This partnership brings together researchers, First Nation communities in Ontario, Saskatchewan and Alberta that were evacuated due to recent wildfires, and agencies responsible for conducting or providing support during these evacuations.

The goal is to examine how Aboriginal residents and communities have been affected by wildfire evacuations and identify ways to reduce negative impacts of wildfire evacuations on Aboriginal people.

**Overview**

Fall 2014 has been a busy time of research and dissemination.

Amy, Larry Fremont, Jeff Eustache, and David Diabo all attended conferences where posters describing the research partnership was displayed. There was lots of interest and great questions from our peers!

Kyla and Henok have been busy in University attending classes and working as teaching assistants. Tara taught two courses at the University this fall and continued to supervise graduate students.

We’d like to welcome Lac La Ronge Indian Band to the partnership! Stanley Mission was evacuated in 2014, and Amy will be speaking to residents this summer. We’d also like to welcome new partnership contact Chad Morrison from Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development.

We’re looking forward to a busy spring of data analysis, report writing, and returning to communities to discuss initial findings.

**Honouring our Knowledge Gifts**

Amy attended the “Honouring Our Knowledge Gifts: An Aboriginal Research Forum” hosted by the Alberta Centre for Child, Family & Community Research, in Edmonton in November. Amy presented a poster on the research partnership.
### Research Team

**Dr. Tara McGee**  
University of Alberta  
Tara is the academic lead for the partnership. Her research program focuses on the human dimensions of wildfires and other hazards. She supervises graduate students and teaches undergraduate courses on social science aspects of hazards. Tara is collecting data with Mishkeegogamang Ojibway Nation and Whitefish Lake (Atikameg) First Nation.

**Kyla Mottershead**  
Kyla is an MA student in the Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences. She is collecting data with Dene Tha’ First Nation.

**Dr. Amy Christianson**  
Canadian Forest Service  
Amy is a Fire Social Scientist and works with Aboriginal communities on fire management. She is collecting data with Whitefish Lake (Atikameg) First Nation and will be collecting data with Onion Lake Cree Nation and Lac La Ronge Indian Band (Stanley Mission).

**Henok Asfaw**  
Henok is a PhD student in the Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences. He is collecting data with Deer Lake First Nation and Sandy Lake First Nation.

### Canadian Risk and Hazards Network Symposium

David Diabo, partnership member from the Assembly of First Nations, attended the 11th annual Canadian Risk and Hazards Network (CRHNet) symposium in Toronto, Ontario in October 2014. David said there was lots of interest in the poster and lots of good questions. Thanks David for presenting the poster to symposium attendees!!
Amy attended the Wildland Fire Canada 2014 conference in Halifax Nova Scotia, October 2014, as did partnership members Larry Fremont (Government of Saskatchewan) and Jeff Eustache (First Nations Emergency Services Society. They presented a poster on the partnership.
In September, Amy returned to Whitefish Lake (Atikameg) First Nation to finish data collection. Whitefish Lake had been evacuated in 2011 due to the Utikuma Lake Complex Fires. The evacuation lasted over two weeks.

Amy met with more residents to learn about their evacuation experiences. Research assistants Sharon Sahlin and Sheila Laboucan helped to arrange and conduct interviews. Amy would like to extend a big thanks to Sharon and Sheila for their invaluable help.

In total, 44 residents from Whitefish Lake shared their evacuation experience with us. For some participants, the evacuation was very difficult and we appreciate residents’ sharing these emotional experiences with us.

**Up next:**
Amy & Kyla return to Whitefish Lake & Dene Tha’ to discuss findings; Amy & Tara attend an international fire conference in Boise; Submission of report on Whitefish Lake First Nation evacuation to funding agency