

Convening for Action in British Columbia



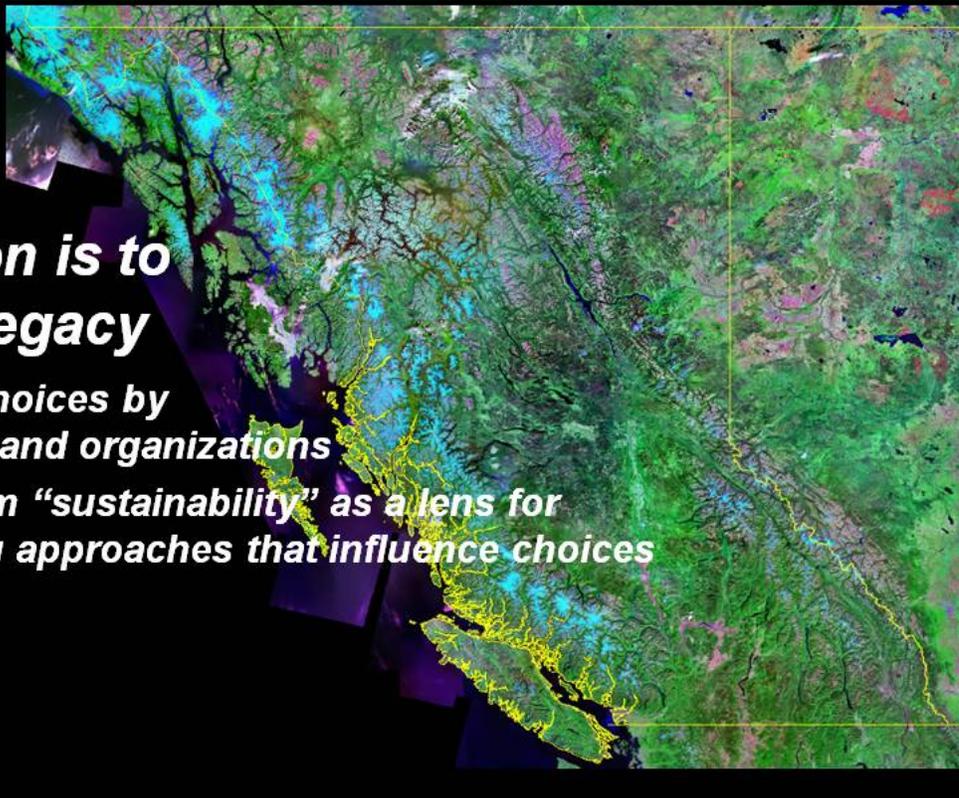
Doing Business Differently: Convening for Action in the Georgia Basin

Penticton Forum showcases regional team approach on April 29, 2009

The New Business As Usual: Visualize What We Want British Columbia to Look Like in 50 years

The Mission is to Create a Legacy

- 1. Influence choices by individuals and organizations*
- 2. Use the term "sustainability" as a lens for considering approaches that influence choices*



Convening for Action in British Columbia

Building Bridges and Breaking Barriers - Teamwork for a WaterSmart World

Water Bucket Web Story #2 posted March 2009

Convening for Action in British Columbia

How do we align our efforts at three scales – provincial, regional and local – to do business differently, prepare communities for change, and choose to be water smart?

Think and Act Like a Region

The Province's **Living Water Smart** and **Green Communities** initiatives provide a framework and direction for **convening for action** in the Okanagan, on Vancouver Island and in Metro Vancouver. Each regional initiative is developing a vision and road map for doing business differently in order to change the way that land is developed and water is used.

Three provincial Ministries (Environment, Community Development, and Agriculture & Lands), the Okanagan Basin Water Board, and the Water Sustainability Committee of the BC Water & Waste Association (BCWWA) are hosting a forum in Penticton on April 29 as an adjunct to the BCWWA Annual Conference.



1. Forum Program – An Overview

"The forum program is organized as four modules, and is built around two themes that are intertwined, namely: 'creating our future' and 'doing business differently'. While each module is stand-alone, they are linked," states **Glen Brown**. He is an Executive Director with the Ministry of Community Development; and is Chair of the Water Sustainability Committee.



"First, we will define the challenge. Then we will tell the stories of what is already taking place on-the-ground in the Okanagan and Georgia basins. We will conclude by presenting a blueprint for action."

"Regional leaders will elaborate on new approaches and tools that are changing the way land is developed so that we can achieve water sustainability."

The Story of the Penticton Forum

"This is the second in a series of stories leading up to the Forum, explains **Kim Stephens**, Program Coordinator for the **Water Sustainability Action Plan for British Columbia**.

"Their purpose is to progressively connect the dots and foreshadow what participants can expect on April 29th."



"This Story #2 describes how a *regional team approach* is being advanced on Vancouver Island and in Metro Vancouver to establish consistent expectations when making green choices."

Organized under the umbrella of the Water Sustainability Action Plan for British Columbia

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2. Doing Business Differently in the Georgia Basin

Released in 2004, the *Water Sustainability Action Plan for British Columbia* is sponsored by the Province and supports the *Living Water Smart* and *Green Communities* initiatives. Action Plan elements are being delivered by BCWWA through partnerships and regional pilot programs. Over the past three years, Action Plan efforts have been concentrated in the Georgia Basin – that is, on Vancouver Island and in Metro Vancouver.



Tools and Education

“The Water Sustainability Action Plan comprises inter-connected program elements that give local governments and practitioners the tools and experience to better manage land and water resources,” explains Kim Stephens. “Examples of tools developed under the umbrella of the Action Plan include the **Water Balance Model** and the **Water Bucket Website**.”

“Through outreach and education, the guiding vision is to influence land and water practitioners to learn about and use practices that better balance the necessary relationships of settlement activity and ecological assets in local and regional landscapes. The pilot **2008 Vancouver Island Learning Lunch Seminar Series** is an example of a precedent-setting approach to informing and educating local government and private sector practitioners.”

Convening for Action

In Module C, the trio of Robert Hicks, Michael Tanner and Derek Richmond will combine to tell the story of *Convening for Action in the Georgia Basin* and set the scene for a town hall sharing session: *What is your green infrastructure story?*

Smart Planning & Living Water Smart: Approaches and Tools for Doing Business Differently in BC

- A. Creating Our Future:
What Do We Want British Columbia to Look Like?
- B. Doing Business Differently:
Convening for Action in the Okanagan
- C. Doing Business Differently:
Convening for Action in the Georgia Basin
- D. Creating Our Future:
The Natural City Vision

Robert Hicks, a Senior Engineer with Metro Vancouver, will start by explaining the genesis for the Water Balance Model in 2001. “In a nutshell, the region needed a tool that would enable regulators and designers to quantify and evaluate how we can reduce our hydrologic footprint. Furthermore, the tool needed to be interactive and able to quickly generate scenario comparisons.”

Then **Michael Tanner**, Chair of the Water Bucket Website Partnership, will briefly elaborate on the communications strategy that is keyed to news releases complete with embedded links to web stories. “This approach is proving very effective in raising awareness of the Water Balance Model and informing practitioners about the purpose and scope of the Learning Lunch Series.”

Derek Richmond, Manager of Engineering with the City of Courtenay, will conclude the presentation segment by describing how “the Learning Lunch Series has helped Vancouver Island local governments advance a regional team approach to rainwater management and green infrastructure.”

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3. Genesis of the Water Balance Model

"The genesis of the water balance methodology development was **UniverCity**, the sustainable community being built adjacent to Simon Fraser University atop Burnaby Mountain in Metro Vancouver," states **Kim Stephens**.

"In the year 2000, translating high expectations for this 'green' development into practical design guidelines meant revisiting accepted drainage engineering practice; this need for innovation eventually led to development of the web-based Water Balance Model."

The Early History

"In 2001 the **Stormwater Interagency Liaison Group (SILG)**, a technical committee of the Greater Vancouver Regional District, recognized the value of the water balance approach and funded the development of a working model to assess the affordability and feasibility of site design solutions for achieving performance targets," continues **Robert Hicks**.



"The results of this applied research were then incorporated as Chapters 6, 7 and 8 in **Stormwater Planning: A Guidebook for British Columbia**, released by the Province in June 2002. This guidance document, founded on BC case study experience, formalized a science-based understanding to set performance targets for reducing rainwater runoff volumes."

"In July 2002 the **Inter-Governmental Partnership** was formed to develop the Water Balance Model as an extension of the Guidebook. The IGP began as a subgroup of SILG and quickly expanded to become a provincial group with municipal representation from four regions: Greater Vancouver, the Fraser Valley, Vancouver Island and the Okanagan Valley."

Innovation & Success on the Ground

"British Columbia is recognized internationally as a leader in implementing a natural systems approach to rainwater management in the urban environment. In many ways, that recognition is an outcome of the trail-blazing efforts of SILG at the beginning of this decade," states **Ted van der Gulik, IGP Chair**.



Ted van der Gulik chats with Premier Gordon Campbell after receiving the Premier's Award for Innovation & Excellence for the 'new' Water Balance Model

"The efforts of SILG in championing research and innovation made it possible to develop the tools and promote the applications that helped overcome fear and doubt in

Metro Vancouver, and begin doing business differently. This enabled landmark projects such as UniverCity and the **East Clayton Sustainable Community** to get off the ground."

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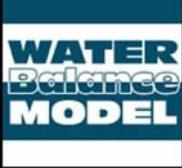
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4. Water Balance Model & Beyond the Guidebook

"The *Vancouver Island Learning Lunch Series* provided a timely opportunity to introduce Vancouver Island municipalities to the latest version of the web-based **Water Balance Model**," states **Kim Stephens**.

The model calculates annual runoff volumes under different combinations of:

- Building coverage
- Rainfall
- Soil type and depth
- Source controls
- Tree canopy coverage



Performance Targets

"In 2003, we developed the first-generation Water Balance Model as an extension of the Stormwater Planning Guidebook to promote rainwater management and 'green' development practices at the site scale," reports **Ted van der Gulik, Chair of the BC Inter-Governmental Partnership**.



"As of 2008, the Water Balance Model web interface has been integrated with the QUALHYMO hydrologic engine which was developed for the Ontario Ministry of Environment in the 1980s. Because the 'new' Water Balance Model has considerably enhanced simulation capabilities, this now enables local governments to establish science-based watershed targets for rainwater runoff capture."

The New Business As Usual

"The new Water Balance Model underpins **Beyond the Guidebook: The New Business As Usual**," adds **Kim Stephens**. "The integrated tool is unique, bridges engineering and planning, and links the site to the stream and watershed."

"The Beyond the Guidebook methodology enables us to correlate green infrastructure effectiveness in protecting stream health."

"We are using the slogan **The New Business As Usual** to convey the message that, for change to really occur, practices that until now have been viewed as the exception must become the norm moving forward. We have to build regulatory models and develop models of practice and expertise to support *The New Business As Usual*," stated **Dale Wall, Deputy Minister** when he announced the change-over to the new Water Balance Model at the Gaining Ground Summit.



We are incorporating all the lessons we have learned to date...

The 'new Water Balance Model' integrates the Site with the Watershed and the Stream...

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5. Premier's Award for Innovation and Excellence

"The Premier's Awards are an annual opportunity to publicly recognize the extraordinary accomplishments of the men and women who have chosen public service as their career," said **Premier Gordon Campbell** on February 5, 2009 at



an awards ceremony where the Water Balance Model received the *Premier's Award for Innovation and Excellence*.

The Story of the Water Balance Model

The Premier's Office has produced a 2-minute video that features Ted van der Gulik and Kim Stephens telling the story of what the tool means for British Columbia.

"The Water Balance Model is a means to an end," states **Ted van der Gulik**. "The challenge that we have been posing since 2002 is this: *What do we want this province to look like in 50 years and beyond?*"

"The Water Balance Model is a tool that will help us create our future," adds **Kim Stephens**. "To get to the big picture, it starts with the smallest pieces. The Water Balance Model links the site to the stream to the watershed."



Premier Gordon Campbell with the award-winning Water Balance Model

One-on-One with the Premier

At the conclusion of the awards ceremony, the Premier sought out Ted van der Gulik. This created an opportunity for an extended conversation.

"As we talked, it became clear to me that WATER is high on the Premier's agenda. He has a strong grasp of water-related issues and the long-term implications if we do not start doing business differently in BC. In a nutshell, he gets it."

"The Premier expressed his personal commitment to making a difference because we have an obligation and a responsibility to act on behalf



of our children and our grand-children so that we leave them with a legacy."

"On the matter of the **Living Water Smart** initiative, I came away from our conversation with a strong conviction that Premier Campbell means what he says,

and says what he means about the province-wide importance of implementing BC's Water Plan. High-level recognition of the Water Balance Model is reassuring... because the model is a key tool underpinning Living Water Smart," concludes **Ted van der Gulik**.

"During the current climate of financial uncertainty, it becomes that much more important to stay on mission vis-à-vis rainwater management and green infrastructure solutions that protect quality of life," adds **Kim Stephens**. "In terms of the long-term vision for BC, and as the Premier emphasized in his speech from the heart, now is the time to be preparing for economic recovery that is truly based on making green choices."



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6. Water Bucket Website

“Launched in 2005, the waterbucket.ca website is the key to the communications strategy for the Water Sustainability Action Plan,” states **Michael**



Tanner, Chair of the Water Bucket Partnership. “The website is designed to provide the complete story on integrated land and water management – why, what, where and how.”



Water Bucket Vision

“The vision for the website has been to provide a resource rich, highly interactive ‘destination location’ for information and communication related to water sustainability in British Columbia. By providing universal access to information we believe we will see improved standards in all aspects of land development and water resource management.”

Communities-of-Interest

“The website comprises a family of ‘communities-of-interest’, or COIs, that provide a ready-made platform for advancing a ‘design with nature’ approach to community development. COIs that correspond to elements of the Water Sustainability Action Plan include:

- Convening for Action
- Water-Centric Planning
- Green Infrastructure
- Rainwater Management

These COIs provide local governments with a sustainability lens through which they can view their plans and planning activities. Our long-term vision is that *communities-of-interest* will evolve into *communities-of-practice*.”

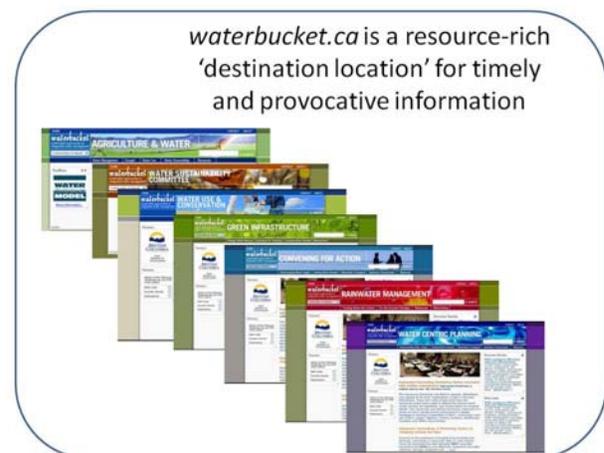
Informing and Educating

“The Water Bucket is designed in a magazine style to appeal to specific target audiences. The menu dropdowns within each COI create the ‘storyline’ and supporting themes. Because we have the Water Bucket, we can record our history even as we are creating it,” explains Mike Tanner.

“Over the past two years, Vancouver Island has been the Action Plan pilot region for a bottom-up approach to informing and educating municipal planners, engineers and others. The experience gained through this process has demonstrated the valuable role that Water Bucket plays in delivering information and sharing lessons learned.”

“We have found it extremely effective to publish news-style stories that create interest in Action Plan programs and events. Our experience is that the use of photos and images is engaging; and attributing quotes to individuals in a conversational style has more impact than dry technical writing.”

“Water Bucket stories establish expectations about program curricula and event outcomes. To get the word out, we work with our partners to craft email-type news releases that are complete with embedded links. We are finding that these news releases are taking on a life of their own,” concludes Michael Tanner.



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7. What is a Regional Team Approach?

Vancouver Island is the pilot region for a precedent-setting approach to regional team-building. "Through programs such as the **Vancouver Island Learning Lunch Seminar Series**, we are informing and educating those who influence or impact how land is developed and water is used," reports **Kim Stephens**.

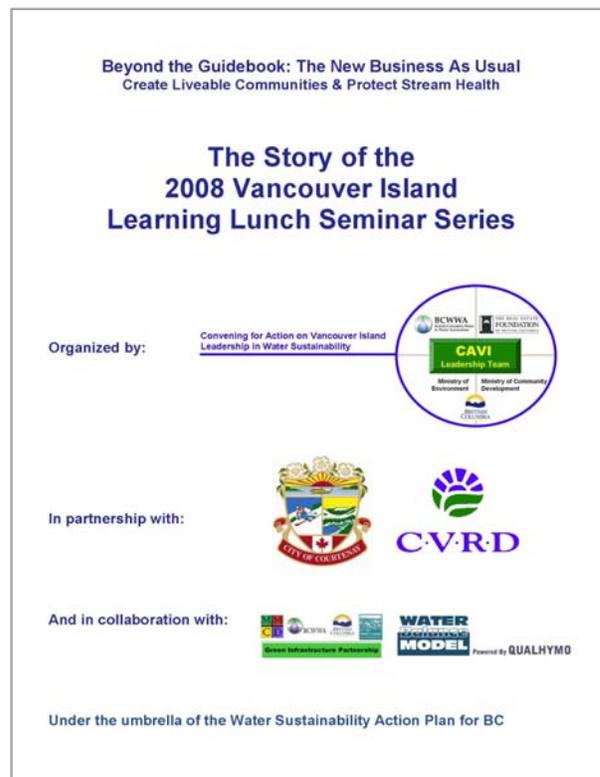


Partnerships and Collaboration

"A regional team approach is founded on broad and inclusive partnerships and collaboration that reach for the common goal of sustainability. In short, we have set our sights on the *common good* and challenge the old barriers of jurisdictional interests. To achieve the *common good*, this requires bringing together:

- ✓ **Local government** - those who plan and regulate land use;
- ✓ **Developers** - those who build;
- ✓ **The Province** - those who provide the legislative framework;
- ✓ **Universities and colleges** - those who provide research; and
- ✓ **The stewardship sector** – those who advocate conservation of resources."

"To get to the big picture, it starts with the smallest pieces. Hence, the Convening for Action team is advancing a regional team approach that aligns local actions with provincial policy goals, in particular those defined in the **Living Water Smart** guidance document," concludes Kim Stephens.



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8. Vancouver Island Learning Lunch Seminar Series

The Learning Lunch Seminar Series refers to and uses a number of currently available guidance documents and/or tools, in particular **Beyond the Guidebook: Context for Rainwater Management and Green Infrastructure in British Columbia**.

Beyond the Guidebook builds on the science-based foundation provided by **Stormwater Planning: A Guidebook for British Columbia**, published in 2002, and incorporates lessons learned over the past six years in moving from planning to action.

When it was published in 2002, the Guidebook ...

- Provided
 - Direction
 - Science-based principles and objectives
 - Guidance on how to do integrated planning
- Introduced these core concepts:
 - Rainfall spectrum
 - The “retain, detain, convey” integrated strategy
 - Water balance methodology
 - Performance targets
 - A “learn by doing” framework

Guidebook Legacy

“After six years, one of the lessons learned is the need for a program that will ensure province-wide consistency in understanding of approaches and desired outcomes,” observes **Peter Law (Ministry of Environment)**, Chair of the Stormwater Guidebook Steering Committee.



“Hence, a premise underpinning the Learning Lunch Seminar Series is that this consistency is best achieved by taking a continuing education program into the places where local government practitioners work.”

Seminar Genesis and Design

“When we came up with the Learning Lunch idea, our objectives and expectations were quite modest,” reports **John Finnie**, General Manager of Water & Wastewater Services, Regional District of Nanaimo (and Chair of **CAVI – Convening for Action on Vancouver Island**).



“We wanted to explore a collaborative approach that we believed would help local governments make informed land development decisions that meet multiple objectives.”

“Initially we were thinking in terms of a small group setting...perhaps 12 to 15 people drawn from the various departments within a willing local government. We wanted to bring together engineers, planners, building inspectors and bylaw enforcement officers; and we wanted the focus to be on aligning efforts to implement effective green infrastructure.”

“The idea resonated, so much so that the original inter-departmental concept quickly mushroomed into an inter-governmental concept. The Cowichan Valley Regional District and City of Courtenay both volunteered to host a regional seminar series, in part because of the opportunity to play a leadership role provincially.”

“Each series comprised a set of three seminars. By spreading the curriculum over three sessions, this enables participants to take in new information, reflect on it, blend it with their own experience, test it, and eventually apply it in making decisions. In terms of the actual curriculum design, it was a matter of drawing upon a number of provincial guidance documents and making them interesting and relevant to a mixed audience.”

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Overview of Series Outcomes

The Learning Lunch Seminar Series helped local government representatives conceptualize why a consistent approach to rainwater management and green infrastructure is needed and what it means regionally.

Cowichan Valley Series:

For **Kate Miller, Manager Regional Environmental Policy Division** at the Cowichan Valley Regional



District, the series provided an opportunity to develop a policy framework for the valley. "It meant that we could foster an informed dialogue that would ultimately lead to adoption of a set of tools for implementing green infrastructure region-wide."

As an outcome of the series, Cowichan Valley local governments proceeded with the **Cowichan Valley Water Balance Model Forum** in October 2008. Three willing development proponents and their planning/design consultants were invited to develop case study applications of the Water Balance Model, a web-based tool for evaluating how to achieve runoff-based performance targets.

"The case studies were shared at the Forum in order to help build a common understanding. This educational approach is helping Cowichan Valley local governments identify and empower a core group of local champions who will then have the expertise to apply and advance the water balance approach to land development."



Comox Valley Series:

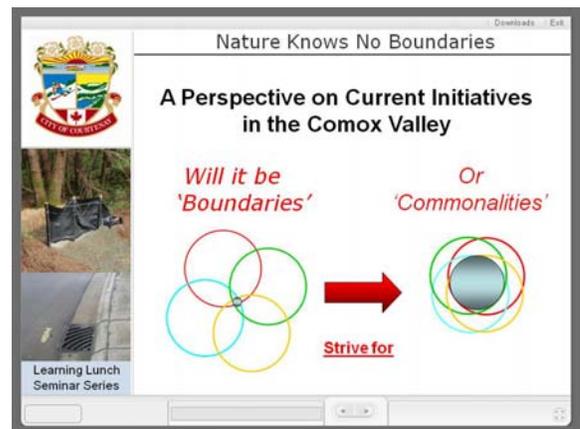
"Our challenge is to work around and with boundaries," says **Derek Richmond, Manager of Engineering** for the City of Courtenay.



"Ideally, we would like to shift the paradigm from boundaries to areas of commonality." For Derek Richmond, the series has provided the springboard for bottom-up regional

action in the Comox Valley to **communicate, cooperate, collaborate and coordinate**.

An example is the **Millard/Piercy Gaps Analysis Project**, which has evolved from a simple regulatory gaps analysis to a regional pilot that will inform watershed-based land use planning across jurisdictions. "The current process has the Comox Valley Land Trust collaborating with regional and municipal planners, engineers and elected representatives to develop a new way of doing business in the Comox Valley."



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9. Convening for Action in Metro Vancouver

How do we simultaneously work together as staff within a municipality and as a region AND externally with developers and other private sector players, to ensure we implement sustainable approaches to development?



Water Balance Model Forum

The above challenge statement provided context for advancing a 'regional team approach' at the **Metro Vancouver Water Balance Model Forum** on March 12, 2009. Hosted by the City of Surrey, this learning event was co-sponsored by the **Inter-Governmental Partnership** and the **Green Infrastructure Partnership**.

The Forum was designed to start a dialogue between policy-makers and project implementers. To that end, the Forum program was built around the *HOW question* as it pertains to green infrastructure: HOW will the City of Surrey ensure it gets built right; HOW will a consistent regional approach be achieved in Metro Vancouver?

Living Water Smart & Making Green Choices to Create Liveable Communities & Protect Stream Health

- *Morning Session:*
Green Infrastructure in the City of Surrey:
"Getting it built right"
- *Afternoon Session:*
Alignment of Regional Actions with
Provincial Goals and Objectives

Alignment with Provincial Goals

"The Surrey Forum was designed to achieve multiple objectives in accordance with the policy framework developed by the Province in **Living Water Smart, BC's Water Plan**, states **Ted van der Gulik, IGP Chair**. "In particular, we explored



ways that regulators and designers can apply the Water Balance Model to facilitate implementation of green infrastructure solutions that achieve two objectives: create liveable communities and protect stream health."

"Our vision is that the Forum will be the catalyst for additional regional forums that would be organized in collaboration with Metro Vancouver's Stormwater Interagency Liaison Group. One of our goals is to implement an educational program that would be modelled on the **Vancouver Island Learning Lunch Seminar Series**."

Creating Our Future

"We see the Forum as providing an opportunity to generate positive energy in the region. In particular, the Forum will inform the actions identified in the rainwater/stormwater component of Metro Vancouver's updated **Liquid Waste Management Plan**," states **Ray Fung, Chair of the Green Infrastructure Partnership**.

"We believe this is where the opportunity for implementing a regional team approach resides."



"Once we know what we want our watersheds and neighbourhoods to look like, the next step is to decide *what the tools are that will get us there*," concludes **Vincent Lalonde, General Manager (Engineering) with the City of Surrey**. "All of us



....whether we are regulators, developers or designersneed to understand and care about the goal if we are to create the future that we all want."

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10. Rewarding Good Behaviour

"Living Water Smart is a provincial strategy; we must look at it as a shared responsibility," sums up **Glen Brown, Executive Director**, Local Government Infrastructure and Finance Division of the Ministry of Community Development.



"Actually, it is not one strategy; the Province has a number of strategies, including the Green Communities Project and the Climate Action Plan. The Province is looking at raising the bar as far as what we are trying to accomplish with standards, provincial legislation and infrastructure grant programs."

LIVING WATER SMART



B.C.'s Plan to protect and preserve water resources through planning, regulatory change, education, and incentives such as economic instruments and rewards.

How We Develop Land

"We really have to look at how we develop land. Ultimately this requires leadership and champions on the ground. The message is that the Province is rewarding good behaviour."

"Beyond the Guidebook is an on-the-ground application of Living Water Smart. It helps focus the attention of local governments and the development community on what is an achievable outcome that makes sense, and results in net environmental benefits at a watershed scale."

