

**Institut de développement  
durable des Premières Nations**  
du Québec et du Labrador

**First Nations of Quebec and Labrador  
Sustainable Development Institute**

# Source water protection plans for First Nation in Quebec: 25 Years of the Circuit Rider Training Program

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# Brief history: Walkerton Tragedy (2000)



**National Inventory** of infrastructure, equipment, resources in First Nation communities:

- Obsolete water treatment plant
  - Investment \$
- Lack of monitoring and analysis
- Lack of preventive maintenance
- Lack of operator **training**
  - Creation of the Circuit raider training program

# The program in a few words

Technical support, mentorship and training in water treatment offered at **no cost** to First Nation communities

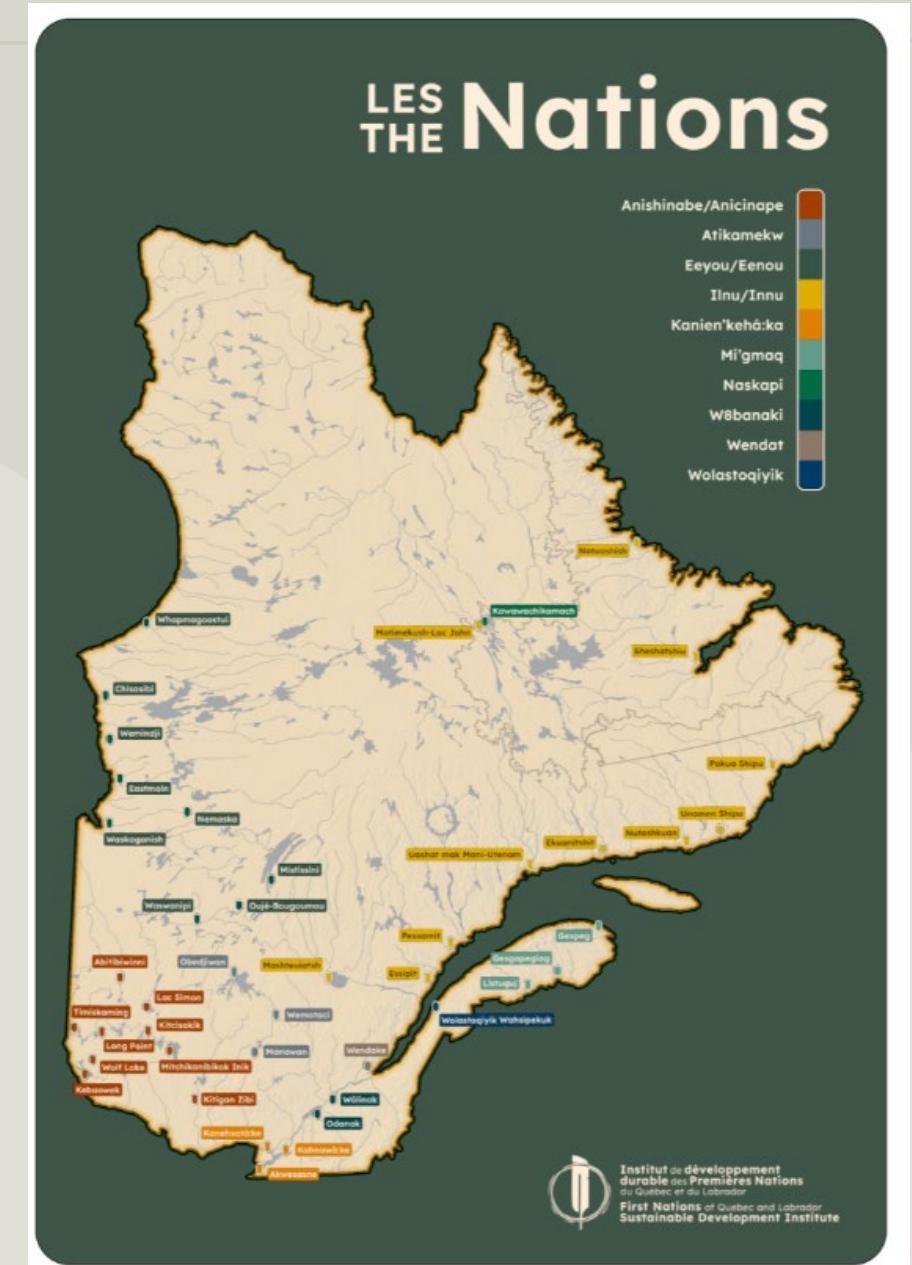
- **Capacity building** of operators to promote community autonomy



# First Nation part of the CRTP

Services to 28 communities

- 9 with surface water
- 12 with groundwater
- 6 with intermunicipal agreement
- 1 with mixed supply



# Why it works?

- Circuit rider in the community since 2000
- No long-term water boil advisories
- Operator conferences: bring First Nation together



# Source water protection plans - Interjurisdiction issues



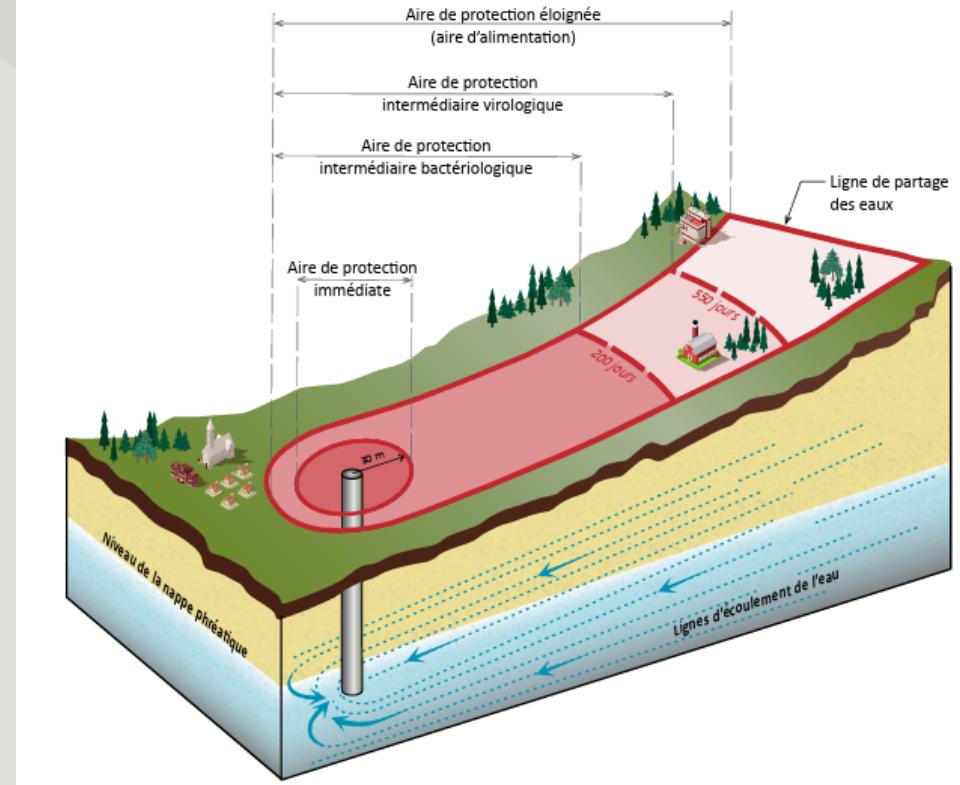
- Federal
  - *2013 Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act* (repeal)
    - lack of adequate, predictable and sustainable funding
    - lack of recognition of Indigenous rights
    - potential infringement of Indigenous and treaty rights
    - **lack of protection of source water**
    - insufficient engagement on issues that directly affect First Nations
  - *Bill-61: First Nations Clean Water Act* (ended)
- Provincial
  - *Water Withdrawal and Protection Regulation*
  - *Regulation respecting the quality of drinking water*

# Source water protection plans - Quebec's legislation

## Analyse de vulnérabilité des sources d'eau potable

- Surface or groundwater
- Water infrastructure over 500 persons (for FN, we do it for any population)
- Delimitation of protection area (200 days for bacteriologic and 550 day for virologic contamination for GW, distance limits for SW)
- DRASTIC index for GW, index of vulnerability to contaminant for SW
- Identification of anthropic and natural threats to water quality

Figure 2 : Schématisation des aires de protection d'un site de prélèvement d'eau souterraine

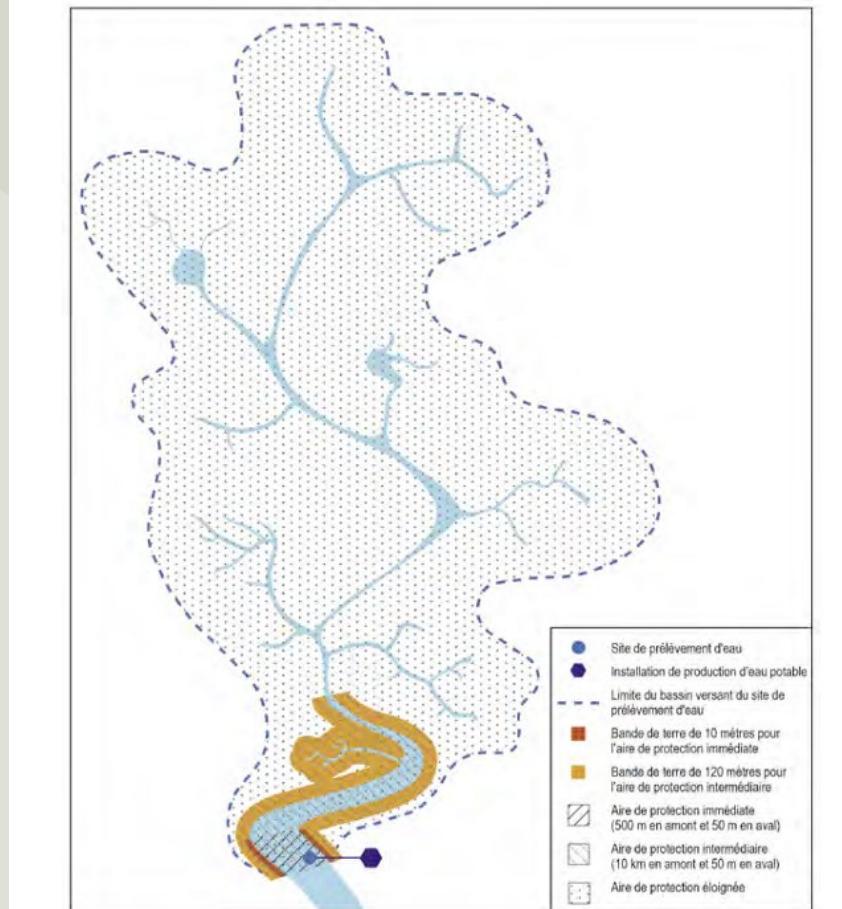


Ministère de l'Environnement et de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques. Guide de réalisation des analyses de la vulnérabilité des sources destinées à l'alimentation en eau potable au Québec. 2018. 189 pages.

# Source water protection plans - Transboundary issues

- Protection area may span across whole watershed:
  - The “reserve” territory (federal lands)
  - The ancestral territory
  - Neighbor municipality (provincial)
  - ...
- Communication
  - Development planners
  - Watershed organization
  - Federal and provincial and municipal...

Figure 11 : Aires de protection immédiate, intermédiaire et éloignée d'un site de prélèvement situé dans une rivière



Ministère de l'Environnement et de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques. Guide de réalisation des analyses de la vulnérabilité des sources destinées à l'alimentation en eau potable au Québec. 2018. 189 pages.

# Source water protection plans - Who are you talking to?

- Several stakeholders:
  - Band Council
  - Tribal Council
  - MELCCFP
  - Engineering firms
  - Indigenous Service Canada
    - Infrastructure team
    - Health team
    - .....



# Source water protection plans - How to do capacity building



- Groundwater sampling training
- Organize community activities: visit drinking water plant, teaching in schools

# Source water protection plans -Be open to specificities

- Traditional source
- Translation
  - Quebec is the province with the most Indigenous language speakers in Canada (nearly 50,000 people)
- Printing the maps
- Value the collaborators / traditional knowledge





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Wliwni

Meegwetch

Meegwetch

Mikwetc

Miikwehch

Tshinashkumitin

Niá:wen

Wela'lin

Chiniskomiitín

Tiawenhk

Woliwon

Nakurmiik

Merci

Thanks

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