Collaborative Water Services Between First Nations and Municipalities in Ontario

Project Overview

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Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada

Canada

Project Team:

We are an inter-disciplinary team of researchers based at the University of Guelph and Western University. Full team member bios are available on our project website.

Primary Investigator:
Professor Brady Deaton
(University of Guelph)
bdeaton@uoguelph.ca

Co-Investigator:
Sheri Longboat
(University of Guelph)
slongboa@uoguelph.ca

Co-Investigator:
Christopher Alcantara
(University of Western Ontario)
calcantara@uwo.ca

Project Coordinator:
Bethany Lipka
(University of Guelph)
blipka@uoguelph.ca

About the Research:

Many First Nations and municipalities across Ontario have formed collaborative relationships to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes, such as improved service provision, or economic development. This research aims to explore factors influencing why these types of relationships emerge in some situations and not others. As a starting point, one relationship type of particular policy relevance will be explored: water sharing arrangements between municipalities and First Nation Bands.

On many First Nations' reserves across Canada, lack of safe drinking water is a chronic problem. Researchers at the University of Guelph and Western University have received a SSHRC Insight Grant to study collaborative water arrangements between First Nations and municipalities in Ontario. This five-year $371,300 project is an interdisciplinary effort, involving a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods – including statistical analysis, and in-depth case studies. The central aim of this project is to identify the potential scope for water sharing in the Province, and factors influencing communities to choose to engage, or not engage, in these exchanges. Researchers will explore the potential for collaborative water arrangements between First Nations and municipalities in Ontario, and assess water sharing as one possible solution in the broader portfolio of solutions needed to address drinking water quality issues on reserves.