North American Megadam Resistance Alliance

*Protecting rivers and their communities by resisting megadams and their transmission corridors*

Visit our [website](https://mailchi.mp/a476dd83d752/april-newsletter) to learn more about our alliance, supporters, and work

April 2020 Newsletter

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**Featured Land & Water Protector**

Each month our newsletter features one of the many people standing up for rivers and their communities. This month we hear from Carlton Richards of Pimicikamak Territory (also known as Manitoba, Canada).

Carlton Richards at the 2019 National Day of Mourning in Plymouth, MA

Carlton Richards

Carlton Richards is from the Cree community of Pimicikamak, north of Winnipeg, Manitoba where hydropower development by Manitoba Hydro has destroyed over 50,000 square miles of rivers, streams, and forests. Carlton is a fluent Cree speaker, hunter, trapper, and fisherman. He has been negatively affected by Manitoba Hydro his entire life. Carlton seeks to raise awareness that many youths in his community suffer from severe hopelessness due to the destruction of the lands and rivers by Manitoba Hydro. This has made it impossible for Carlton and for other community members to use their traditional hunting, trapping, and fishing knowledge and skills for their livelihoods and cultural survival.
Carlton currently has a seasonal job cleaning up after Manitoba Hydro's destruction caused by ongoing dam operations that involve manipulating water levels and other river flow alterations. He recently organized a Wet’suwet’en megadam solidarity event in Pimicikamak territory, see story below.

**Current News:**

*Report: New England Clean Energy Connect and Champlain Hudson Power Express transmission corridors tied to potential for more dam construction in Canada*

NAMRA has released a ground-breaking expert report linking the proposed transmission corridors bringing dirty hydropower from Canada to the U.S. with new megadams in Canada. The report, by Northbridge Energy Partners, shows Hydro-Quebec cannot meet demand for the export contracts associated with the corridors. This means that Hydro-Quebec needs more destructive megadam power than it has now. Alternatively, it has to take hydropower from other customers and supply them with fossil fuel power so it can sell the hydro to the US. This bait and switch results in greenwashing HQ's energy. NAMRA's report confirms the earlier findings of two other expert reports by Energyzt showing how Hydro-Quebec is greenwashing its hydropower.

*Investigation of Muskrat Falls Megadam in Labrador, Canada reveals violations of Indigenous rights, failure to follow environmental law, and fraud and deceit*

Over three years ago, land and water protectors in Labrador led a petition drive to get the provincial government to investigate the financial and regulatory irregularities behind the Muskrat Falls megadam. To date, the cost of the project has more than doubled, to $12.7 billion. The government established an inquiry into the megadam project and established the *Commission of Inquiry Respecting the Muskrat Falls project* on November 20, 2017. The inquiry investigation alone cost the government $33 million. NAMRA members and allies including the Grand Riverkeeper Labrador, Inc, the Labrador Land Protectors, and others testified at the inquiry.

In March 2020, the inquiry judge issued an explosive report finding among other things, fraud and abuse and confirming the environmental destruction and blatant disregard for Indigenous rights and culture in the siting and construction of Muskrat Falls. The judge recommends that *criminal and civil charges* be considered against the contractors and engineers involved with the project.
World Water Day: Often overlooked, water resources are essential part of solution to climate change

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, World Water Day events on March 22 were held virtually. NAMRA had planned a community forum in Portland, Maine with Indigenous and allied land and water protectors and climate activists in coordination with Wa Ni Ska Tan's event. We want to thank our allies who offered to participate in our events and hope to see you soon!

According to a recently published Guardian article, our society's destruction and exploitation of natural resources and animals are at least partially responsible for outbreaks such as HIV, SARS, H1N1, and now COVID-19.

Water insecurity and climate change are two of the most severe crises that the world will face over the coming decades. Instead of treating these two topics as separate, it is time to begin treating them as the connected issues that they are which require comprehensive solutions. Stay tuned to NAMRA's continued efforts to build alliances with land and water protectors around these issues.

Public Comments on NECEC hydro corridor due April 10, 2020

The Maine Department of Environmental Protection has issued a draft permit on the New England Clean Energy Connect transmission corridor that will carry Canadian hydropower to Boston.

Leading Maine conservation groups have criticized the permit. Find out more from the Natural Resources Council of Maine.

The public can comment on the permit until April 10, 2020

Email: NECEC.DEP@maine.gov
Mail: Jim Beyer, Maine DEP, State House Station #17, Augusta, ME 04333

NAMRA is a volunteer-led organization and relies on donations. Please consider donating to our work.
NAMRA Actions

Wet'su'weten Solidarity

On Friday, February 21, an international alliance of land and water protectors held a series of solidarity actions across Canada and New England to stand with the Wet'suwet'en People in their struggle against extreme energy development and to raise awareness about climate justice and the role of extreme energy development in contributing to the climate emergency and cultural genocide of Indigenous people.

We honor Wet'su'weten actions raising awareness about land and water sovereignty, climate justice, energy extraction and infrastructure, and colonialism. Canada’s monopoly hydropower corporations have destroyed communities, rivers, and forests for 100 years by building massive megadams and causing cultural genocide. Hydro is extreme energy extraction-using rivers and land for private profit. It is a climate disaster.

February 10, 2020: NAMRA allies including opponents to the NECEC hydro corridor through Maine stand out in Lebanon, NH.
Commentary

As we write this newsletter we are reminded of the fragility of the interconnected world that we live in and the ramifications that exploitative relationships with nature often bring. Whether it is the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, climate change, extreme resource extraction, or any number of other issues, the importance of functional ecosystems cannot be understated. As David Quammen, author of *Spillover: Animal Infections and the Next Pandemic*, recently wrote in the New York Times. “We cut the trees; we kill the animals or cage them and send them to markets. We disrupt ecosystems, and we shake viruses loose from their natural hosts. When that happens, they need a new host. Often, we are it.”

We look forward to holding similar events to what was planned for World Water Day at a safer point in the future and we want to thank all of our allies, supporters, and volunteers for all of the work that they did in helping to organize World Water Day and we hope to see you soon.

The fight against the destructive New England Clean Energy Connect transmission corridor (NECEC) continues as new evidence is unearthed that Central Maine Power hired private investigators to follow petitioners’ whereabouts and track their social media posts while they were collecting signatures to ensure that Maine voters have a say on the construction of the corridor. These disturbing findings demonstrate just how desperate Central Maine Power and Hydro-Quebec have become as the chances of NECEC being knocked down by voters increases. NAMRA stands strong and united with allies across North America and beyond in the fight against megadams and for land and water sovereignty.
Thank you for your interest in our work and stay well!
- The Editors