

Remarks by Adele Hurley, November 17, 2014
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Colleagues, Friends and Family:

I've had the privilege, to not just work on this country's water gifts and legacy, but to do so, here, in this heritage building, in the midst of great history and beauty, with supportive colleagues and staff. The truth is, it really doesn't get much better.

Having the Munk School be the home for the Program on Water Issues was the idea of the Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation whose foresight, financial commitment, and collegial support has permitted innovation, continuity and the kind of professional-community building that tends to produce results.

It also hasn't hurt that the Munk School's first Director, Janice Stein, is someone who thinks big and is not risk averse—qualities that have come in handy in a Canada that has undergone an unprecedented era of cuts to science and environmental protection legislation.

In the early days of the Program on Water Issues, when I told Janice that one of our first major research projects would be to look at water issues in the Athabasca River downstream of the oil sands she said "Oh, boy!" and then added "Well, if you have the research, if you can back it up, then you do it". And then she added, "You do have the research?"

And we did. Or, at least many of this country's distinguished water professionals and scientists certainly did. And over the

years, they've come into this room and helped the rest of us understand and come up with solutions to some of the most pressing water policy issues of our time. The Program on Water Issues has brought people together to tackle bi-lateral transboundary water issues, including the threat of bulk water export, diversions from the Great Lakes and the future of the Columbia River Treaty. We have started dialogue on emerging issues such as the impact of shale gas fracking on groundwater, carbon capture and storage, and the risks and rewards involved in restructuring water supplies. And in the Program on Water Issues 13 years of existence, we have repeatedly gone back to examine the water-energy nexus – how water is affected by energy production and how energy production is limited by water availability.

I'm grateful to this university, and to the Royal Society of Canada for acknowledging my efforts, both before and during my time at the Munk School, to translate important science into public policy and legislation.

A big 'thanks' to my friends and family who are here today. As the saying goes "It takes a village". Thanks for coming.