

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



CORPORATION OF THE
CITY OF SAULT STE. MARIE

November 21, 2022

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau,

There is no better location for the Canada Water Agency than Sault Ste. Marie.

Sault Ste. Marie is located at the heart of the Great Lakes and has everything needed for the Canada Water Agency's success.

We are strategically located in central Canada and on the U.S.-Canada border. Our twin cities of Sault Ste. Marie Ontario and Michigan house thriving post-secondary institutions focused on the natural environment, indigenous teachings and fresh water research. Both the federal and provincial government have established research facilities here in Sault Ste. Marie, from Ontario's Forest Research Institute and Invasive Species Centre, to Canada's Great Lakes Forest Research Institute.

Furthermore, Sault Ste. Marie is significant in Indigenous culture as a historic gathering place known as, "Bawaating," meaning "Place of the Rapids". It is located at the centre of the Ojibwe territory. Even it's current name "Sault" means rapids in ancient French.

We are excited to share the City of Sault Ste. Marie's proposal for the federal Canada Water Agency. Our City established a Task Force of internal and external stakeholders to oversee and guide our Canada Water Agency initiative and the development of our final bid. Key activities we have undertaken as part of this project include:

- Launching a website dedicated to the Sault Ste. Marie Canada Water Agency Project, www.cwassm.ca, which highlights our region's strengths and provides updates to our extensive community engagement.
- Holding community outreach discussions including sessions specifically for youth, Indigenous, and organizational stakeholder input. The City released a "What We Heard" report, highlighting the results of these community sessions - we had strong and positive response from community members and stakeholders for a local Canada Water Agency presence.
- Obtaining letters of support from key stakeholders, industry and international strategic partners (included in the attached information package).
- Creating a promotional video highlighting our local value proposition for a Canada Water Agency (<https://youtu.be/fa2vjmr41b4>).
- Participating in local, regional, and national media invitations to highlight and promote our work and Sault Ste. Marie as an ideal location for the Canada Water Agency.

The City welcomes the opportunity and is ready to host the Canada Water Agency. We look forward to working with the Government of Canada to advance this project in Sault Ste. Marie.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'M5C', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Mayor Matthew Shoemaker

Cc: Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Steven Guilbeault
Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Terry Duguid
Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour, Terry Sheehan, M.P. Sault Ste. Marie

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



CORPORATION OF THE
CITY OF SAULT STE. MARIE

November 21, 2022

Honorable Premier Ministre Justin Trudeau
L'honorable Steven Guilbeault, Ministre de l'Environnement et du Changement climatique

Cher Premier Ministre Trudeau et Ministre Guilbeault,

Cette lettre, a pour but de vous aviser de notre intention d'être considéré comme ville hôte pour l'agence canadienne de l'eau. À nos yeux, il n'y a pas de meilleur emplacement pour héberger ce directorat du département de l'environnement et des ressources naturelles que chez nous à Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario.

D'abord, je crois qu'il est nécessaire de mentionner que l'Ontario renferme environ un cinquième de l'eau douce du monde et que nous sommes situés au cœur des Grands Lacs. De plus, nous partageons une frontière canado-américaine et nos villes jumelles de Sault Ste. Marie en Ontario et celle du Michigan possède tous deux des établissements post-secondaires prospères. L'Université Algoma a en outre des programmes d'étude sur l'environnement, l'enseignement des premières nations, ainsi que sur la recherche de l'eau douce. Les gouvernements fédéral et provincial ont déjà des installations de recherche ici à Sault Ste. Marie. Je pense entre autre à l'Institut de recherche forestière et son centre d'excellence contre la lutte des espèces envahissantes de l'Ontario et également l'Institut de recherche forestière des Grands Lacs du Canada.

De plus, Sault Ste. Marie a un profond héritage de culture autochtone et est considéré par plusieurs comme étant un lieu sacré de rassemblement historique. Connu sous le nom de « Baawaating », qui signifie « Lieu des rapides », nous sommes également situés en territoire Ojibwé. Dans leur croyance ancestral, ceux-ci décrivent leurs responsabilités collectives de protéger les ressources naturelles telles que l'eau pour au moins les sept générations suivantes et les femmes sont gardiennes de cette importante tradition. J'ajoute pareillement que le nom actuel "Sault" signifie aussi < rapides ou chute d'eau> en français immémorial.

La Ville de Sault Ste Marie serais ravi d'accueillir l'Agence canadienne des eaux. Notre conseil municipale a par ailleurs mis sur pied un groupe de travail composé d'intervenants internes et externes pour superviser et guider cette initiative et l'élaboration de notre offre finale. Les principales activités que nous avons entreprises dans le cadre de ce projet comprennent:

- Le lancement d'un site web dédié à l'Agence canadienne de l'eau à Sault Ste. Marie: Canada Water Agency Project, www.cwassm.ca, qui met en évidence les forces de notre région et fournit des mises à jour sur notre vaste engagement envers cette initiative.
- La tenue de nombreux forums de discussions sur la sensibilisation collective face à un tel projet, y compris des séances spécifiquement orientées pour obtenir les commentaires des jeunes, des Autochtones et des intervenants du milieu. La Ville a

aussi publié un rapport « Ce que nous avons entendu », soulignant les résultats de ces séances communautaires. Nous avons eu une réponse forte et très positive des membres de la communauté et des intervenants dans le but d'héberger l'Agence canadienne de l'eau.

- Obtention des lettres d'appui des principaux intervenants, de l'industrie et des partenaires stratégiques internationaux (incluses dans la trousse d'information ci-jointe).
- La création d'une vidéo promotionnelle mettant en valeur notre proposition locale pour l'Agence canadienne de l'eau (<https://youtu.be/fa2vjmr41b4>).
- Notre participation a diverses invitations médiatiques locales, régionales et nationales pour souligner et promouvoir notre travail à Sault Ste. Marie comme ambassadeur et terre d'accueil idéale pour l'Agence canadienne de l'eau.

La Ville de Sault Ste Marie est très enthousiasme face à cette opportunité d'accueillir le siège sociale de l'Agence canadienne de l'eau. Nous sommes impatients de travailler avec le gouvernement du Canada pour faire avancer ce projet à Sault Ste. Marie.

Je vous prie d'agréer, Monsieur le Premier Ministre de mes sentiments les plus distingués,



MATTHEW M. SHOEMAKER
Maire, Sault Ste. Marie

Copie:

Secrétaire parlementaire du ministre de l'Environnement et du Changement climatique, Terry Duguid, et
Secrétaire parlementaire du ministre du Travail, Terry Sheehan.



**SAULT
STE.MARIE**

Sault Ste. Marie

**An ideal location for the
Canada Water Agency**



Welcome

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- 11+ Appendices:
 - What We Heard in the Algoma District
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 - Letters of Support

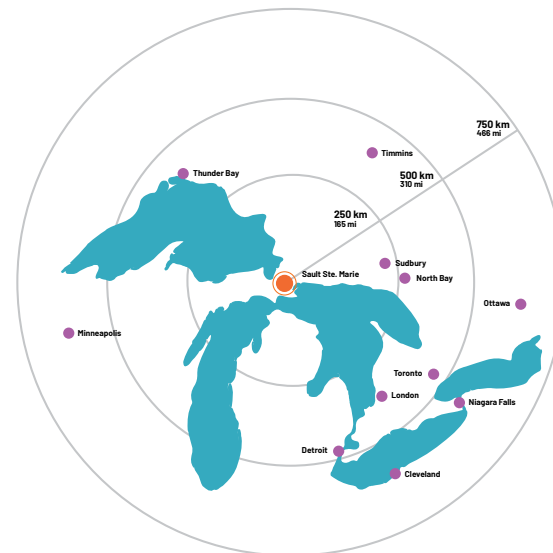
Centrally located within the largest group of freshwater lakes in the world, the City of Sault Ste. Marie's plentiful natural assets, cultural diversity, and local expertise that reaches beyond borders, make it an ideal location for the Canada Water Agency.

Why Sault Ste. Marie

Explore the many reasons why Sault Ste. Marie is the perfect location for Canada's Water Agency.

We are the Heart of Canada's Freshwater

Nestled in the Hub of the Great Lakes Region, Sault Ste. Marie is located mid-way across Canada and next to one of the largest freshwater lakes in the world, Lake Superior. Within city limits are a variety of bodies of water and landforms including forests, cliffs, fast moving waters, swamps, wetlands, and the St. Mary's River. Sault Ste. Marie boasts habitat diversity, and the biological diversity associated with it.



Indigenous Partnership

Named after its freshwater, Baawaating, meaning "Place of the Rapids" is centrally located in the traditional Ojibwe territory. The City has engaged with our Indigenous communities and partners to build support and bring indigenous voice to our proposal development.

City Leadership

The City of Sault Ste. Marie is committed to supporting freshwater research and conservation. Sault Ste. Marie has completed a GHG Emissions Reduction Plan and is continuing its commitment to climate action through the implementation of the plan!

Truth and Reconciliation

The City of Sault Ste. Marie has been active and engaged in responding to the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). The Mayor leads the Bawaating Advisory circle. The Bawaating Advisory Circle was established as a way for engagement and dialogue to take place between Sault Ste. Marie leadership and our Indigenous communities. The advisory circle is another positive step forward on the path to local reconciliation. Algoma University is developing Canada's first Truth and Reconciliation hub. Mukqua Waakaa'igan, the Anishinaabemowin name endowed to the new cultural facility. The facility will promote the Calls To Action and provide a space to showcase indigenous cultures in Canada.

A Centre for Innovative Clean Economic Growth

Sault Ste. Marie's business community has been a leader in clean economic growth. The region features over 272 MW of wind generation, 68 MW of solar generation and 203 MW hydroelectric generation. Our local utility will switch on the first community-wide smart grid in Canada in 2023. Heliene, a solar panel manufacturing company headquartered in Sault Ste. Marie, can produce 950MW per year at its facilities in SSM and the U.S. Earlier this year, Algoma Steel announced its new electric arc furnace project that will enable the company to create the greenest steel in Canada.



Community Support and Engagement

Water is a way of life in Sault Ste. Marie. Our beautiful region offers endless beauty and activities centred around our freshwater. The City of Sault Ste. Marie partnered with Lake Huron North to bring community voices representing industry, non-profit organizations, youth, and Indigenous persons to the table to explore our vision for a water-secure future.

International and Regional Collaboration

Being a border City, Sault Ste. Marie freshwater researchers collaborate internationally with ease. Algoma University faculty have partnered and collaborate regularly with Lake Superior State University’s faculty at the Center for Freshwater Resources and Education.

Algoma University and other community stakeholders are a part of the Lake Superior Living Labs Network (LSLLN), a regional network. The LSLLN works collaboratively to co-create innovative solutions to sustainability challenges in the Lake Superior Watershed. Plus, Sault Ste. Marie has collaboratively monitored and managed the St. Mary’s River – for example, through the Bi-National Public Advisory Committee (BPAC).



An Ecosystem of Freshwater Research

innovative and leading freshwater and natural resource research and expertise, including:

- Sault College’s School of Natural Environment
- Algoma University’s School of Life Science and the Environment
- Turkey Lakes Watershed Study
- The Sea Lamprey Control Centre
- The Great Lakes Forestry Centre, part of Natural Resources Canada
- The Ontario Forest Research Institute, part of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry
- The Invasive Species Centre
- The Sault Ste. Marie Region Conservation Authority
- NORDIK Institute
- Lake Superior State University Center for Freshwater Resources and Education



Freshwater Experts

Sault Ste. Marie possesses the skills and expertise required for collaboration with the future Canada Water Agency staff. From Algoma University, Sault College, Great Lakes Forestry Centre, the Centre for Research and Lake Superior State University Center for Freshwater Resources and Education, Invasive Species Centre and more, the region includes a number of expert researchers. *An appendix is provided with a sample of biographies.*



Indigenous Partnership

“The significance of water in Anishinabe culture is really the connection of life. It is the life blood of our earth mother. It is the connection that binds all of life. Without water, there would be no life.”

– Mary Wabano-McKay

Vice President, Niiyaagaaniid Anishinabe Initiatives
Equity Student Success, Algoma University



Community Engagement

Ten in-person and virtual community discussions were held over five months to gather input from local organizations, Indigenous persons, youth (ages 15-24), and the general Algoma District community. Through this process, 208 individuals contributed their perspectives.

What We Heard in the Algoma District (found in the appendices) is the culmination of these discussions. The report shares the key themes and messages we heard from the community discussions hosted between August and December 2021.

To deliver these community discussions, the City of Sault Ste. Marie partnered with Lake Huron North, a local network of community organizations collaborating on water quality objectives across Algoma District. The sessions were facilitated by their Project Coordinator, Dr. Elaine Ho-Tassone.



10 COMMUNITY DISCUSSIONS
208 INDIVIDUALS CONTRIBUTED
3 FIRST NATIONS PARTICIPATED

Task Force



Matthew Shoemaker, Mayor of Sault Ste. Marie



Corey Gardi, City Councillor Sault Ste. Marie



Tom Vair, Deputy CAO, City of Sault Ste. Marie



Rick Van Staveren, Director Economic Development, City of Sault Ste. Marie



Travis Anderson, Director Tourism, City of Sault Ste. Marie



Joe Turpin, Manager Business Attraction, City of Sault Ste. Marie



Emily Cormier, Sustainability Coordinator, City of Sault Ste. Marie



Dr. Elaine Ho-Tassone, Director of Operations, NORDIK Institute



Dr. Paula Antunes, Freshwater Researcher and Consultant



Ryan Namespetra, Natural Environment Coordinator, Sault College

Our Supporters

Algoma District School Board
Algoma Steel Inc.
Algoma University
Algoma University, Department of Geography
Algoma University, School of Life Sciences and the Environment
Central Algoma Freshwater Coalition
Eastern Upper Penninsula Regional Planning & Development Commission (EUP)
Invasive Species Centre
Lake Superior State University's Center for Freshwater Research and Education (CFRE)

PUC Services Inc.
Rural Agri-Innovation Network (RAIN)
Sault College
Sault Ste. Marie Chamber of Commerce
Sault Ste. Marie Region Conservation Authority (SSMRCA)
Science North
Shingwauk Kinooomaage Gamig
St. Mary's Bi-National Public Advisory Council (BPAC)
The Kensington Conservatory

City of Sault Ste. Marie

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**SAULT
STE. MARIE**



A Canada Water Agency in the Sault: Summary of Community Discussions

What We Heard in the Algoma District



**SAULT
STE.MARIE**



JANUARY 2022

Who is the Sault?

We are at once in the middle of Canada and yet connected to six provinces via the flow of water from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of St. Lawrence. We have a large educated professional, academic and technical workforce. Two post secondary education institutions with experience in networked learning, information sharing and process implementation. Sault Ste. Marie has significant experience utilizing outside resources to impact change and bring desired results to large projects. We also have ongoing relationships that provide these resources to others whether it be smaller regional communities or larger industrial or commercial endeavors. Sault Ste. Marie is also a leader in green energy which is important as we continue to create, build and analyze large data to better make decisions with regards to water use, treatment and management.

Water's role in our history mirrors Canadian and Indigenous history – e.g., the fur trade, industrialization, and water recreation. Sault Ste. Marie's relationship with water is a microcosm of Canada's. This relationship makes Sault Ste. Marie uniquely situated to host a new Canada Water Agency.

Excerpt of a written contribution by an Algoma District community member. Adapted with permission.

Acknowledgements

OUR PLACE

These community discussions took place in Robinson-Huron Treaty territory—the traditional territories of Garden River First Nation, Batchewana First Nation, Métis Nation of Ontario, Missanabie Cree First Nation, and many others (including our friends across the colonial Canada-US border). We recognize and uphold the collaborative spirit of the Two-Row wampum (Gä•sweñta') and Dish with One Spoon wampum (Gdoo-naaganinaa).

We thank the Indigenous peoples and nations surrounding Baawatigong (St. Marys River) for their stewardship of the lands, waters, air, and everything within them, which settlers have benefited from often at the expense of original peoples. We recognize the many injustices perpetuated by colonialization, which continue to impact individuals, societies, and environments across Nayaano-nibiimaang Gichigamiin (Great Lakes region).

With these acknowledgements, we have engaged in community discussion with an intent to progress towards a more respectful and collaborative future. We are grateful to our Indigenous contributors for your willingness to collaborate in your territory—chi miigwech.

OUR PEOPLE

Many individuals contributed to the work presented in this document. The City of Sault Ste. Marie Canada Water Agency Task Force is comprised of the following members:

- **Matthew Shoemaker**, Mayor, City of Sault Ste. Marie
- **Christian Provenzano**, Former Mayor, City of Sault Ste. Marie
- **Cory Gardi, City Councillor**, City of Sault Ste. Marie
- **Tom Vair**, Deputy CAO, City of Sault Ste. Marie
- **Rick Van Staveren**, Director of Economic Development, City of Sault Ste. Marie
- **Travis Anderson**, Director of Tourism & Community Development, City of Sault Ste. Marie
- **Kathleen Heymans**, Manager of Business Development, City of Sault Ste. Marie
- **Emily Cormier**, Sustainability Coordinator, City of Sault Ste. Marie
- **Ryan Namespetra**, Natural Environment Coordinator, Sault College
- **Dr. Elaine Ho-Tassone**, Project Coordinator, Lake Huron North
- **Dr. Paula Antunes**, Freshwater Researcher and Consultant

We thank the City of Sault Ste. Marie's City Council for supporting this initiative, and Lake Huron North for dedicating their Project Coordinator's time to facilitate and summarize our discussions. We could not have carried out these discussions without the support of Jessica Maione (Economic Development Officer, City of Sault Ste. Marie), Grace Zhang (Business Analyst, Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Centre), Sarah Constable (Leader of Experiential Learning, Algoma District School Board), Celeste Schoahs (Co-op Student), Amanda Comegna (Administrative Assistant, Office of the Mayor, City of Sault Ste. Marie), Prabhleen Bhatia (Vice President Campus Affairs, Algoma University Students' Union) and the teachers who facilitated discussion with their students.

Finally, we extend our sincere gratitude to the 200+ contributors from our community who dedicated time and meaningful discussion to guide our effort to invite the Canada Water Agency to Sault Ste. Marie—**THANK YOU, MIIGWECH!**

REPORT AUTHORS:

Dr. Elaine Ho-Tassone,
Lake Huron North

Kathleen Heymans,
City of Sault Ste. Marie

FRONT AND REAR COVER IMAGES:

City of Sault Ste. Marie

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 – for a proposal and for a Canada Water Agency in the Sault



Executive Summary

BACKGROUND

The Government of Canada is establishing a Canada Water Agency to improve freshwater management across the country. The City of Sault Ste. Marie partnered with Lake Huron North to bring community voices to the table as we develop a formal proposal to the Government of Canada to invite the Agency to the Sault. This report summarizes those community voices.

ENGAGEMENT TIMELINE

Ten in-person and virtual discussions were held between August 24 and December 11, 2021 (inclusive). We heard from 208 individuals who represented perspectives of local organizations, Indigenous persons, youth (ages 15-24), and the general public.

WHAT WE HEARD

Sault Ste. Marie is an excellent location for a Canada Water Agency for reasons including our central location, proximity to a key navigation location and many fresh water areas, the immense cultural and historical significance of this region (being a 'meeting place' among the rapids), and that we recognize the unique approaches needed across the country due in part to our rural-urban community. We also provide a new space for collaborative policy, being a smaller community in Canada's North—an underrepresented demographic for government offices. We are also home to a vibrant freshwater research ecosystem that spans across the Canada-US border—e.g., expertise within multiple post-secondary institutions, the private sector, and all three levels of government.

Despite all this, there are opportunities to improve. Like in other areas across Canada, our history of urban and industrial development have had impacts on our environment and on the health of our peoples.

Community members highlighted that the presence of industry is an opportunity to explore and develop policies and practices for 'clean growth'. We are excited about our collective responsibility (Sault and across Canada) to demonstrate leadership in freshwater remediation.

The need for further education and conversation was a major component of our community members' perspectives. Misinformation (about water governance), language, ethics, ways of knowing, and human rights were all discussed. We need to have conversations to ensure a common understanding of how integral water is to our lives—while recognizing that this relationship with water is different for different peoples and parts of Canada.

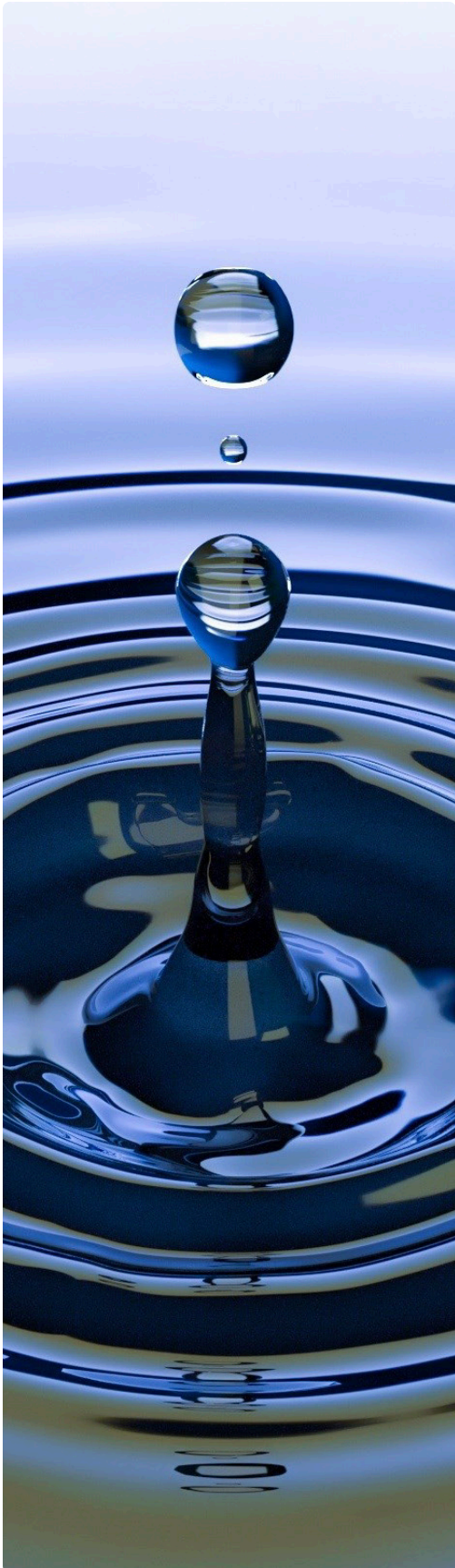
Voices from across the community—representing industry, non-profit organizations, youth, and Indigenous persons—were strongly aligned in the need to form stronger and more productive relationships with both industry organizations and Indigenous nations. In addition, community members hope a CWA will be supplemented by local strategies and actions to address issues that are not within the federal purview.

Our vision for a water-secure future for everyone includes that water is elevated and respected, a holistic approach to watershed stewardship is used, management is well-coordinated by and with diverse people and organizations, and that we take advantage of opportunities offered by technological innovations. Citizen scientists would have a stronger role to play in a future fresh water regime, and Indigenous leadership is considered core to a successful Canada Water Agency.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A PROPOSAL AND FOR A CANADA WATER AGENCY IN THE SAULT

We conclude this report with 10 recommendations that summarize the perspectives presented throughout this report. These recommendations are listed and described on page 13.

Background



The Government of Canada is establishing a Canada Water Agency to improve freshwater management across the country.

On June 28, 2021, Sault Ste. Marie City Council approved the formation of a Task Force to explore this potential opportunity. The Task Force consists of City Staff from the Community Development and Enterprise Services Division, as well as external stakeholders.

The Task Force is developing a proposal to bring the Canada Water Agency to our community. A significant component to developing a formal proposal to the federal government is engaging in community discussions for input, feedback, and ideas on the Canada Water Agency. We sent out multiple calls to participate across the Task Team's diverse networks, through the media, and on social media.

This "What We Heard" report is the culmination of these discussions. The report shares the key themes and messages we heard from the community discussions hosted between August and December 2021.

To deliver these community discussions, the City of Sault Ste. Marie partnered with Lake Huron North, a local network of community organizations collaborating on water quality objectives across Algoma District.

The sessions were facilitated by their Project Coordinator, Dr. Elaine Ho-Tassone.

For more information about the City's initiative, please visit:

www.cwassm.ca

A companion document to this report, capturing the complete and unedited contributions of community members, can be found on this website.

Additional input, questions, or comments can be submitted to **cwaproject@cityssm.on.ca**.

Engagement Timeline

Ten in-person and virtual community discussions were held over five months to gather input from local organizations, Indigenous persons, youth (ages 15-24) and the general Algoma District community. Through this process, 208 individuals contributed their perspectives, including 12 written comments sent to our team. All contributors had the opportunity to review this report prior to publication, with some providing additional feedback.

ORGANIZATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS (16 PARTICIPANTS)

- In-Person Meeting on Tuesday August 24th, 3-5pm, at the Waterfront Adventure Centre, Sault College
- Online Meeting on Thursday August 26th, 11am-1pm

INDIGENOUS PERSONS (6 PARTICIPANTS FROM THREE FIRST NATIONS)

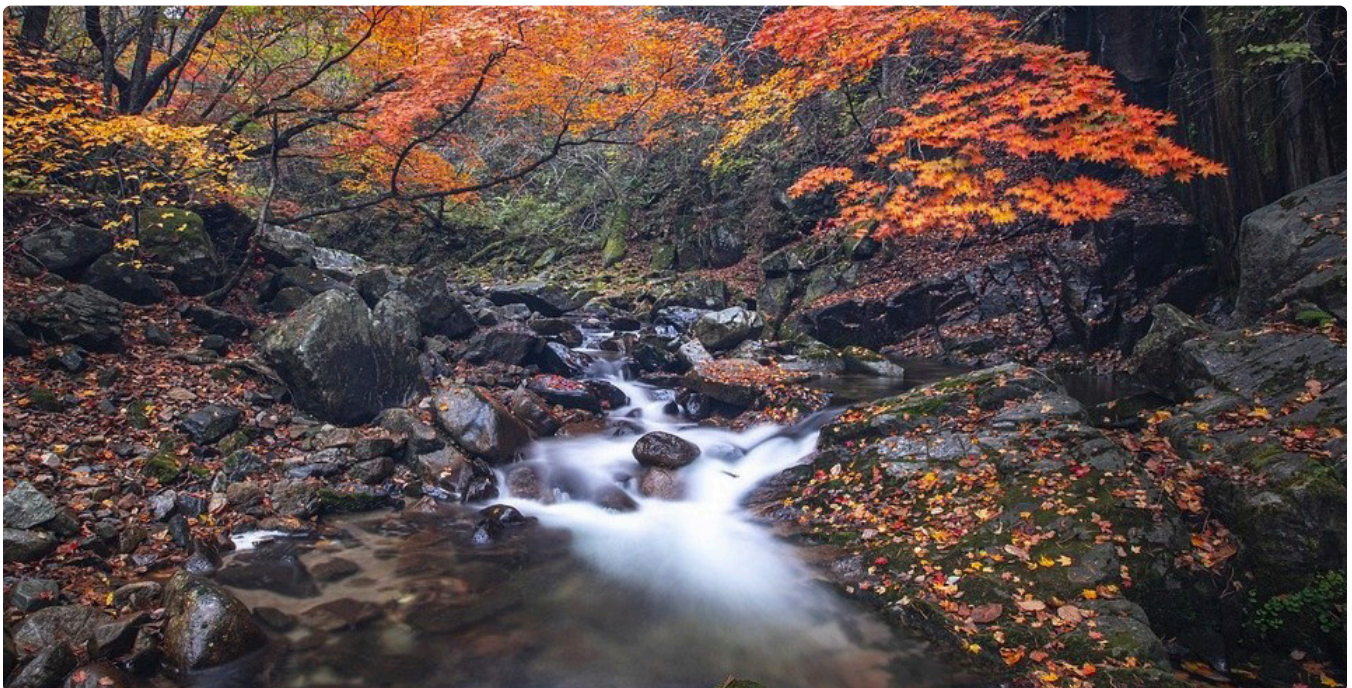
- In-Person Meeting on Wednesday August 25th, 10am-1pm, at the Arbor, Algoma University
- Online Meeting on Wednesday, September 1st, 1-3pm

YOUTH (152 PARTICIPANTS)

- Online Meeting 1 - Algoma District School Board on Tuesday, October 26th, 10-11am
- Online Meeting 2 - Algoma District School Board on Tuesday, October 26th, 1-2pm
- Online Meeting 3 - Post-secondary Students on Monday, November 8th, 11:30am-1pm
- Online Meeting 4 - Mayor's Youth Advisory Council on November 26th, 4-4:30pm

ALL COMMUNITY (22 PARTICIPANTS)

- Online Meeting 1 on Saturday, September 11th, 11am-1pm
- Online Meeting 2 on Saturday, December 11th, 11am-1pm



What We Heard

Introduction

The community discussions included an introductory presentation on the City's initiative and context about freshwater water management in Canada. Each community discussion was structured around three main themes:

- 1. Current State:** (Why) is the Sault a great place for a Canada Water Agency?
- 2. Desired Future State:** What is your vision for a secure freshwater future in Algoma District and across Canada?
- 3. Actions to move from Current State to Future State:** How do we achieve the vision?



Current state

SAULT STE. MARIE IS AN EXCELLENT LOCATION FOR A CANADA WATER AGENCY

We are centrally located, mid-way across Canada, at the hub of the Great Lakes, on a U.S.–Canada border and at a critical navigation point (shipping); therefore, Sault Ste. Marie is a prime location for a Canada Water Agency.

This is a place of enormous cultural and historical significance: at the heart of Turtle Island (northeast North America), *Baawitigong* (“place of the rapids”, or the St. Marys River) is a recognized meeting place rich with collaborative history across nations. Six Indigenous nations currently call this territory home, each of which contributes to leadership in freshwater stewardship.

As Federal agencies are typically not located in smaller communities (especially in the North), the Sault provides a ‘neutral’ or new space for collaboration, negotiation, and policy process to take place – a space that can provide real opportunity to recognize and work with Indigenous nations across Canada.

As an urban-rural community, we value a central coordinating vision, but we recognize that unique, localized approaches are needed across the country.

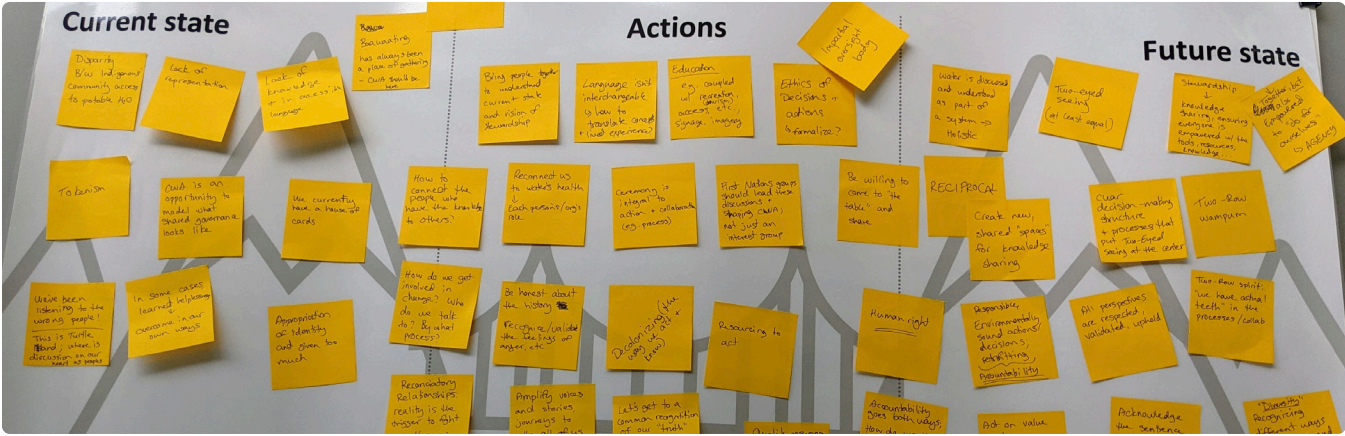
WE ARE HOME TO A VIBRANT FRESHWATER RESEARCH ECOSYSTEM

We have immense local expertise (research, education, policy) and existing binational cooperation in academia, business, and government. Examples of academic collaborators include Sault College, Algoma University, Shingwauk Kinooamaage Gamig (University), Lake Superior State University, Lakehead University, and others. Our active networks are already undertaking meaningful work in governance and the blue economy.

We are also home to major industries due to our rich natural resources—e.g., forestry and mining. Also in our vicinity is the Turkey Lakes Watershed, which has been the site of decades of federal research about the impact of human activities on Canadian Shield ecosystems, acid rain, climate change.

Finally, our many high quality secondary and postsecondary schools are well positioned (geographically and academically) to collaborate on research and in shaping innovative solutions. Collectively, these organizations present an opportunity for a Canada Water Agency to create career pathways and opportunities for the development of tomorrow’s fresh water leaders.

What We Heard



OPPORTUNITIES TO LEAD

Like many communities across Canada (and the world), generations of settlement and growth have had unintended effects on the health of our environment and the people who subsist on it. This history, and the presence of heavy industry today, are part of our story as a nation – resulting in the mandate to create a Canada Water Agency. Our community members call for more effective management (including prevention and remediation) of pollutants in our waters—whether industrial or consumer (e.g., plastics)—alongside industry innovations and collaboration with Indigenous nations locally and across Canada.

Community members highlighted that the presence of industry is an opportunity to explore and develop policies and practices for 'clean growth'. For example, the electric arc project at Algoma Steel has made it a world leader in 'green steel' production; community members encourage further innovations for industries across the region.

We are excited about our collective responsibility (in Sault Ste. Marie and across Canada) to demonstrate leadership in freshwater remediation.

Actions

EDUCATION, COMMUNICATION AND CULTURE

Communication was a major aspect of our discussions, whether identifying the need to educate the general public about water management and stewardship in Canada or simply opening the lines of communication between Canadian governments, researchers, community members and Indigenous nations.

Concerns exist that misinformation or lack of awareness (about freshwater governance in Canada) may result in some community members to be concerned that a Canada Water Agency is a threat to local (industry) employment; however, most participants agreed this may be addressed with good messaging by key community champions.

Language, ethics, ways of knowing, and human rights were raised in several distinct yet related conversations, which often began with a recognition of our colonial history and its effect on our peoples and our waters. Policy, management, and decision-making processes must reflect a culture change across Canada in appreciation of these discussions. Ultimately, we need to have conversations to ensure a common understanding of how integral water is to our lives—while recognizing the diversity of relationships with water for peoples across Canada.

What We Heard

RELATIONSHIPS, COLLABORATION AND SHARED SPACES

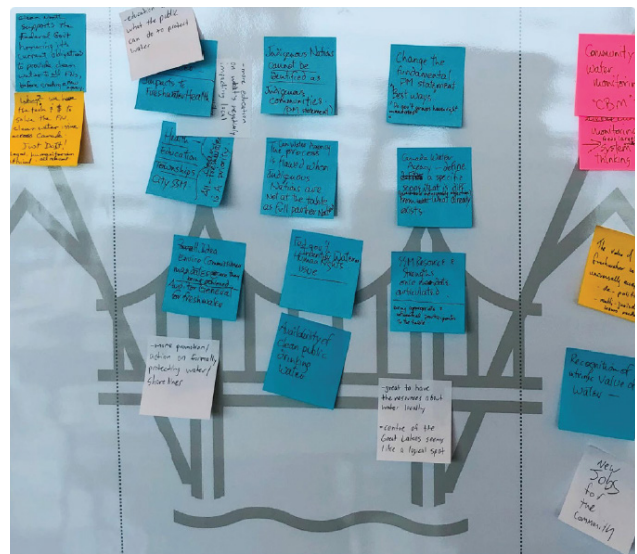
Following the above discussions, the need to work together—people, industry, governments—evolved into a conversation about collective impact. Community members highlighted opportunities to act locally while supporting a national mandate or strategy for fresh water that would bring Canada to the forefront of global innovation and sustainable water stewardship.

Voices from across the community—representing industry, non-profit organizations, youth, and Indigenous persons—were strongly aligned in the need to form stronger and more productive relationships with both industry organizations and Indigenous nations. Most participants expressed the need to ensure Indigenous perspectives, approaches, and persons lead—or at least have a core, partnering role in—future management (stewardship) and decision-making of our waters.

MORE THAN A CANADA WATER AGENCY

While community members are supportive of bringing the CWA to the Sault, we recognize it is not a solution to all water challenges. Community members hope a CWA will be supplemented by local strategies and actions to address issues that are not within the federal purview. For example:

- Participants highlighted the need for education of community members (there is likely a role for local management bodies like Conservation Authorities, NGOs and academic institutions).
- Beyond awareness/education, community members (youth and adult) were keen to be more engaged in water monitoring and management processes but felt there were limited opportunities to support water quality objectives locally.
- In addition to mitigation and adaptation of the many challenges that may fall within the purview of the CWA, community members suggested we must all – including industry and NGOs – consider upstream preventative measures to ensure remediation efforts are lasting.



Future State

FRESH WATER IS ELEVATED AND RESPECTED

Water is not just critical for life, it is life, the 'life blood of our earth mother'. This perspective was shared by many participants from across our region, followed by a call to recognize Canada's large lakes as more than a resource. These places have immense social-economic value as the original navigable 'highways', primary regions of settlement over our history, and meaningful cultural and spiritual values for our First Peoples as well as Canadians.

Community members also frequently called for management to take a more holistic approach in the way the watershed and their many challenges are viewed. Many community members called for an 'upstream approach' to prevent and control pollution, hold polluters accountable, and recognize the connections between air, land, surface water, and groundwater.

What We Heard

INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP IS CORE TO A SUCCESSFUL CANADA WATER AGENCY

Participants were consistent in their voice that Indigenous nations must be respected as equal partners in the governance of lands and waters across the country. We recognize the need to bring together distinct Indigenous and Canadian knowledges in a way that celebrates our diversity while collaborating to ensure healthy, safe, and accessible waters for everyone.

That Indigenous communities in our region and across Canada have yet to access or maintain reliable, safe drinking water is unacceptable to all community members who participated in our discussions. This was a main concern of several discussions.

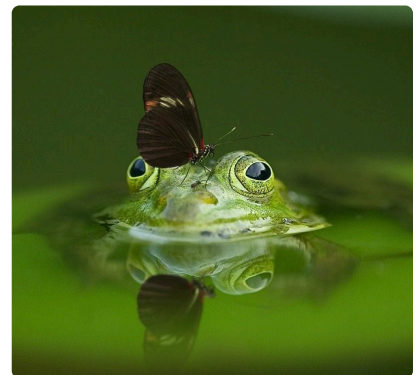
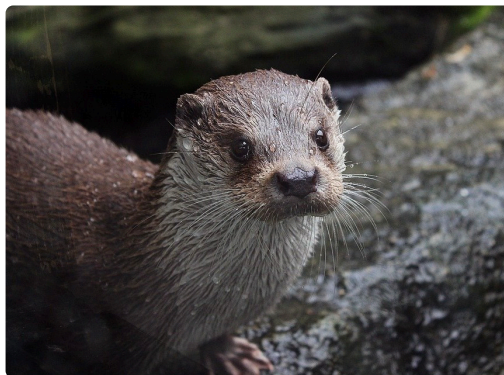
FRESHWATER MANAGEMENT (STEWARDSHIP) IS WELL-COORDINATED AND DIVERSE

Organizations and people must work across boundaries and disciplinary or cultural siloes to share information, communicate experiences, collaborate on and coordinate action. Multiple levels of government—e.g., Great Lakes Forestry Centre and Ontario Forest Research Institute—would work with Indigenous nations to build a new culture of governance. Mandates, roles, and responsibilities must be clearer to minimize duplication or gaps. Community members envisioned a fresh water regime in which governance, the economy, society, and the environment are inextricably linked.

Finally, citizen scientists should have a stronger role to play in a future fresh water regime, including implementing community-based monitoring and surveying. Community members would participate more actively in local decision-making and would co-create actions that would be collaboratively implemented. Resources would be made available for community and Indigenous-driven efforts to lead water stewardship.

FUTURE-PROOFING WITH TECHNOLOGY (AN OPPORTUNITY)

The history of water is one of mechanization—boats, pumps and dams. The future of water is technological—data, communication and education. With the proliferation of the Internet of Things, Artificial Intelligence, data management and remote communications, we—a small and somewhat remote city at the center of the Great Lakes—can anchor the new Canada Water Agency.

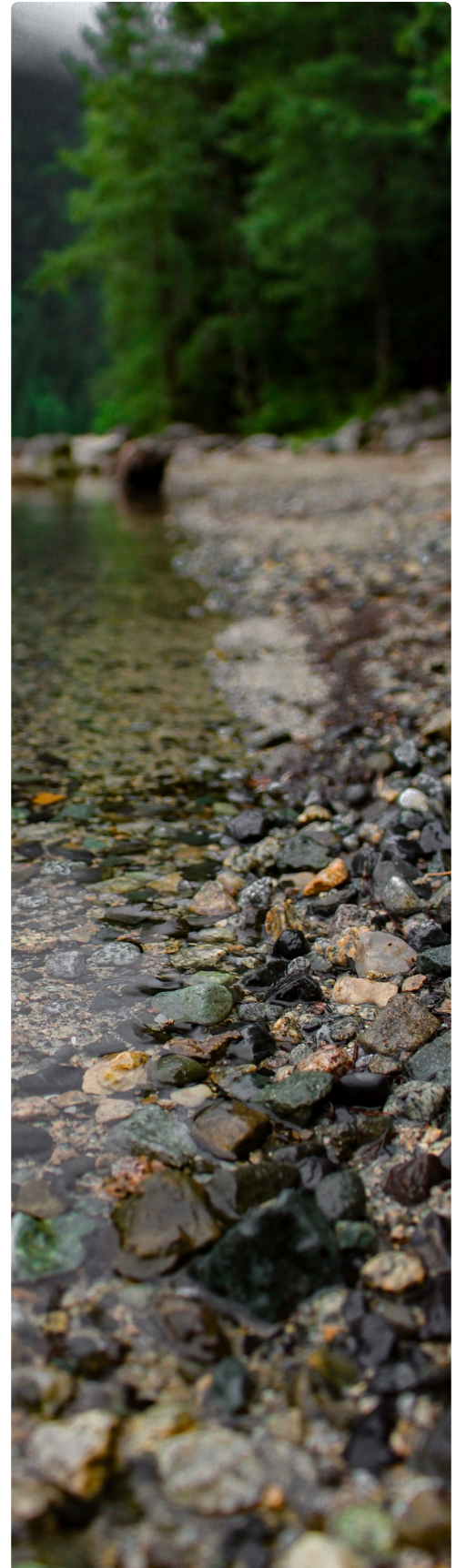


Recommendations

—for a proposal and for a Canada Water Agency in the Sault

1. Our location is amazing, but don't make this the focus.
2. Focus on our people—our expertise, our collaborative approaches and potential, our ability to lead with innovation, our historical diversity and our rich culture.
3. Seize the opportunity to build our story based on community growth, from past polluters to present-day healers, through meaningful partnerships between industry, government, and the community (as an example to follow).
4. A holistic systems approach to governance and science should be encouraged—integrating social, economic, and environmental spheres; connecting air, land, surface water, and groundwater; connecting climate change and other 'distinct issues' to water quality; incorporating upstream preventative measures alongside mitigation and adaptation.
5. Decisions, management, and action should be informed by diverse ways of knowing, enhanced through technologies.
6. Indigenous nations, perspectives, culture, and knowledge should be at the core of a Canada Water Agency. If we want to return the waters to their former condition, we need to learn from those who lived in harmony with those waters.
7. There is much work to do regarding relationship building (between community members, industry, government, Indigenous nations); however, we have all the ingredients to we need to get started!
8. Enable and empower community members and Indigenous nations (e.g., provide education/awareness and funding) to understand and actively participate in management and decision-making processes, monitoring of water quality, and to collaboratively design and implement actions.
9. Ensure collective action and shared spaces (including data sharing, different ways of doing) are possible to achieve.
10. Waters should be swimmable, drinkable, fishable—usable and healthy—by/for all (human and non-human).

This report highlights some of the common perspectives shared by residents of Algoma District from August–December 2021. The full perspectives (e.g., summary notes from each of our meetings, copies of the written comments we received) are available on our website as accompanying documents to this report. To request copies, please email our team at cwaproject@cityssm.on.ca.





www.cwassm.ca | cwaproject@cityssm.on.ca



Biography Information for Research Collaborators



Michael Twiss, PhD

Dean, Faculty of Science, Algoma University

Michael Twiss is Yankee who grew up in northern Ontario. He returned to the region in 2022 to become the inaugural Dean of the Faculty of Science at Algoma University. Twiss's expertise is the limnology (freshwater oceanography) of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River system. His research focuses on aquatic biogeochemistry, water quality analysis and winter limnology and he has published over 80 peer-reviewed scientific manuscripts. He studied at universities in Ontario (Trent, Toronto) and Quebec, (INRS-ETE) and spent two years as an NSERC postdoctoral fellow at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution on Cape Cod studying marine chemistry and geochemistry. From 1998-2002, Twiss was an assistant professor at Toronto Metropolitan University prior to spending 20 years at Clarkson University where he rose to full professor and chair of its Department of Biology.

Over the past decade, Twiss has increasingly become involved with Great Lakes environmental policy where his expertise is sought at both international and national levels. He is an appointed member of the Great Lakes Science Advisory Board of the International Joint Commission (Canada/USA) since 2014 where he has led working groups on the Status of Emerging Technologies to assess water quality in the Great Lakes, the Status of Connecting Waters, the Great Lakes Early Warning System (Phases I and II), and Great Lakes Winter Science. He is a past member of the Great Lakes Advisory Board - Science and Information Subcommittee of the United States Environmental Protection Agency, and special government employee of the USEPA. He was an elected member of the Board of Directors of the International Association for Great Lakes Research, and served as its president (2018-2019). He served the Smart Great Lakes Initiative as the US co-chair of the SGLi Steering Committee leading the development of its strategic plan (2020-2021). Twiss adheres to the Kaswentha (Two-Row wampum) as a guiding principle for establishing and maintaining respectful relationships with Indigenous communities. He is a Level III USA hockey referee during spare time.



Dr. Elaine Ho-Tassone

Director of Operations, NORDIK Institute

Elaine holds a PhD from the Social and Ecological Sustainability (Water) program at the University of Waterloo. She is passionate about building bridges between people and organizations, raising social-ecological awareness, and exploring innovative, sustainable solutions for ecological protection or restoration and community development. In addition to being the Director of Operations at the NORDIK Institute, Elaine is also Part-time Faculty at Algoma University, and Researcher-in-Residence for Waterlution (a national, youth and water focused non-profit organization). A recognized water leader in the Algoma Region, she is an appointee to the City of Sault Ste. Marie's Canada Water Agency Task Force - a role in which she led a series of community engagement discussions around the potential mandate and location for the Agency. Elaine is a certified Project Management Professional (PMP) as of 2014 and is a member of the Climate Reality Leadership Corps, having trained with Al Gore (former Vice President of the USA) in 2015.

At the core of Elaine's project approach is collaboration that results in collective impact, especially in community-based projects. In her experience, collective benefits (e.g., sustainable development) are best achieved by meaningfully working together. She has collaborated with people from a variety of industries and sectors, e.g., construction, engineering, public education, tourism, natural resource management, renewable energy, academia, government, businesses, non-profit organizations, and community members (Canadian and Indigenous). Elaine has delivered dozens of talks and has designed/delivered workshops in settings that range from small community events and corporate meetings to international conferences. She has provided input on various levels of water policy and research. For example, she contributed to policy briefs at the 2018 High-Level Political Forum and has provided input at the request of Canadian Federal Ministers, the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario, and the planning committee for a national roundtable on community-based water monitoring. In addition, she has also been a driving force in the growth and development of several social-economic ventures. In 2019, Elaine's work was awarded the Our Water - Our Life - Most Valuable Resource Award by the Canadian Water Resources Association. In January 2022, she was recognized with two Algoma Visionary Awards: Environment & Nature, and Professional of the Year.



Jody-Lynn Rebek, BBA, MA, PhD

Associate Professor, Faculty of Business and Economics, Algoma University
Sustainability Researcher and Serial Social Entrepreneur

Dr. Jody-Lynn Rebek has a Ph.D. from Lakehead University (Thunder Bay, ON) and is also a Principal Management Consultant of Vive Strategies Consulting. For 25 years, she's supported transformation efforts that renew focus, well-being, and growth for organizations and communities. She specializes in engaging diverse stakeholders to develop evidence-based, practical solutions and results-oriented action plans. She currently leads community-led water sustainability research that works to support Truth and Reconciliation.

Jody has over 30 years of management expertise and with a research focus on leadership, sustainable development, and social innovation, she understands the interdisciplinary perspectives required for efficient and sustainable water management. Together with Dr. Aziz and their research team, they are investigating the blue economy to better understand the region's narrative around freshwater health. She was Co-lead in the creation of the local network, Water Wise, which focuses on freshwater education, engagement and action; and Co-founder of Algoma's zero-waste refillery, Hearterra, a social enterprise that encourages sustainable consumption in the region.

She has several accolades including a Global Affairs Faculty Mobility Partnership Grant, SSHRC Canada Graduate Scholarship, and was a delegate of the Governor General's Canadian Leadership Conference (2020-2022), along with gaining the Athena award, Innovative Educator, and Community Builder for the Environment awards.



Dr. Ashley Moerke

Professor and Director, Center for Freshwater Research and Education, Lake Superior State University

Dr. Moerke has a Ph.D from the University of Notre Dame and over 20 years of experience in managing and conserving freshwater resources, with a focus on the Great Lakes basin. Her research focuses on the ecology and conservation of freshwater fisheries and aquatic ecosystems, including understanding the ecology of migratory fishes, effects of invasive species and landscape stressors on aquatic ecosystems, stream restoration, and stream and wetland bioassessment.

She has led and/or collaborated on over 20 funded research projects (over \$22 million in funding), and she secured funding for Lake Superior State University's new Center for Freshwater Research and Education (CFRE) along the St. Marys River. She also led the effort to attract the US Coast Guard's Center for Expertise on oil in freshwater, which is now located in the CFRE. In addition to her role at the university, Dr. Moerke served as an Associate Editor of Freshwater Science from 2007-2017, she is an advisor to the Lake Superior Committee of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, and she was appointed to the Governor of Michigan's Environmental Science Advisory Board.



Dr. Paula Cypas Antunes

Senior Research Scientist, AquaTox Testing & Consulting
Adjunct Faculty, Algoma University

Dr. Cypas Antunes has a Ph.D. from the University of Guelph and 20 years of experience with environmental toxicology and chemistry focused on aquatic environments. Her work primarily focuses on applied aspects of water quality control specific to industrial operations and includes toxicity identification evaluations, site-specific risk assessment and remediation (soil, water, and sediment). She also has experience with national and international water quality guideline derivation, standard test methods, metal speciation models, and the use of these important tools to applied risk assessment. She has completed many projects over the years focused on metal-mining and also complex organic and inorganic contaminant mixtures (e.g., with PAHs and other contaminants).

In addition to her work as the senior research scientist at AquaTox, Dr. Antunes is an editor for the scientific journal "Environmental Toxicology & Chemistry", is adjunct faculty at Algoma University, and has spent years working with local community groups on issues associated with Areas of Concern and various stressors impacting water quality that are of both local and national concern.



Dr. Erik Emilson

Research Scientist Forest Aquatic Ecology, Natural Resources Canada, Great Lakes Forestry Centre

As an avid fly fisher, Erik grew up close to the water. He has a love of forests, water, and nature. Erik completed his Masters and PhD at Laurentian University where he researched how the reclamation of forests in the Sudbury area was impacting aquatic health. During his Post-doc at the University of Cambridge he researched the climate change related impacts on forested watersheds and nutrient cycling in lakes.

Erik has continued his work at the intersection of forest and freshwater research. As a Research Scientist with the Natural Resources Canada, Great Lakes Forestry Centre, Erik and his team research how changes in Canadian forests influence and impact our freshwater systems. Their work extends far beyond the hub of the Great Lakes in Sault Ste. Marie to other provinces across Canada, including New Brunswick and Quebec.



Ryan Namespetra

Natural Environment Coordinator, Sault College

Ryan's background is a mixture of both hands-on skills and a conceptual understanding of the aquatics field through a diploma in Fish and Wildlife Conservation from Sault College paired with a BSc in Fish & Wildlife Management from Lake Superior State University. Ryan spent eight years working with the Department of Fisheries & Oceans in various roles before starting with the School of Natural Environment as the Aquatic Studies Faculty in 2011.

After his first summer contract with DFO, he knew he had a passion for freshwater systems. Ryan's employment from that point on has focused on the area of freshwater. Ryan's current aquatics work focuses on sharing his passion for the aquatic/fisheries field with his students, the next generation of water researchers/technicians, and fostering their interest in the field.



Algoma District School Board

644 Albert St. East
Sault Ste. Marie
ON P6A 2K7
Telephone: (705) 945-7111
FAX: (705) 942-2540
www.adsb.on.ca

CHAIR
Jennifer Sarlo

DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
Lucia Reece

March 28, 2022

City of Sault Ste. Marie
Canada Water Agency Task Force
99 Foster Drive
Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario

Re: The City's Canada Water Agency Initiative

Dear Canada Water Agency Task Force,

On behalf of the Algoma District School Board, I am writing in support of a Canada Water Agency location in Sault Ste. Marie.

The Algoma District School Board and the City of Sault Ste. Marie enjoy excellent collaboration and have completed several community projects that engage students in their community. Some recent examples include a beautification project for our city core and an art project to honour veterans. We share the goal of providing our youth with opportunities to be active citizens who take pride in their city and the resources around them. Having a Canada Water Agency would provide rich learning and sustainability options for our students to not only be engaged citizens, but to help promote the sustainability of one of our most precious resources -- water.

As a teaching and learning organization, we recognize the important role we play in educating students about natural resource management and sustainability, as well as the impacts humans can have on climate change, agriculture and freshwater management. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss how we could support the Agency's work, share resources for education and help develop the knowledge and skills of future employees through educational programs or even co-op placements.

Located in the heart of the Great Lakes, there is no better place for a Canada Water Agency to call home. Our city is proud of its natural surroundings of ample water and forests, of our partnerships with Indigenous and Métis people, of our local agriculture and of our commitment to a sustainability community and future, thus we fully support the location of a Canada Water Agency in Sault Ste. Marie.

Sincerely,

Lucia Reece
Director of Education
Algoma District School Board
644 Albert Street East,
Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6A 2K7
(705) 945-7234 / reecel@adsb.on.ca



January 11, 2022

City of Sault Ste. Marie
Canada Water Agency Task Force
99 Foster Drive
Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario

Re: The City's Canada Water Agency Initiative

Dear Canada Water Agency Task Force,

On behalf of Algoma Steel, I am writing in support of a Canada Water Agency location in Sault Ste. Marie.

Sault Ste. Marie's location at the center of the Great Lakes as connected to the St Lawrence Seaway via the St. Mary's river reflects the historical successful balance amongst stakeholders interested in the vitality of our water resources. The history of Sault Ste. Marie displays how the provinces, Indigenous communities, local authorities, international neighbours, industry, and scientists can find the best ways to keep our water safe, clean, and well-managed.

We know that the preservation of this water resource is so critically important to health, quality of life, economic prosperity, and our sustainable existence, and we believe a Canada Water Agency would thrive here in Sault Ste. Marie surrounded and supported by those who value and align with the Agency's mission.

At Algoma, we take environmental stewardship seriously. We act responsibly and strive to do more as demonstrated by our pending transition to electric arc steelmaking that is expected to significantly shrink our environmental footprint, in part with a 70% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and a marked reduction in water consumption.

In our opinion, you would be hard-pressed to find a more suitable location in Canada. Sault Ste. Marie's geographic location and historic significance at the hub of three of the world's largest freshwater lakes, our wealth of regional expertise on freshwater ecosystems across our post-secondary institutions, Ministerial entities, private sector enterprises, cooperation with Indigenous communities, and our immediate proximity to the new US Centre for Fresh Water Research and opportunity for bi-national collaboration, all combine to build a best-case scenario.

Our economic and recreational pursuits meet on the waters that surround and connect us. Algoma is a '*land of lakes*', a land where Canada's Water Agency could call home.

Should you require any contact with us, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike McQuade', written in a cursive style.

Michael McQuade
President & Chief Executive Officer

Nairne Cameron, Ph.D.
Associate Professor & Chair
Dept. of Geography, Geology & Land Stewardship
1520 Queen Street East
Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6A 2G4
Email: nairne.cameron@algomau.ca

Councillor Corey Gardi
City of Sault Ste. Marie
Email: c.gardi@cityssm.on.ca

Subject: *Letter of Support for Siting the Canada Water Agency in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario.*

March 22, 2021

Dear Councillor Gardi,

I am writing in support of siting the Canada Water Agency in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. What better place could be found in all of Canada. Traditionally known as Bawating, our area is home to the St. Marys River and its rapids have been a meeting place for thousands of years.

Our strategic location in the centre of the Great Lakes is a natural fit for the new establishment. Sault Ste. Marie is situated on the border with the United States, facilitating bi-national cooperation. With the twin cities of Sault Ste. Marie in Michigan and Ontario straddling the St. Marys River, the region is uniquely positioned to assume a leading role in “shared waters”.

The City has strong institutional foundations with Federal and Provincial research agencies, and Sault College and Algoma University. This spring, our program will be offering a water-themed course entitled “Water Stewardship in a Spatial Context” as part of our Level 1 of the Professional Lands Management Certification Program. This course will incorporate a mini-conference to explore water stewardship from a community perspective.

Siting the Canada Water Agency in Sault Ste. Marie will provide great opportunities for partnerships among countries, organizations, and communities for the advancement of water stewardship. In closing, I urge you to consider Sault Ste. Marie as the future site of the Agency.

Sincerely,



Nairne Cameron

cc: Asima Vezina, President and Vice-Chancellor, Algoma University

To Councilor Gardi:

Algoma University's School of Life Sciences and the Environment would like to voice its support for the government locating the Canadian Water Agency in Sault Ste. Marie. There are several practical reasons for locating this agency here, including the Sault's obvious strategic location within the Great Lakes Watershed, and the abundance of local expertise. Combined, these two facts will contribute to synergistic research that will ensure that the Canadian Water Agency can accomplish more in Sault Ste. Marie per unit input than it would if located elsewhere.

Sault Ste. Marie is already home to a Regional Office of Fisheries and Oceans Canada that includes laboratory facilities. Sault Ste. Marie also houses a fish hatchery facility that serves the area, and hosts the Sea Lamprey Control Centre. What's more, Sault Ste. Marie contains significant expertise in both provincial and federal forestry labs, whose researchers can contribute greatly to synergistic research with the Canadian Water Agency. Finally, Algoma University happily hosts researchers who would welcome this local opportunity and look forward to collaborating on research. Dr. William Dew, who conducts research in fish behaviour and aquatic ecotoxicology, and Dr. Istvan Imre, who has a history of research on salmonids and sea lamprey, would contribute valuable local expertise to the Canadian Water Agency.

Situating the Canadian Water Agency in proximity to the largest freshwater lake in the Americas is logical. Attracting talented researchers who study natural systems, including aquatic systems, to Algoma University has been easy simply because those who study such systems do so out of a passion for them. As such, Sault Ste. Marie's abundant natural beauty will facilitate recruiting talented researchers to a local branch of the Canadian Water Agency. Sault Ste. Marie is a logical site for this agency.

On behalf of the School of Life Sciences & the Environment at Algoma University,



Dr. Brandon Schamp, PhD
Professor, Head of the School of Life Sciences and the Environment
Algoma University,
Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario
Brandon.schamp@algonau.ca
(705) 949-2301 x 4358



March 31, 2022

City of Sault Ste. Marie
Canada Water Agency Task Force
99 Foster Drive
Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario

Re: The City's Canada Water Agency Initiative

Dear Canada Water Agency Task Force,

On behalf of Algoma University, I am writing to express my utmost support for the establishment of a Canada Water Agency location in Sault Ste. Marie.

The creation of the Clean Water Agency in our community would build upon a range of successful partnerships the University has established with the City. Over the past number of years, the University has actively engaged with the City of Sault Ste. Marie on a number of collaborative projects as part of a concerted effort to improve the social, economic and environmental fabric of our community and the surrounding region. The CityStudio project is one recent example.

This project is of particular interest as it would further foster collaboration and partnerships with other organizations based on the community such as the Invasive Species Centre, Great Lakes Forestry Centre and Ontario Forest Research Institute while creating further synergies with our local post-secondary partners from Sault College and Lake Superior State University. The University has been actively involved in the process to date including participation in community consultation sessions.

The Clean Water Agency initiative is of particular interest to the faculty, researchers, and students with Algoma's School of Life Sciences and the Environment, where numerous academic programs have been established based on the land, waters and other environmental elements of importance to our region. It is also of great interest to those associated with our Anishinaabe Studies and Community, Economic and Social Development programs whose faculty are actively engaged in community based research projects to support environmental sustainability. Algoma University currently has three Canada Research Chairs based at its Sault Ste. Marie campus including one whose research efforts specifically focus on invasive species found within the lakes and rivers of our region.

In closing, our ongoing efforts to support environmental sustainability and the water based resources in our region are of critical importance to our region and the nation as a whole. Given our strategic location at the heart of the Great Lakes, the City of Sault Ste. Marie is very well positioned to support this important initiative for the mutual benefit of all and Algoma University is committed to doing its part to support the establishment of a Canada Water Agency location within our community.

Please do not hesitate to reach out if you wish to further discuss our unwavering support.

Sincerely Yours,



Asima Vezina
President & Vice-Chancellor





Keeping Central Algoma a place to live, swim, drink, fish, and play for generations to come!

Central Algoma Freshwater Coalition

Box 88, Bruce Mines, ON P0R 1C0

City of Sault Ste Marie

99 Foster Drive,
Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6A 5X6

Dear Mayor Provenzano:

March 28, 2021

The Central Algoma Freshwater Coalition fully supports and applaud efforts underway to bring the proposed Canada Water Agency to Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario.

Sault Ste Marie has a history of forestry research, strong connections with indigenous communities and is located in the heart of the Great Lakes - 84% of North America's surface and 21% of the world's supply of surface freshwater. The Great Lakes are binational and is home to 30% of the Canadian population.

Sault Ste Marie would be a good location for the Canada Water Agency.

We also support of the efforts of Canada to, create a new Canada Water Agency to work together with the provinces, territories, Indigenous communities, local authorities, scientists and others to find the best ways to keep our water safe, clean and well-managed. We supports Canada's proposal to develop further protections and take active steps to clean up the Great Lakes.

The Central Algoma Freshwater Coalition (CAFC) is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the protection, improvement and restoration of the watersheds throughout the Central Algoma Region, a region that stretches from the easterly boundary of Sault Ste. Marie to the easterly boundary of the Municipality of Huron Shores (including St. Joseph Island). CAFC's main concerns are aligned with the identified threats within the Lake Huron Lake Management Plan for 2017-2021.

From our local perspective - it was a windy summer on Lake Huron. The severe storms that were predicted for the future are happening now plus fluctuating water levels. Global changes in climate means past conditions around the Great Lakes are not a reliable basis for decision making.

We are happy to hear about the new Canada Water Agency proposal and efforts to bring it to Sault Ste Marie – it cannot happen soon enough.

Yours truly

Chuck Miller – CAFC President.



December 20, 2021

City of Sault Ste. Marie EDC
C/O Kathleen Heymans
99 Foster DR.
Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6A 5x6

Re: Location for the Canada Water Agency

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the EUP Regional Planning & Development Commission (EUP), I am writing in support of a Canada Water Agency location in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario.

EUP has been in collaboration with our partners at the City of Sault Ste. Marie EDC for several years on, on efforts to enhance Bi-National Economic Development initiatives, with include tourism, natural resources and the surrounding Great Lakes and St. Marys River system, which are vital to our economy.

During 2016, building off years of planning, research and analysis, EUP was part of a large group of stakeholders who implemented a Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GRLI) grant to remove a Beneficial Use Impairment (BUI) on the St. Marys River, one of the last remaining BUI's in order for the St. Marys River system to be removed from the Areas of Concern listing, due to years of misuse and pollutive efforts that degraded the rivers condition and created numerous environmental concerns. The Little Rapids project was completed in 2017 and the river has flourished, with the return of several species of fish that were not found in the project area over the past several decades.

In closing, we believe that Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario would be the most ideal location for a Canada Water Agency due to its' proximity to the largest Great Lake (Superior) and the connecting St. Marys River system, which are integral to the health and well-being of the entire Great Lakes system. In addition, the area is home to significant research assets, including the recently opened Center for Freshwater Research and Education (CFRE).

Should you require any contact with us, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Sincerely Yours,

Jeff Hagan, CEO



Invasive Species Centre
1219 Queen Street East
Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6A 2E5
.....
invasivespeciescentre.ca
705 541 5790

Mayor Christian Provenzano,
City of Sault Ste. Marie,
Ontario, Canada

April 7, 2021

Dear Mayor Christian Provenzano,

The Invasive Species Centre is pleased to support the resolution of City Council indicating interest in establishing the future Canada Water Agency in Sault Ste. Marie. Sault Ste. Marie is a natural choice for many reasons including:

Great Lakes location: The history of Sault Ste. Marie is linked to water, located at the hub of some of the largest freshwater lakes in the world, Lake Huron and Lake Superior. These vast reservoirs of water continued to provide many benefits, from ecosystem services, recreation, tourism, transportation, manufacturing industry and forestry.

Talented Science and Policy Workforce: Sault Ste. Marie also has a rich workforce skilled in science, policy and research. Sault College and Algoma University could contribute well respected expertise in environment and business. Federal government department including Natural Resources Canada Great Lakes Forestry Centre, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Ontario government ministries, including the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, could help support the Canada Water Centre.

At the Invasive Species Centre, our mission is to protect Canada's lands and waters from invasive species. We work directly on many water issues, including protecting lakes and rivers from invasive species such as lamprey, invasive fish, zebra mussels and aquatic weeds. We work with municipalities and communities on water infrastructure and protecting water quality. We host the International Conference for Aquatic Invasive Species, which draws scientists and practitioners from around the world. We are proud to be part of the growing science, forestry and environmental hub in the Sault, that could be an asset for the Canada Water Agency.

Link to Indigenous communities: The Canada Water Agency could also consider working with local indigenous communities, and nearby indigenous associations.

Please let me know if you have any questions, and we would be glad to offer you a tour or update on current activities at the Invasive Species Centre.

Many thanks,

Sarah Rang

Executive Director, Invasive Species Centre



March 27, 2021

Re: Canada Water Agency

Dear Mayor Provenzano,

On behalf of Lake Superior State University's Center for Freshwater Research and Education (CFRE), I would like to express our strong support for the Canada Water Agency to be located in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario.

As a research and education center whose mission focuses on conserving freshwater resources in the Great Lakes basin, we at CFRE are keenly aware of the importance of and challenges associated with sustainably managing fresh water. The challenges require broad partnerships between diverse stakeholders, including multinational partners (First Nations, Native American tribes, and the US). Sault Sainte Marie, Ontario is uniquely positioned along a multinational border and at the nexus of three Great Lakes, nearly 20% of the world's surface fresh water. Additionally, our region already has a strong infrastructure in place to complement the Canada Water Agency, including provincial, indigenous, and local natural resource agencies as well as scientific research centers and non-profit organizations. Collectively, the geographic locations and existing synergies in the region will ensure that the Canada Water Agency's priorities of building resilience, advancing reconciliation, and ensuring effective water governance are achieved.

We are pleased to provide this letter of support and to show our commitment as a future partner of the Canada Water Agency.

Sincerely,

Ashley Moerke, Ph.D.
Director, Center for Freshwater Research and Education



Robert Brewer,
President & CEO, PUC Services Inc.
500 Second Line East,
Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario

To Mayor Christian Provenzano and City Council,

I am writing in support of having the Canada Water Agency located in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. Our geographical location makes us the perfect city to host the new agency. Every day, Lake Superior, the world's largest body of fresh water, pumps tens of thousands of cubic meters of water into our community. The citizens of Sault Ste. Marie understand the importance of Lake Superior, to not only our city, but to our country.

With our American neighbours located just on the other side of the St. Marys River, the relationships needed to help protect the world's most valuable resource are already here, in the twin Saults. In both Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, and Michigan, the Indigenous communities take an active leadership role in fighting for the water protection of the Great Lakes. In Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, Lake Superior State University is home to the Centre for Freshwater Research and Education. While in our backyard, Algoma University is also offering a water-themed course as part of its Professional Land Management Course.

As a water treatment and distribution company, PUC Services Inc. understands the importance of clean, safe, reliable water. We know Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario is an ideal location for the new Canada Water Agency. I urge the Federal Government to strongly consider our city as the location for the site of the Canada Water Agency.

Sincerely

Robert Brewer

Robert Brewer
President & CEO
PUC Services Inc.



David Thompson, MBA
RAIN Manager
99 Foster Drive, Level Six
Sault Ste. Marie, ON
P6A 5X6
dthompson@ssmic.com

His Worship Christian Provenzano
Mayor of Sault Ste. Marie

Re: Support for Establishing the Canada Water Agency in Sault Ste. Marie
March 25, 2021

Dear Sir:

I am writing in support of establishing the Canada Water Agency in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, also known as Baawaating (meaning rapids in Ojibway) in Robinson-Huron Treaty territory. This area has been an ideal meeting place that has provided sustenance for thousands of years through the St. Mary's River. The St. Mary's River goes through Batchewana First Nation, Garden River First Nation, Sault Ste. Marie Michigan (home to the Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians), and agricultural communities in Central Algoma and Chippewa County.

In this area, we have strong institutions with a breadth of expertise in water management, which includes Algoma University, the Center for Freshwater Research & Education, Great Lakes Forestry Centre, Lake Superior State University, Ontario Forest Research Institute, Sault College, and the Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Centre (SSMIC). There is also a history of bi-national collaboration through the St. Marys River Bi-National Public Advisory Council.

This year the SSMIC's Rural Agri-Innovation Network (RAIN) Division will initiate a collaboration of organizations (along Lake Huron's North Shore) to set a five-year plan to organize efforts (riparian restoration, water quality monitoring) to address priorities in the Lake Huron Lakewide Action and Management Plan (LAMP) and the Canada-Ontario Agreement on Great Lakes Water Quality and Ecosystem Health.

Sault Ste. Marie would be the ideal place to signal the importance of building resilience to cope with climate change and ensuring effective water governance with the leadership of Indigenous peoples. The establishment of the Clean Water Agency in Sault Ste. Marie would provide great partnerships to advance water stewardship for many years to come.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "D. Thompson".

David Thompson

Cc: Councillor Corey Gardi, City of Sault Ste. Marie
Peter Bruijns, Executive Director, Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Centre

March 30, 2021

RE: Canada Water Agency in Sault Ste. Marie

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of Sault College, I would like to offer my support for the City of Sault Ste. Marie's submission to bring the proposed Canada Water Agency to Sault Ste. Marie. Sault Ste. Marie is a vibrant and welcoming community located in the heart of the Great Lakes, the largest group of freshwater lakes on Earth. The St. Mary's river in Sault Ste. Marie, is situated on a traditional trading route on the lands of the Ojibway First Nation. In addition, Sault Ste. Marie is bordered to the east by the Rankin and Garden River First Nation Reserves making First Nations collaboration and inclusion a natural fit.

With the possibility of increased emerging water crisis, and the new Canada Water Agency's work to greatly improve our collective response, work such as this will require a highly trained workforce that can be found in Sault College graduates from the School of Natural Environment. Our nationally recognized School of Natural Environment programs focus on conservation, environmental protection, and exploring natural resources through field-based study. With over 350 students annually participating in multi-day field trips and collaboration in shared outdoor workspace, students work toward varying careers to support the natural environment.

Once again, I would like to reiterate my strong support towards having the Canada Water Agency located in Sault Ste. Marie.

Respectfully yours,



Dr. R. Common,
President

The Corporation of the City of Sault Ste. Marie

Civic Centre, 99 Foster Drive
Sault Ste. Marie, ON
P6A 5X6

Re: Location for the Canada Water Agency

To Whom It May Concern

On behalf of the Sault Ste. Marie Chamber of Commerce and our collective members, I am writing in support of a Canada Water Agency location in Sault Ste. Marie. The Sault Ste. Marie Chamber of Commerce represents 650 employers employing and over 43% of the labour force, or 15,000 employees. A significant part of our local economy is connected to the water, whether this be for industrial use, commercial purposes such as fisheries, tourism, recreation, transportation, or the production of electricity.

Nestled in the heart of the Great Lakes, Sault Ste. Marie was founded by our indigenous peoples because of what water represents to them and the life it gives all things. As Indigenous peoples, First Nations recognize the sacredness of our water, the interconnectedness of all life and the importance of protecting our water from pollution, drought, and waste. Water is the giver of all life and without clean water all life will perish.

As a collaborative community Sault Ste. Marie has recognized the importance of water in that it also is a foundational element of developing our sustainable economy. Our ability to collaborate among all levels of government, with our indigenous communities in the region, as well as both private and public entities will support the capabilities of the Agency to complete extensive research in freshwater assets at one of Canada's most significant watersheds, the great lakes.

Sault Ste. Marie has all the integral infrastructure components required for a modern operation, ease of access to global markets and regional travel, skilled workforce, access to academic institutions, a focus innovation and the environment and many other assets that can benefit the Canada Water Agency locating in Sault Ste. Marie.

Should you require any contact with us, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Respectfully,



Rory Ring, CEO
Sault Ste. Marie Chamber of Commerce
W: 1-705-255-4361
P: 1-705-989-4804
Email: rory@ssmcoc.com



1100 Fifth Line East
Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6A 6J8
Tel: (705) 946-8530
Fax: (705) 946-8533
Email: nature@ssmrca.ca
www.ssmrca.ca

March 29, 2021

Mayor Christian Provenzano
c/o Civic Centre
99 Foster Drive
Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6A 5X6

Re: Bringing a Canada Water Agency to Sault Ste. Marie

Dear Mayor Provenzano,

We are writing on behalf of the Sault Ste. Marie Region Conservation Authority to express our support for bringing a "Canada Water Agency" to the city of Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario.

The Sault Ste. Marie Region Conservation Authority (SSMRCA) is one of Ontario's 36 conservation authorities. Located in northern Ontario, the SSMRCA provides watershed management based on over 50 years of local experience. Conservation Authorities (CA's) are known globally for their stewardship of our rivers, lakes and streams through the development and delivery of comprehensive programs that work with nature to protect, restore and effectively manage Ontario's water resources.

As such, we at the SSMRCA know from experience how important it is to ensure that our water be kept safe, clean, and well-managed, while requiring a coordinated effort across multiple jurisdictions. Water does not adhere to political boundaries, and watersheds are often shared across multiple geographical boundaries. Effective management and governance of our water resources requires federal leadership to ensure that a watershed-based approach is adhered to, and to avoid the mismanagement that a piecemealed approach (which can arise when multiple agencies with different areas of jurisdiction and lack a coordinated effort) can inevitably cause. A federally driven Canada Water Agency can fill this gap on a national level, greatly improving the ability to address current inaction with respect to water management across Canada.

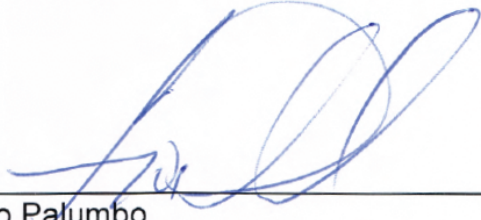
The city of Sault Ste. Marie is located right at the centre of the Great Lakes, along the shores of the St. Marys River. This location would make an ideal spot for the location of a Canada Water Agency. Traditionally referred to as Bawaating in Ojibwe by the Anishinaabe peoples of the Great Lakes, Sault Ste. Marie has been a traditional gathering place since the beginning of time.

The St. Marys River, which drains Lake Superior into Lake Huron, is a federally designated Canadian Heritage River System, with rich natural, cultural and recreational heritage. Historically, the River had been a significant transportation link within the Great Lakes system, acting as a vital artery leading to the heart of North America and beyond. The River is also a

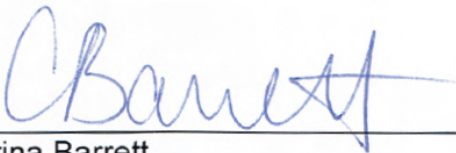
Government of Canada designated binational Great Lakes Area of Concern, further highlighting the river's significance from a federal perspective.

The SSMRCA fully supports creating a Canada Water Agency right here in the Sault, along the shores of the Great Lakes. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any additional questions.

Sincerely,



Enzo Palumbo
Chair, SSMRCA Board of Directors



Corrina Barrett
General Manager, Sault Ste. Marie Region Conservation Authority
Phone: 705-946-8530 ext. 1005
Email: cbarrett@ssmrca.ca



100 chemin Ramsey Lake Road, Sudbury, Ontario P3E 5S9
(705) 522-3701 (705) 522-4954 Fax / téléc. sciencenorth.ca

City of Sault Ste. Marie
Canada Water Agency Task Force
99 Foster Drive
Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario

26 April, 2022

Re: The City's Canada Water Agency Initiative

Dear Canada Water Agency Task Force,

On behalf of Science North, I am writing in support of a Canada Water Agency location in Sault Ste. Marie.

Science North operates Canada's 2nd and 8th largest science centres and is Northern Ontario's most popular tourist attraction, with a vision to be the leader among science centres in providing inspirational, educational and entertaining science experiences. Science North serves all of Northern Ontario with its unique, hands-on education and outreach programming, and has established a strong presence, made possible by longstanding partnerships, in Sault Ste. Marie. Every year, Science North partners with organizations in Sault Ste Marie, including the City of Sault Ste Marie, to deliver events such as the annual Science Festival, permanent visitor experiences and travelling exhibits at partner attractions, education and outreach programming and summer camps for kids.

Science North is planning the expansion of its presence in Sault Ste. Marie through a two-year pilot project that will seek to establish a programming and outreach hub in Sault Ste. Marie. This project aligns well with City's aim to be home to a new, federal agency focused on freshwater conservation and management. Centrally located within the largest group of freshwater lakes in the world, the City of Sault Ste. Marie's plentiful natural assets, cultural diversity, and local expertise that reaches beyond borders, make it an ideal location for such an Agency. Through its partnership with the City of Sault Ste Marie, Science North would be well positioned to collaborate with The Canada Water Agency to grow STEAM engagement through enhanced education programs, outreach events and initiatives.

We hope you review the City of Sault Ste Marie's application favourably, as we look forward to continued opportunities to collaborate to make Sault Ste Marie a hub for STEAM and innovation in Northern Ontario.

Should you require any contact with us, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Sincerely,

Ryan Land
Director, Education and Northern Programs

November 21, 2022

Attn. Emily Cormier
City of Sault Ste. Marie
Canada Water Agency SSM Task Force
99 Foster Drive P6A 5X6
705.989.8748
e.cormier2@cityssm.on.ca

RE: The City's Canada Water Agency Initiative

Dear Canada Water Agency Task Force,

Shingwauk Kinooamaage Gamig – Teaching Lodge (SKG), supports the Canada Water Agency SSM Task Force and the City of Sault Ste. Marie in their application to bring the Canada Water Agency to Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario.

Shingwauk Kinooamaage Gamig is a teaching and research centre of excellence in Anishinaabe education. We are one of nine Indigenous institutes of higher learning that are legally recognized in Ontario and also home to the National Chiefs Library. We aim to educate and preserve the integrity of Anishinaabe knowledge and understanding by developing and providing academic programs and workshops reflecting the Anishinaabe worldview, ways of learning and knowing.

By supporting this initiative, we are honouring our geographic location in Baawaating (Sault Ste. Marie) in the Robinson Huron Treaty Territory, on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabe people. Nestled between the largest Great Lakes, this waterway has been an original gathering place for the Anishinaabe people of the Great Lakes since time immemorial.

Our traditional Indigenous ways of life and activities depend on water. Our ability to access good water shapes these activities and our relationship with our surroundings. There are many water teachings in Indigenous Culture as a sacred element; water is the most life sustaining gift provided by Mother Earth and is the interconnection between all living beings.

We recognize the sacredness of our water and the important inherent obligation we have to protect it as critical aspects to our health, sustainability and success of our future generations. Initiatives like this one will assist in educating the present and future generations in a positive, cooperative and respectful environment, to the importance of water and the need for water protection.

Sincerely,



Dianne Roach, Director of Operations

Mayor Provenzano

City Council Members

Sault Ste. Marie

Ontario, Canada

Mayor and City Council:

The St. Marys River Bi-National Public Advisory Council (BPAC) endorses your efforts to locate the Canada Water Agency facility in Sault Ste. Marie. The geographic location of Sault Ste. Marie along an international waterway at the junction of two of the Great Lakes and in central Canada makes Sault Ste. Marie an ideal location. In addition, the Agency will be able to coordinate research with existing federal and provincial facilities, two universities, and a provincial college already located here.

The members of BPAC represent stakeholders on both the U.S. and Canadian sides of the St. Marys River and its mandate is to provide input into the rehabilitation of the St. Marys River. The St. Marys River is a designated Area of Concern due to the degradation of the ecosystem from past years of contamination. With the Canada Water Agency located on its shore, we hope that they will prioritize research and action contributing to the task of fully rehabilitating and protecting the St. Marys River.

We wish you all the best in your efforts to secure this facility. If there are any additional ways we can support your endeavours, please let us know.

Signed,

St Marys River Binational Public Advisory Council

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'P. Greve', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Canadian Chair, Peter Greve

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Aubrey Maccoux-LeDuc', written in a cursive style.

American Vice-Chair, Aubrey Maccoux-LeDuc



**The Kensington
Conservancy**

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Staff:

Carter Dorscht

Executive Director

PO Box 127

Desbarats, Ontario

P0R 1E0

705-782-2200

kensingtonconservancy.org

City of Sault Ste. Marie
Canada Water Agency Task Force
99 Foster Drive
Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario

April 19, 2022

Re: The City's Canada Water Agency Initiative

Dear Canada Water Agency Task Force,

On behalf of The Kensington Conservancy, I am writing in support of a Canada Water Agency location in Sault Ste. Marie.

We recently partnered with the City of Sault Ste. Marie to organize the Algoma Earth Day BioBlitz.

The Kensington Conservancy is part of Lake Huron North, which is a collaborative among local like-minded organizations that aims to protect and improve overall water quality in the St. Marys River and West North Channel of Lake Huron and to provide information related to this effort.

Our own conservation work protects many wetlands and undeveloped shorelines in the St. Joseph Channel area.

Given that Sault Ste. Marie is in the heart of the Great Lakes, we believe it makes a great location to host the Canada Water Agency.

Should you require any contact with us, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Sincerely,

Carter Dorscht
Executive Director