

Canada Water Agency discussions with ADSB students

October 26, 2021 | 10-11am (morning session)

ATTENDEES

Ms. Pelland's class – 19 students

Ms. Willoughby's class – 28 students

Ms. Keranen's class – 19 students

Ms. Maclachlan's class – 20 students

QUESTION 1: What does a water secure future look like for everyone in Canada?

- Drinking water is safe for everyone to drink regardless of where they live in Canada
- Accessible water for everyone - it doesn't run out (wells)
- Legal personhood for water to give it rights that can be protected in a court of law so that it can be kept clean, accessible and safe for everyone
 - Elaine says: this has *just* started in Canada (with [a river in Quebec](#))
- Honor original treaties between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people for water protection.
 - Elaine says: can you name treaties in the area, and/or name the nations that live(d) here?
- Work to dismantle exclusive property ownership over water
- Limit water pollution so that aquatic animal populations are stable
- Good/comprehensive government control for water safety
- Confidence that our water is clean and drinkable regardless where you are in Canada
 - Elaine says: does this mean community monitoring to test water quality? What would instill confidence?
- Country-wide standard for clean drinking water
 - Elaine says: more information [here](#) and [here](#)
 - Maybe a more holistic approach that looks at water quality standards that put the rights of the water before human needs
- Technologies for improving drinking water such as iron removal
- Control water levels in Great Lakes for salmon spawning - so that the spawning can be consistent from year to year
- Protection for vulnerable species (aquatic and those who rely on aquatic environments)
- Accountability for "big polluters" - whether through legislation, fines, etc
- Controls/regulation for road salt applications that lead to Chloride pollution"
- Preventing mercury exposure by regulating output for everyone who uses it.
- Maintaining sustainability for areas who experience low levels through year.
- Preserving ecosystems.
- Allowing everyone access to water for drinking, washing & recreation usage.
- Sustainable access without fear of running out.
- Ensuring back up plan for emergency situations.
- Proper irrigation to prevent damage /contamination to water table.
- Ensure that regulatory systems are maintained to ensure water cleanliness and that filtration systems are secure.

QUESTION 2: Why is Sault Ste. Marie a great place to have the CWA?

- There's LOTS of water here
- It is centrally located on the Great Lakes - The "heart" of the Great Lakes
- Good balance between "city" and "rural" in this area
- Access to Lake Superior, Lake Huron, and many inland lakes in Algoma District.
- Border town to United States so it's great for collaboration and partnership for protection/conservation and education - St Mary's River - "area of concern"
- Sault Ste. Marie is on the main highway so easily accessible
- Presence of Steel Plant - can be useful in monitoring effects of factories on water
- Home of Algoma University and Sault College so students could work/learn/collaborate with the Agency
- Locks here - another area that could be studied
- Sault Ste. Marie is a good fit for the "Three Key Themes" that the Agency wants to focus on: agriculture, climate change, and Indigenous Reconciliation
 - Elaine says: how so? (I don't disagree - but expand?)
 - Home of Batchewana First Nations, Garden River First Nation key partners for water protection
 - Elaine says: you might be interested in [this Declaration](#) by local First Nations groups from 2008
- We have all four seasons with lots of snow in the winter
- We have lots of fish species here also
- Home of some Conservation Authorities who could work with agency

QUESTION 3: Is there anything else anyone would like to share about the Canada Water Agency and our water future?

- Limited perspective due to smaller city, important to outsource from other locations
- Political affiliation of Sault Ste. Marie being more neutral therefore more potential agreements to policies, procedures
- Maintaining sustainability and reassurance of access to enough clean water
- Back up plan and emergency procedures
- Important representations from Indigenous leaders in Sault Ste. Marie
- Controlling contaminants in well water ; Sulphur
- Prevention of mercury poisoning

Canada Water Agency discussions with ADSB students

October 26, 2021 | 1-2pm (afternoon session)

ATTENDEES

Ms. Caputo's class – 12 students

Ms. Pelland's class – 19 students

Ms. Reiter's class – 16 students

Ms. MacLachlan's class – 3 students

QUESTION 1: What does a water secure future look like for everyone in Canada?

- Access to clean drinking water - adding - ALL across Canada
- No pipelines
- Controls/regulations to protect lakes, rivers, streams etc.
- Not having to buy bottled water: accessible and affordable water for everyone
- Accessibility to water for bathing
- Make clean water affordable in homes
- Clean and safe water for ALL - for consumption, recreation, etc.
- Keeping the great lakes clean
- Use more renewable energy resources
 - Is hydro a renewable resource? How does the use of hydro affect this vision for a secure water future (or, how does our thinking about a water secure future impact the use of hydro)?
- Greater understanding of what naturally resides in our water sources
- Having clean water to swim in
- If we are in a drought - regulate consumption of water
- Have emergency plans and resources for water crisis (ie Iqaluit)
- Honoring the Indigenous perspective and knowledge on water issues
- Honoring the treaties between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous people for water protection
- Remove all boil water advisories that have been going on for years (ie Grassy Narrows)
 - Elaine says: while some long-term boil water advisories still exist, Grassy Narrows lifted their last long-term advisory in late 2020 :) → Neskantaga First Nation in Ontario has had a boil water advisory in effect for ~76 buildings since 1995!!!
- Better water filtering methods (get rid of chlorine)
- Water helps maintain clean air
- Water can help promote clean energy
- More recycling centres - less plastic - less pollution in our water
- Upgraded and monitored water systems in homes/buildings/schools etc.
- Water is a Canadian geographic landmark
- Enough water to grow food
- Supports diverse ecosystems

QUESTION 2: Why is Sault Ste. Marie a great place to have the Canada Water Agency

- The great lakes are super close - three of them are easily accessible - superior is the closest and flows to the rest
 - Elaine says: kind of like the Great Lakes headwaters - cool thought!
- SSM is the hub of water transportation
- Centre of three great lakes - geographic landmark
- Algoma Steel being right here could be a tester to upgrade factories and their pollution
- Close to US border
- We are at the heart of turtle island
- Bawating “meeting place”
- We are near Batchewana First Nation and Garden River First Nation to collaborate and gain Indigenous perspective
 - Elaine says: and many others! Missanabie Cree First Nation, Metis Nation of Ontario, Bay Mills Indian Community (US), and others too who share(d) this territory
- Can be run with indigeneous values in mind
- Community that is open to more job opportunities can b
- Great location for research
- SSM is culturally diverse
- Better opportunities for post secondary programs
- We have a hydroelectric plant here
- Can work together with Great Lakes Forest Research Centre and the Center for Invasive Species
- Many other research facilities close by as well as Sault College and Algoma University - can collaborate
- MANY environmentalists in the area - many potential employees
- Adding jobs to our city

QUESTION 3: Is there anything else anyone would like to share about the Canada Water Agency and our water future?

- Importance of recognition to Indigenous leaders - funding for freshwater monitoring programs (measuring quality of water)
- CWA beneficial to Sault Ste. Marie and growth of community
- Government entities (legislations regarding freshwater)
- Process of application - when do we hear if Sault Ste. Marie can go ahead with this project
- Conversations with MP's
- Global Water futures - research group for freshwater
- Unique approaches across the country
- Interpretation is that we want to have a central vision (coordinating efforts)
- Conservation authorities unique to Ontario, local watershed management agencies
- US Government provides funding for community environmental monitoring