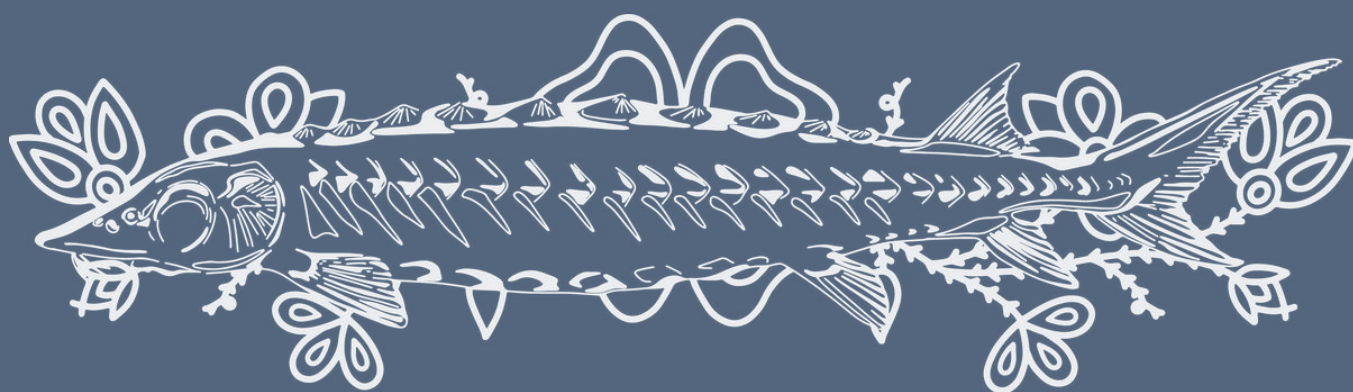


RESOURCE GUIDE

WATER AND JUSTICE

J U N E 2 0 2 5



Art by Nadya Crossman-Serb

Prepared by:

Sarah Deckert - Just Waters Project and Knowledge Mobilization Coordinator

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Centre for Human
Rights Research



University
of Manitoba

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WATER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Just Waters project and the Centre for Human Rights Research (CHRR) are based in Winnipeg, Manitoba on the original lands of the Anishinaabeg, Ininiwak, Anisininewuk, and Dakota Oyate, and the National Homeland of the Red River Métis. We honour the lands, waters and relationships that sustain us.

The Just Waters team is based in the Lake Winnipeg watershed and acknowledges the lake and the many waters that flow into it including the Red, Winnipeg, Saskatchewan, Poplar, Berens, Pigeon, Manigotagan, Dauphin, Fisher, and Icelandic rivers. This lake, called Weenipagamiksaguygun in Anishnaabemowin, has been harmed by nutrient-loading from agricultural run-off, livestock production, and sewage. Wetlands, which would normally protect the lake, have been drained for agricultural and construction purposes. These harms have impacted the traditional lifeways and relationships of the peoples that have lived with Lake Winnipeg for many generations.

We acknowledge that Winnipeg's drinking water comes from Shoal Lake, and that this led to Shoal Lake 40 lacking access to clean drinking water for more than two decades. Many First Nations communities do not have clean drinking water, both because of a lack of water treatment and distribution infrastructure and because source waters have been polluted.

We also acknowledge that the production of Manitoba's hydroelectric energy often results in the displacement of Indigenous peoples and their communities from their land, as well as flooding, shoreline erosion, changes to water quality, disruption to fishing and hunting, and the destruction of habitat.

We offer this water acknowledgement to promote a shared understanding of the history that has led us to this moment. This history is a history of colonial violence, Indigenous dispossession, and environmental harm, as well as of Indigenous resistance, knowledges, and resurgence. The Just Waters project aims to address this settler colonial violence and to think about water from a relational, rather than a resource, perspective. To this end, we express our gratitude to the waters that sustain us.

ABOUT THIS RESOURCE GUIDE

The Nibi Declaration of Treaty #3 begins, “Nibi (water) is alive and has a spirit. It is the lifeblood of our mother (aki) and connects everything. It can give, sustain and take life.” Indigenous knowledges teach us to relate to water not as a resource to be extracted but as a living being to be loved and respected. As you engage with the following podcasts, documentaries, books and other resources, we hope that you will do so while holding on to the central truth of the Nibi Declaration: “Nibi (water) is alive and has a spirit.”

PODCASTS



MEDIA INDIGENA
WITH RICK HARP

MEDIA INDIGENA WITH RICK HARP

WATER INSECURITY AND FIRST NATIONS SUICIDE (EPISODE 318, MARCH 20, 2023)

In this episode of MEDIA INDIGENA Jeffrey Ansloos joins Candis Callison and host Rick Harp to explore the findings of research by Ansloos and Annelies Cooper entitled, "Is Suicide a Water Justice Issue? Investigating Long-Term Drinking Water Advisories and Suicide in First Nations in Canada."

For a related resource, see this presentation by Jeffrey Ansloos: [CHRR PRESENTS: Jeffrey Ansloos, PhD, on "When the land hurts" \(June 16, 2023\)](#).



LAKE WINNIPEG
INDIGENOUS COLLECTIVE

NIPAWITAN / NIPOWITAMOK

A podcast from the Lake Winnipeg Indigenous Collective about the land, culture, stories, current issues, policy, traditional knowledge and of course, water.



GREEN DREAMER

ZOE TODD: EMBODIED LISTENING FOR FRESHWATER FISH FUTURES (EPISODE 410)

In this episode, Dr. Zoe Todd invites listeners to think alongside a critical lens of Indigenous fish philosophy and examine relationships between Indigenous sovereignty and fish well-being in Canada.

PODCASTS



INDIGENOUS 150+

NIBI BIIMAADIIZIIWIN (WATER IS LIFE): CARING FOR CREATION

Ojibwe-Mohawk Elder and Grandmother Shirley John from Chippewas of Saugeen First Nation, speaks from the heart about caring for creation, the importance of prayer and spreading seeds of love for all peoples.



WHAT ABOUT WATER? WITH JAY FAMIGLIETTI

SUBMERGED: INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES AND MEGA-HYDRO PROJECTS (SEASON 4, EPISODE 6, NOVEMBER 22, 2022)

In “Submerged”, we hear about the different ways Indigenous communities bear the brunt of mega hydroelectric projects. Featuring Inuk Labrador Land Protector Amy Norman and Aimée Craft, co-editor of In Our Backyard: Keeyask and the Legacy of Hydroelectric Development, this documentary by Farha Akhtar gives us a first-hand and insightful account of the long-lasting legacies created by hydroelectric projects.



AS LONG AS THE RIVER FLOWS

This podcast uplifts the collective work and voices of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit environmental groups, and concerned citizens working together to protect water, air, and land.

VIDEOS



FLOOD CHILDREN: EIGHT YEARS DISPLACED FROM LITTLE SASKATCHEWAN FIRST NATION

This video recounts the experience of Little Saskatchewan First Nation, whose members were forcibly displaced for years after the Manitoba government's 2011 flood diversion to protect settler cities like Winnipeg and Brandon. As Canada commits to reconciliation, the video calls for justice, healing and the restoration of Indigenous peoples' connection to their land.

See <https://www.youtube.com/@bimaadiziwin> for more related videos and <http://ecohealthcircle.com/> for more information



THE LAKE WINNIPEG PROJECT

A four-part documentary series that calls attention to stories of ingenuity and resilience in four diverse communities surrounding Lake Winnipeg, at a time when many external forces are imposing change.



THERE'S SOMETHING IN THE WATER

Based on Ingrid Waldron's book of the same name, this documentary examines the disproportionate impact of ecological disasters on Black and Indigenous communities in Nova Scotia.

Available on [Kanopy](#) through your public library or through Apple TV.

VIDEOS



HOW UNDRIP RECOGNIZES THE SACRED RELATIONSHIP WITH NIBI (WATER) WITH AIMÉE CRAFT

Indigenous peoples have long held robust, relationship-driven legal orders that take all aspects of life into account. As Aimée Craft — an Indigenous lawyer (Anishinaabe-Métis) and assistant professor at the Faculty of Common Law, University of Ottawa — explains in this video, Anishinaabe spiritual, natural, customary and human legal structures are connected, and must be meaningfully considered in decisions related to water.



ANISHINAABEMOWIN LANGUAGE TEACHINGS- NIBI

Kegedonce John Borrows breaks down the meaning of Nibi.

For more videos from Decolonizing Water, see their Vimeo channel: <https://vimeo.com/user54051431>



FREEDOM ROAD

Freedom Road is a five-part documentary series that tells the inspiring story of Shoal Lake 40 Anishinaabe First Nation and their battle to build Freedom Road, after their community was forcibly relocated and cut off from the mainland over 100 years ago-- so that water could be diverted to the city of Winnipeg.

C U R R I C U L A & T O O L K I T S



NIBI CURRICULUM

The Nibi Curriculum, developed to support learners of all ages, is a resource for classrooms and independent study alike. With an abundance of structured lesson plans, discussion prompts, and hands-on activities, it is the hope that this new work from Treaty #3 will help guide water education and relationship building across the Nation and beyond.



INDIGENOUS CLIMATE MONITORING TOOLKIT

This Toolkit was developed to support Indigenous Peoples in Canada with planning, implementing, or expanding community-based climate monitoring projects. It provides convenient access to tools, good practices, and examples of projects from across the country as inspiration. The Toolkit supports a range of approaches to monitoring climate and climate impacts including Indigenous Knowledge Systems, science, and co-production of knowledge using many ways of knowing.

NIBI DECLARATION TOOLKIT

This Toolkit will provide you with information on how you, your family and your community can support the Nibi Declaration of the Anishinaabe of Treaty #3.

CURRICULA & TOOLKITS



WATER IS LIFE

This learning package has been created as an extension of the Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada Giant Floor Map learning activities. It was written by Jaime Black, an Indigenous educator, artist, and the founder of the REDress Project. The four lesson plans draw on land-based learning, centered on women's teachings about, for, and from Mother Earth, with a specific focus on water and its connection to land and the Indigenous Peoples living on Turtle Island. The learning package is designed for students in grades 6-12 but can be adapted for younger students.

The Impacts of Hydropower

A Manitoba Case Study

A Middle School - High School Unit Plan Developed by the Interfaith Council on Hydropower (ICH)



THE IMPACTS OF HYDROPOWER - A STUDY UNIT

1

THE IMPACTS OF HYDRO: A MANITOBA CASE STUDY

BY DEREK EIDSE AND THE INTERFAITH COUNCIL ON HYDROPOWER

In Manitoba, and around the world, hydropower is touted as clean energy source, but as the title of the gallery walk in this unit communicates, it's a Sad Sort of Clean. This low-carbon energy source is high on impact in northern Manitoban communities. This study unit explores the troubling and seldom-reported reality at the northern end of the transmission line, and the complicated nature of hydropower in an era of climate change.

ORGANIZATIONS & PROJECTS



WA NI SKA TAN: AN ALLIANCE OF HYDRO IMPACTED COMMUNITIES

Wa Ni Ska Tan Alliance of Hydro-Impacted Communities is a community-academic research partnership that emerged out of the priorities voiced by hydro-impacted Indigenous communities.

HYDRO IMPACTS

Stories of hydro development from the impacted communities of Northern Manitoba.



LAKE WINNIPEG INDIGENOUS COLLECTIVE

Their vision is that our sacred waters are healthy, traditional livelihoods are restored and Indigenous perspectives are influential in leading the protection and sustainability of Lake Winnipeg as a source of life for all future generations.



LAKE WINNIPEG FOUNDATION (LWF)

LWF is a membership-based environmental charity that advocates for change and coordinates action to improve the health of Lake Winnipeg..



UN-WATER

UN-Water is the United Nations' coordination mechanism for water and sanitation, bringing together over 30 UN entities and international partners to work collectively on these vital issues.

ORGANIZATIONS & PROJECTS



WATER CARRIERS

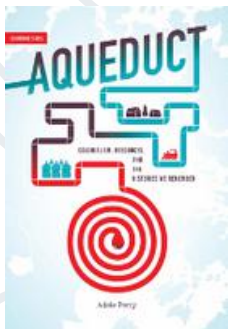
This website illustrates the holistic worldview of Indigenous women's relationship with water through knowledge sharing, storytelling, and art. It is intended to bring a greater understanding to how freshwater issues affect Indigenous women, girls, and gender-diverse peoples and their communities.



INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT-EXPERIMENTAL LAKES AREA

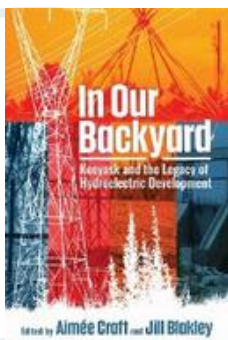
International Institute for Sustainable Development-Experimental Lakes Area is an exceptional natural laboratory comprised of 58 small lakes and their watersheds set aside for scientific research.

BOOKS



AQUEDUCT: COLONIALISM, RESOURCES, AND THE HISTORIES WE REMEMBER **BY ADELE PERRY**

Adele Perry analyses the development of Winnipeg's municipal water supply as an example of the history of settler colonialism.

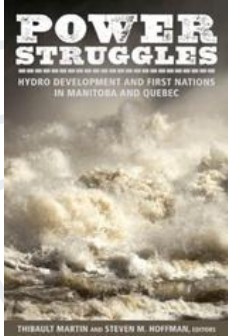


IN OUR BACKYARD: KEEYASK AND THE LEGACY OF HYDROELECTRIC DEVELOPMENT

EDITED BY AIMÉE CRAFT AND JILL BLAKLEY

In Our Backyard tells the story of the Keeyask dam and accompanying development on the Nelson River from the perspective of Indigenous peoples, academics, scientists, and regulators.

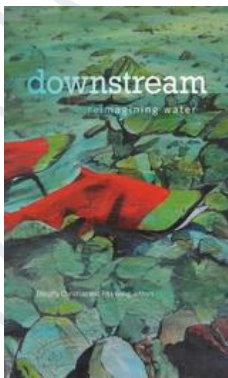
BOOKS



POWER STRUGGLES: HYDRO DEVELOPMENT AND FIRST NATIONS IN MANITOBA AND QUEBEC

EDITED BY THIBAUT MARTIN AND STEVEN M. HOFFMAN

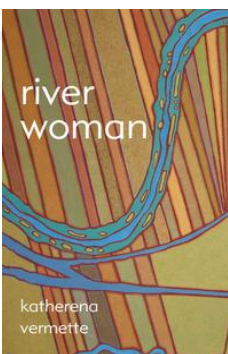
Power Struggles examines the complex evolution of hydroelectric agreements between Indigenous communities and provincial governments from the 1970's "modern treaties" to more recent projects like Wuskwatim and Paix des Braves. Featuring voices such as scholars and activists, the book critically examines whether these developments signal a shift toward genuine partnership or a continuation of colonial power dynamics in Canada.



DOWNSTREAM: REIMAGINING WATER

EDITED BY DOROTHY CHRISTIAN AND RITA WONG

Downstream brings together artists, writers, scientists, scholars, environmentalists, and activists who understand that our shared human need for clean water is crucial to building peace and good relationships with one another and the planet. This book explores the key roles that culture, arts, and the humanities play in supporting healthy water-based ecology and provides local, global, and Indigenous perspectives on water that help to guide our societies in a time of global warming.



RIVER WOMAN

BY KATHERENA VERMETTE

Governor General's Award-winning Métis poet and acclaimed novelist Katherena Vermette's second collection, *river woman*, explores her relationship to nature — its destructive power and beauty, its timelessness, and its place in human history.

BOOKS



A SHORT HISTORY OF THE BLOCKADE: GIANT BEAVERS, DIPLOMACY, AND REGENERATION IN NISHNAABEWIN

BY LEANNE BETASAMOSAKE SIMPSON

In *A Short History of the Blockade*, award-winning writer Leanne Betasamosake Simpson uses Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg stories, storytelling aesthetics, and practices to explore the generative nature of Indigenous blockades through our relative, the beaver—or in Nishnaabemowin, Amik. Moving through genres, shifting through time, amikwag stories become a lens for the life-giving possibilities of dams and the world-building possibilities of blockades, deepening our understanding of Indigenous resistance as both a negation and an affirmation.



TO BE A WATER PROTECTOR : THE RISE OF THE WIINDIGO SLAYERS

BY WINONA LADUKE

Winona LaDuke is a leader in cultural-based sustainable development strategies, renewable energy, sustainable food systems and Indigenous rights. Her new book, *To Be a Water Protector: Rise of the Wiindigoo Slayers*, is an expansive, provocative engagement with issues that have been central to her many years of activism.

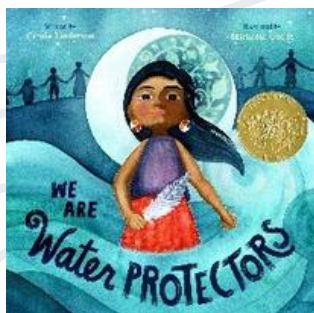


MANOMIN: CARING FOR ECOSYSTEMS AND EACH OTHER

EDITED BY BRITTANY LUBY, MARGARET LEHMAN, ANDREA BRADFORD, SAMANTHA MEHLTRETTER AND JANE MARIOTTI

Manomin explores the cultural, ecological, and spiritual significance of manomin (wild rice), the only cereal grain native to Turtle Island. The book gives vital insights on food and ecological care through the voices of scholars, harvesters, artists and more. This collection highlights deep relationships between food, land, water, and community.

CHILDREN'S BOOKS

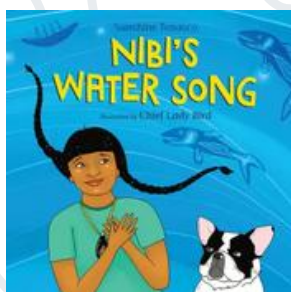


WE ARE WATER PROTECTORS

WRITTEN BY CAROLE LINDSTROM

ILLUSTRATED BY MICHAELA GOADE

When a black snake threatens to destroy the Earth and poison her people's water, one young water protector takes a stand to defend Earth's most sacred resource.

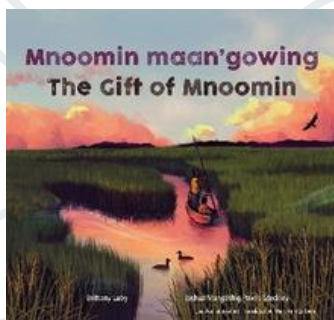


NIBI'S WATER SONG

WRITTEN BY SUNSHINE TENASCO

ILLUSTRATED BY CHIEF LADY BIRD

Nibi is the Anishinaabemowin word for water. In Nibi's Water Song, an Indigenous girl is on the search for clean water to drink. Though she is faced with repeated obstacles, Nibi's joyful and determined energy becomes a catalyst for change and action as her community, and then in widening circles the country and government, rally around her to make clean drinking water available for all.



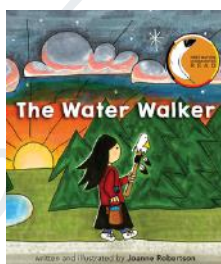
MNOOMIN MAAN'GOWING / THE GIFT OF MNOOMIN

WRITTEN BY BRITTANY LUBY

ILLUSTRATED BY MANGESHIG PAWIS-STECKLEY

TRANSLATED BY MARY ANN CORBIERE

In this bilingual book, an Anishinaabe child explores the story of a precious mnoomin seed and the circle of life mnoomin sustains.

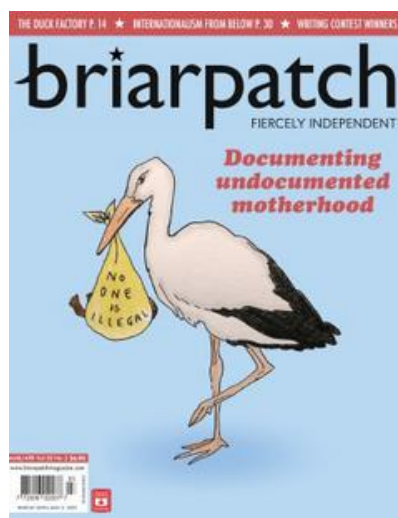


THE WATER WALKER

BY JOANNE ROBERTSON

The story of determined Ojibwe Grandmother (Nokomis) Josephine-ba Mandamin and her great love for Nibi (water).

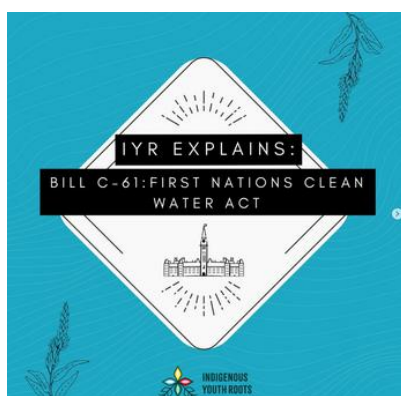
ARTICLES



AGAINST THE DUCK FACTORY

BY ALEX WILSON, KEVIN SETTEE AND OWEN TOEWS

Ducks Unlimited – which controls more land and water in Canada than all First Nations combined – deserves its own chapter in the story of colonial water control in Canada.



INDIGENOUS YOUTH ROOTS EXPLAINS: BILL C-61

Are you curious about Bill C-61: First Nations Clean Water Act, how it came to be, and what it could mean for the future of clean water in First Nations communities?

FURTHER RESOURCES



WATER AS A FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT

PODCAST: MEDIA INDIGENA WITH RICK HARP
EPISODE 121, DECEMBER 4, 2020

A compendium of Media Indigena's discussions about water, be it as a fundamental right or the more nitty-gritty matters of funding, infrastructure, and accountability.

FURTHER RESOURCES



ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM TOOLKIT

BY LAKE WINNIPEG INDIGENOUS COLLECTIVE

The purpose of this toolkit is to provide the reader with a better understanding of environmental racism, its history, how it plays out in so called Canada, and what you can do to take action. We have provided links and resources throughout this toolkit that can be of use to help the reader better identify environmental racism today and current roots of advocacy.

TED

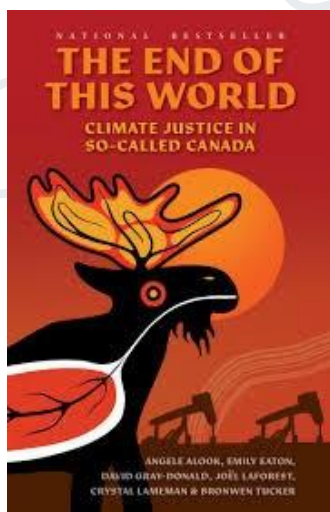
HOW INDIGENOUS GUARDIANS PROTECT THE PLANET AND HUMANITY

TED TALK BY: VALÉRIE COURTOIS

TED

THE STANDING ROCK RESISTANCE AND OUR FIGHT FOR INDIGENOUS RIGHTS

TED TALK BY: TARA HOUSKA



THE END OF THIS WORLD: CLIMATE JUSTICE IN SO-CALLED CANADA

BY ANGELE ALOOK, EMILY EATON, DAVID GRAY-DONALD, JOËL LAFOREST, CRYSTAL LAMEMAN & BRONWEN TUCKER

In *The End of This World: Climate Justice in So-Called Canada*, a vision for climate justice rooted in Indigenous sovereignty and dismantling of settler capitalism is presented. Written by six activists and scholars, it offers a powerful roadmap for a just transition, where fossil fuels are left behind, wealth is redistributed, and land is reclaimed by Indigenous people.