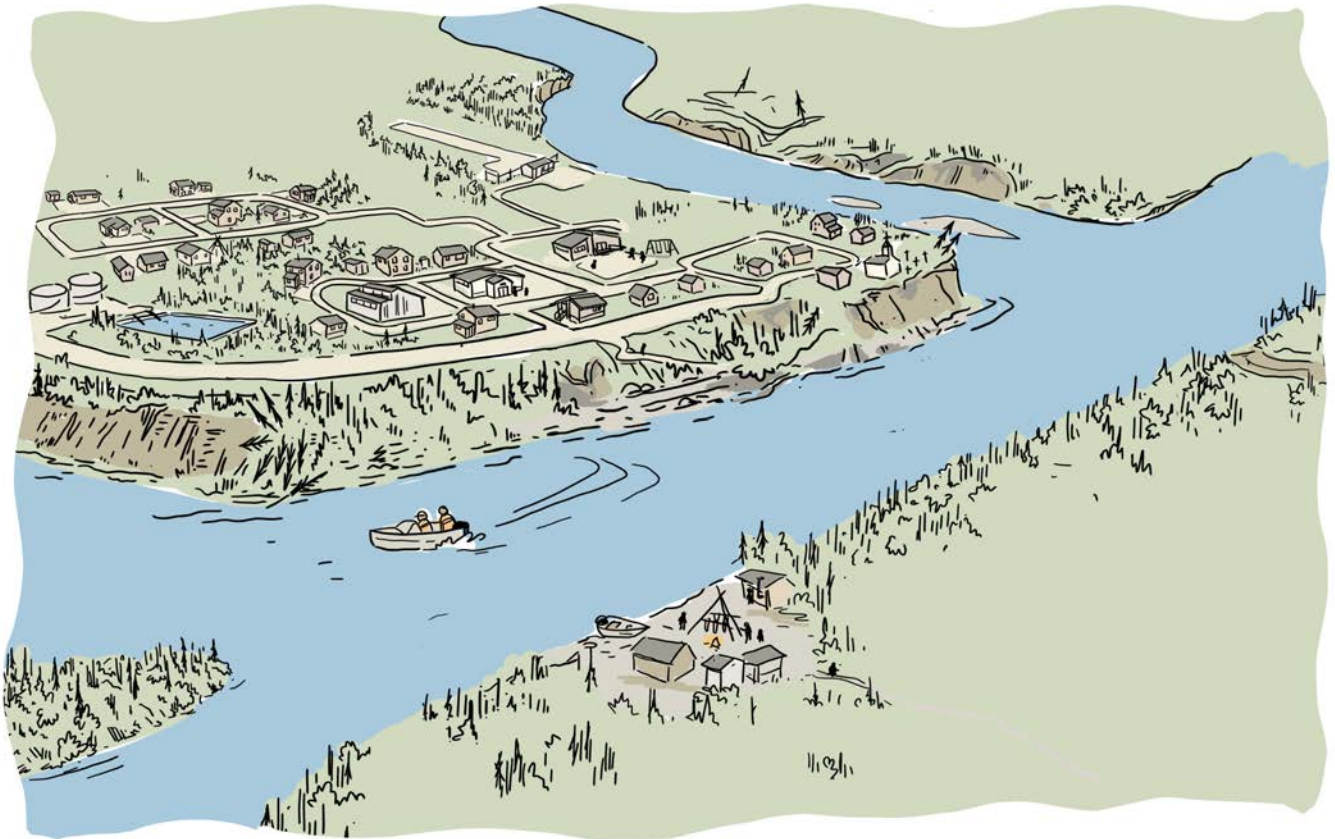




NWT **RIVERBANK EROSION** WORKSHOP 2025

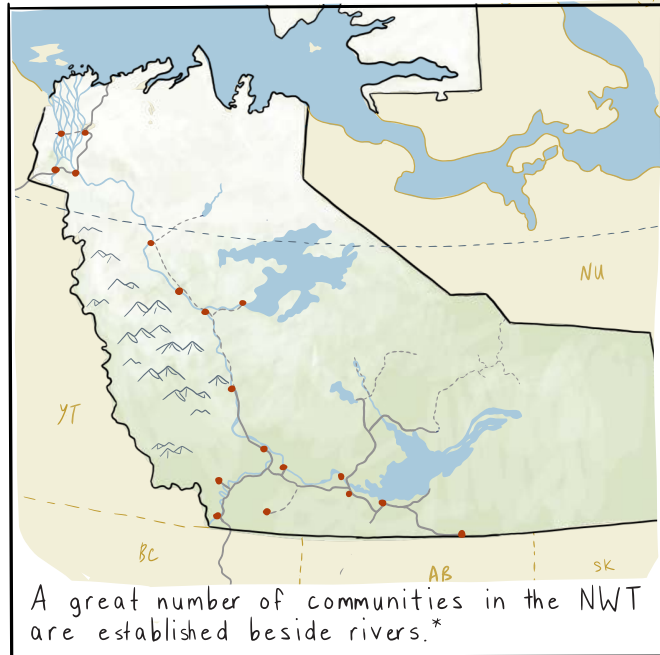
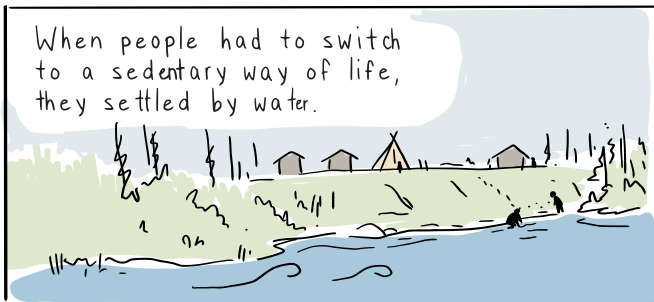
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Visual Summary
by Alison McCreesh

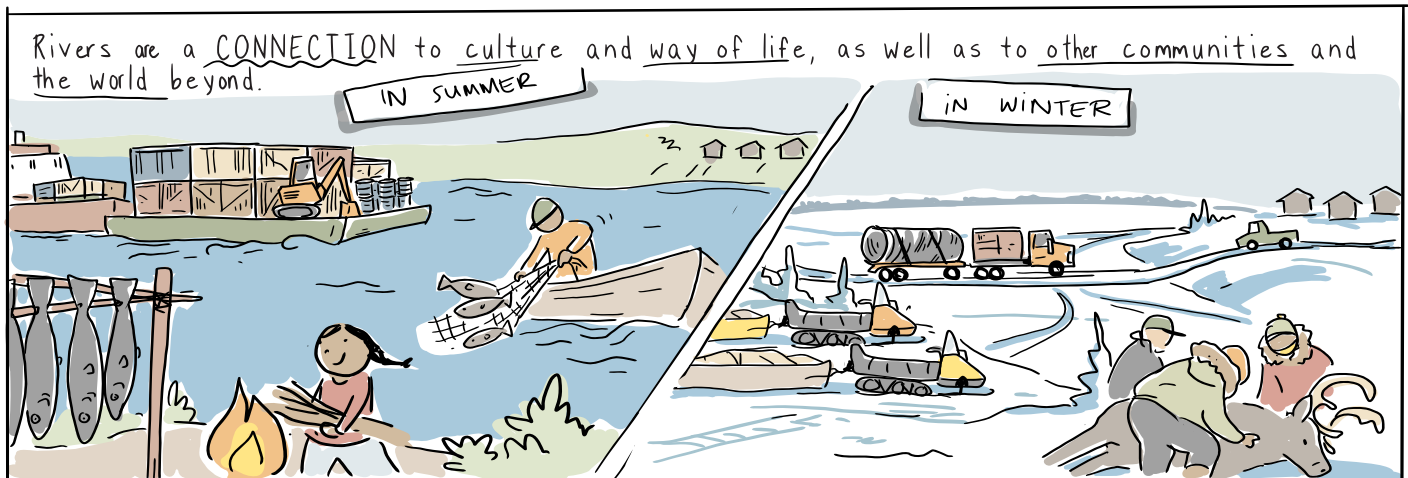
PLEASE NOTE : This summary is “What Alison heard”. Please contact the NWTAC for other follow-up reports and Riverbank Erosion materials.

Rivers and Communities, some context.

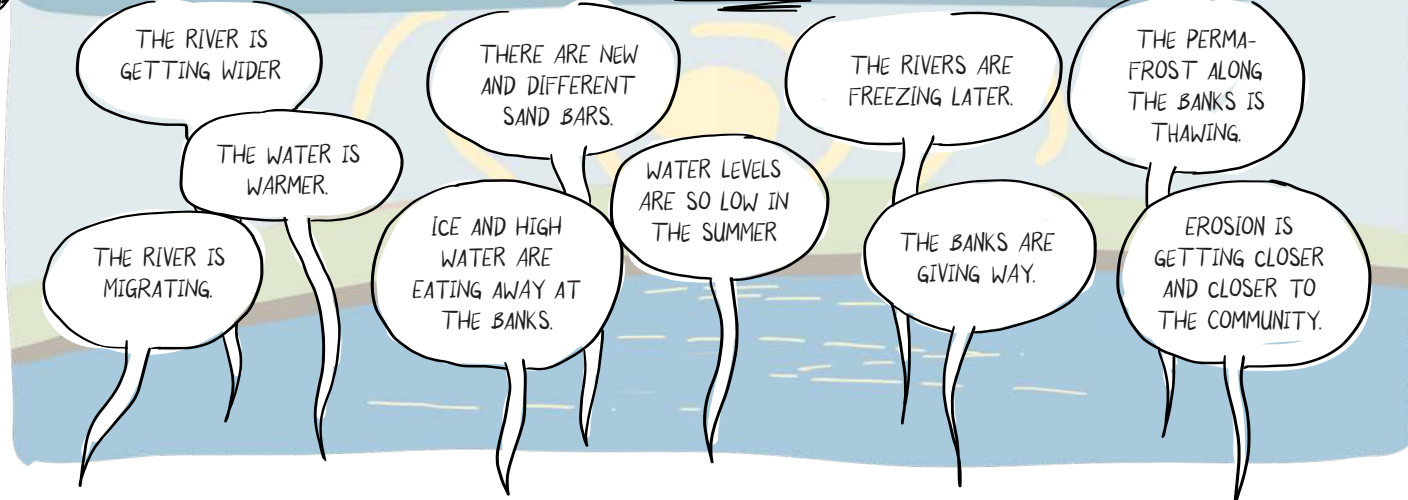


Still today, rivers play an important role.

They are lifelines for these communities.



In recent years, people have been observing changes to the rivers and their banks..

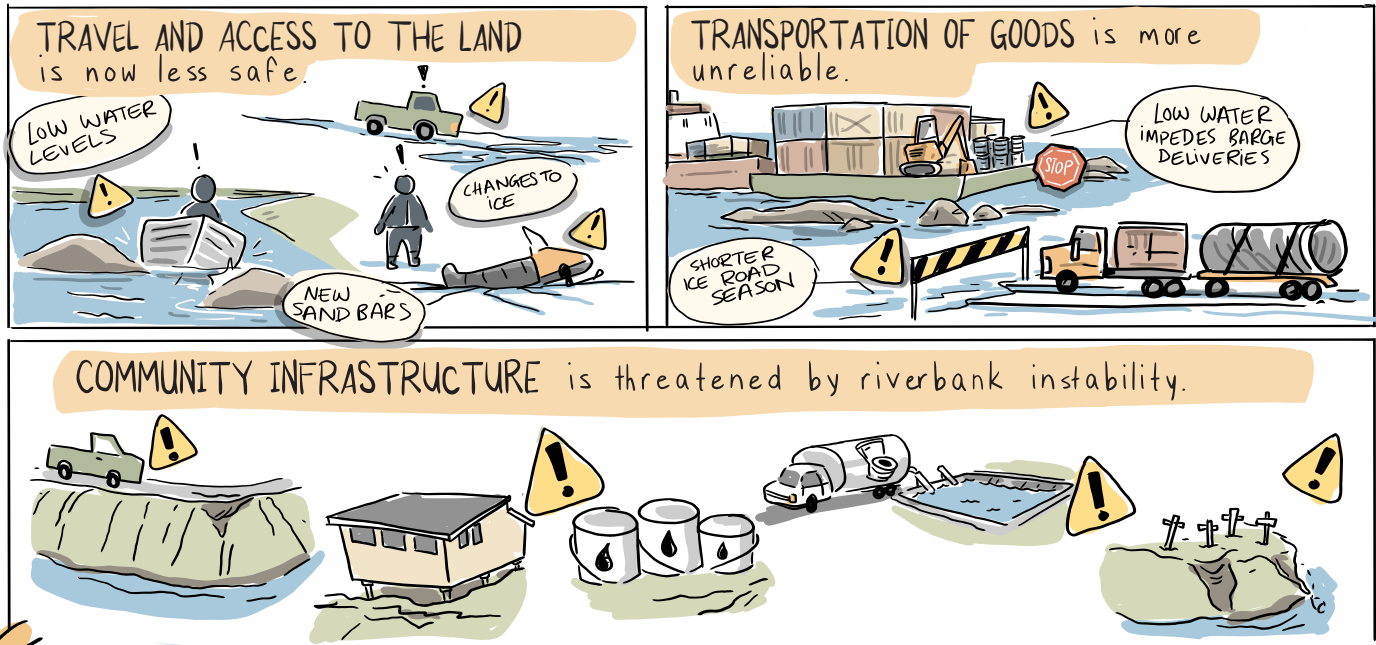


* Representatives from 14 NWT communities participated in the Riverbank Erosion Workshop.

Changing rivers and their impact

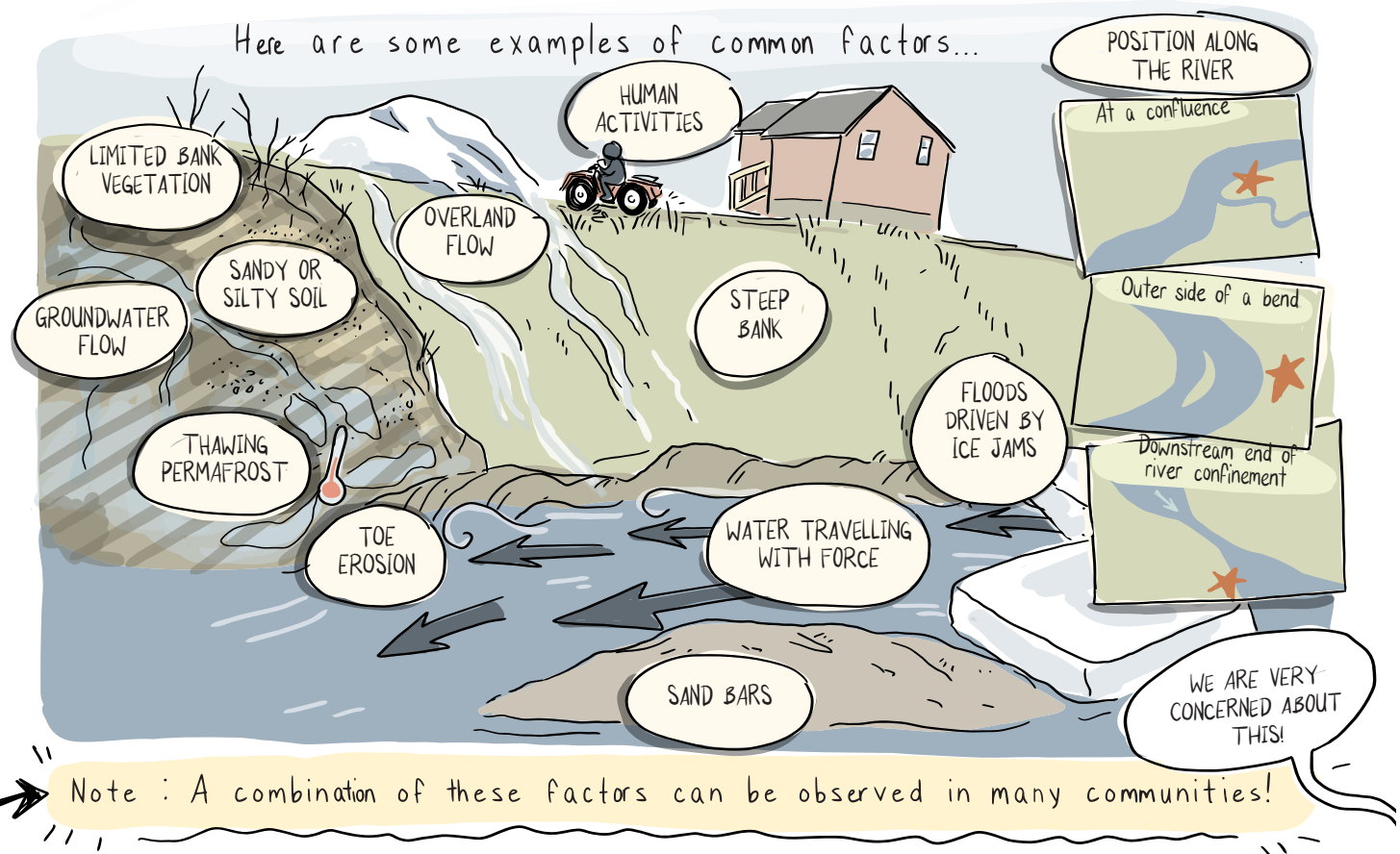
It is natural for rivers and riverbanks to evolve over time, but many of the changes are intensified by climate change.

The changes are impacting river communities at many levels.



What is contributing to this instability?

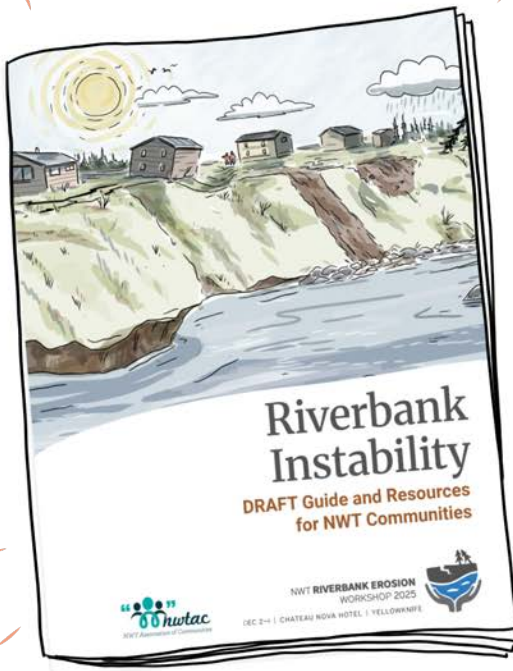
Here are some examples of common factors...



Note: A combination of these factors can be observed in many communities!

Communities addressing riverbank instability

The NWTAC has created a guide to offer **NEUTRAL GUIDANCE** on the different phases involved in addressing riverbank erosion and instability.



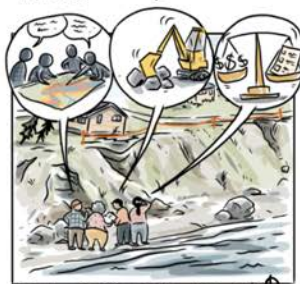
1. RECOGNIZE THE PROBLEM \$



2. MANAGE THE THREAT RIGHT AWAY \$\$



3. GATHER AND ASSESS INITIAL INFORMATION \$\$\$



4. EVALUATE OPTIONS MAKE A PLAN \$\$\$



5. TAKE ACTION! \$\$\$\$

✓ GIVING THE RIVER SPACE
✓ ADDRESSING THE ISSUE
✓ PROTECTING STRUCTURES

Note: the phases are not linear and often overlap.

YOU CAN BE IN MANY PHASES AT ONCE!

AND MONITORING SHOULD BE ONGOING!

IT'S AN ONGOING PROCESS - AND IT WILL LOOK DIFFERENT FOR EVERYONE

Some communities have already taken several steps to address the threats...

... While others are earlier in their journey.

FOR EXAMPLE: FORT GOOD HOPE

THE STUDY SHOWED THAT SEVERAL HOUSES WILL NEED TO BE MOVED.

AND WE HAVE IDENTIFIED FOUR THAT ARE THE TOP PRIORITY.

WE ARE CHANGING OUR COMMUNITY PLAN TO GUIDE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AWAY FROM THE RIVER.

WE NOW HAVE AN EMERGENCY PLAN.

FOR EXAMPLE: WRIGLEY

SOME PEOPLE'S HOUSES ARE REALLY CLOSE TO THE EMBANKMENT.

AND SO ARE THE FUEL TANKS.

AND WE'VE LEARNED THERE IS AN UNDERGROUND WATER SYSTEM UNDER THE COMMUNITY,

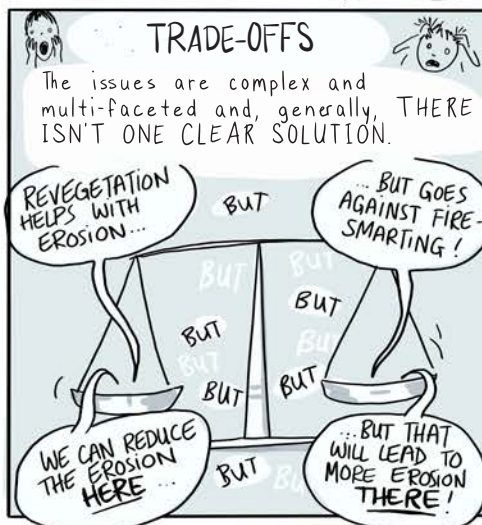
AND THAT COULD CONTRIBUTE TO LANDSLIDES.

BUT WE HAVEN'T DONE ANY STUDIES OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT YET.

The urgency varies from community to community, but all are (or will be!) impacted.

Addressing riverbank erosion and instability is challenging

Communities want to keep their residents safe, but there are a lot of challenges!
Here are some examples :



→ It all takes TIME, but the erosion keeps happening!! ←

What can we do?

The river will do what the river will do! It can all feel OVERWHELMING.
 Breaking things down into smaller, more manageable actions can help.

GIVE THE RIVER SPACE

Use community planning to guide future development away from the riverbank.



EDUCATE

Help residents and leadership understand the risks and rate of change



BE MINDFUL OF THE RIVERBANK

Create awareness and take action to minimize human-caused erosion.

DON'T PILE SNOW



DON'T REMOVE VEGETATION



DON'T DRIVE ATVs



CONTROL DRAINAGE



DON'T LOAD THE BANK



MONITOR

Keep track of erosion and bank instability within the community.



THIS HELPS IDENTIFY TRENDS:

- IS THE EROSION INCREASING?
- HOW FAST?
- IN WHAT DIRECTION?

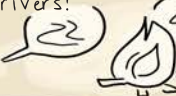
INVOLVE GUARDIANS

They can help with broader monitoring of the river, the ice and the land.



VALUE LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

People know the land and the rivers!



GET TECHNICAL ADVICE

Commission studies and assessments



TALK ABOUT IT

Have the hard conversations
 Identify community priorities
 Don't wait until there is an emergency!



KEEP THINGS MOVING

Everything takes time.
 Work to have shovel-ready projects, ready for when funding becomes available.



BE CREATIVE (\$\$\$)

Combine pots of money,
 Find partnerships
 Use existing planning tools



COME TOGETHER

Learn from other communities
 Advocate TOGETHER -
 Make the problem known!



ABOUT STUDIES

ASK FOR WHAT YOU NEED!

(Scoping)

- i.e.
 - ✓ Plain language summaries
 - ✓ Identify next steps
 - ✓ Solutions that consider what is locally available
 - ✓ Specific recommendations and estimated costs
 - etc.

These studies are hard for lay people to understand!

Most community members, elders and leadership aren't technical experts.

We have a lot of studies, but they often end up gathering dust.

It's hard to move from assessment to implementation!

It can be frustrating: it often feels like studies just lead to more studies, but it's necessary. Funders will require these technical reports and assessments to provide larger amounts of funding, sooner.

Moving forward!

INITIATIVES MUST BE COMMUNITY-LED

Be in the drivers' seat. Local and Indigenous Knowledge is key! Centre the community and the people - it isn't just about \$\$\$ and infrastructure.



COMMUNICATION IS CRUCIAL

Use plain-language. Keep everyone engaged and part of the conversation: ELDERS, YOUTH, RESIDENTS, LEADERSHIP, LOCAL KNOWLEDGE HOLDERS, TECHNICAL EXPERTS.



TAKE A HOLISTIC APPROACH

This is the Indigenous way. See the whole picture, not just the riverbank instability in a silo.



WE ARE STRONGER TOGETHER

Riverbank Erosion Partnership Table! Learn from other communities, in the in the NWT, Alaska, and across the north. Support one another. OUR VOICES ARE STRONGER TOGETHER.



That's all great, but these are real threats and we need to take action quickly!

We have so much on our plates already!

There are gaps in funding.

Funding pots change with political cycles

These are complex issues - it's complicated!

It's A LOT of work!

We have to knock on so many doors for funding, expertise and support.

We aren't technical specialists!

Our community only has 105 residents!

Communities NEED support to manage their unique threats...

THE DREAM



One-Window access to support

Dedicated position

\$\$\$ Funding for every step of the process

From procurement, to assessment, to engagement, to action. \$\$\$



...and to keep their residents safe and thriving. ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥



NWT RIVERBANK EROSION WORKSHOP 2025

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NWT Association of Communities

www.nwtac.com

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNER



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*A program of/
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*Funded by/
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*This project is carried out with funding from the Federation of Canadian
Municipalities' Green Municipal Fund and the Government of Canada.*

For more information on the
2025 NWT Riverbank Erosion Workshop go to
www.riverbankerosionworkshop2025.eventsnwtac.com