

UNTAPPED POTENTIAL FOR LOCAL WATER SECURITY? OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR MUNICIPAL TYPE SERVICE AGREEMENTS

UNIVERSITY
of GUELPH

IMPROVE LIFE.

WHO ARE WE?

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A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a clear glass jar filled with water. The jar is tilted slightly, and the water inside is clear. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with green foliage. A white circular overlay is positioned on the left side of the image, containing text.

Research Goal:

To investigate one potential solution to on-reserve water quality and quantity challenges by talking with people.

Personal Rationale:

Given the prevalence and severity of on-reserve drinking water issues we need to fully explore the range of solutions and hear from those directly impacted and support their decision-making

BACKGROUND: WE KNOW FROM PAST RESEARCH

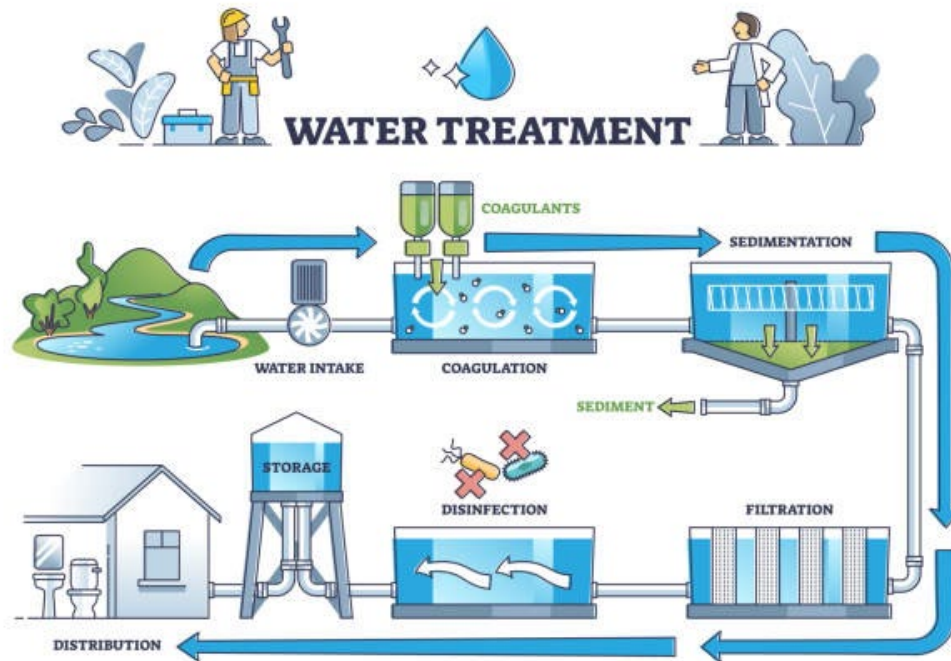
- ❖ Municipal Type Service Agreements have benefits (Chris)
- ❖ In particular, Water Sharing Agreements
 - Statistical research shows a relationship between water sharing and water quality outcomes (Brady)

Questions:

- ❖ If there are benefits to water sharing agreement – Why are First Nations not generally entering into these arrangements?
- ❖ What are we missing in our understanding to paint a full picture of considerations?
- ❖ Let's go beyond the data and talk to people directly impacted.

WE ASKED – RESEARCH QUESTION

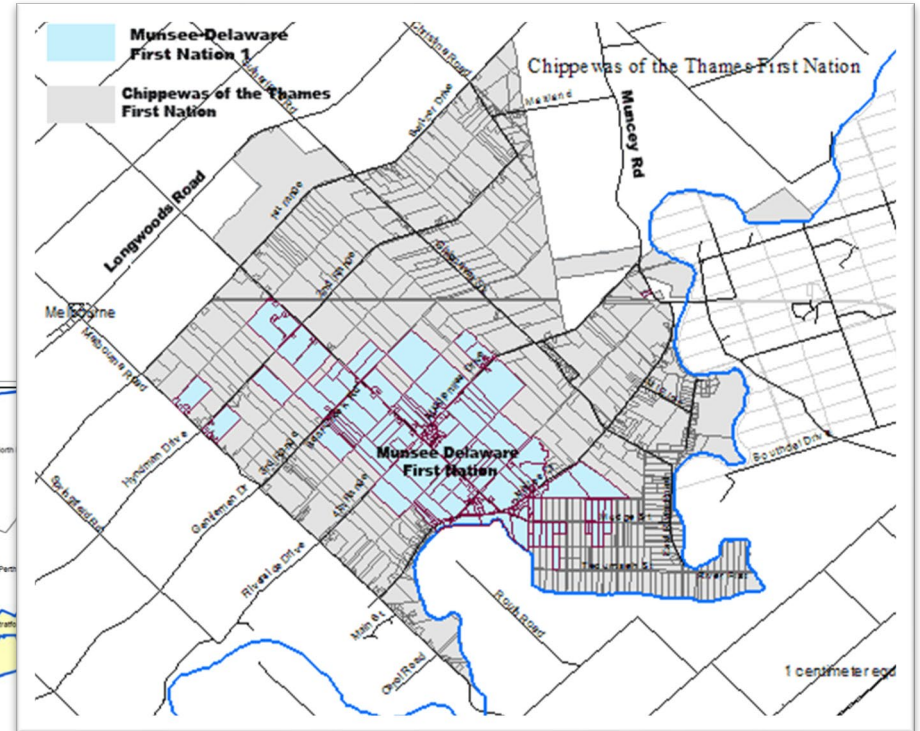
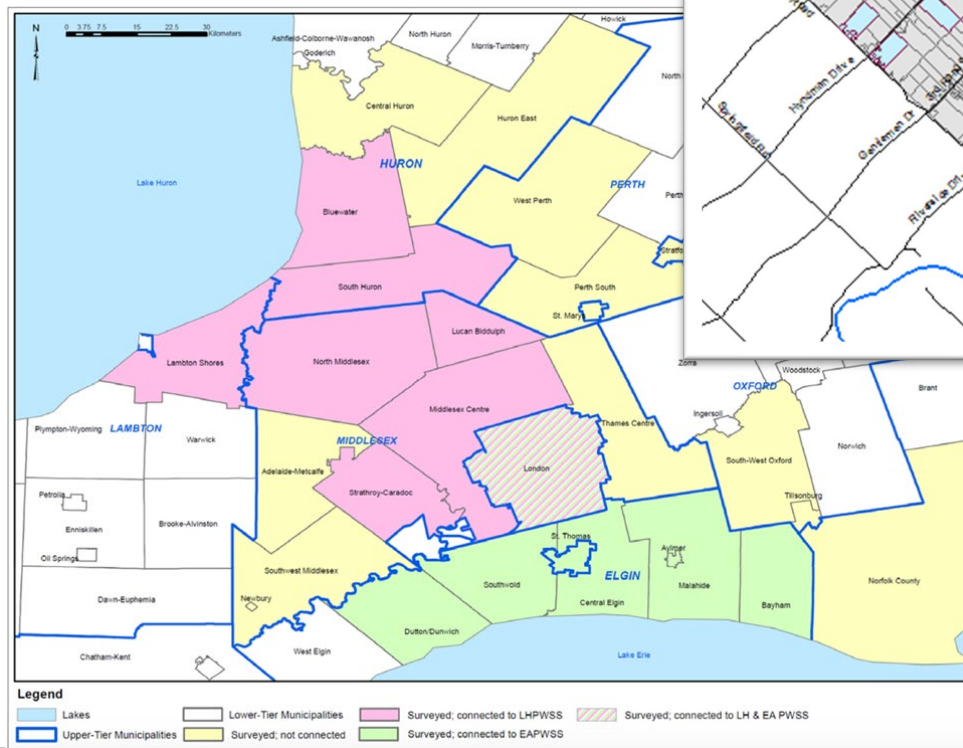
With the potential to address water insecurity, why do water actors from either First Nations or Municipalities choose to/not to engage in Municipal Type Service Agreements?



CASE STUDY: CHIPPEWAS OF THE THAMES FIRST NATION

Aimed for regional case with CMO and began with COTTFN but COVID limited ability to extend this approach to Munsee-Delaware and Oneida Nation

We adapted research methods



RESEARCH METHODS

Hear form different perspectives

Talked with 14 water actors, including:

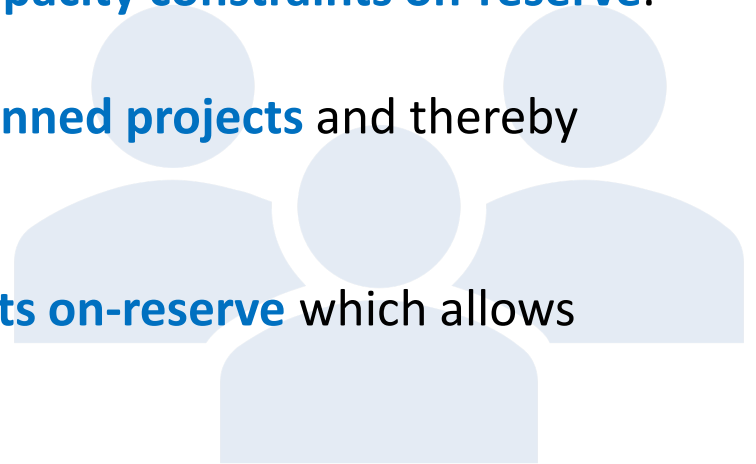
- COTTEN,
- City of London,
- London Regional Water Authority,
- Ontario Water Works Association, and
- Ontario Ministry of Agricultural Food and Rural Affairs
Indigenous Relations Branch.

Summarized findings, identified themes, and perspectives

WHAT WE HEARD: OPPORTUNITIES

Positive perspectives on the potential opportunities for MTAs:

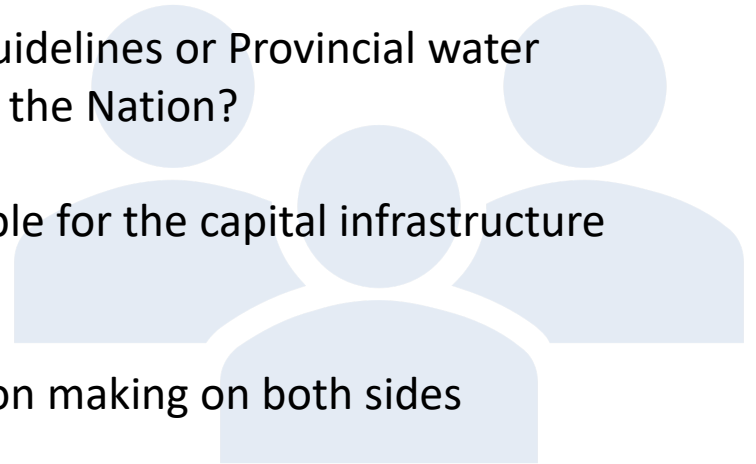
- Can assist in addressing the **water capacity constraints on-reserve**.
 - Can assist in the **development of planned projects** and thereby economic opportunities on reserve.
 - Can allow for **additional housing units on-reserve** which allows members to return to the reserve.
 - Can provide greater certainty for **fire suppression on-reserve**.
- Can built stronger **working relationships** with local municipalities



WHAT WE HEARD: CONCERNS AND BARRIERS

Perspectives voiced concerns and barriers:

- **Liability and associated costs:** who is responsible if a drinking water quality event if occurred on reserve?
- **Water standards:** Will federal water guidelines or Provincial water standards apply to the water servicing the Nation?
- **Infrastructure costs:** Who is responsible for the capital infrastructure costs to extend the line?
- **Election cycles** interrupting the decision making on both sides
- **Compensation policies** for water vary from on-reserve to off-reserve. Who's policies prevail?
- **Reparation policies** for residents who can afford water vary from off-reserve to on-reserve.
- **Relationships**, lack of trust and sovereignty for the Nation



CONSIDERATIONS FOR EXPLORING WATER SERVICING AGREEMENTS

- Reflect and determine the level of impact on the Nation and sovereignty over water servicing and distribution
- Reflect and determine the level of impact of additional water capacity on reserve and economic opportunities
- Consider the short-term and long-term interest
- Consider what the relationship could look like, how it could improve or what challenges the Nation would need to overcome
- Learn from other Nations who have already engaged in water sharing agreements

UPDATES SINCE 2019 - WHAT HAS CHANGED SINCE OUR RESEARCH?

- Federal Government adopted UNDRIP
- Federal Government revoked the Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act and proposed NEW water and wastewater legislation.
- COTTFN has been listed on the Long-Term Drinking Water Advisories list
- Provincial Policy Direction has changed.

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING... LET'S DISCUSS!!

COTTFN for allowing us onto their territory and for expanding our learning.

Oneida Nation, and Munsee, Delaware for continuing to work with us as able to.

To SSHRC for funding the research.

To our team Brady Deaton, Chris Alcantara and Bethany Lipka