



Windmills created by Tobique youth at the March Break Sustainability Program

## A SHARED Future Bi-Monthly Update

Greetings A SHARED Future affiliates and friends! We wish you continued wellness amidst the changing seasons.

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).

### ASF Connect: Asha Bear & Katie Russell

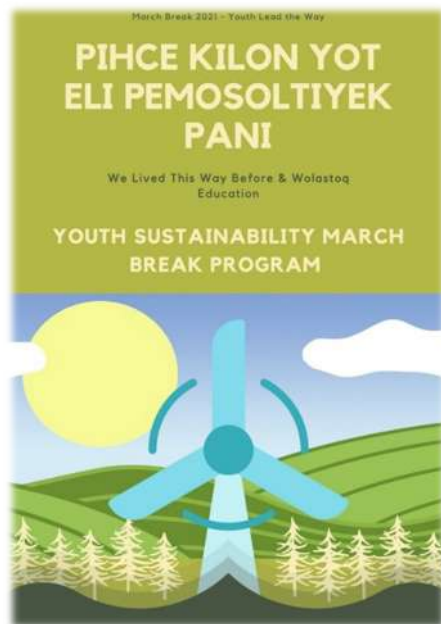
This month, we spoke with Asha Bear and Katie Russell, members of *We Lived This Way Before* research team. Alongside Serena Mendizabal, the team led a Sustainability focused March Break program for the youth in their community of Tobique First Nation.

We chatted with Asha and Katie to learn more about the program, their roles in the initiative, and next steps in planning more sustainability-focused events for the Nation.

**Thank you, Asha and Katie, for taking the time to speak with us about your roles on the *We Lived This Way Before* research project, and to talk about some of the great work your team has been up to.**

**To start off, could you tell us a little bit about yourselves?**

**Katie:** My name is Katie Russell. I graduated last year from the Business Administration program at the University of Maine, at Presque Isle. My concentration was in leadership and management, in addition to completing a health and fitness, as well as a recreation minor. I have been working on the *We Lived This Way Before* project since last year when I was hired on as the project coordinator, so I help with logistics and administration, but I also do research assistant stuff too.



Youth sustainability March Break program, Tobique First Nation

### Highlights

- ASF Connect: Asha Bear and Katie Russell: Pihce Kilon Yot Eli Pemosoltyek Pani Youth Sustainability March Break Program
- ASF featured project: Bras d'Or Lakes CEPI

### Upcoming Events

### In the News



**Asha:** My name is Asha Bear. I am from Tobique First Nation and have been working with the *We Lived This Way Before* project team on and off since 2018. I graduated from Dalhousie University in 2018 with a double major in sociology and theatre and a minor in Indigenous studies. I was fortunate to attend some conferences through the ASF research program during this time. Since then, I have stepped back from the project to take on my current position as an academic support worker at our local high school, but I am contributing to the project part time in any ways that I can.

**You both offer such a diverse set of skills to the team, that's really awesome! How did you get involved with the project?**

**Katie:** In my first year of university, I had the opportunity to work in the finance office, which is just across from Tanna's office. We were able to spend some time working together during that year, and when the project coordinator position

opened up last year, I applied and she decided to take me under her wing, which I am really appreciative of. It has been a great mentorship opportunity working with Tanna and the team.

**Asha:** I was also brought into the project by Tanna when I graduated university and was looking for work in our community. I really enjoy working with and helping the youth, so when Tanna asked me to be a part of the project I was really happy to!

**Well, thank you Tanna for recruiting such excellent team members! Tell me a little bit about the projects you have been working on this spring**

**Katie:** Our big focus over the winter and spring was preparing for and running the *Pihce Kilon Yot Eli Pemosoltyek Pani – We Lived This Way Before* Youth Sustainability March Break Program. We planned out each day according to a theme centered around renewable energy and it ran really well! We had about 20 youth involved in a bunch of different activities. We brought in guest speakers to talk about different kinds of renewable energy, then ran different activities and exercises to do some hands-on learning that was connected to what the youth were hearing and learning about.

**Asha:** The first day focused on energy in general, then on the second day we talked about climate change and the effects it has on our health, environment, and community. Then, we focused on hydropower one day and wind power the next, since there is a hydro dam in our community that we all drive over everyday, as well as the Wocawson Wind Energy Project that Tobique First Nation is partnered with.

**What do you find are effective ways to engage youth in renewable energy?**

**Katie:** We ran some really cool activities, like one we did on the first day was called the 'RenewaBean'. What we did was put go brown beans in a bag and 10 white beans. The white beans stood for renewable energy, while the brown ones stood for non-renewables. We put the youth into groups and first had them pick 5 beans out of the bag, count them, and tally the data. Then, we had them put the white beans back in the bag, while keeping

the brown ones out, and then we did another round where they pulled 10 beans, and so on. This was about giving them a perspective on how many years it will take for non-renewable energy to be phased out and the transition to renewables. It was a really effective way to get the youth thinking about big concepts and applying them to activities they can engage with and relate to.



*Asha Bear, We Lived This Way Before project team member*



*Katie Russell, We Lived This Way Before project team member*

**Asha:** We also had a guest speaker, Deana Sappier from the Tobique Climate Change Committee, come in to talk with the youth about the effects of climate change, and then we did a climate change bingo game. I think the youth really grasped the concept of that one. When I went back to the youth at the end of the week, I asked them about what they learned and they responded really well. I know the youth

were also going home and talking to their parents about what they were learning, so the impacts of this kind of work go beyond the youth.



*Youth participating in activities at the March Break program*

When we talked about hydropower, we had an Elder, Allan Tremblay, come in from the community. We shared pictures and talked about what life was like in the community before the dam, and how the dam was built without the community's consent. I think this was a really effective way for the youth to learn about the history of energy developments in our community and how some of these decisions were and are made. Then, we made little hydro dams out of water bottles to show the youth how they work and to think about how this process would provide energy to the community.

My favourite part was the day we focused on wind energy, talking about the wind turbines, and making mini windmills with the youth. It was a great way to talk about the renewable energy projects we are working on in the community.

**It is amazing how much diverse programming you fit into a few short days. It sounds like it was really successful. Would you run a March break program like this again? What would you do differently?**

**Katie:** We would definitely run a program like this again, and I think we know now what we could do differently to make things run even better. We need to plan a few extra activities just in case plans change or we have some extra time to fill. Because we were collaborating with other members of the team and community, the schedule for activities was kind of last minute, so having some extra activities on

hand would help keep the youth engaged in between sessions and moments of downtime. So, there was a bit of figuring out things 'on the fly' that worked out well, but now we can plan with a bit more clarity if we run a program like this again.

**Asha:** Yeah, I think we would have to change up some of the projects too, because the youth that participated this time will probably take part again. So, we would want to touch on some other topics, like solar energy, which we didn't have an opportunity to cover.



*Building and experimenting with miniature hydro dams*

**With that in mind, do you have any future programming on your radar?**

**Asha:** We have been working to develop some curriculum around renewable energy and have it implemented in the elementary, middle, and high schools. The plan would be to have youth learn about renewable energy for a couple days every month, where we would cover certain topics, sort of like we did with the March break program. We really want to reach as many youth as we can with this work because Tobique is playing a big role in different renewable energy projects. We were hoping to get this off the ground in 2020, but we haven't been able to work out the details because of covid.

**Katie:** Yeah, I think it worked out though because the March Break program kind of gave us that trial-and-error time to test

out some of our activities and ideas. So now we have a better idea of what is going to work and what might not work so well when bringing this into the classroom. Figuring out things like the time it takes to do activities and the resources needed will be helpful to teachers to give them a better sense of the time they need to set aside to do this during class time.

**That sounds like such an exciting and impactful initiative. All of this programming sounds so immersive too—the youth learn about it through school and extracurricular programming, then go home and talk about it to their parents, who can also attend some events. It is such an effective way to teach youth and have renewable energy be part of their everyday. Has the idea of bringing this into the classroom been well received by the school's administration and teachers?**

**Asha:** Yes, we have received so much support. Early on into planning this work, I contacted as many Indigenous People from Tobique that work in the schools—two elementary, one middle, and one high school—and they were all really excited about the initiative. Oh, I contacted the daycare too and they were super pumped also! It is great to have that support from the teachers and administration. It shows us that we are on the right path doing this work.

**That sounds like such a fantastic initiative and excellent next step, to go from a March Break program to integrating renewable energy into the curriculum across schools in Tobique. What a wonderful learning opportunity for the youth. Is there anything else cool on your radar?**

**Katie:** We are currently in the midst of planning some summer programming that would focus on renewable energy, but would involve adults and youth. We are planning to organize a couple events a month that would be more of a community engagement type of event to extend our reach, get the project name out there, and let folks know what we are all about. We really want to introduce the project more to the community so they are more receptive to attending any larger events that we plan. We really want

families to be involved with their children too, because in order for change to happen, parents need to adapt to it too and teach their children. We are really striving for a shared sense of responsibility and teamwork to get everybody involved. That is kind of our goal.

So, stay tuned for upcoming events in Tobique First Nation over the summer!



*Youth participating in more activities focused on sustainability and climate change*



# Bras d'Or Lakes Collaborative Environmental Planning Initiative

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

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

**Local Project Manager:** Carolyn Barber

**Student Trainees:** Trinity Nicholas, Shaniya Vance, Tanaysha Sack

The Bras d'Or Lakes Collaborative Environmental Planning Initiative (CEPI) is a unique intersectoral partnership that values, prioritizes and demonstrates inclusivity. Guided by the principle of Etuaptmumk/Two-Eyed Seeing, the 16-year-old partnership has endured and grown, despite shifting local social, environmental, and political priorities. Primarily, the ASF CEPI project began with the intention to explore and learn from the practice of Two-Eyed Seeing in a long-term intersectoral partnership. The research involved primary (one-to-one interviews), secondary (archival) research conducted from 2018-present, and a series of interactive on-line group discussions held in the fall/winter 2020-2021.

**We learned that** enacting Etuaptmumk/Two Eyed Seeing within the CEPI involves understanding the integrative power of stories (CEPI Timeline and historical narratives), identity and relationships (organizational and personal), and governance and planning. Importantly, clear and consciously cultivating strategies that encourage regular and clear communication is essential to success. To provide a more fulsome understanding of our findings, we will first provide an overview of CEPI's organizational identity, timeline, and governance structure. This feature will highlight some of the findings from our project. A full-length summary report has been provided to the CEPI Management Committee for consideration. It will be released publicly later this year, once it has received their final approval.

## CEPI's Origin Story

The CEPI is committed to exploring sustainable economic development of the Bras d'Or Watershed and acknowledges the forthcoming challenges presented by climate change. We would say that the CEPI officially came into being in 2004, that is when the name CEPI was first adopted in the program of the 2004 Bras d'Or Workshop. However, its place as a discussion table was forged through relationships and dialogue tracing back to the mid-1990's. Gatherings that pre-date CEPI were important to acknowledge. They represent the preceding periods of (1) separation between Mi'kmaw and Canadians (1975 -1995) as well as other voices invested in the health and well-being of the Bras d'Or Watershed; (2) Early efforts at Collaboration and Indigenous/non-Indigenous Dialogue (1995-2003); (iii) Formalization of the CEPI: Ongoing Action, Tension, and Negotiation (2004-present)



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

## CEPI's Timeline and Historical Narrative

Through the research effort we developed an appreciation for the influence of past events on CEPI's current work.

Early in the research process, we met with Senator Dan Christmas to understand the priorities for the CEPI and the challenges that he saw as the Chair. In this first interview, and those that followed, it became evident that CEPI's history and past events, are important parts of the CEPI operations. The past heavily influences how the present is understood. Therefore, we created a timeline from archival sources so everyone engaging in the conversations about the CEPI will have a common set of reference points (this timeline can be found in the full summary report).

Though, the CEPI may have officially launched in 2004, its place as a discussion table was forged through relationships and dialogue tracing back to the mid-1990s. The Bras d'Or Lakes Ecosystem Workshops in 1999 brought key CEPI members together, it also set the stage for much the future work of the CEPI. Gatherings that pre-date CEPI were important to acknowledge.

Therefore, **we have identified these three distinct phases of CEPI history** as follows:

### I - Separation between Mi'kmaq and Canadians (1975-1995)

During this phase, there were separate conversations about the health and well-being of the Bras d'Or Watershed, and scientific, political, and cultural voices were assumed to be separate and distinct.

### II - Collaboration and Indigenous/non-Indigenous Dialogue (1995-2003)

This period began with the historic Middle Shoal case which related to the dredging of the Lake bottom. The case resulted in recognition of Mi'kmaq rights to be consulted on policy and the need for "science" informed policy decisions. The 1999 Marshall decision brought recognition of Mi'kmaq rights to fish for a moderate livelihood. Both court cases changed local and national policy discussions. They amplified social tensions between Indigenous/non-Indigenous governments. They also signalled the need for intentional and respectful dialogue about science and policy between Indigenous/non-Indigenous inhabitants of the Bras d'Or Watershed and governing bodies with jurisdiction over decision making.

### III - Formalization of the CEPI: Ongoing Action, Tension, and Negotiation (2004-present)

The signing of the Bras d'Or Charter in 2005 signaled the beginning of the third and current phase. It included memorable events like the internal CEPI review conducted in 2008-09, the culmination of the 2011 Spirit of the Lakes document. Then, in 2016, the high-profile Spirit of the Lakes Conference was held where CEPI announced its new focus on sustainable economic development of the watershed.

## Recommendations Related to History and Narrative:

We propose the CEPI use this historical framework and attached timeline in the following ways:

- Create an orientation package to share with new members, improve internal communication and dialogue.
- Develop a consistent set of narratives regarding the CEPI's formation, including the development of visual and audio-visual elements to facilitate sharing
- Post these elements on the website and social media, improve external communication and increase awareness about the CEPI's impact and value.

## Themes of Identity and Relationships

The results suggest that CEPI has persevered because it has consistently fostered dialogue and reflection about its purpose and identity. We discuss aspects of **CEPI Organizational Identity** and the relative importance of relationships that have developed around the CEPI table.

The purpose and objectives outlined in the charter are reflective of watershed planning initiatives in other places. However, the vision makes CEPI unique:

*“VISION – To lead a unique collaboration of partners that incorporate both the traditional Mi’kmaq and western perspectives in order to foster a healthy and productive Bras d’Or Lakes Watershed ecosystem.”*

Many interviewees, noted that CEPI’s strength lies in the diversity of its membership and the perspectives they bring issues presented around the CEPI discussion table. They reflected the essence of the vision, often referring to the **Mi’kmaq and Canadian members** as evidence of diversity. However, we also saw it as something broader than that; **CEPI is a unique collaboration of partners** and each member brings unique gifts to the table, adding complexity and depth to the discussion.

*“There’s so many great minds on CEPI. I learn so much just from listening and hearing all their different sides and all their different perspectives. They all have something to bring to the table.”*



*Bras d’Or Lakes, wintertime.  
Photo by Mary Beth Doucette*

## Recommendations Related to Identity and Partner Relations

To build a more cohesive organizational identity, we recommend the following:

- Leverage the central attribute of CEPI as "a discussion table" and demonstrate the value in collaborative discussions for co-learning, and networking regarding important watershed issues, e.g. conferences and steering committees
- Script a common narrative to raise and maintain awareness about CEPI mandate, priorities, plans and projects with communities in the Bras d’Or Lakes watershed
- As a group, possibly led by the communications task team, consider the following questions in clarifying its identity: What is CEPI's reason for being?
  - ~ What is its value to members and watershed communities? How are the vision and objectives being communicated to the broader Unama'ki/Cape Breton communities?
  - ~ Does CEPI have a central character? What makes it distinct? What attributes if any have been consistently embraced or enacted over time?
- Position the CEPI as a unique organizational structure and a unique model for Reconciliation

## Themes of Governance, Planning, and Two-Eyed Seeing

The UINR is the official secretariate for CEPI. It is an organization that strategically advocates for integrative sciences approaches (Bartlett et al, 2012), using research strategies that draw on both western and Indigenous knowledge systems (Denny & Fanning, 2016). When the CEPI was formed in 2005 with an intention to address environmental policy gaps, it adopted a guiding principle known as Etuaptmumk, a Mi'kmaw word translated to "Two-Eyed Seeing". This pedagogical approach, developed locally to teach integrative sciences (Hatcher, Bartlett, Marshall, and Marshall, 2009), weaves between western and Indigenous knowledge systems to create space for collaborative co-learning across different ontologies and epistemologies (Bartlett et al., 2012; Denny & Fanning, 2016).

A SHARED Future was eager to learn how to apply Two-Eyed Seeing as an organizational process for research and governance, making the ASF-CEPI project integral to its broader program of research. The value of Two-Eyed Seeing is gaining attention within the CEPI network and beyond.

*"I think Two-Eyed Seeing is a useful tool for development. It's not going to replace science, but what it can do is make a better, stronger case for determining how you proceed."*



*Mi'kmaw Elder Albert Marshall developed the pedagogical approach of Etuaptmumk/Two-Eyed Seeing*

Understandings of Etuaptmumk/Two-Eyed Seeing, the guiding principle of the CEPI, have evolved over time. Even though we found there is a lack of consensus among interviewees around what Etuaptmumk/Two-eyed seeing should look like, it was clear that the CEPI continually engages with Two-Eyed Seeing as a guiding principle, methodological approach, or framework for research projects, teaching and learning, and policy/program development.

At CEPI, we can appreciate that it is still unusual for Two-Eyed Seeing-like strategies to be adopted by non-Indigenous organizations in the way CEPI was attempting to do, for non-academic, administrative purposes.

The CEPI practices Etuaptmumk in multiple ways. For example, by:

- Presenting the voice of the lakes as the central character in the Spirit of the Lakes Speak document (See chapter on storytelling CEPI, Doucette and Castleden, Forthcoming)
- Setting aside meeting time for everyone in the room to share a recent experience within the watershed
- Including Elders and youth in conversations, meetings, and conferences
- Hosting gatherings in a variety of locations to foster co-learning places around the watershed

When establishing a future research agenda for climate change and climate mitigation, the economy will also be a critically important consideration. Now more than ever, as we recover from the pandemic, the lesson we learn from CEPI is that there are multiple ways to create space for important and reflective dialogue and collaborative co-learning.

## Recommendations Related to Etuaptmumk/Two-Eyed Seeing

As the CEPI continues to integrate Two-Eyed Seeing, we invite you to consider the following:

- Define Two-Eyed Seeing in the same way as UINR. This means understanding it is an integral part of collaborative co-learning.
- Continue to actively bring youth and Elders to the discussion.
- Provide regular, focussed workshops about Two-Eyed Seeing. UINR staff have done two of these sessions this past year- one for an aquaculture task force meeting, and another for the steering committee. Reflect on the value of those presentations.
- Integrate dialogue about Two-Eyed Seeing into regular meetings and major events.
- Promote the CEPI as an exemplar of Two-Eyed Seeing in practice – thus encouraging more dialogue with other organizations. For example, at the 2019 Climate Adaptation Forum.

## Reflections from the Research Team

*I became acquainted with Etuaptmumk/Two-Eyed Seeing on a very academic level years ago during graduate school. The CEPI project was a unique opportunity to revisit and explore this way of processing complex decisions and relationships. In our pursuit to identify the "opportunities, complexities and pitfalls" of enacting Etuaptmumk/Two-Eyed at the CEPI, I observed both a faith in, and struggle with, the process of collaboration. It changed my understanding of the role that tension, rupture and repair play in building strong, long-lasting collaborations.*

- Carolyn Barber (Research Coordinator)

*Working with the CEPI project has allowed me to learn more about traditional knowledge. Despite being an Aboriginal woman, I haven't been able to work very closely with traditional ideals and sustainability before this. As well as traditional knowledge, I have been able to learn better research and writing skills that continue to help me outside of the CEPI project. Being able to listen in on the CEPI table and hear about ideas like Etuaptmumk has allowed me to have a better understanding of why traditional knowledge needs to be implemented into sustainable practices. I look forward to seeing how CEPI implements Two-Eyed Seeing in future projects.*

- Trinity Nicholas (Research Assistant)



*From left: Stan Johnson, Lisa Young, Mary Beth Doucette, Carolyn Barber*



*The Bras d'Or Lakes.  
Photo courtesy of Mary Beth*



*Bras d'Or Lakes,  
artist's rendition by Claire and Simon Brascoupe*

***Wela'lin. Merci. Thank you. Tapadh leat. Thanks to the members for their contributions, support, and honesty through the research process.***



## Upcoming Events

### The Land, Health, & Healing Gathering: Honouring Indigenous Leadership, June 17-18

The Land, Health & Healing Gathering, organized by Margot Parkes and Meg Labron through the University of Northern British Columbia, will be taking place on the territory of the Lheidli T'enneh and online June 17-18. The gathering is intended to bring together people who are engaged with Indigenous-led approaches to connecting land, health, and healing. The gathering will focus on strengthening existing relationships and fostering cross-fertilisation among work that connects health, environment, and community. For more information on how to register, please contact Meg Labron at [labron@unbc.ca](mailto:labron@unbc.ca)

### Native American and Indigenous Studies Association Annual Meeting, June 14-21

The annual meeting of the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association will be taking place virtually from June 14-21. This year's theme is *Indigenous Conversations Across Waters, Lands, Generations, and Imaginations*. [You can learn more about the conference and register here.](#)

### Sustainable Buildings Canada: Green Building Festival, October 5

Sustainable Buildings Canada will be hosting the Green Building Festival in Toronto and virtually on October 5. The conference focus is on sustainability, regeneration, and resilience in the context of the building community and climate change. Keynotes include Eladia Smoke, who will be giving a presentation on Two-Eyed Seeing in the context of a building expansion project at Centennial College. [You can learn more about the conference and register here.](#)

### Behavior, Energy, and Climate Change: Reimagining the Future, November 8-10

The Behavior, Energy and Climate Change Conference will be taking place virtually on November 8-10. The conference focuses on understanding human behavior and decision making, then using that knowledge to accelerate the transition to a low-carbon future. [You can learn more about the conference and register here.](#)

## In the News

### Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation's Solar Farm Now Generating Electricity

The Vuntut Gwitchin First Nations solar farm is now generating electricity that meets some of the community's energy needs. The farm will replace 190,000 litres of diesel fuel annually, while providing additional income to the community to support other renewable energy projects. [Read more about it here.](#)

### Kwadacha First Nation Receives Funds to Support School Solar Power Project

Kwadacha First Nation has received \$486,000 through the British Columbia Renewable Energy for Remote Communities program to install solar panels on the K-12 Aatse Davie School. The project will reduce the Nation's reliance on diesel and propane power generators, while also saving the school more than \$12,000 annually. [Read more here.](#)

