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**MEDIA RELEASE: MUNK SCHOOL OF GLOBAL AFFAIRS RESEARCH
DEMONSTRATES HOW COLUMBIA RIVER TREATY RENEGOTIATION CAN INCLUDE
FLEXIBILITY TO ADDRESS FUTURE CHANGE**

TORONTO, ON - The Program on Water Issues at the University of Toronto's Munk School of Global Affairs today released a groundbreaking report that demonstrates how flexibility to address future change can be built into the review process for the Columbia River Treaty. A four-page highlight of the report -- ***Common Cause: Building Flexibility into the Columbia River Treaty*** – can be found at <http://powi.ca/>.

The Columbia River Treaty is a bi-national agreement that has been hailed as one of the most successful transboundary water treaties in the world. Since coming into effect in 1964, it has protected Columbia River Basin communities from flooding and has generated hydropower for the Pacific Northwest. The Treaty is now under review by the United States and Canada. A key question in the review process is how to build in the capacity to address future changes in climate, energy markets, population growth, environmental issues, public expectations of participation, and the status of Tribes and First Nations.

To address the question, the Program on Water Issues at the Munk School of Global Affairs at the University of Toronto collaborated with two experts in international law – Nigel Bankes from the University of Calgary and Barbara Cosens from the University of Idaho – to develop ***Protocols for Adaptive Water Governance: The Future of the Columbia River Treaty***, available at <http://powi.ca/>. In the report, Bankes and Cosens examine existing models from both the international and domestic level and identify legal mechanisms that would allow for flexibility and adaptive capacity in transboundary water agreements.

The review by Bankes and Cosens clearly demonstrates that there are a number of ways in which flexibility can be built into the Columbia River Treaty or achieved outside the Treaty. “In addition,” note Bankes and Cosens “some of the models that we have identified could serve to bridge differences between Canada and the United States on key issues such as how to address ecosystem function”.

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Additional information about the Munk School of Global Affairs:

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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Common Cause: Building Flexibility into the Columbia River Treaty (4 page highlights of Protocols for Adaptive Water Governance) available at: <http://powi.ca/>

Protocols for Adaptive Water Governance: The Future of the Columbia River Treaty by Nigel Banks and Barbara Cosens available at <http://powi.ca/>

Map of Columbia River Watershed with Columbia River Highlighted



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