



Nation to Nation W.A.S.H. Project

Water Access, Security and Heritage

Initial Community and Stakeholder Survey

This fillable survey is an initial information-gathering tool for Indigenous communities, water and wastewater operators, Elders and Knowledge Keepers, youth, leadership, lands and resources staff, technical advisors, and other stakeholders. It is designed to gather perspectives on drinking water, wastewater, source water, groundwater, cultural relationships with water, and environmental impacts related to commercial or industrial activity.

The survey is not a substitute for consultation, consent, treaty implementation, or community-specific decision making. It is intended to help identify priorities, stories, concerns, and calls to action that can guide later roundtables, recommendations, and partnership discussions.

Community • Industry • Environment

Clean Water For All



1. Instructions, Consent, and Knowledge Protection

Please complete as much of this survey as you are comfortable completing. Some questions may not apply to every community, region, or role. Use the open text boxes to provide context, examples, stories, concerns, and proposed solutions.

Do not include sacred, confidential, or community-protected knowledge unless you have authority and choose to share it. You may identify any answer as confidential or request that community-specific details not be shared publicly.

Participant consent and information use

- ☐ I understand that this survey will be used to support the Nation to Nation W.A.S.H. Project.
- ☐ I understand that survey results may be summarized in reports, proposals, roundtables, and recommendations.
- ☐ I understand that sensitive community information will not be publicly attributed to me without permission.
- ☐ I understand that I may skip questions and may ask that specific comments be treated as confidential.

How may your responses be used?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Use in non-identifying summary reports | ☐ Use in internal project planning only |
| ☐ Use in funder/partner proposals without identifying me | ☐ May contact me to verify or clarify information |
| ☐ Do not quote me directly without written permission | ☐ Treat community-specific details as confidential unless I approve release |

Please describe any community protocols, knowledge protection requirements, or consent expectations that should guide how your responses are handled.



2. Participant Information

This section helps understand whose perspectives are represented. You may leave blank any personal information you do not wish to provide.

Name

Community / Nation / Organization

Province / Territory / Region

Role / Profession

Email

Phone

Participant perspective / role - check all that apply

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Elder / Knowledge Keeper | ☐ Youth |
| ☐ Chief / Council / leadership | ☐ Water treatment operator |
| ☐ Wastewater operator | ☐ Public works / infrastructure |
| ☐ Lands and resources | ☐ Environmental monitor |
| ☐ Health / wellness | ☐ Community member |
| ☐ Indigenous organization | ☐ Technical advisor |
| ☐ Industry representative | ☐ Government representative |
| ☐ Other | |

Other role or professional description

Follow-up contact

Would you like to submit your name for further contact regarding surveys, roundtables, interviews, or project updates?

☐ Preferred contact method: email

☐ Preferred contact method: phone

☐ Meeting / roundtable

☐ Yes ☐ No



3. Cultural Relationships with Water and Heritage

This section invites participants to express how water is understood, respected, used, protected, and experienced in their community. Please share only what is appropriate to share.

Rating scale: 1 = serious concern / weak / not present; 3 = mixed or uncertain; 5 = strong / healthy / well supported.

How strong is your community's relationship with water through teachings, stories, ceremony, land use, harvesting, food, medicines, or intergenerational knowledge?

1 2 3 4 5
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

How well are cultural values and responsibilities to water considered in water-related decisions?

1 2 3 4 5
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

How concerned are you about impacts to culturally important water places, practices, or responsibilities?

1 2 3 4 5
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Are cultural practices, harvesting, medicines, ceremonies, or land-based activities currently affected by water quality, quantity, access, or trust concerns?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Are there water teachings, responsibilities, or protocols that should guide proposed solutions and calls to action?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Please describe your relationship with water, what water means to your community, or how water-related changes are affecting cultural life, identity, health, food, medicines, ceremony, or future generations.

Anecdote or story space: Share a water-related experience, concern, teaching, observation, or example that you believe the project should understand.



4. Drinking Water and Potable Water Treatment

This section gathers information on current potable water systems, reliability, confidence, budgets, operations, and unmet needs.

Current water access and source - check all that apply

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Community water treatment plant | ☐ Private wells |
| ☐ Community wells | ☐ Surface water source |
| ☐ Groundwater source | ☐ Truck / hauled water |
| ☐ Bottled water used regularly | ☐ Cistern / holding tank |
| ☐ Point-of-use treatment | ☐ Unknown / not sure |
| ☐ Other | |

Current potable water treatment method, if known

Is there a current drinking water advisory, boil water advisory, do-not-consume advisory, or repeated water quality concern?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Has the community experienced repeated service interruptions, low pressure, outages, or inconsistent access to potable water?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Are promised upgrades, repairs, funding, or studies currently outstanding?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Rate the reliability of current potable water access.

1 2 3 4 5
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Rate community confidence or trust in the safety of drinking water.

1 2 3 4 5
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Rate whether current treatment capacity meets present community need.

1 2 3 4 5
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Rate whether current water quality monitoring is adequate and transparent.

1 2 3 4 5
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Please describe current drinking water issues, including any known advisories, system failures, concerns about taste/odour/colour, reliability, access, costs, or community confidence.



5. Drinking Water Operations, Budgets, and Promised Actions

Rate the adequacy of operations and maintenance funding for drinking water systems.

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Rate the adequacy of capital funding for repair, replacement, or expansion.

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Rate the availability of certified operators and backup operators.

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Rate access to operator training, technical support, parts, and emergency repairs.

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Rate how well promised actions have been communicated and implemented.

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Are current budgets sufficient to maintain reliable drinking water services over the next five years?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Are there barriers related to procurement, approvals, jurisdiction, permitting, staffing, or project management?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Is community growth, housing demand, or economic development increasing pressure on drinking water systems?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Approximate annual drinking water O&M budget, if known

Known promised action / project name

Please describe funding, operator, maintenance, training, procurement, or promised-action barriers affecting drinking water access or reliability.

Anecdote or example: Please share a specific drinking water incident, challenge, promise, delay, or solution idea.



6. Wastewater Treatment and Environmental Health

Wastewater treatment is a core part of water security. This section gathers information about systems, capacity, reliability, environmental impacts, and unmet needs.

Current wastewater system type - check all that apply

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Lagoon | ☐ Mechanical treatment |
| ☐ Septic systems | ☐ Decentralized / cluster systems |
| ☐ Truck / hauled wastewater | ☐ Sewage holding tanks |
| ☐ No formal system | ☐ System type unknown |
| ☐ Other | |

Are there current wastewater capacity, overflow, bypass, leakage, odour, or discharge concerns?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Are there known or suspected impacts to land, waterways, fish, wildlife, downstream users, or community health?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Are promised wastewater upgrades, repairs, funding, or studies currently outstanding?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Rate the reliability of the current wastewater system.

1 2 3 4 5
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Rate whether the wastewater system has enough capacity for current and future needs.

1 2 3 4 5
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Rate the adequacy of wastewater operations and maintenance funding.

1 2 3 4 5
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Rate operator staffing, training, and technical support for wastewater systems.

1 2 3 4 5
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Rate confidence that wastewater is being treated and discharged safely.

1 2 3 4 5
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Please describe wastewater treatment issues, including capacity, system condition, operations, overflows, discharges, odours, environmental impacts, costs, or promised upgrades.

Anecdote or example: Please share a wastewater-related incident, concern, delay, impact, or proposed solution.



7. Source Water, Groundwater, and Watershed Protection

This section focuses on the health of the water before treatment, including lakes, rivers, streams, groundwater, aquifers, wetlands, watersheds, and seasonal patterns.

Known or suspected source water concerns - check all that apply

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Water quality changes | ☐ Water quantity / low levels |
| ☐ Flooding | ☐ Drought |
| ☐ Erosion / sediment | ☐ Wildfire impacts |
| ☐ Changing ice / snow patterns | ☐ Permafrost or northern infrastructure concerns |
| ☐ Algae / cyanobacteria | ☐ Contaminants |
| ☐ Loss of traditional access | ☐ Monitoring gaps |
| ☐ Unknown | ☐ Other |

Does the community have a source water protection plan, watershed plan, wellhead protection plan, or equivalent community-led water protection plan?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Are groundwater, aquifers, wells, or springs currently a concern for the community or region?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Rate the current health of source water used by the community.

1 2 3 4 5

Rate confidence in groundwater protection and monitoring.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

Rate the adequacy of watershed monitoring and early warning systems.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

Rate the community's ability to influence upstream decisions affecting water.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

Please describe changes or concerns related to source water, groundwater, watersheds, wells, aquifers, wetlands, seasonal flows, or traditional water access.

Anecdote or observation: Please share any water-level, water-quality, groundwater, or watershed change you have personally observed or heard from community members.



8. Environmental Change, Cumulative Impacts, and Water Access

This section helps document how natural and human-caused environmental changes are affecting water security, water access, and community planning.

Rate the impact of environmental change on drinking water reliability.

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5

Rate the impact of environmental change on wastewater systems.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
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Rate the impact of environmental change on traditional water use, harvesting, medicines, fishing, or land-based practices.

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5

Rate concern about cumulative impacts from multiple activities or stressors.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
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Have environmental changes contributed to increased costs, infrastructure damage, emergency response needs, or water access restrictions?

☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ Unsure
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Is water security planning considering future climate, flood, drought, fire, ice, snow, or extreme weather conditions?

☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ Unsure
---------------------------	--------------------------	------------------------------

Impacts noticed - check all that apply

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ More frequent advisories | ☐ Lower water levels |
| ☐ Changed flows | ☐ Higher turbidity |
| ☐ Taste / odour / colour changes | ☐ Road or access disruptions |
| ☐ Damage to pumps/intakes | ☐ Flooded or damaged infrastructure |
| ☐ Increased treatment costs | ☐ Health concerns |
| ☐ Harvesting/fishing impacts | ☐ Other |

Please describe environmental changes, cumulative impacts, or future water security concerns that should be considered by the W.A.S.H. Project.



9. Commercial and Industrial Activity Impacts

This section gathers information about water quality, quantity, access, trust, and security impacts connected to commercial, industrial, municipal, agricultural, extractive, or upstream activity.

Activities near or upstream of water sources - check all that apply

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Mining | ☐ Oil and gas |
| ☐ Forestry | ☐ Agriculture |
| ☐ Manufacturing | ☐ Waste disposal |
| ☐ Municipal discharge | ☐ Roads / construction |
| ☐ Industrial water withdrawal | ☐ Tailings / ponds |
| ☐ Spills / releases | ☐ Commercial development |
| ☐ Unknown | ☐ Other |

Are commercial or industrial activities believed to be affecting water quality, quantity, groundwater, source water, or water security?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Has the community received timely notice of spills, leaks, seepage, discharges, monitoring results, or risks?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Are monitoring, reporting, and remediation activities trusted by the community?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Rate perceived impact of industrial/commercial activity on water quality.

1 2 3 4 5
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Rate perceived impact of industrial/commercial activity on water quantity or access.

1 2 3 4 5
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Rate adequacy of independent monitoring and transparent reporting.

1 2 3 4 5
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Rate adequacy of industry engagement with affected Indigenous communities.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Please describe known, suspected, or feared industrial/commercial impacts, including sectors, locations, contaminant pathways, incidents, water withdrawals, or cumulative concerns.



10. Upstream Contaminants, Pathways, and Monitoring

This section helps identify how contaminants may be introduced to water systems and what monitoring, evidence, or community observations exist.

Known or suspected contaminant pathways - check all that apply

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Surface runoff | ☐ Groundwater seepage |
| ☐ Tailings or waste storage | ☐ Spills or leaks |
| ☐ Wastewater discharge | ☐ Agricultural runoff |
| ☐ Road salt or road runoff | ☐ Erosion / sediment |
| ☐ Air deposition | ☐ Unknown pathway |
| ☐ Other | |

Are there records, test results, community monitoring data, photos, maps, reports, or other evidence that could help document the concern?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Would the community benefit from independent water testing, groundwater testing, environmental monitoring, or technical review?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Are there concerns about data being inaccessible, delayed, incomplete, or difficult for the community to interpret?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Rate adequacy of current testing for contaminants of concern.

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Rate adequacy of public/community access to monitoring results.

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Rate need for independent technical support to interpret results.

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please identify known or suspected contaminants, pathways, reports, observations, data gaps, or monitoring concerns. Include dates, locations, and organizations only if appropriate to share.

Anecdote or incident space: Please describe a specific spill, leak, discharge, unusual water observation, fish/wildlife concern, or community notification issue.



11. Water Governance, Funding, Promised Actions, and Accountability

Rate how well community authority and decision-making are respected in water-related decisions.

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Rate the adequacy of consultation, engagement, and consent processes related to water impacts.

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Rate the adequacy of federal/provincial/territorial coordination on water security concerns.

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Rate the adequacy of accountability when promised water-related actions are delayed or not completed.

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Rate the adequacy of long-term funding for water and wastewater infrastructure.

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Are there promised actions, studies, repairs, upgrades, funding commitments, or remediation commitments that remain incomplete?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Are jurisdictional gaps or disputes affecting water security, source water protection, wastewater treatment, or remediation?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Do existing processes give the community enough access to water-related data, project status, budgets, and timelines?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Status of known promised actions - check all that apply

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ No known promise | ☐ Feasibility study |
| ☐ Design work | ☐ Interim repair |
| ☐ Permanent repair | ☐ New infrastructure |
| ☐ Operator training | ☐ Monitoring |
| ☐ Remediation | ☐ Planning only |
| ☐ Underway | ☐ Stalled / delayed |
| ☐ Completed | ☐ Unknown |

Please describe governance, funding, implementation, jurisdiction, consultation, consent, reporting, or accountability concerns.



12. Calls to Action and Proposed Solutions

This section gathers practical recommendations for communities, Indigenous organizations, the Government of Canada, Indigenous Services Canada, provinces/territories, and industry.

What are the top three water-related calls to action that should be advanced through this project?

What should the Government of Canada or federal departments do differently regarding source water, drinking water, wastewater, groundwater, funding, implementation, monitoring, or accountability?

What should Indigenous Services Canada do differently regarding implementation and funding of water security in Indigenous communities?

What should industry do differently to prevent harm, improve monitoring, share information, remediate impacts, and build better relationships with Indigenous communities?

What community-led, culturally guided, technical, engineering, training, monitoring, or governance solutions should be explored?



13. Additional Anecdotes, Attachments, and Next Steps

Do you have documents, reports, photos, maps, monitoring data, notices, correspondence, or project materials that you may be willing to share later?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Would you be willing to participate in a follow-up interview or roundtable discussion?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Would you like to receive a summary of project findings when available?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Additional anecdote or story space: Please share any further experience, observation, concern, teaching, or proposed solution that was not captured above.

Attachment/contact notes: Please list materials you may be willing to share later, or note the best way to follow up with you.

Submission confirmation

☐ I have reviewed my responses to the extent I am able.

☐ I consent to my name being kept for follow-up contact regarding the W.A.S.H. Project.

Date completed

Signature or initials, if desired



14. Public Reference Materials Used to Inform Survey Design

The following public materials and research areas were reviewed to guide the structure of this initial survey. This list is not exhaustive and should be expanded as the project develops.

First Nations Information Governance Centre

The First Nations Principles of OCAP® - ownership, control, access, and possession as a framework for information governance and data sovereignty.

Office of the Auditor General of Canada

Report 3: Access to Safe Drinking Water in First Nations Communities, which examined progress, funding, monitoring, and long-term advisories.

Indigenous Services Canada

Water in First Nations communities and ending long-term drinking water advisories - guidance and public reporting on feasibility studies, repairs, construction, training, and monitoring.

Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami

Access to Drinking Water in Inuit Nunangat - documentation of drinking water and sanitation infrastructure issues in Inuit communities.

Assembly of First Nations

First Nations Safe Drinking Water Preliminary Concepts - goals relating to water and wastewater systems, rights, values, knowledge, consent, sustainable funding, and care and control.

Environment and Climate Change Canada / Canada Water Agency

National freshwater science and data materials recognizing Indigenous rights, relationships with water, and collaborative water governance.

Indigenous water governance research

Peer-reviewed studies on Indigenous methodologies, community-led water governance, storytelling, deep listening, source water protection, and cultural relationships with water.

Water insecurity and perception studies

Publicly available papers on Indigenous water insecurity, water quality perceptions, resource development, climate concerns, and community trust in drinking water.

NWAC Water Carriers Initiative

Materials emphasizing the role of Indigenous women, girls, gender-diverse people, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and future generations in water governance and protection.

Design note: This initial survey is intentionally broad. It is intended to identify issues for deeper engagement in later project phases, including roundtables, technical review, calls to action, and recommendations for Indigenous organizations, government, and industry.