberta also leads the *Tracking Change* research project.

University of New Brunswick – collaborates with various partners, including other academic partners, Indigenous governments and organizations, and ENR, to support community-based aquatic monitoring activities.

University of Saskatchewan – collaborates with many partners, including other academic partners, the Slave River and Delta Partnership and ENR, to undertake research on knowledge mobilization and aquatic environmental indicators in the Slave River and Delta watershed and beyond.

University of Waterloo – collaborates with various partners, including other academic partners, Indigenous governments and organizations, and ENR, to support groundwater baseline data acquisition in the Sahtu region, and community-based aquatic monitoring activities in the Slave River watershed.

Wilfrid Laurier University (WLU) – works with ENR through a ten-year partnership agreement (2010-2020) to undertake various water-related research projects to better understand the impacts of climate change and development on aquatic ecosystems.

Aurora College

Aurora College provides campus and community-based learning opportunities to train future water leaders for careers in water resource management and community-based monitoring. The Environment and Natural Resources Technology diploma program is also a springboard to further studies, equivalent to the first two years of many Bachelor of Science programs. This responsibility is linked to a broader Water Strategy goal to increase local capacity, technical skills and knowledge in water management, and research and monitoring activities. This work is ongoing and is shared with co-lead partners ENR, Dehcho Aboriginal Aquatic Resource and Oceans Management Program (Dehcho AAROM), and Dechinta Centre for Research and Learning (Dechinta).

Number of Action Item Responsibilities

Lead Partner:	0
Co-lead Partner:	2
Components:	Work Together (1.2 C) Know and Plan (2.1 H)

Aurora Research Institute (ARI)

The ARI is a co-lead partner with ENR to support technical experts and researchers to present relevant water information to NWT communities through existing templates. The ARI works with ENR to communicate Water Strategy research priorities to academic institutions.

Number of Action Item Responsibilities

Lead Partner:	0
Co-lead Partner:	2
Components:	Work Together (1.4 A) Know and Plan (2.2 B)

Dechinta Centre for Research and Learning (Dechinta)

As a co-lead partner with Aurora College, Dehcho AAROM and ENR, Dechinta promotes ongoing local and distance learning opportunities for community-based water monitors and future water leaders (*see Aurora College for more information*).

Number of Action Item Responsibilities

Lead Partner:	0
Co-lead Partner:	1
Components:	Work Together (1.4 A)

Dehcho Aboriginal Aquatic Resource and Oceans Management Program (Dehcho AAROM)

As a co-lead with Aurora College, Dechinta and ENR, Dehcho AAROM promotes ongoing local and distance learning opportunities for community-based water monitors and future water leaders (*see Aurora College for more information*). Dehcho AAROM also works with ENR on an ongoing basis to ensure that community based-monitoring programs in the Dehcho collect useable data relevant to local decision-making and addressing community concerns.

Number of Action Item Responsibilities

Lead Partner:	0
Co-lead Partner:	1
Components:	Work Together (1.4 A) Know and Plan (2.2 A)

Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC)

DUC works with the NWT Centre for Geomatics to advance the development of a wetland inventory approach using remote sensing. DUC will also be leading an initiative to test the wetland inventory approach at pilot sites. These efforts contribute to broader DUC goals of helping address identified science and knowledge gaps related to wetlands and the environment, and advancing wetland, watershed and ecosystem-based approaches in the NWT.

Number of Action Item Responsibilities

Lead Partner:	1
Co-lead Partner:	1
Components:	Know and Plan (2.1 B)

Ecology North

Ecology North provides ongoing educational programs and workshops about water treatment in the NWT. Ecology North also continues to work with ENR to do research and educate residents on the costs of imported bottled water versus tap water in the NWT.

Number of Action Item Responsibilities

Lead Partner:	1
Co-lead Partner:	1
Components:	Work Together 1.4 B

Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC)

ECCC is a co-lead partner working with ENR to identify, prioritize and address water quality and quantity monitoring gaps. ECCC also works with ENR to maintain and enhance water quality and quantity monitoring networks in the NWT through ongoing monitoring agreements and partnerships.

Number of Action Item Responsibilities

Lead Partner:	0
Co-lead Partner:	5
Components:	Know and Plan (2.1 A; 2.1 C)

Environment and Natural Resources (ENR), GNWT

ENR leads or co-leads 119 Action Items under the four components of the Water Strategy. ENR has responsibilities linked to all Keys to Success, with the exception of *Work Together 1.3 B – maintain the roles and responsibilities of the ASC*, and *Know and Plan 2.2 B – improve community participation and leadership in aquatic research projects*. Please see the [2016-2020 Action Plan](#) for the detailed Action Items towards which ENR is working.

Number of Action Item Responsibilities

Lead Partner:	Work Together (33) Know and Plan (30) Use Responsibly (5) Check our Progress (9)
Co-lead Partner:	Work Together (10) Know and Plan (120) Use Responsibly (20)
Components:	All Keys to Success, except Work Together (1.3 B); Know and Plan (2.2 B)

Health and Social Services (HSS), GNWT

HSS works with Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA), GNWT to maintain the public drinking water database, which contains chemical sampling results and weekly bacteriological samples. HSS also has responsibilities as a member of the Interdepartmental Drinking Water and Waste Management Committee (see below).

Number of Action Item Responsibilities

Lead Partner:	0
Co-lead Partner:	1
Components:	Use Responsibly (3.1 A)

Interdepartmental Drinking Water and Waste Management Committee, GNWT

The Interdepartmental Drinking Water and Waste Management Committee has four member departments from the GNWT: ENR, HSS, MACA, and the Department of Infrastructure (formerly Public Works and Services). This committee provides information to NWT residents on municipal drinking water treatment and distribution through the NWT Drinking Water website (nwt drinkingwater.ca).

Number of Action Item Responsibilities

Lead Partner:	2
Co-lead Partner:	1
Components:	Use Responsibly (3.1 A)

Lands, GNWT

The Department of Lands (GNWT) works with ENR to track and report on industrial water licence inspections on an ongoing basis.

Number of Action Item Responsibilities

Lead Partner:	0
Co-lead Partner:	2
Components:	Use Responsibly (3.2 B)

Land and Water Boards of the Mackenzie Valley and the Inuvialuit Water Board (LWBs/IWB)

The LWBs/IWB Water Strategy activities are primarily tied to the Use Responsibly component of the Strategy. These activities include working with various water partners (ENR, MACA, Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board, and Lands) on a number of Action Items: improve municipal waste and wastewater systems in the NWT; improve municipal water licence compliance through improved communication, support and training; increase clarity of water use, waste and wastewater regulatory processes; improve understandings of industrial water licence compliance; and review and develop guidelines and regulations to clarify the existing regulatory and environmental assessment processes.

Under the Work Together component of the Strategy, the LWBs/IWB work with ENR to improve data collection and data and information management for water and related monitoring programs. Priority activities related to this work include: establishing standardized water quality sampling protocols; standardizing quality assurance and quality control protocols; developing metadata guidelines; and establishing a licensed water use inventory. Although a longer-term initiative, the LWBs/IWB are also lead partners for establishing a protocol to store, manage and report data from Surveillance Network Program (SNP) sites.

Number of Action Item Responsibilities

Lead Partner:	4
Co-lead Partner:	26
Components:	Use Responsibly (3.1 B; 3.1 C; 3.1 D; 3.2 A; 3.2 B; 3.2 C)

Mackenzie River Basin Board (MRBB)

The MRBB works with the University of Alberta and ENR to carry out the Tracking Change research project. The project is funded until 2020 and is aimed at supporting traditional and local knowledge research to better understand social and ecological changes in the Mackenzie River Basin.

Number of Action Item Responsibilities

Lead Partner:	0
Co-lead Partner:	1
Components:	Know and Plan (2.1 B)

Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board (MVEIRB)

MVEIRB conducts environmental assessments and impact reviews of proposed developments to carefully consider impacts on the environment, and social, cultural, and economic well-being, before developments proceed. As part of the environmental assessment process, ENR and other parties provide evidence to the MVEIRB. This evidence helps to inform the MVEIRB evaluation of potential cumulative and project-specific impacts on aquatic ecosystems. MVEIRB Reports of Environmental Assessment and Reasons for Decision explain how cumulative and project-specific impacts are considered in the Board's decisions.

MVEIRB Water Strategy activities also include working with ENR and the LWBs/IWB to continue to improve clarity and understanding of regulatory processes for water use, waste, and wastewater through resource management workshops, developing guidelines and other outreach activities.

Number of Action Item Responsibilities

Lead Partner:	3
Co-lead Partner:	4
Components:	Use Responsibly (3.1 A; 3.1 B)

Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA), GNWT

MACA works on several Water Strategy Action Items under the Use Responsibly component of the Strategy. These include: working with HSS to maintain the public drinking water database; working with the Department of Infrastructure (formerly Public Works and Services) to complete water treatment plant upgrades; working with the LWBs /IWB and ENR to implement NWT Guidelines for Municipal Landfills; and collaborating with ENR to identify ways to enhance community waste infrastructure.

MACA lead responsibilities in the Action Plan are to maintain the Circuit Rider Training Program, upgrade remote monitoring of drinking water parameters and update the *Good Engineering Practices for Northern Water and Sewage Systems*.

Number of Action Item Responsibilities

Lead Partner:	1
Co-lead Partner:	6
Components:	Know and Plan (2.1 E) Use Responsibly (3.2 A; 3.2 C)

NWT Centre for Geomatics, GNWT

The NWT Centre for Geomatics leads and co-leads Action Items under the Know and Plan component of the Water Strategy. The NWT Centre for Geomatics works with DUC to advance the establishment of a wetland inventory approach. With the support of ENR, NWT Centre for Geomatics is also working to complete the transfer of Climate Impacts Tracking Analysis System to the NWT Centre for Geomatics.

The NWT Centre for Geomatics is also making ongoing improvements to the existing digital elevation model as new data are acquired.

Number of Action Item Responsibilities

Lead Partner:	1
Co-lead Partner:	3
Components:	Know and Plan (2.1 B; 2.1 E; 2.1 I)

Sahtù Renewable Resource Board (SRRB)

The SRRB is the lead partner establishing traditional knowledge research guidelines for the Sahtù region.

Number of Action Item Responsibilities

Lead Partner:	1
Co-lead Partner:	0
Components:	Work Together (1.2 D)

Tides Canada

Tides Canada works with ENR to promote intergenerational on-the-land water education/leadership camps as a way of involving communities in monitoring and research.

Number of Action Item Responsibilities

Lead Partner:	0
Co-lead Partner:	1
Components:	Work Together (1.4 A)

University of Alberta

The University of Alberta works with the MRRB and ENR to carry out the *Tracking Change* research project. The project is funded until 2020 and is aimed at supporting traditional and local knowledge research to better understand social and ecological changes in the Mackenzie River Basin.

Number of Action Item Responsibilities

Lead Partner:	0
Co-lead Partner:	1
Components:	Know and Plan (Key to Success 2.1 B)

Supporting Water Partners

The 2016-2020 Action Plan identifies 11 additional supporting partners committed to implementing the Action Plan and working with lead water partners to undertake Action Items. Examples of support include sharing resources and knowledge, providing capacity building opportunities, and helping with program development and delivery. Supporting partners and their Action Plan responsibilities are summarized below.

Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, NWT Chapter (CPAWS-NWT)

The Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society NWT Chapter (CPAWS-NWT) works closely with Indigenous, territorial and federal governments, NWT communities, industry and non-governmental organizations to carry out water, land and wildlife conservation planning and stewardship initiatives in the NWT. These efforts support implementation activities under the Work Together component of the Water Strategy.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)

Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) has the lead federal role in managing Canada's fisheries and safeguarding its waters. The Department supports strong economic growth in marine and fisheries sectors; supports innovation through research; and contributes to a clean and healthy environment and sustainable aquatic ecosystems through habitat protection, oceans management, and ecosystems research. These efforts support implementation activities under the Know and Plan component of the Water Strategy.

Gordon Foundation

The Gordon Foundation, through Mackenzie DataStream, works with ENR and NWT communities to promote water-related knowledge sharing and collaborative decision-making in the Mackenzie River Basin. These efforts support implementation activities under the Work Together component of the Water Strategy, particularly those that relate to improving the management and sharing of water monitoring and research data.

Environmental Monitoring Advisory Board (EMAB)

The Environmental Monitoring Advisory Board (EMAB) provides oversight of Diavik Diamond Mine and the regulatory processes to ensure protection of the land, water, air and wildlife in the Lac de Gras area. These efforts support implementation activities under the Use Responsibly component of the Water Strategy, particularly those that relate to water partners participation in regulatory and environmental assessment processes for industry.

Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency (IEMA)

The Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency (IEMA) is an oversight body independent of the owner and regulators that review and monitor the environmental management of the Ekati Diamond Mine. IEMA actively participates in ongoing regulatory and environmental assessment processes related to the Ekati Diamond Mine and engages in dialogue with its Society members, the public and other stakeholders helping to support implementation of the Use Responsibly component of the Water Strategy.

Indigenous Governments and Organizations

Indigenous governments and organizations play an active role in ensuring their traditional territory is well stewarded and that obligations under treaties and land, resource and self-government agreements are fulfilled. This role is championed by various land and resource boards, councils and committees who undertake or participate in activities under all components of the Water Strategy.

Industry Partners

Industry partners play an important role in ensuring the responsible development and management of NWT petroleum and mineral resources, including contributions to maintain and enhance water quality and quantity networks in the NWT. These efforts support implementation activities under the Know and Plan and Use Responsibly components of the Water Strategy. Partners include the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers, NWT Chamber of Mines and oil, gas and mining companies.

NWT Housing Corporation

The NWT Housing Corporation works in partnership with NWT residents to ensure access to adequate and suitable housing. Part of this responsibility includes providing information and resources to promote municipal water tank maintenance. These efforts support implementation activities under the Use Responsibly component of the Water Strategy.

Parks Canada

Parks Canada Agency (PCA) works with its partners, including Indigenous governments in proximity to the parks, federal, provincial and territorial departments and agencies, to address water quality and quantity monitoring gaps.

PCA strives to use both traditional and local knowledge and western science-based knowledge in their monitoring activities, which include addressing changes resulting from cumulative regional development and climate change in parks. These efforts support implementation activities under the Work Together and Know and Plan components of the Water Strategy.

Snap Lake Environmental Monitoring Agency (SLEMA)

Snap Lake Environmental Monitoring Agency (SLEMA) is an independent watchdog organization mandated to ensure De Beers Mining Canada's environmental regulatory compliance for its Snap Lake Mine, as well as the implementation of applicable environmental assessment and licensing/permitting processes by regulators, including the Snap Lake Environmental Agreement. SLEMA actively participates in the oversight and assessment of De Beers Mining Canada's mining activities and environmental performance, helping to support implementation of the Use Responsibly component of the Water Strategy.

Wek'èezhìi Renewable Resources Board

The Wek'èezhìi Renewable Resources Board (WRRB) is a wildlife co-management authority established by the Tłı̄cho Agreement. WRRB manages wildlife, plants, forests and protected areas within Wek'èezhìi through the use of traditional and scientific knowledge, helping to support implementation of the Work Together component of the Water Strategy.

For more information about the NWT Water Stewardship Strategy, please visit

www.nwtwaterstewardship.ca.

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