

## **Using Collaborative Engagement in the Development of an Indigenous-led Monitoring Framework in the Matawa Water Futures Project**

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The Matawa Water Futures (MWF) project started in 2018 with the goal of supporting the overall advancement of Indigenous-informed water science and monitoring framework within the MFN homelands and traditional territories. The MWF project also serves a purpose in the larger movement of trying to change the governing mindset of environmental monitoring approaches, and to also assert Indigenous governance in relation to the environment. Over the course of the MWF project, there has been a central focus on building and supporting relationships between researchers and MFN community members, as well as with other tribal councils and communities in the region, across Canada, and internationally. In shifting to focus on building out this relationship, efforts towards building an Indigenous-led monitoring and management framework developed organically by learning from engagement. A shift in the project's methodological approach towards adapting to more organic forms of engagement and relationship building has proven effective in carrying out some of the core activities for the MWF project. The importance of reflecting on these stories, as well as the engagement opportunities throughout the project, upholds that there is a shared recognition for the multi-dimensional value and importance of water amongst all who were and continue to be involved.