

Introduction

On November 1st and 2nd of 2013, citizens, activists, experts, and decision-makers came together in Saskatoon to learn and talk about climate change—the threats it poses and the urgent actions required if we are to escape its most damaging effects. This is a special report on the proceedings of those two days, and on the observations of the Commissioners who generously listened with care to the testimony.

Over the course of 20 hours, 36 experts, activists, educators, and concerned citizens made oral presentations. Written submissions were also received. Approximately 200 people attended the free event, listened, asked questions, and discussed what they saw and heard. The Hearings made use of internet-based audio-visual technology to allow presentations from remote locations, saving carbon emissions and expanding the circle of those who could present and participate. This also allowed participants at selected off-site locations to view the event and to ask questions.

In every phase and at every level, the Citizens' Hearings embraced diversity and inclusion, with First Nations and Métis citizens well represented in all aspects of planning and conducting these Hearings. A top priority for organizers was that the Hearings include a broad range of presenters—not just experts and scientists, but farmers, grandmothers, homebuilders, healthcare professionals, workers, teachers, and school children.

Four Commissioners presided over the Hearings:

- Maria Campbell, teacher, activist, and author of the literary classic *Halfbreed*;
- Marcia McKenzie, University of Saskatchewan education professor and Director of the Sustainability Education Research Institute (SERI);
- Harry Lafond, Executive Director of the Office of the Treaty Commissioner; and
- Willard Metzger, Executive Director of the Mennonite Church of Canada.

In the first quarter of 2014 the Commissioners worked with Peter Prebble, Director of Environmental Policy for the Saskatchewan Environmental Society and others on the Organizing Committee to produce and publicize this report, with a focus on climate change in Canada's prairies, and on the actions needed at every level in order to avoid the most damaging impacts of climate change.

The Hearings were the culmination of nearly a year's work by an Organizing Committee of 13 people supported by four organizations (Climate Justice Saskatoon, Saskatchewan Eco-Network, National Farmers Union, and Green Energy Project Saskatoon). The Saskatchewan Environmental Society joined with the other four organizations after the hearings to play the lead role in summarizing the testimony given at the hearings. Organizers included Davida Bentham, Mark Bigland-Pritchard, Matt Dow, Sarina Gersher, Bonnie Lawrence, Julie Maxwell, Rick Morrell, Janelle Pewapsconias, Peter Prebble, Darrin Qualman, Karen Rooney, Rasheed Soomro and Megan Van Buskirk. Jonathan Stockdale kindly assisted in the process of gathering a written record of the proceedings.

The Hearings were also made possible by generous contributions from 12 sponsoring organizations: Retail Wholesale and Department Store Union, Regina Public Interest Research Group, The Better Good, Affinity Credit Union, the Saskatchewan Environmental Society, the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour, the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses, Central Business Equipment Systems, the Confederation Inn in Saskatoon, Eat Healthy Foods in Regina, Horizon Distributors, and Pro Organics.

It is the collective effort of the Commissioners, organizers, supporting organizations, sponsors and presenters that made the publication of this report possible.

Commissioners:

Maria Campbell is a writer, playwright, teacher, volunteer, and activist. She is the author of the literary classic *Halfbreed*. Her book *Stories of The Road Allowance People* translates oral stories into print. Her play, *Flight*, was the first all-Aboriginal theatre production in Canada. She went on to write and direct other plays, co-found a film and video production company, produce and direct documentaries, and produce the weekly television series “My Partners, My People.” Maria Campbell has received numerous awards, including the National Aboriginal Achievement Award, the Gabriel Dumont Order of Merit, the Chalmers Award for best new play, and a national Dora Mavore Award for playwriting. She was made an Officer of the Order of Canada in 2008. Professor Campbell is currently the Trudeau Foundation Visiting Fellow at the University of Ottawa. Prior to this, she worked with The Centre for World Indigenous Knowledge and Research at Athabasca University. And for several years she taught native studies, creative writing, and drama at the University of Saskatchewan. She has worked as a volunteer with women and children in crisis for over forty years and is co-founder of a halfway house for women in Edmonton as well as an emergency crisis centre for women and children in that city.

Harry Lafond is the Executive Director of the Office of the Treaty Commissioner. He has a wide range of experience in the community, in politics, and in academics, which he brings to the OTC. He has been Chairperson for the Board of Trustees First Nations Trust since 2003. Previously, he served his Nation as Chief (1990-2000). Harry has worked extensively in the area of education including as the Director of Education, and earlier as principal of the kihiw waciston School at Muskeg Lake Cree Nation. Harry was appointed (1994-2000) as the Saskatchewan representative to the Chiefs’ Council on Education (Assembly of First Nations). He was appointed to serve on the Board of Governors for the University of Saskatchewan (1995-2002), and was also appointed to the national Federal Task Force on Education (2003). Harry’s academic education includes three degrees: B.A., B.Ed. and an M.Ed.

Marcia McKenzie is an Associate Professor in the Department of Educational Foundations at the University of Saskatchewan. She is also Director of the Sustainability Education Research Institute (SERI) (www.seri.usask.ca). She is principal investigator on two SSHRC-funded projects: the Sustainability and Education Policy Network (www.sepn.ca) and the Digital Media Project: Youth Making Place. Her interdisciplinary research focuses on the intersections among environment and sustainability, educational policy and practice, youth identity and place, and the politics of social science research. Dr. McKenzie has published numerous papers and book chapters and is co-editor of *Fields of Green: Restorying Culture, Environment, and Education*. She sits on the editorial boards of a number of journals including *Environmental Education Research*, the *Canadian Journal of Environmental Education*, and the *Canadian Journal of Education*. She is Past Chair of the Environmental Education Special Interest Group of the American Educational Research Association. Jointly appointed to the School of Environment and Sustainability from 2008-2012, Dr. McKenzie has supervised 18 PhD and Master’s students, including 2 winners of the Social Sciences Graduate Thesis Award.

Willard Metzger is the Executive Director of Mennonite Church Canada. He was ordained and worked as a pastor for 18 years before transitioning to the position of Director of Church Relations for World Vision Canada. He was the chair of the Mennonite Church of Canada’s Witness Council for 10 years, and a member of the steering committee that oversaw realignment of church bodies and the creation of the new structure, Mennonite Church Canada (MC) in 2000. He has extensive experience speaking in Canadian churches across a wide diversity of Christian expression. Willard Metzger received his Bachelor of Theology degree from Emmanuel Bible College in Kitchener, Ont., a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology at the University of Waterloo, Ont., and a Master of Theological Studies at Conrad Grebel University College, also in Waterloo. He also has a Doctor of Ministry degree from Ashland Theological Seminary in Ashland, OH.

Supporting Organizations:

Climate Justice Saskatoon	(climatejusticesaskatoon.wordpress.com)
National Farmers Union	(nfu.ca)
Saskatchewan Eco-Network	(econet.ca)
Saskatchewan Environmental Society	(environmentalsociety.ca)
Green Energy Project Saskatchewan	(greenenergysask.ca)

Organizing Committee:

Davida Bentham	Janelle Pewapsconias
Mark-Bigland Pritchard	Peter Prebble
Matt Dow	Darrin Qualman, Chair
Sarina Gersher	Karen Rooney
Bonnie Lawrence	Rasheed Soomro
Julie Maxwell	Megan Van Buskirk
Rick Morrell	

Report Preparation:

The Conclusions and Recommendations section of this report was authored by:

Maria Campbell
Harry Lafond
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Those responsible for preparing the Summary of Testimony section in this report were as follows:

Peter Prebble, Lead Author
Darrin Qualman

Jonathan Stockdale assisted with recording testimony.

Karen Rooney coordinated follow-up with presenters.

The Commissioners generously provided general direction for this portion of the report.

The Organizing Committee assisted with editorial review of this portion of the report.

Megan Van Buskirk led formatting, web design and publication of the report.

All persons listed served in a volunteer capacity in the organization of these hearings and the preparation of this report.

Please use the following reference for this report:

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Electronic version of this report is available at: www.skclimatehearings.org