



Wind turbine assembly at Tobique First Nation as part of the Wocawson Project  
Photo courtesy of Tanna Pirie

Hello A SHARED Future affiliates and friends! We hope all is well with you and yours as we transition seasons across the globe.

If you have any big news, a conference or funding announcements you would like to share, or if you are interested in getting involved in A SHARED Future, you can contact Marc Calabretta at [marc.calabretta@queensu.ca](mailto:marc.calabretta@queensu.ca).

## Highlights

### ASF Connect: Tanna Pirie & the Wocawson Project

This month, we spoke with Tanna Pirie, CEO of Band Operations at Tobique First Nation. Tanna took the time to speak with us about the Wocawson Project, an Indigenous-led wind energy development that, beginning November 2020, will provide renewable energy and greater energy autonomy to Tobique First Nation. We are very excited to feature the Wocawson Project in our newsletter this month and thank Tanna and Tobique First Nation for taking the time to share their story with us!

**Thank you so much for taking the time to speak with us! To begin, could you tell us a little bit about yourself?**

My name is Tanna Pirie. I am from the Wolastoqiyik territory and the community of Tobique, which we call Neqotkuk. We are the largest of six Wolastoqiyik communities in our Nation. I love how I got

here in my journey; I started off wanting to be a forest ranger in university, but my path never took me to the woods. I ended up graduating with a sociology degree concentrating in criminology and law. One of the areas that really interests me is environmental law. My dad always called me a tree hugger growing up. He worked in the woods as a woodsman and it was him who helped me and my siblings connect to the land and to that way of life. When my dad went to the woods, he would come back with rabbits. When he went down to the river, he would come back with fish. Then, he would tell the kids, us, to go out to the garden. He would say, "there's never no food". The older I got, I realized that there was abundance in the environment. But, here I am, 40 years old, realizing when I go take my daughter out to the woods, that abundance is no longer there.



Tanna Pirie,  
Band Manager,  
Tobique First Nation

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## News Items

### How did you become involved with the Wocawson project and how has it evolved?

In 2015, I took a leap of faith, left my job with the federal government, and applied for a job in my community. One of the very first files I was handed was to see if a wind farm was a good option for Tobique. [Natural Forces](#) was invited to present an idea for a wind development to the community. People were welcoming of the idea and there were lots of questions around it. This was happening at the same time we were negotiating utilities with the Province, so it was a hot button issue!

So, we assembled a team based on the Chief's direction and we started looking at our options. I said to Council in a presentation: we could be leaders in clean energy. Everything is available to us and we have seen our Mi'kmaw brothers and sisters in Nova Scotia and PEI do this. We can do it too, but there needs to be willingness from the Provincial and Federal governments. There is a lot of legislation that is holding back forward momentum in New Brunswick because of how difficult it is for First Nations to have a role in the utility industry. So, when the Government of New Brunswick put launched the [Locally Owned Renewable Energy Small Scale Program](#), we took interest right away and developed a proposal for the Wocawson Energy Project. We faced a lot of challenges getting the project funded—four years of going back and forth through bureaucracy to build a windfarm in our own community, in our own territory.



Wocawson Project in early construction. (Photo courtesy of Tanna Pirie)

Finally, in 2019, impact assessments and preliminary work began to take place. Today, we have five Enercon 4MW turbines that we have erected. This will provide at least 5000 homes with clean

energy and will reduce up to 50,000 tons of carbon emitted into the environment every year.

The project is almost like a reclamation of the land. Yes, we did extract resources to build it, but we are going to put this infrastructure and resource in place so that we can give back. We have also been able to develop the project to make it uniquely our own. In our proposal to Enercon, we requested that the turbines be painted. When the project is completed in November, you are going to be able to see Wabanaki designs on the turbines. They are absolutely beautiful. You are going to be able to see it for miles and miles away. There is this pride—you cannot even describe how it is. There are no words to describe that happiness.

Every time I see them, I know that the Wocawson Project is not just helping the Wolastoqiyik people. It is helping the people of New Brunswick, and it is helping Atlantic Canadians. When you remove 50,000 tons of carbon from the air and you start giving back from a piece of land that was destroyed—well, I can't think of a better cosmic conclusion than that.



Wind turbine tower awaiting blade installation (Photo courtesy of Tanna Pirie)

**Wow, that sounds incredible. It really does sound like a reclamation of the land. Tell us a bit more about working with Natural Forces—what does a meaningful partnership between the Nation and utility developer look like to you?**

The community has had some bad experiences with development corporations, joint ventures, and limited liability partnerships. So, we were extra cautious this time, especially given the scale of the project. We started connecting with Natural Forces in 2015, but we did not solidify our partnership until almost a year later. I called it a kind of courtship where we had meetings and asked questions upon questions upon questions because you have to build trust. For a community that has been burned by partners before, trust is a major, major issue. Not just for the leadership, but for everyone that supports the leadership too. If you are going to invest \$50 million of your people's money, you need to have full out support from the community. What did that look like? It meant Natural Forces coming to the community and being upfront, with both sides explaining the nature of the partnership and how we will move forward together in a good way.

It meant that we had to go through some major transformations within our governance structure as well, in order to remove politics from the way we do work and projects like this. This was fundamental to creating a healthy partnership—when you remove politics and focus on that end vision, that community goal, you can knock any project out of the park.

Today, we have a strong partnership with Natural Forces. Their willingness to engage with the community and stick their neck out on the line for us was important. There are so many sharks out there. Finding that diamond in the rough, like our partners, was a gift. I hear of so many energy projects that getting sidelined because that partnership isn't there.

### How does the Wocawson project fit in with the work the Nation has been doing with A SHARED Future?

Our ASF project, *We Lived This Way Before*, focuses more on the health economy, asking the question: Where is Tobique now? And, once we invest in clean energy, what will our health look like in the year 2050? The Wocawson Project plays a big role in investing in the health of our community. So, through the ASF project, we are putting the building blocks in now to try and understand what the health of

our community is—physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. They are all connected, too—I am thinking of a medicine wheel now. If you are disconnected from spirit, all the others are going to be disconnected too.

For me, ceremony is a holistic way to connect back to why—what my purpose here on earth is, and how can I leave a very small footprint. When we combine ceremony with our work, it helps connect and put everything into place. At the beginning of the project, there was delay after delay with government legislation that threatened the start of the project. I laid down tobacco to ask for guidance and was reminded that we need to do ceremony to ask the ancestors to help us with this very important project for our people. Another member of our team, Ramona, guided us to conduct a small pipe ceremony right at the site. We quickly organized a trip to the site for Natural Forces and our Chief and Council to attend the ceremony. We chose the site where the transmission lines were going to be connected to the turbines.

Ramona conducted a powerful pipe ceremony; for some, it was their first experience attending ceremony. It was a beautiful experience bringing in the ancestors to guide us on our journey through this important project. Shortly after the ceremony, we had a resolution to the legislative barriers, moved past some of the issues we had with New Brunswick Power, and were even to secure a higher functioning turbine than before. This is the power of our ancestors and how we connect with them.

When the ASF Summer Institute delegation came to Tobique in 2018, we conducted a ceremony as well. We felt it was important for people to understand why this place is so special to us. Julian Moulton led us through a really impactful ceremony at our pow wow grounds. I think we cleared the clouds for a lot of people that day. It was very powerful, to help the ASF team connect to us as people here and why we're passionate about what we do, but also to connect us to each other, and to the purpose of why clean energy and green energy should be our future and will be our future - not should be, it *will* be.



Windmill nacelle with Wabanaki art  
(Photo courtesy of Tanna Pirie)

## Project Updates

Here is what Project Leads have to say this month:

### Gikinoo'amaagewin Wiigwaam (Teaching Lodge): Supporting M'Wikwedong Indigenous Friendship Centre's Leadership on Land Stewardship and Urban Climate Transition in Owen Sound/Saugeen Ojibway Territory

**Co-Leads:** Paul Nadjiwan, Karen Houle, and Jeff Masuda

**Team Members:** Diane Giroux, Renee Abram, Diana Lewis, Carlos Sánchez, Anna Anbalagan, and Julia Moreau

**Advisory Committee:** Theresa O'Connor, Susan Staves Schank, Hillary Trudeau, Ron Root, Shane Chegahno, Nick Saunders, Shari Huber, Anne Marie Shaw, Victoria Serda and Helen Doyle

**Current Status:** Project on hold due to COVID<sub>19</sub>.

**Update:** After initial enthusiasm about the possibility of hosting potential in-person activities after the first wave of COVID-19, the rise in new cases throughout the country at the beginning of this fall suggests that our project plan needs to shift and adapt to the current circumstances.

At this point, M'Wikwedong continues to offer online programming over Zoom and it is expected that in-person community gatherings will not take place at least until after Spring 2021. Our team members have suggested that since Zoom is already being used for program delivery, some of our research activities could take place

through this platform. The research activities could engage community members in providing input to M'Wikwedong's ongoing projects, such as the construction of the Gikinoo'amaagewin Wiigwaam teaching lodge and greenhouses. Our team will convene in October to finalize our COVID-19 contingency plan.

### Indigenous Women in Renewable Energy (I-WIRE)

**Co-Leads:** Naatoi'Ihkpiakii (Melissa Quesnelle) and Heather Castleden

**Advisory Committee:** Barbara Dumont-Hill, Tanna Pirie. One position open

**Current Status:** Project proceeding as planned

**Update:** Progress on the I-WIRE film and data analysis has slowed in recent months due to extenuating COVID-19 commitments. Heather and Melissa are planning a meeting in the near future to develop a workplan to move forward with the film and data analysis.

### Bras d'Or Lakes CEPI

**Co-Leads:** Mary Beth Doucette, Lisa Young, and Stan Johnson

**Project Assistant:** Carolyn Barber

**Advisory Committee:** Elder Albert Marshall and Cheryl Bartlett

**Current Status:** Project proceeding as planned.

**Update:** Leaves are beginning to turn here in Unama'ki as the ASF-CEPI research team moves into the knowledge sharing phase of its project exploring possibilities, pitfalls, and complexities of implementing Etuaptmumk/Two-Eyed Seeing within the Collaborative Environmental Planning Initiative (CEPI).

Mary Beth presented a knowledge sharing strategy, including a sample presentation, to the CEPI Management Committee on Sept. 25. The proposal was well-received and committee members provided useful comments and recommendations.

With the Management Committee's endorsement, Mary Beth, Carolyn and CBU fourth-year student Trinity Nicholas, will develop six pre-recorded presentations to be made available on the A SHARED Future website in October. Each presentation focuses on a major theme that emerged out of the 21 interviews

conducted in late 2019/early 2020 with various knowledge holders within and associated with the CEPI.

Mary Beth and Carolyn will host online discussions in October/November, inviting members of the CEPI to reflect on each theme – CEPI History, CEPI Governance and Organizing, CEPI Identity and the identities within it, CEPI Relationships (internal and community), the “Work” of the CEPI, and Etuaptmuk/Two-Eyed Seeing within the CEPI

### Perspectives Among Indigenous Youth on Energy and Food Sovereignty

**Co-Leads:** Hannah Tait Neufeld and Chief Gordon Planes

**Advisory Committee:** TBD

**Current Status:** Proceeding as planned

**Update:** T’Sou-ke First Nations is continuing to focus their efforts on assisting their citizens during the COVID-19 pandemic. As such, the project continues to progress at a slower pace. In the meantime, Hannah and Brianna are continuing to prepare a manuscript for submission based on data collected during summer 2019. Once prepared, the draft manuscript will be submitted to Band Council for review and approval.

### We Lived This Way Before - Tobique First Nation

**Co-Leads:** Diana Lewis, Tanna Pirie  
**Research Assistant:** Serena Mendizabal  
**Project Coordinator:** Jennifer Sappier  
**Advisory Committee:** Elder Ramona Nicholas, Laura Turnbull (Sex and Gender Project Co-Champion), Asha Bear (Youth)  
**Current Status:** Project proceeding as planned. We continue to be flexible to accommodate COVID demands.

**Update:** Since July, we have been able to meet several times. Led by Elder Ramona Nicholas, the WL TWB team is able to find comfort in her prayers and words during these difficult times. As you know, Tobique First Nation (TFN) is in the ‘Atlantic Bubble’ – the envy of North America in handling Covid-19 - so we have been able to meet virtually to keep things moving along in the community. We are happy to report that Katie Russell (Project Coordinator), Asha Bear (Youth Rep), and Serena Mendizabal (Research Assistant)

have been busy planning the youth educational program that we plan to roll out in early 2021. Chad Walker (Research Associate) has received ethics approval to do a survey with the TFN Chief and Council to gain the views of Council members about their leadership role in renewable energy. He plans to launch the survey next month with the help of Katie and Asha. Serena, who is embarking on her Master’s degree in geography has decided she will devote her time to work on research with TFN, and we are starting to plan the health survey work that she will lead for the community in the coming months.



*The We Lived This Way Before research team during a team meeting on [Orange Shirt Day](#). (Photo courtesy of Dee Lewis)*

### Advancing Culturally Relevant Gender Based Analysis in Indigenous Research on Renewable Energy Futures and Health

**Co-Leads:** Jeff Masuda & Hollie Sabourin  
**Project Assistant:** Carlos Sánchez, Anna Anbalagan

**Advisory Committee:** Programmatic Steering Committee

**Current Status:** Project proceeding as planned.

**Update:** Our team is preparing to continue to transform our analysis of the interviews and sharing circle that we conducted into a research paper that reflects on our ongoing learning in regard to CRGBA. Granted that COVID-19 is making everything uncertain, we nonetheless aspire to have a first draft ready to present/review/discuss at our

annual meeting this December. As is always the case, authorship will be open to any A SHARED Future members who have participated in our research activities and wish to get involved in this project.

### Working Towards Energy Security, Self-Determination, and Reconciliation: A Collaborative Analysis of Natural Resources Canada Off Diesel Initiative

**Project Lead:** Heather Castleden

**Manager:** Derek Kornelsen

**Advisory Committee:** Naatoi’Ihkpiakii (Melissa Quesnelle), Ken Paul, Diana Lewis, Siobhan Slade, Vince Robinson

**Current Status:** Proceeding as planned.

**Update:** Over the summer we have continued to develop our analysis of the IODI and to work with our Advisory Committee and participants to develop engagement and publication strategies.

In response to participant and Advisory Committee feedback, our next steps include distributing a short video summarizing our analysis to date and soliciting feedback regarding key messages and audiences that participants would like to see prioritized as we work towards iterative development of initial publications.

As IODI awardees move into the implementation stage of their clean energy projects, our next steps will also include engaging with provincial and territorial governments and utilities to examine how their policies and practices can best reflect commitments to reconciliation and Indigenous rights and how these practices impact implementation of clean energy initiatives.

We are also happy to welcome Alex Makin, an incoming PhD student under Heather’s supervision, to the project. Alex is a white settler scholar and teacher in his first year as a PhD student and member of the HEC lab. He is currently living in Rankin Inlet, Nunavut. His research interests include community-based participatory research, the Indigenous Off-Diesel Initiative (IODI), Indigenous-settler reconciliation, and the Pact for a Green New Deal. Welcome to the team, Alex!

## Towards Energy Security in NunatuKavut

**Co-Leads:** Debbie Martin, Amy Hudson.

**Current Status:** Project proceeding as planned.

**Update:** No update to report.

## Exploring Relations, Experience and Ways of Knowing in an Interdisciplinary Cross-Cultural Program of Research

**Lead:** Sarah Rotz, Assistant Professor and A SHARED Future Associate

**Project Assistant:** Johnathan Rose

**Advisory Committee:** Simon Brascoupe and Cheryl Bartlett

**Current Status:** Project proceeding as planned.

**Update:** The team has received substantive feedback from the Programmatic Steering Committee on the draft manuscript entitled "Moving Beyond Sex and Data: Structurally Shifting Sex and Gender Analysis in Health Research." The team is continuing to refine the manuscript before moving forward with submission.

Working from recent developments in sex and gender conceptualizations, this paper examines the current concepts and practices of gender-based analysis in health research within CIHR and EHSI research. We examine how SGBA has been integrated into research programs, such as the extent to which frameworks of intersectionality, positionality and reflexivity have been applied.

Our findings indicate that: (a) attention has focused on issues of representation (both human and data) while deeper justice issues—and attendant concepts of intersectionality, positionality and reflexivity—continue to be ignored; (b) quantitative issues, topics, and approaches are separated from and often prioritized over qualitative; and (c) CIHR can improve and expand its knowledge, training and funding infrastructure and better support researchers to conceptualize and apply SGBA frameworks that are grounded in an understanding of sociopolitical structures of white supremacy and colonialism, and how these structures shape our research and our lives.

## News Items

### South Baffin Receiving \$18.3 Million to Develop Renewable Energy Projects

Through a partnership between the federal government and the Nunavut government, \$18.3 million will be invested towards the installation of solar panels and upgrades to lighting, mechanical and control system upgrades in 45 buildings. Although the primary contractor is based out of Toronto, three subcontracts have been awarded for companies with Inuit employees.

The project is called the South Baffin Energy Management Project and is receiving funding through the Low Carbon Economy Leadership Fund, a \$1.4 billion federal fund to support provinces and territories that have adopted the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change.

The main reason for this funding is to combat climate change, which disproportionately affects the North. It is predicted that Nunavut will see a cumulative reduction of 24 000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions by the end of the project's lifetime in 2022. Read more [here](#).

### How Gardening is Helping Haítzaqv (Heiltsuk) Nation cope with COVID-19

**This** piece featured in APTN News tells the story of Jess Housty (whose traditional name is 'Cúagilákv) who began the Granny Gardens initiative in the Haítzaqv (Heiltsuk) community. The story explores the community's approach to food sovereignty, especially considering environmental crises (eg. A devastating oil spill and climate change) and the more recent COVID-19 pandemic.

Community gardening is a mechanism through which community members can feel a deep sense of autonomy and connection with the generations of women on Haítzaqv lands who gardened, harvested, and worked together. Especially as a remote community, Housty explains that the carbon footprint of transporting fresh foods and the substandard quality of produce once arrived has an effect on the wellbeing of community members. The Granny Gardens project has been a way to bring the community together and contribute to the physical, mental, and spiritual health of community members, as well as the environment as a whole.

### Fisher River Cree Nation Launches Biggest Solar Project in Manitoba

Fisher River Cree Nation is now home to the biggest solar project in Manitoba, a 1-megawatt facility with nearly 3000 solar panels build entirely by Indigenous employees. Not only is this a source of revenue for the Nation, the facility has provided employment opportunity for community members and training that could lead to expansion of Indigenous-led renewable energy initiatives in other communities. Fisher River has been a leader in geothermal energy, and the new solar facility hosts wildflowers to support the local bee population and a free electric vehicle charging station. Read more about it [here](#)