

Arctic Caucus Proceedings  
PNWER Annual Summit- Calgary, AB

July 18, 2016

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*Co-Chairs:*

- Sen. Lesil McGuire, State Senator, Alaska State Legislature
- Steve Rose, Assistant Deputy Minister, Yukon Government
- Hon. Wally Schumann, Minister of Environment and Natural Resources & Minister of Transportation, Government of the Northwest Territories

*Speakers:*

- Nils Andreassen, Executive Director, Institute of the North
  - John Higginbotham, Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI) & Carleton University
  - Robert Cooke, Polar Knowledge Canada
  - Professor Maribeth Murray, Arctic Institute of North America, University of Calgary
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**Discussion Topics**

***View from the Northwest Territories – Remarks on Infrastructure and Economic Development***

John Higginbotham – Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI) & Carleton University

John Higginbotham gave an overview of the Northwest Passage, specifically on service corridors and marine developments. The question was raised over who will be responsible for the investment, construction, and management of port facilities in support of the Northwest Passage. The *Canada Transportation Act Review*, developed in part by David Emerson, is being utilized as a rationale to plan for the future and has a heavy focus on the North. This review was based on the same rationale as the *Pacific Gateway Initiative*, which focused on economic and social development. Additionally, John Higginbotham presented a graph that showed the Arctic Sea Ice Extent as of July 14, 2016. Current trends indicate the possibility of an Open Arctic that can facilitate higher vessel traffic through the Northwest Passage. The Canadian government, through their *Review*, recommended an increase in funding and policy measures to address infrastructure deficiencies in the North, as well as the desperate need for economic development. While the *Review* was received positively by the United States, there has been little action taken so far, partly due to the report originating from a foreign government. Finally, the Arctic lacks a firm policy, in addition to the lack of funds for projects.

[Presentation](#)

Robert Cooke, Polar Knowledge Canada

Robert Cooke spoke on collaborating for the future with the help of Canada's polar knowledge. Polar Knowledge Canada was formed in 2015 as a means to advance the understanding of the Canadian Arctic, promote economic development, Canada's leadership, and establish a hub for future research. In addition to these areas, Polar Knowledge Canada seeks to find sustainable solutions to waste treatment, housing, and reducing the dependence on diesel fuel for energy generation. These programs will help in

building capacity and increasing resiliency for Arctic communities. However, these plans are challenged due to the remoteness of the northern communities, the lifestyle and culture, and limited human resource and skill sets. In order for these programs to be successful, the community needs to be involved and participate throughout the whole process. This can be done, in part, by providing training or investment programs. Finally, Robert Cooke spoke about the Arctic Remote Energy Networks Academy (ARENA) Project, which brings students from around the world and provides training and the chance for knowledge exchanging. This helps to grow capacity in the North and looks for sustainable energy generation projects to implement.

### [Presentation](#)

#### Nils Andreassen, Executive Director, Institute of the North

Nils Andreassen presented on two projects being conducted by the Institute of the North: Emergency preparedness through the Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response (EPPR) Arctic Council Working Group, and Oil Spill Preparedness in small communities. The work will include surveying of community leaders or responders to receive information and assess awareness of risk and impact. Additionally, it will address what community service response mechanisms are in currently in place. A survey will be distributed in the coming months. Canada and the United States have also partnered with the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) for the Arctic Renewable Energy Atlas (AREA) as part of the Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG). This project is looking into gathering existing data in energy and resource mapping, power production and consumption by communities, and the doubling of budgets for Arctic development efforts. The goal of the project is to assist decision makers in realizing the potential of the Arctic and current projects already in place. Finally, the project also seeks to change the narrative concerning the Arctic to being leaders in technology and renewable energy resources as opposed to being painted as victims of climate change.

#### Professor Maribeth Murray, Arctic Institute of North America, University of Calgary

Professor Maribeth Murray discussed the current programs, and future needs, of Arctic observing and monitoring. The Arctic Observing Summit has brought people together from many different levels to define Arctic needs through changes and data collection. The aim is to increase accessibility and relevancy for policy development, as well as planning for the future. Since 2013, participation at the Summit has been steadily growing and has an additional focus of responsible economic development and sustainable livelihoods for Northern communities. At the 2014 meeting, participation had nearly tripled from 2013, where 342 participants were involved from 29 different countries. The Arctic will require broad expertise to address the changes in the North and the economic situation of the communities. Openly sharing data across borders between researchers will become more crucial moving forward, but the most challenging aspect is achieving the data exchange between government organizations and the private sector.

### [Presentation](#)

#### ***Panel Review of the Arctic Council and other projects, and discussion of Arctic Caucus participation roundtable***

Government of Yukon Representative: In 2007, the premiers of Canada's three territories released their vision of the North which outlined the territorial governments' shared priorities, focusing on sovereignty and sustainable communities, adapting to climate change, and circumpolar relations. Following its release, the federal government published its own Northern Strategy, which echoed the direction the

northern Premiers had taken. In 2014, the northern premiers released a renewed vision with a focus on productive and engaged citizens, energy, infrastructure and governance (see: [A Northern Vision: Building A Better North](#)). The North is where we live and raise our families. I worry that sometimes the discussion around sustainability in the North can refer to a sort of static, unchanging situation rather than the opportunities for growth and the continuing development of a modern economy. How can the uniqueness of the North be maintained while at the same time continue to diversify and grow its economy, including the development of modern infrastructure comparable to the South. It is important that northern governments help shape these discussions by presenting their vision for the development of the North. The Government of Yukon continues to work with industry and all levels of government to identify strategic infrastructure projects and opportunities to diversify its economy.

Government of Alaska Representative: “Referring to the lack of federal involvement, policy development without consultation impacts [Alaska], the people, and economy. From the U.S. perspective on the Arctic, subnational research is rarely considered. Economic development, water, food security are not national priorities.”

Academic Representative: “[World Wildlife Fund] WWF wrote some of the lines in that statement. Canadian and Northern interests are not as well reflected. PNWER could find a grey zone between international and domestic realms, where can balance be achieved? Innovation, as an organizing principle, is to create an economy of scope. Innovation can be the solution to problems. PNWER can create an economy scope at the subnational level. Capacity of the community, but who in the community will overlook that?”

Another Academic Representative: “How the Alaska-Yukon border network is developing. What has not been discussed is the articulation of that network with the U.S. side. It is the least known area, lacks literature or a formal understanding. CBSA says that they are concerned regarding the magnitude of large development programs, as they lack capacity to manage the magnitude of these projects. Those living on the border have difficulty crossing. PNWER must look at the whole issue”.

Trade and Transportation Expert: “How can the border facilitate? (Referring to the study of the railway corridor from Ft. Maac to Delta Junction) That is a large construction project that postulates carriage of bitumen to be reheated and sent via pipeline for potential offshoring. This project sounds very Alberta centric but this involved many first nations groups and those impacted by mineralization.” (\$ 33 Billion to \$69 Billion of opportunity over time that this would generate, as Peter Wallace argues)

Private Sector expert: “I believe that investments of grants and research money of the Arctic does not translate well. How can we turn research money into investment for start-ups and Surge innovations? Oil and gas incubators are looking for innovation. This model could be considered for other areas, such as Seattle, Vancouver”.

Academic Representative: “In the macro, there is much commercialization”.

Federal Canadian Government Expert: “There is a lack of attention by the government to the Arctic. I was pleased to see the summit statement (Join U.S.-Canada statement on the Arctic), (cooperation) is very important, it is an area of unexploited opportunities with broad changes. Ottawa and the government do not suggest that such policies or agreements are being followed up. This is largely an American initiative.”

First Nation Native Corporation Representative: “Aboriginal development is being pulled in the wrong direction. Pulling the easy way but not meeting goals and objectives. Studies that have been done have

many recommendations but how measurable are they? (The) Reconciliation commission that made 4 decisions, all within the shadow of the book 'resource rulers'. Infrastructure requires consideration of what role First Nations will play. Conferences and meeting on the North are multifarious but rarely reaches the community level to achieve policy implementation or development. The North involves a high percentage of Aboriginals. Where is this infrastructure going to go for gas, infrastructure, or corridors? 90% of the time this development will occur on sacred land. The type of infrastructure or the scale of infrastructure. In 2014, First Nations support these developments but the thinking is that if it can be developed, the intent at the assembly is that the First Nations are ready to be involved or take a lead role. The communities along routes will increase economies of communities and Northern Provinces, regions, territories. It is not whether it can or cannot be done, it can be, and First Nations across the country bring a great amount of potential momentum to aforementioned projects."

State of Alaska Legislator: "The term 'People' has come up many times. Anytime a government(s) comes out with a document, (it includes) an invested group of academics, stakeholders, corporations. We need results and material improvement of those who reside in the Arctic. It is simple but often overlooked. Lack of consultation has been done by the White House to create development and policy initiatives in the North (Alaska). The local and regional government and those living off the land."

Government of Northwest Territories Representative: "The way the territorial government operates involves communities and aboriginal organizations including collaboration of environment and rites however food security, lack of economics, social issues are still a concern. PNWER's role when sitting down with the federal government requires a collective push to focus on real issues in the North. Still continues to be a Lack in understanding of true economic needs and issues by the federal government."

Action Items	Project Lead	Status	
1	Write letter to senate and house supporting the innovations act.	Travis Joseph Sen. Chas Vincent	In progress
2	Empower collaborative in a manner in which they have outcome based solutions and insulate them in the process to incentivize participation.	Travis Joseph Sen. Chas Vincent	In progress
3	Write a bulleted, one page Issue paper on proactive solutions.	Mark Stayton	In progress
4	Discuss with the executive committee that its really important to focus on the real solutions, instead of bringing up ideas.		In progress