

Volume 1, Issue 1

August 1, 2015

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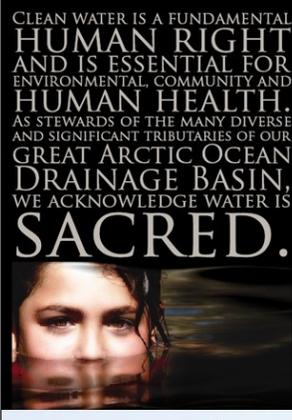
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As Keepers of the Athabasca is not a registered
charity, we cannot offer tax receipts.



Keepers Accomplishments

- co-sponsorship of an annual Healing Walk in "ground zero" of the tar sands between Fort McKay and Fort McMurray, Alberta, 2010-2014
- community meetings on groundwater protection, fracking, climate change, etc.
- conferences with Treaty 8 and the University of Alberta on the effects of open pit and in-situ tar sands mining on surface water, wetlands and groundwater
- press releases and advocacy on issues related to the adverse effects of industrial development in the watershed
- solar energy installation in partnership with Fort Chipewyan First Nation
- Canadian Aquatic Biomonitoring Network (CABIN) training and water monitoring through Living Lakes Canada's Community-based Water Quality Monitoring program (<http://www.livinglakes.ca/community-based-water-quality-monitoring>)
- participation in Canada/Alberta Joint Oil Sands Monitoring program
- participation on boards of other organizations; the Athabasca Water Council, Alberta Environment Network
- participation in government policy consultations through the Alberta Environmental Network
- participation in Water Week events
- supporting petitions and actions focused on water, environment, Aboriginal justice and Treaty rights
- sponsorship and participation in annual Keepers of the Water gatherings

Keepers of the Water

KEEPING THE ARCTIC OCEAN BASIN

News from the Keepers:

Keepers of the Water VIII: Resolutions from Cold Lake

Last year's Keepers of the Water VIII Gathering, held June 6-8 in Cold Lake with the Beaver River Keepers delivered the following resolution:



Passed on June 7th, 2014, on the Cold Lake First Nation Treaty Grounds: *Whereas the people of the Unist'ot'en camp are traditional Gitksan Wet'suwet'en people who are asserting and protecting natural law on their birthright; Whereas the Unist'ot'en Camp are on their rightful traditional territory; Whereas the camp is protecting the fresh waters*

that eventually flow toward the Pacific Ocean and Arctic Ocean, waters that our global well being depend upon; Whereas we, The Keepers of the Water, are monitoring and watching what is happening with the Unist'ot'en camp; Be it resolved that we oppose government, military and police aggression against the Unist'ot'en Camp.

The people of the Unist'ot'en camp are traditional Gitksan Wet'suwet'en people who are asserting and protecting natural law on their birthright Traditional territory. They are a resistance community whose purpose is to protect sovereign Wet'suwet'en territory from proposed pipelines, The camp is located at the shore of the Wedzin Kwah and mouth of the Gosnell Creek, tributaries to the the Skeena, Bulkley, and Babine Rivers. The

proposed pipelines from Enbridge Northern Gateway and Pacific Trails both seek to cross the rivers at the exact point where the resistance camp is built on the Unist'ot'en Territory of Talbits Kwah.

At this time, RCMP have put in a checkpoint and attempted to escort in crews. Support from those able to attend is requested. Caravans of supporters are needed at the Unist'ot'en Camp. Food and supplies are also needed. Communications support and online fundraising efforts are also requested.



Freda Huson, Hereditary Chief Dini Zi Toghestiy

Caleb Behn, Executive Director for Keepers of the Water :

Keepers of the Water welcomes Executive Director Caleb Behn, Eh-Cho Dene and Dunne-Za/ Cree from West Moberly and Fort Nelson First Nation is a lawyer and scientist. He has extensive experience as a legal research director, lands department director, and oil and gas officer for West Moberly First Nations, Salteaux First Nations, and Fort Nelson First Nation.

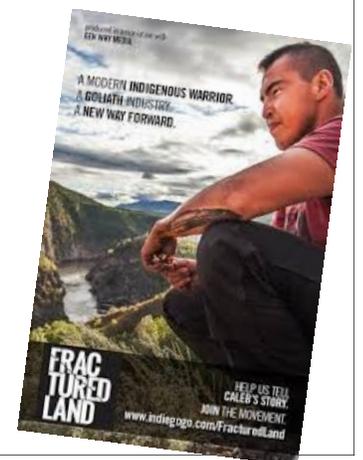


Caleb Behn, E.D., Keepers of the Water

During this work on behalf of his Nations, Caleb became increasing concerned about the processes involved. With his Traditional values, he held the record for most delayed applications, yet not one application was denied on the basis of his arguments. This is when he decided to go to law school.

Caleb stars as himself in the 2015 independent documentary film "Fractured Land" relating his story over a four year time frame, with an audience growing ever larger for his concerns. According to Anthony Marcusa of EcoRazzi, "Fractured Land is an

intimate portrait about identity and purpose, a crusade for the environment and a campaign to support the will of the people ..."



Keepers IX: Carbon Lake and Bushe River 2015



KEEPERS OF THE WATER

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Annual General Meeting – August 30, 2015

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[www.keepersof
thewater.ca](http://www.keepersofthewater.ca)

Keepers of the Water IX Gatherings will be held in two locations this year. First is the Water Bush Camp in Carbon Lake, British Columbia from August 5 - 8, 2015, toward Decolonizing Water. Invited to his home territories by Caleb Behn, our Executive Director, we will participate in a “learning from the land” experiment that replicates and honours the experiences and traditional ecosystems management practices of the Dunne-Za

Our second Keepers of the Water IX is co-hosted by the Dene Tha' and Beaver First Nations, along with Treaty 8, at Bushe River, near High Level, Alberta from August 27–30, 2015. Our co-hosts have identified issues concerning water quality after massive pipeline breaks, and their incomplete clean-up by the companies involved. Some of these breaches (Apache, Pace) are over five years old, and have had dubious remediation attempts such as attempts to 'burn off' the oil, the use of bacteria and chemicals, as well as soil removal. At KOTW IX, we will round table with the communities to hear their concerns; we will also present workshops on wetlands remediation, expected impacts of the Site C Dam, climate change impacts and adaptation, renewable energy, and Traditional and non-Traditional medicine.

Communities' concerns about residual contamination have not been appropriately addressed. Further community monitoring and documentation may help governments move ahead with remediation orders. Alternately, what if Nations were to prove contamination, remediate, and then invoice the companies involved? It would be great to have an Emergency Response Toolkit in case of a catastrophic tailings pond or pipeline breach, an assessment of environmental samples from First Nations for toxicity and even a Keepers of the Water Response Team, in order to react when breaches occur. All this and more will be discussed during Keepers IX Gatherings.

Keepers of the Water: a History

The Keepers of the Water is a non-profit organization made up of First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples, environmental groups, concerned citizens, and communities working together for the protection of air, water and land for all living things today and tomorrow in the Arctic Ocean drainage basin. The Arctic Ocean basin covers 36% of Canada's land surface.

In partnership with local First Nations, Keepers of the Water holds annual public watershed gatherings to draw attention to the state of the Arctic Ocean basin and the impact of development on its fragile ecosystems. Our first gathering was called in 2006 by the Deh Cho First Nations at Liidlii Kue, Denedeh (Fort Simpson, Northwest Territories). The Keepers of the Water Declaration states that:

Water is a sacred gift, an essential element that sustains and connects all life. It is not a commodity to be bought or sold. All people share an obligation to cooperate to ensure that water in all its forms is protected and conserved with regard to the needs of all living things today and for future generations tomorrow.

Acting on this resolution Keepers held subsequent gatherings at Fort St. John, British Columbia (2007), Fort Chipewyan, in the Athabasca region of Alberta (2008), Hatchet Lake Denesuline First Nation of Wollaston Lake, Saskatchewan (2010), Northlands Denesuline Nation and Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (2011), Fort Nelson First Nation British Columbia (2012), Fort Mc Murray First Nation Alberta (2013), Keepers of the Water

Beaver River Council in English Bay, Cold Lake First Nations, Cold Lake, Alberta (2014). Keepers of the Water IX will be co-hosted by the Dene Tha' and Beaver First Nations and Treaty 8 at Bushe River (near High Level) in northwestern Alberta from August 27-30, 2015.

Supported by a special resolution of the Treaty Chiefs of Treaties 6, 7, & 8 in 2007, the Keepers of the Water will continue to hold annual Gatherings during which our host communities are invited to present their environmental concerns and request presentations and workshops on these topics. At the culmination of the Gatherings, resolutions are made to address these concerns.

These resolutions are followed up with measures to encourage action by industry and governments: through letters, our contacts in the international environmental community, and by enabling communities on the land.

Declarations, photos, video, and actions from the Gatherings can be found on our website. keepersofthewater.ca



Keepers of the Water IV Watershed Gathering 2010, Wollaston Lake, Saskatchewan