



# Incorporating Traditional Knowledge into Transboundary Water Management

First Nations and Indigenous people have acquired a vast store of knowledge through living on the land for centuries. The Mackenzie River Basin Board and the transboundary water management agreements established within it recognize this knowledge as an essential source of information about the natural environment and the relationship between the people and the land.



Map of the Mackenzie River Basin

## The Mackenzie River Basin Board

Established in 1997, the Mackenzie River Basin Board (MRBB) involves multiple jurisdictions and partners, and works to maintain the ecological integrity of the Mackenzie River Basin. For many processes, the Board uses a 'braided knowledge' approach, which recognizes the value and importance of Indigenous knowledge and western scientific information in assessing the health of the Basin. To undertake this, the Board has a Traditional Knowledge and Strengthening Partnerships (TKSP) Committee, which is made up of MRBB Indigenous members and staff. Specifically, the TKSP provides traditional knowledge oversight and incorporates traditional knowledge into the Board's operations and products. The TKSP acts as the steering committee for a multi-year, international research project titled: Tracking Change – The Role of Local and Traditional Knowledge in Watershed Governance. Recently the TKSP has begun developing indicators to assess water quality, quantity, species and human health in the basin.

## Tracking Change

Led by the University of Alberta, the Tracking Change project is a multi-disciplinary, multi cultural research project that aims to collaboratively document and mobilize local and traditional knowledge about social-ecological change in the Mackenzie, Mekong and Amazon watersheds.

For more information visit their website at:

<http://www.trackingchange.ca/>

## Development of Indicators

Signs and signals are currently in development to assess the state of water quality, water quantity, species and habitat, and human well-being in the Mackenzie Basin. These signs and signals are designed to apply local observations and oral histories to assess changes in the aquatic ecosystem. These will be used for reporting in the Mackenzie River State of the Aquatic Ecosystem Report in 2021.

## Partners

- Mackenzie River Basin Board Government members from Canada, Yukon Northwest Territories, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia
- Mackenzie River Basin Board Indigenous members from Yukon, Northwest Territories, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia
- University of Alberta

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:**  
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