



MUSHKEGOWUK-LED NATIONAL MARINE CONSERVATION AREA

In Western Weeneebeg (James Bay) and
Southwestern Washaybeyo (Hudson Bay)

Presented to Hudson Bay Consortium, Nov. 2022

VISION

Establishing an Indigenous-led National Marine Conservation Area will protect Weeneebeg (James Bay) and Washaybeyoh (Hudson Bay), our Cree people, our culture and the lands and waters that sustain all life, and our interconnected ecosystems for all future generations.





MOU SIGNING CEREMONY

August 9th, 2021



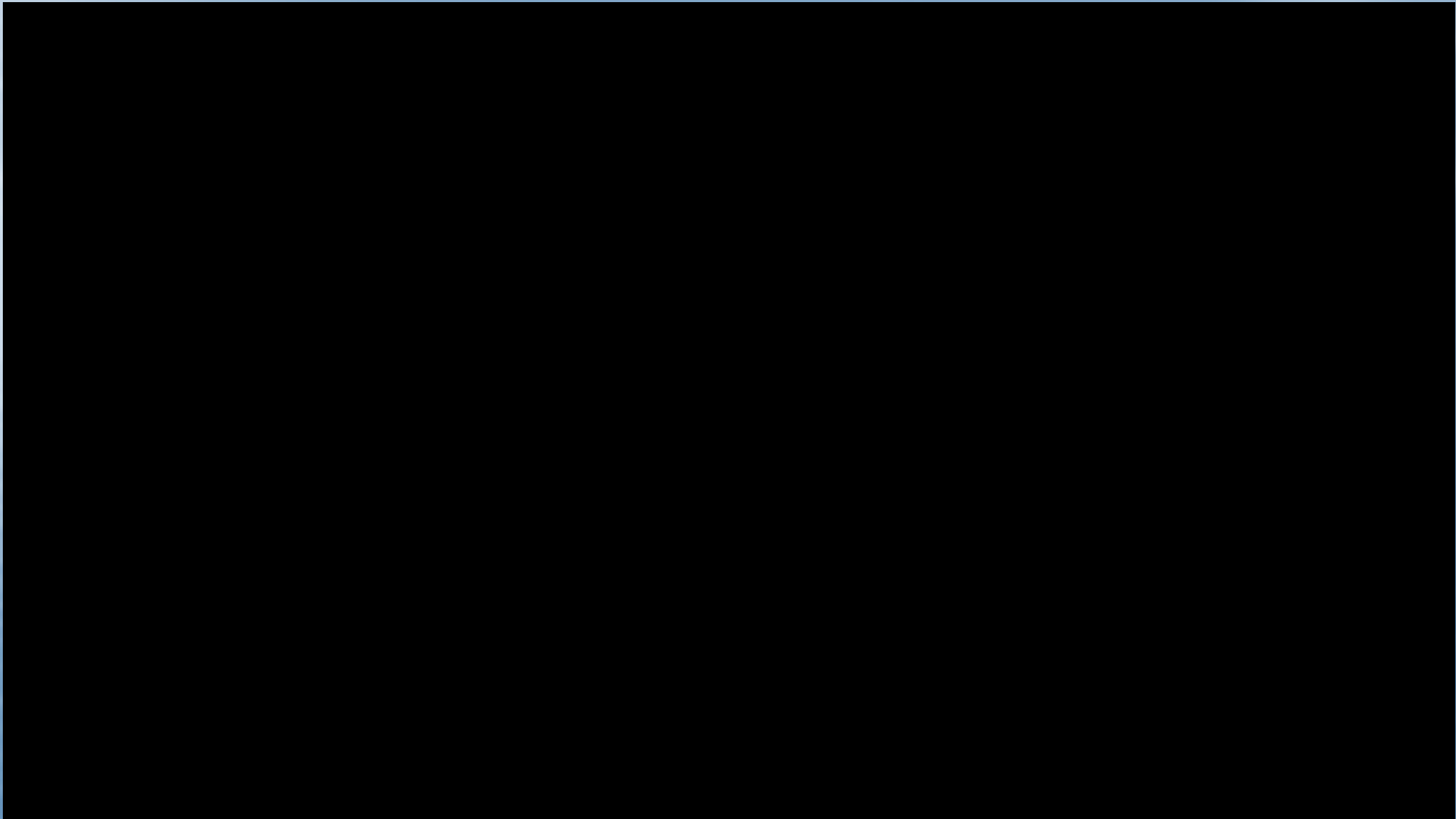
“We have been the stewards of these lands and waters for millennia, and now we want to protect the coastal and marine ecosystems that underpin the Omushkego way of life for future generations.”

— Grand Chief Jonathan Solomon, Mushkegowuk Council

MUSHKEGOWUK NATIONAL MARINE CONSERVATION AREA – STUDY AREA



- Offshore Treaty 9
- Covers approx. 91,000km²
- Immense array of biodiversity (threatened/endangered species such as beluga, polar bears), global stopover for billions of migratory birds
- Contribute to fight against climate change
- Help maintain health, culture, well-being of Omushkego Cree
- 9 participating communities





How are Feasibility Assessments Done?

- An agreement (ex., MOU) sets how the feasibility assessment will be done; it typically includes a

Steering Committee



- Time limited **studies** (Ecological/traditional/socioeconomic



- **Contribution agreement** provides funding to Indigenous organizations to support capacity and meaningful participation

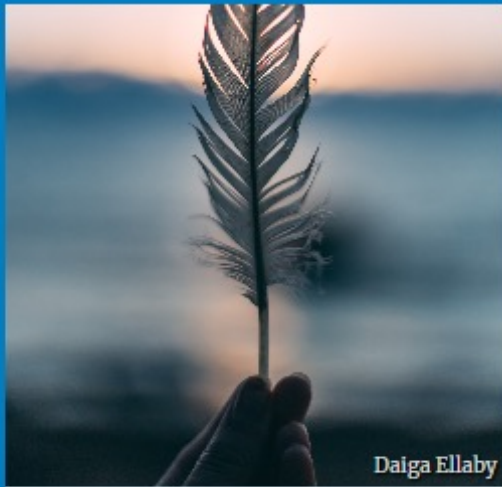


- Build **relationships and trust**, and address keep challenges to progress



- Stakeholders, partners and Indigenous **consultations**

PROGRESS SINCE LAST HUDSON BAY SUMMIT



NATION-TO-NATION RELATIONSHIP

In August 2020, the Mushkegowuk Council Chiefs gave support for a nation-to-nation talk with the Government of Canada to formally work towards establishing an Omushkego-led NMCA in western James Bay and southwestern Hudson Bay.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement is at the heart of this project. Extensive consultation with all nine Mushkegowuk communities will take place in order to gather knowledge about the area, understand common uses and activities, and identify Omushkego conservation priorities.



MUSHKEGOWUK MARINE TASK FORCE

The Mushkegowuk Marine Task Force (made up of Elders, youth and community members appointed by the respective Chiefs and Councils of the Mushkegowuk Council) will be guiding the planning process for establishing the NMCA.



COMMUNITY COORDINATORS

Hired Community Coordinators from each community will help facilitate their community engagement activities and assist with documenting Traditional Knowledge related to the marine and coastal environments.



170+ species of geese, ducks and shorebirds including long-distance migrators such as endangered red knots

The Mushkegowuk NMCA study area

1,290 km of coast, 91,000 km² offshore waters



Rich in blue carbon stored in sediments, plants and wildlife



The most southern population of polar bears in the world



5 species of seals and 30+ species of fishes



20% of Canada's belugas including one unique population that resides in James Bay year-round

[Mushkegowuk Marine Conservation Moving Ahead – YouTube](#)

INDIGENOUS-LED, SUPPORTED BY STRONG PARTNERSHIPS TO ENHANCE KNOWLEDGE

- University of Manitoba (Carbon/Biodiversity)
- University of Waterloo (Hydrology)
- Wildlands League
- Oceans North
- Environment and Climate Change Canada
- Parks Canada
- Oceans 5
- Moore Foundation
- WWF



Wildlands League is a not-for-profit charity working to protect public land and water since 1968. We are policy experts, negotiators and communicators standing up for wildlife and standing with communities. We tackle irresponsible development that threatens precious rivers, lakes and wildlife habitat. We create solutions and hope. We give voice to Canada's irreplaceable nature to make sure at least half of the country is protected for all children, the climate and for the planet.



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THE FUTURE

- Early stages of the feasibility assessment
- Recommendation if NMCA is feasible (or not) to Mushkegowuk Grand Chief and Environment and Climate Change Canada Minister : winter 2024
- Opportunities for input and upcoming consultations

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