



Cumulative Effects,
Indigenous Rights, and
Disaster Management

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Who We Are and What We Do



- Research and Consulting Company based in Alberta
 - Work with and for Indigenous Nations, Governments, and Communities
 - Cumulative Effects Management, Impact Assessment, Treaty and Rights Infringement, Oral and Archival Histories
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CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

- Cumulative effects are most often framed within *the worldview and language of environmental science*
- This environmental-science bias in cumulative effects greatly *limits* our understanding of both the *causes* of and *solutions* to the problems created by cumulative effects
- Because this environmental-science understanding of cumulative effects isolates the concept from other ways of understanding the world, it cannot 'integrate' *Indigenous knowledge*, which is far richer and more complex



CUMULATIVE EFFECTS ARE THE REAL HISTORY OF CANADA

- Indigenous peoples have been experiencing 'cumulative effects' since the arrival of Europeans and the formation of Canada
- *The history of Indigenous peoples is the history of cumulative effects; Indigenous knowledge is the knowledge of cumulative effects*

- *Between Treaty Peoples and Governments*
- *Between People and the Lands and Waters*
- *Between Species in Ecosystems*
- *Within and Between Communities and Families*
- *Between Us, Our Ancestors, and Future Generations*

WHEN WE TALK ABOUT **CUMULATIVE EFFECTS**, WHAT WE'RE REALLY TALKING ABOUT IS **BROKEN RELATIONSHIPS**

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT



- Disasters **are** Cumulative Effects
 - Where relationships are broken, relationships really matter;
 - Context and Rights **Can** and **Should** Shape Disaster Management
 - Know What You Don't Know
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QUESTION: HOW DO WE INTEGRATE INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE INTO THE MANAGEMENT OF CUMULATIVE EFFECTS AND DISASTERS?

- This is the *wrong question*
- Colonial mindset: assumes there is a non-Indigenous understanding of cumulative effects and disaster management that is superior
- Why do we assume that the institutions, cultures, and value systems that created the problems should be the ones to put in charge of changing course?
- Why isn't it Canada's responsibility to integrate its understanding into those of Indigenous peoples? What would it look like if we tried? Where would we fit, as non-Indigenous peoples? How could we contribute?