



Dear Municipal Consortium Leaders,

April 8, 2020

**Re: 2019 Consortium Update**

The pending summary of the work of the Canadian Municipal Water Consortium in 2019 is receiving final edits in March/April 2020, in the midst of exceptional changes in the world resulting from the novel coronavirus pandemic. There is no doubt what is happening now will alter how we all function in the world going forward. The current crisis highlights essential community services and those who ensure we have safe and effective water, wastewater and stormwater services are prominent among Canada's frontline heroes.

As I look back on the work done by the Municipal Consortium in 2019, it strikes me that much of that work has been well placed to support a sector that is looking to build on its connections to communities, offer greater coordination and support evidence-informed decisions. The municipal water management sector in Canada is increasingly moving the industry to where it needs to be to support the challenges of becoming more resilient as a society to major impacts going forward. It is not only about climate change impacts, but about being resilient to the many other unknowns that will challenge us going forward. This current crisis brings challenges to water management, but will likely also accelerate a new way of functioning.

The water leaders who comprise the Consortium's Leadership Group continue to articulate national priorities that better define the sector's knowledge and decision needs. This group has grown steadily over the past few years, and we are looking at ways to expand on the value generated for the overall sector by bringing in perspectives from mid-size municipalities, academia and industry to accelerate, advance and improve municipal water management across Canada.

CWN will continue to be agile in 2020 in response to sector trends and will move us ahead in areas of strategic focus that strongly support CWN's core goals:

- Enabling resilient, adaptable and strong communities by leveraging the co-benefits of water-management
- Establishing water as Canada's gateway issue to addressing broader challenges like climate change, resilience and sustainable resource management
- Moving Canada to an evidence-informed, effects-based approach to prioritizing risks, investments and actions

These high-level goals continue to frame the Consortium's work plan, even as we help support the sector to address the challenges during and after a pandemic. The goal is to enable the water management community to be vigilant in the areas critical to success going forward: adapting to new industry realities, managing uncertainty, building resilience, working across silos, inequality and public engagement. I look forward to sharing the pending update on initiatives that CWN has completed or commenced in 2019, as well as our plans for 2020 and beyond as we work to accelerate, advance and improve water management decisions. We continue to adapt to the needs of our greater community and look forward to serving during 2020.

**Bernadette Conant**

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