

WINTER 2021 | SEAL RIVER WATERSHED ALLIANCE

Community Voices

why do you love the watershed?



The Seal River Watershed is one of the last great wild places on our planet.

There are no permanent roads. No mines. No industrial development of any kind.

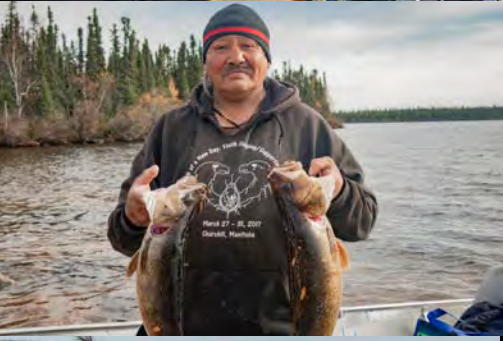
The Dene, Cree and Inuit peoples have cared for these lands and waters since time immemorial. They continue to rely upon the unsullied watershed to support their families and maintain cherished traditions.

These are their words.



**Seal River
Watershed**

**Indigenous Protected
Area Initiative**



THE WATERSHED IS OUR HOME, AND THESE ARE OUR VOICES.




IN THE NORTHERNMOST REACHES OF MANITOBA, ALONG THE TREELINE WEST OF HUDSON BAY (TU CHO), IS THE REGION KNOWN AS NUHEH NENE (OUR LAND, TOGETHER).

Only one community is located in the 50,000 square kilometre watershed: Sayisi Dene First Nation, which lies on the beautiful shores of Tadoule Lake and has a population of fewer than 400 people.

The Seal River still flows freely into Hudson Bay: unlike other major northern rivers, the Seal's entire 260 km path is unhindered by dams and other industrial developments.

Sayisi Dene First Nation (SDFN) leads the initiative to protect the entirety of the Seal River watershed from industrial activity in partnership with our Cree, Dene and Inuit neighbours.

Every aspect of our cultures, spirituality and identities are rooted in our relationship to the caribou and to the lands which sustain us.



We envision a pristine watershed where people, animals and fish are healthy, our unique languages and cultures are thriving, and there is hope and abundance for all future generations.

Photo courtesy of Chris Paetkau

SARAZINE MERASTY MOOSE
O-PIPON-NA-PIWIN CREE NATION

We love our watershed. We need to protect our water, land, and wildlife.

CAROLINE THORASSIE
SAYISI DENE FIRST NATION

Nothing beats the beauty of the land and fresh water, to be able to eat the fish from the lakes and to harvest moose and caribou.

MELODY DUCK
SAYISI DENE FIRST NATION

The land, waters and animals need to be protected in order for our children and children's children to carry on our traditions. The land, waters and animals need to be protected and taken care of in order for them to keep giving to our people.

BONNIE DENECHZHE
NORTHLANDS DENESULINE FIRST NATION

It's important to keep the watershed safe for the future generations and to protect the land and wildlife from pollution.

THOMAS DUCK
SAYISI DENE FIRST NATION

Protecting the water is important, it provides life to all. The rivers are like highways to travel on, the abundance of animals and birds is unbelievable, the land is so beautiful and peaceful yet can be so deadly! Respecting our watershed is crucial for our younger generations!

ROBERT BOBBY POWDERHORN
SAYISI DENE FIRST NATION

To protect land, waters, and wildlife from pollutions, and preserve hunting grounds for future generations.

RANDY ANOWTALIK
ARVIAT NUNAVUT

We love our watershed & the land and wildlife. We need to protect our beautiful land. They need to be protected.

BRENT INGLIS
BARREN LANDS FIRST NATION

It should be protected so that our communities are protected from anything that's harmful to wildlife and to us.

MARY WOOD
O-PIPON-NA-PIWIN CREE NATION

We should protect the watershed because it is crucial to our culture.

FRAN SPENCE
O-PIPON-NA-PIWIN CREE NATION

Being a part of one of the last generations that had the privilege to be raised in the fish camp/trap line, our lands and lakes were full of life. Our land was never protected and was destroyed by flooding. We must protect our land for our future generations.

SAMANTHA YASSIE
SAYISI DENE FIRST NATION

Water is a part of life and to protect it is our right as Indigenous people. We would perish without water.



ALPHONSE TSSESAZE
NORTHLANDS DENESULINE
FIRST NATION

Protecting the watershed is essential for healthy ecosystems and keeping all species healthy that depend on pristine water.

TRISHA BIGHETTY
BARREN LANDS FIRST NATION

The watershed should be protected because it is our livelihood, our tradition, and our culture.

VALERIE THORASSIE
SAYISI DENE FIRST NATION

Protection of the natural resources in our watershed is essential to maintain the health and well being of all living things, both now and in the future.

CAITLYN TSSESAZE
NORTHLANDS DENESULINE FIRST NATION

We love our watershed, the land and the wildlife. They need to be protect the land, waters and wildlife from pollutions, and preserve hunting grounds for future generations

CHARMAIN CLIPPING
SAYISI DENE FIRST NATION

We need our lands and waters for everything! Water is vital to life and our living in the north! Without our water and land, we have no life. It needs to be kept safe for our ways of life, for now and for future generations to come.

ROSE ANTASANI
NORTHLANDS DENESULINE FIRST NATION

What I loved about visiting the north was the clean blue lakes and beautiful sandy beaches. I loved visiting the elders whom we all called Granny Sâtuni and helping them with chores in hopes they would reward us with candies or cookies. My grandmother would also talk about preserving the lakes.

JEAN BUSSIDOR
SAYISI DENE FIRST NATION

The water is used for drinking and land for fire, medicine and food.

CHARMAINE COOK
BARREN LANDS FIRST NATION

The watershed needs to be protected because we need to keep our water and animals healthy for future generations to come. Without healthy watersheds we risk losing clean water and animals that depend on the watershed.

KRISTY THOM
SAYISI DENE FIRST NATION

I am very opinionated when it comes to environmental protection in Canada, and so I believe that the watershed should be protected because it is so important for the environment. So many different species of animals live and thrive on this land it's up to us to ensure that big industries don't destroy it through pipelines and industrial projects. We're so close to irreversible climate damage, and there being so many fresh water lakes that industrialization would greatly impact them in a negative way. This area of land is so beautifully kept and rare that it is in the best interest for all Canadians to keep as much of it this way as we can.

SHARON NAMBIENNARE
NORTHLANDS DENESULINE FIRST NATION

When the south has destroyed itself, the North is where we have to protect. The water, land, air, animals will be our last frontier.

DANA DANTTOUZE
NORTHLANDS DENESULINE FIRST NATION

This is a great opportunity for acknowledging traditional culture and encouraging young people to speak their language! Water is life-sacred. Without water there is no life. We are connected to the harmony of the land, the spirit of all creation. Our ancestral roots are embedded on the Seal River Watershed. The land, plants, animals, and birds have provided food, medicine, shelter, clothing and still do. Without protection, generations to come can only imagine a life we call home today.



Charmain Clipping, Sayisi Dene First Nation

GLEN TSESSAZE
NORTHLANDS DENESULINE FIRST NATION

We love our watershed, the land and the wildlife. They need to be protected.

JOYCE YASSIE
SAYISI DENE FIRST NATION

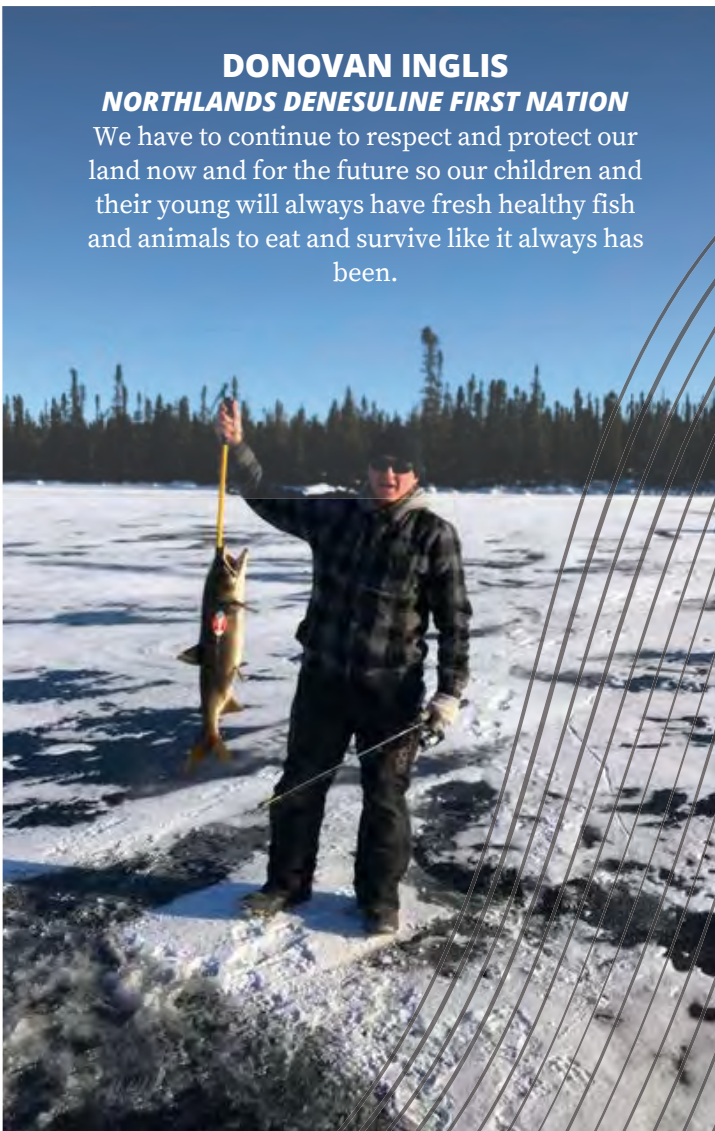
It's so important to protect the land and the water. Keep the water fresh because water is a part of life.

VICTORIA ANTSANEN
NORTHLANDS DENESULINE FIRST NATION

We need our waters, land, and wildlife protected, they are crucial for our way of life, mostly we live off the land. We have beautiful pristine wilderness, and are grateful for the land.

DONOVAN INGLIS
NORTHLANDS DENESULINE FIRST NATION

We have to continue to respect and protect our land now and for the future so our children and their young will always have fresh healthy fish and animals to eat and survive like it always has been.



BRUCE COOK
BARREN LANDS FIRST NATION

The watershed needs to be protected for future generations to enjoy. Once it is taken over by big industries all wildlife will be destroyed.

KELLY-ANN THOM
SAYISI DENE FIRST NATION

It's very important to protect the pristine paradise that is our home. We've lived hunting and gathering this territory for time immemorial, it is as important as the blood in our veins and spirit in our bodies.

*Without the
preservation of
this territory,
who would
we be?*

ALEX ISHALOOK
ARVIAT NUNAVUT

**This area is a hospital for our wildlife.
It must be protected.**

PAUL PEMIK,
ARVIAT NUNAVUT

The caribous, whales, and polar bears migrate along the coast. Keep our hunting ground clean, then there would be always wildlife.

SANDY TRAVERSE
O-PIPON-NA-PIWIN CREE NATION

The watershed must be protected because our water is life. Our wildlife matters, our harvesting medicine from the land matters, our entire being depends on this. The best part of life is being on the land and the water with our children and watching our grandchildren being able to see the beauty of our world.



DESIRAE DENECHYZHE
NORTHLANDS DENESULINE FIRST NATION

Being on the land and fishing and setting nets with my uncles gave me a sense of identity. Learning that the caribou give us what we need, also taught me that we are descendants of the caribou. It's who we are. It's what keeps us strong. Protecting the water shed is what is keeping our culture and traditions alive! Our children and great grandchildren and so forth will be rich in life to have clean drinking water that will nourish them and land where the caribou and animals can roam freely.

WILL MOOSE
O-PIPON-NA-PIWIN CREE NATION

What I was taught growing up was showing respect for everything - the land, the water, and for other people and wildlife. And teaching the children because the children are the future, and how the history will continue to grow.

CATHERINE INGLIS
O-PIPON-NA-PIWIN CREE NATION

It should be protected so that our way of life is protected! And so those future generations can get taught traditionally from the land & waters.

LINDA INGLIS
NORTHLANDS DENESULINE FIRST NATION

**We need our land
protected by our own
people.**

KYLE POWDERHORN
SAYISI DENE FIRST NATION

The land is beautiful and the fishing and hunting is great which we need to protect from pollution. One day if we make the wrong decision it will affect a lot of us. Please protect our land from industrial work.



KRISTIN ANDERSON
SAYISI DENE FIRST NATION

It is important to keep our environment safe, we need to protect our land and wildlife from pollution, we depend on the land and the waters as a natural way of survival and living. And we need to protect it for our future generations.

DIANDRA POWDERHORN
SAYISI DENE FIRST NATION

The protection of our gorgeous land and all its beautiful creatures is vital. Our children are the future and we're depending on them to keep our traditions alive, but they're also depending on us to make sure they have what they need in order to do so.



LINDA INGLIS
NORTHLANDS DENESULINE FIRST NATION



LINNEA DENECHZHE
NORTHLANDS DENESULINE
FIRST NATION

We need to protect our land and waters so the wildlife can live long and healthy lives and for the younger generation.



MONICA ANNE
SAYISI DENE FIRST NATION

A healthy caribou population means a healthy boreal. And by protecting its habitat, we can not only support many other species, but we can also help fight climate change. Protecting the watershed ensures that the many generations to come will be able to continue to hunt on their traditional lands.



LUCY ANTSANEN
NORTHLANDS DENESULINE
FIRST NATION

The water quenches our thirst and cleanses our body & Spirit. The land feeds us and nourishes our body.



SARINA SAMMY
SERENE
BARREN LANDS FIRST
NATION

We love our watershed and we have to protect our land, water, and wildlife. We have one of the biggest lakes in Manitoba, which is vital to life and our living in the north. It needs to be kept safe for our ways of life and for our future generations to come. We must protect and cherish our beautiful land.



YVONNE CHEEKIE
SAYISI DENE FIRST NATION

The watershed should be protected because it'll ensure our future generations peace of mind, pride of land, and pride of who we are.



Water is life.

Rachelle Bighetty
Barren Lands First Nation

SHARNELLE VEUILLOT
NORTHLANDS DENESULINE FIRST NATION

We need to protect our land and waters so the wildlife can live long and healthy lives, and we can keep our culture and traditions alive for future generations to come.

ISABELLE SIWAP
SAYISI DENE FIRST NATION

Protecting the watershed is important to keep the environment safe and traditions alive for the future generations. Also, because the whole watershed is so beautiful.

NICK ANTSANEN
NORTHLANDS DENESULINE FIRST NATION

The waters of all First Nations should be protected in order to preserve our traditional ways of life and to keep a healthy ecosystem.

NATALIE THOMAS
O-PIPON-NA-PIWIN CREE NATION

One of the most important reasons for protecting the watershed is to protect the animals, fish, and birds and their habitats. So in the future our Indigenous people can continue to hunt, fish, and trap to make a livelihood off the land as is our traditional and cultural way of life in the north.

ISAIAH DADZIENNARE
NORTHLANDS DENESULINE FIRST NATION

We live off the land and water so we need to protect it for our future generations.

STEPHANIE ANTSANEN
NORTHLANDS DENESULINE FIRST NATION

Protecting the watershed is important to keep our environment safe.



Without land and water, we have nothing.

Animals and fish depend on it. Mining companies will get rich and our survival ways using the natural resources will become very hard, and could cause harm if destroyed. Our healing methods depend on water quality and will also be affected.

John Thorassie, Sayisi Dene First Nation



REBECCA SINCLAIR
BARREN LANDS FIRST NATION

I grew up on the seal river watershed, it is home to the best trout fishing in the world.

Caribou and moose are what the people live off - the health of the watershed is vital to the social, mental and physical wellbeing of all that live there. It is where I learned to fish, hunt, trap and where I fell in love with the land. The North still holds a place in my heart and I'll forever call ancestors lands home. It should be protected at all costs. It is more than a way of life.



RANDY THORASSIE
SAYISI DENE FIRST NATION

I think we should protect the watershed because it restores life to humans, animals and Mother Earth. We've ravaged the Earth and we really need to protect these life-giving lands.



MARIE BIGHETTY
BARREN LANDS FIRST NATION

We need our water to live a healthy lifestyle. It's our life.

ZACHERY LONGBOY
SAYISI DENE FIRST NATION

The way of life must be protected for future generations to learn from the land & waters.

CHERYL DENECHZHE
NORTHLANDS DENESULINE FIRST NATION

Our land & water have always been a big part of our culture. Let's all protect our land & water by keeping it clean for our animals.

SHEILA TAITE
O-PIPON-NA-PIWIN CREE NATION

I believe it should be protected because water is life. We must protect our land for our future generations.

DAWN CHEEKIE
SAYISI DENE FIRST NATION

I think this is a great opportunity to share the on-land traditional knowledge with our children and we can protect our land from mining and protect the water from being harvested.

CAROLINE CHEEKIE
SAYISI DENE FIRST NATION

Wildlife is our most precious gift and we need to pass on to our next generation, and needs to be protected.

STEPHANIE ZAMORA
SAYISI DENE FIRST NATION

The land needs to be protected for our future. The future of our nations and the future of our children.

How can you help protect the #SealRiverWatershed?

Our Nations and communities have joined together in the spirit of cooperation and mutual respect.

The Seal River Watershed Alliance has pledged to maintain a transparent process which reflects the values and interests of our Nations and communities.

Community representatives are working to engage community members in the initiative and to gather knowledge that will shape how the protected area is designed and managed.

Please contact your community's representatives or the project team to learn about opportunities to get involved. We are here to answer all questions and concerns. Do you want to add your voice to our campaign? Post your statements of support on our Facebook page.

And be sure to follow the page for upcoming contests, news and events. Please visit our website to learn more about the initiative.

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