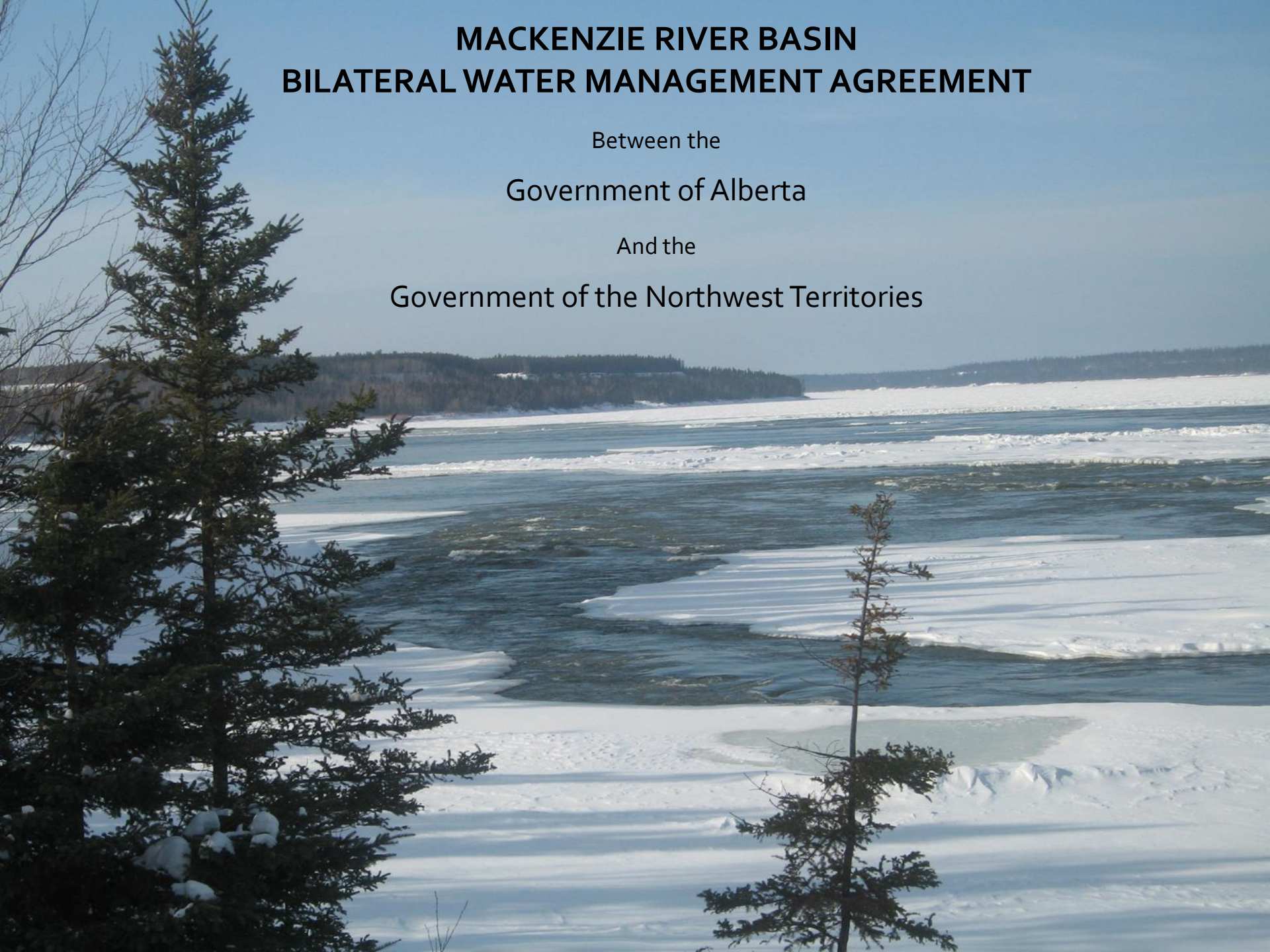
Alberta-NWT Bilateral Water Management Agreement

Progress Update

Erin Kelly (NWT) and Brian Yee (Alberta)

Mackenzie River Basin Board Meeting
November 17-18, 2015
Whitehorse, Yukon

Northwest Territories Environment and Natural Resources



MACKENZIE RIVER BASIN
BILATERAL WATER MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT

Between the

Government of Alberta

And the

Government of the Northwest Territories

Bilateral Technical Tasks:

- A Learning Plan for the Hay River
  - State of the Aquatic Knowledge Report
- A Learning Plan for the Slave River
  - Update the 2012 MRB Hydraulic Model

Bilateral Technical Tasks:

- The development of interim triggers for mercury for the Hay and Slave Rivers
- Development of the first AB-NWT BWMA Ministerial/Public Annual Report

Multi-Jurisdictional Tasks

1. Develop a classification system for transboundary waters
2. Discuss climate change research needs for the MRB
3. Select biological indicators for transboundary waters
4. Establish mechanism(s) for prior notification between jurisdictions
5. Collaborate on the development of site specific water quality triggers and objectives for transboundary waters

Establishment of Water Quality Triggers

- We have agreed to utilize water quality triggers (WQTs) and water quality objectives (WQOs) to aid with the management of transboundary waters

- WQOs have not yet been established
- "interim" WQTs have been agreed upon (AB-NWT), need to agree upon and finalize methods

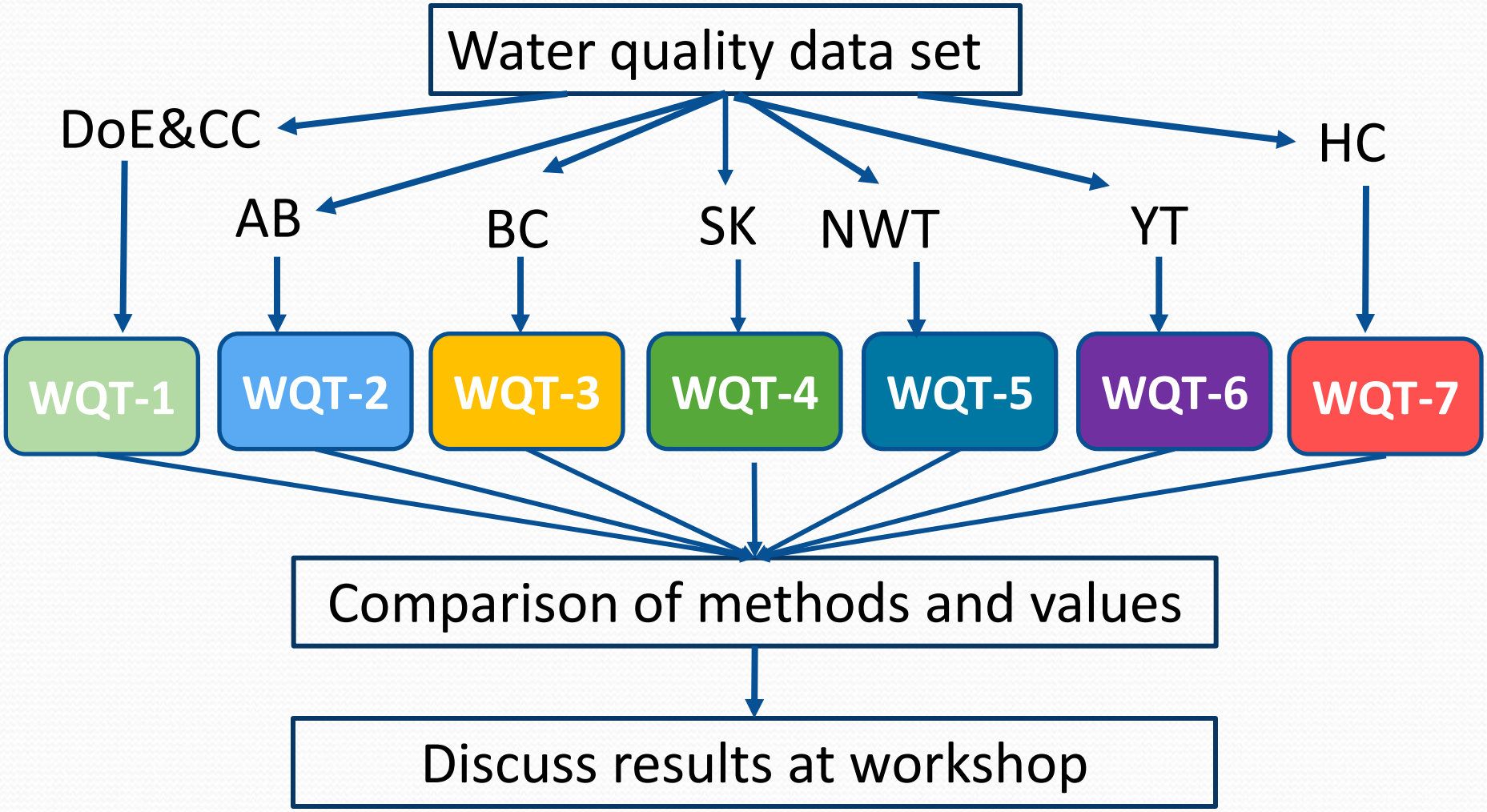
Multi-Jurisdictional Opportunity

- **NWT is hosting meetings on classification of water bodies and development of triggers/objectives with participation by multiple experts from across Canada in Feb 2016**

- We propose that we use this opportunity to gain a mutual understanding of the statistical and policy options that can be used to set WQTs/WQOs

- Improved understanding of available options and preferences will help guide determination of methodology for WQTs/WQOs for all bilateral agreements

Water Quality Trigger/Objective Development Options



Key Features of the proposal

- Objective process
- Minimal bias
- Allows parties to work through a real case example

Overall, we believe that this will create a shared understanding of the issues around setting effective triggers (and, eventually, water quality objectives).


Questions/Comments?