



BRANDON SCHOOL DIVISION

**PRESS RELEASE – International OPEN Water Planning Project
Welcomes students to Brandon for innovative learning opportunity**



To: All Media
From: Brandon School Division Office of Communications
Re: Open Water Planning Project

BRANDON, MB April 10, 2015 – The Lake Winnipeg Watershed knows no boundaries. As Canada’s second largest watershed it includes parts of four provinces and four U.S. states and is home to more than seven million people. For the first time, the OPEN Water planning project will bring together young Canadian and American students from different areas within the Lake Winnipeg Watershed to better understand how this important ecosystem can be impacted by land-based environments it travels through.

The two-day hands-on workshop in Brandon, MB on April 13 and 14 is part of OPEN Water, a collaborative planning initiative of the North Dakota Geographic Alliance (NAGE), the Minnesota Alliance for Geographic Education (MAGE) and the Canadian Geographic Education (CG Ed). The students and their teachers represent three distinct river watersheds (the Assiniboine, the Souris and the Saskatchewan) within the larger Lake Winnipeg basin. The workshop will combine traditional Aboriginal teachings, classroom study, fieldwork, and geospatial technology to gain insight into how the people, the land and the water in the Lake Winnipeg Watershed are interconnected.

CG Ed Chair and Project Leader Connie Wyatt Anderson calls the initiative ground-breaking. “OPEN Water is an international project that is distinguished by its transborder dimension and by its aim to accommodate scientific approaches and land-based traditional knowledge,” said Wyatt Anderson. “The Brandon workshop will help the founding partners to further refine their planning to better serve the needs of teachers and students in all four provinces and four states that comprise the Lake Winnipeg Watershed.”

“Getting students out in the field for place-based investigations is a key aspect of OPEN Water,” said Rob Langston, Brandon high school geography teacher and Manitoba representative on the national CG Education executive. Once the students have collected data from sampling water in different locations along the river using the Collector for [ArcGIS app](#) Langston will be instructing them on how to share the results in [ArcGIS Online](#), mapping software enabling students to create storymaps.

“Accepting the Challenge”

Joe Super, high school science teacher from Minot North Dakota encourages his students attending the workshop to present their research projects related to the watershed. "Nothing nourishes a lifelong understanding and concern for our environment like hands-on experience," said Super. "Partnering with students from other schools in the watershed will be a powerful means of reinforcing the connections within the Lake Winnipeg basin."

The OPEN Water project, in its planning stage, is funded by a grant from the National Geographic Education Foundation. The OPEN Water partners gratefully acknowledge Manitoba Pork for its support of the Brandon workshop.

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BACKGROUND

OPEN Water Project. **OPEN Water** is an innovative international educational project using the Lake Winnipeg Watershed as a model that will enable students to explore the watershed in both the classroom and the field. The project has the potential to involve thousands of American and Canadian school children in collecting, analyzing and sharing their observations and findings with other students in the four provinces and four states within the basin. OPEN Water is being designed to combine the latest geospatial technology with traditional land-based knowledge. The objectives are to lead students to an enriched understanding of water and the watershed and to engender a lifelong commitment to environmental stewardship.

North Dakota Geographic Alliance (NDGA) is dedicated to promoting and increasing the level of geographic literacy, to fostering innovation in geographic education and to encouraging stewardship and conservation of Earth's resources. NDGA equips North Dakota students and teachers with the geographic knowledge and skills to become empowered global thinkers and problem solvers in an interconnected world. For more information, visit www.ndgeographic.org

Canadian Geographic Education (CG Education) is the educational network of The Royal Canadian Geographical Society, one of Canada's largest educational associations. The programs of CG Education aim to strengthen geographic education in the classroom and to increase the emphasis on geography within the school system. Through innovative programming with a wide range of public and private sector partners, CG Education endeavours to increase the public awareness of and support for geographical literacy. For more information, visit www.cgeducation.ca

Minnesota Alliance for Geographic Education (MAGE) Since 1987, the Minnesota Alliance for Geographic Education (MAGE) has been engaged in a wide ranging set of professional development activities, public policy advocacy, curriculum development, and programming for extracurricular learning. The core of the Alliance leadership began as a team of college faculty and master teachers that had successfully completed summer institutes funded by the National Science Foundation. Based at Macalester College throughout its history, MAGE has as its mission to enhance the level of geographic literacy of the state through professional development for in-service teachers, the creation of a common assessment for high school geography classes that is aligned with the state graduation requirements, the development of curriculum for all levels of geography instruction, and the promotion of the awareness of the importance of geographic education among the general public. For more information, visit lt.umn.edu/mage/

Founded in 1888, the **National Geographic Society** is one of the world's largest nonprofit scientific and educational organizations. With a mission to inspire people to care about the planet, the member-supported Society offers a [community](#) for members to get closer to explorers, connect with other members and help make a difference. The Society reaches more than 450 million people worldwide each month through National Geographic and other magazines, National Geographic Channel, television documentaries, music, radio, films, books, DVDs, maps, exhibitions, live events, school publishing programs, interactive media and merchandise. National Geographic has funded more than 10,000 scientific research, conservation and exploration projects and supports an education program promoting geographic literacy. For more information, visit www.nationalgeographic.com.

The Brandon School Division is located in Brandon, Manitoba. There are 22 schools in the Brandon School Division, 19 of which are located within the City of Brandon. The current enrolment in Brandon School Division is approximately 8400 students. The Brandon School Division boundary extends beyond the boundaries of the City of Brandon and includes parts of the municipalities of Cornwallis, Daly, Elton, Oakland, North Cypress, South Cypress and Whitehead as well as Canadian Forces Base Shilo. For more information, visit www.bsd.ca.

OPEN Water

An international project for students in the Lake Winnipeg Watershed

Teacher workshop Tentative Schedule

Dates

Monday, April 13 to Tuesday, April 14, 2015

Location

École secondaire Neelin High School in Brandon, Manitoba

Participants

Teachers from Manitoba and North Dakota:

- Rob Langston + students
- Joe Super, Marilyn Weiser + 6 students - Honors Biology, Minot High School
- Brandon teachers + students (names and numbers TBD)
- Randy Koshel + students, Oscar Laithlin Collegiate, Opaskwayak MB.

Objectives

- to bring together students from different communities within the Lake Winnipeg basin compare techniques to study the watershed.
- to answer Essential Questions:
 1. *Why should we care about Lake Winnipeg?*
 2. *How does the Lake Winnipeg watershed affect our ability to take care of the lake?*
 3. *How are social and economic activities affecting the health of Lake Winnipeg?*
 4. *How does monitoring water chemistry help improve our ability to care for Lake Winnipeg?*
 5. *How can biotic parameters indicate the health of Lake Winnipeg?*
- to offers students from different communities the opportunity to teach each other GIS mapping/[Spyglass](#) and Data Collection techniques.
- to assist the partners in planning the OPEN Water project.

Proposed Structure

Sunday, April 12	Arrival of out-of-town participants	
Monday, April 13	8:30 a.m. Rob	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Welcoming remarks from OPEN Water and a brief project overview ▪ PowerPoint on Lake Winnipeg and OPEN Water Presentation Deck. ▪ What are the issues? ▪ Who are the stakeholders?
	9:00 a.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Welcome from Kevin Tacan (Brandon School Division and Sioux Valley) and presentation about Water as a traditional teaching
	9:30 a.m. Connie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Group defines the term watershed and outlines the Lake Winnipeg Watershed
	10:00 a.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Break: Students from Minot set up Posters of Research ▪ Coffee and snacks
	10:15 a.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Presentation from Lake Winnipeg Basin Information Network – Claire Herbert, Centre For Earth Observation Science, Department of Environment and Geography, University of Manitoba ▪ AIS - Zebra Mussel
	11:00 a.m. Joe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The group is divided to pursue separate objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Teachers learn more about the pedagogy and expectations of the project ○ Students participate in a map activity - painting a map, learning where they are, topographic map building, etc. TBD ▪ Students create inquiry/geographic questions and expected outcomes for their time in Brandon
	12:00 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lunch and Neelin’s Broken Chair Improv Team
	1:00 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Whole group learns about the testing that will be done ▪ Examples of data collecting apps explained (Janet to provide one pager Joe) ▪ Collector for ARC-GIS and Esri collector App taught in detail (Rob)
	2:00 p.m. Rob, Randy, and Joe to drive. Joe to lead testing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Testing begins in the watershed ▪ Travel to 3-4 different locations (travel time to be determined) ▪ Collect and compare data at different locations
5:00 p.m. Rob	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dinner as a group ▪ Screening of documentary: <i>Save the Lake</i> 	
Tuesday, April 14	8:30 a.m. Breakfast available at Neelin Canteen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Data analysis begins back at the school ▪ Pair up students to look at different values/locations ▪ Demo Story Map
	10:00 a.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Coffee and snacks

	12:00 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lunch:
	1:00 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students work with GIS create their Story Map ▪ Teachers focus on next steps, the associated activities, how they will remain involved in the project
	2:30 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students present their maps and data to the group
	3:30 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Presentation of Story Map (student made) ▪ De-brief of the day and evaluations ▪ Wrap up the day, concluding remarks ▪ Depart to home
Follow-up		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Webinar with Esri to teach story maps ▪ Present story personal story maps to the other group ▪ OPEN Water partners assess the event in the ongoing planning of the initiative

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