

## 2019 - 12 Implementing Change: Supporting Wa Ni Ska Tan, Indigenous and Grassroots Calls for Ethical Energy in Manitoba

### Moved by: Wa Ni Ska Tan: An Alliance of Hydro-Impacted Communities

**Whereas:** Manitoba lies within the ancestral lands of many diverse First Nations, Metis, and Inuit peoples and are Aboriginal peoples as so defined within the constitution of Canada. Aboriginal peoples in Manitoba possess Aboriginal rights and include inherent and treaty rights, where applicable.

**Whereas:** Manitoba, through its publicly owned utility Manitoba Hydro, produces 97% of the hydropower used in Manitoba and serves more than 580,000 electric customers. Thus, hydropower is of key economic importance to Manitoba. Manitoba Hydro is governed by a publicly appointed board and the Manitoba Hydro Act.

**Whereas:** Manitoba Hydro operates 15 generating stations as part of its integrated system in Manitoba, most of which lie on the traditional lands of First Nation communities and there have been many negative consequences as a result of energy production. The production of hydroelectricity has been largely unethical.

**Whereas:** Manitoba, the Manitoba Hydro Board, and on occasion Canada, have entered into agreements with various Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities relating to adverse effects and impacts resulting from Hydro activities in their respective territories such as the Northern Flood Agreement, which has never been fully honoured.

**Whereas:** There is widespread and polarizing perspectives concerning the various Hydro agreements that have been made to date and the views concerning the implementation of these agreements is equally varied; some communities have raised significant concerns related to environmental damage, impacts on local and regional economies, the loss of traditional lands and livelihoods, impacts to cultural activities, among other concerns.

**Whereas:** While nominal steps have been taken toward providing economic opportunities in northern Manitoba, particularly where new developments are concerned, many First Nations communities have yet to benefit in a meaningful way from hydro development.

**Whereas:** The Province of Manitoba formally apologized to First Nations communities affected by northern hydropower on January 20th, 2015, acknowledging the damages hydropower has inflicted on the environment, livelihoods, cultural identity, transportation, and way of life, and passed *The Path to Reconciliation Act* in March of 2016. Drawing upon the Truth and Reconciliation's Call to Actions and principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, this legislation commits the Province of Manitoba to act in a spirit of reconciliation.

**Be It Resolved That:** Manitoba Hydro and the Government of Manitoba, along with the various regulatory bodies, need to take responsibility for past, present, and future impacts resulting from Hydro operations throughout the province and redress the cumulative environmental effects and harms caused by the operation of Hydro's integrated system;

**Be it further resolved that:** Manitoba Hydro remain publicly owned and committed to working in a spirit of collaboration with all Hydro-impacted communities to redress the losses of Aboriginal cultural and economic heritage in Hydro-affected lands in Manitoba;

**Be it further resolved that:** Manitoba Hydro and the Government of Manitoba provide local and regional economic opportunities that do not appropriate Indigenous knowledge.

**Be it further resolved that:** Manitoba Hydro, the Government of Manitoba, and the Government of Canada, and implement the Northern Flood Agreement.