



Call to Courage: Demonstrating the Regional Team Approach in the Comox Valley

How to achieve Green Action Objectives - first of three Learning Lunch seminars sets stage for integrating planning tools and engineering principles



2009 Vancouver Island Learning Lunch Seminar Series

Comox Valley is Demonstrating the Regional Team Approach

Water Bucket Web Story #8 posted October 2009

Preface

A series of stories published on the Convening for Action community-of-interest on the Water Bucket website progressively foreshadow and/or elaborate on the curriculum and the learning outcomes for the 2009 Comox Valley Learning Lunch Seminar Series.

Establishing Expectations

The first seven stories established expectations and set the stage for the first seminar, titled **Understanding the Dynamics of Settlement Change**. This Story #8 provides a record of the day: it highlights the defining moments, comments on the implications, and summarizes resulting action items. The title for this Story #8 synthesizes key messages:

- the 'call to courage' by the organizing team underscores the passion and commitment of the local government players;
- through their actions, the Comox Valley local governments are already demonstrating what the 'regional team approach' looks like; and
- the Series spotlight is on working with existing legislation to achieve integrated outcomes.

This article emphasizes the relevance of a newly introduced phrase: **Green Action Objectives**. The inspiration is the paper by Susan Rutherford titled *Bill 27: Opportunities and Strategies for Green Action by BC Local Governments*.

What the Reader Should Know

The main focus of this Story #8 is on what drives settlement on the east coast of Vancouver Island.

- There is **one market** for large-scale real estate development projects in the mid-Island region, from Cobble Hill to Campbell River.
- Communities have choices when considering development proposals - they need only accept ones that are aligned with community values, that is: *the right development in the right place*.
- A matrix-type **Development Evaluation Tool** has been developed to enable apples-with-apples comparisons of development proposals, and assess whether they provide *Green Value*.

Table of Contents For Story #8

1. Context

- The Collaboration Challenge
- Living Water Smart and Building Greener Communities

2. Call to Courage

- Watershed Stewardship
- Moving from Awareness to Action

3. Convening for Action

- It Starts With a Conversation
- Examples Inform Policy
- Breaking Down Silos

4. One Market - Cobble Hill to Campbell River

- What Drives Large-Scale Real Estate Development in the Mid-Island Region?
- Comox Valley Can Pick and Choose
- Declaring Community Values
- Development Evaluation Tool

5. Regional Growth Strategy Encapsulates all the Plans

- From Boundaries to Commonalities
- The Water Challenge

6. Provincial Context for Regional Team Approach

- Living Water Smart
- Green Communities Initiative

7. Town Hall Sharing

- Integration Leads to Innovation
- Reflecting on the Day

8. Learning Lunch Program

- Telling the Story of the 2009 Series
- Green Action Objectives

Attachment A – Project Case Reviews

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

By CAVI – Convening for Action on Vancouver Island in collaboration with the Comox Valley Regional District

2009 Vancouver Island Learning Lunch Seminar Series

Comox Valley is Demonstrating the Regional Team Approach

Water Bucket Web Story #8 posted October 2009

1. Context

The Comox Valley is in the early stages of demonstrating what a 'regional team approach' looks like. A desired outcome in collaborating is alignment of goals and actions at three scales – provincial, regional and local.

The Collaboration Challenge

The essence of the **regional team approach** is that all the players will set their sights on the *common good* and challenge the old barriers of jurisdictional interests.

The Collaboration Challenge

"How we will simultaneously work together.... as staff within a municipality and as a region AND externally with the stewardship sector, developers and other private and public sector players....to ensure we implement a regional stewardship approach to land and water resource uses."

Rising to the Challenge: Achieving the *common good* ultimately requires bringing together all these players under the regional team umbrella:

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

The primary purpose of the *2009 Learning Lunch Seminar Series* is to advance the team-building process for aligning inter-governmental efforts. **Partnerships, collaboration, innovation and integration** will enable the four Comox Valley local governments to make the best choices over time for *living water smart and building greener communities*.

Living Water Smart and Building Greener Communities

The vision of the Comox Valley organizing team is that the 2009 Series will help facilitate a consistent regional approach to *implementing green infrastructure practices that lead to water sustainability* (i.e. "consistency at the front counter").



A Call to Action



Living Water Smart, BC's Water Plan

and the **Green Communities Initiative** provide a vision of what the regions of our province can look like if local governments.....

- prepare communities for climate change,
- choose to live water smart, and
- strive to build greener communities

The Story of Seminar #1: "Because the 2009 Series comprises three seminars, the learning process is incremental. We build understanding by having time in between seminars to reflect on what we heard, and then we adapt the curriculum accordingly," states **Kim Stephens**, Program Coordinator for the **Water Sustainability Action Plan for BC**, and Series moderator.



"Seminar #1 was held on September 25th at the offices of the Comox Valley Regional District. This article tells the story of the defining moments, the implications, and the resulting action items. The insights gained by the organizing team at Seminar #1 are already influencing how we will achieve the learning outcomes at the next two seminars."

"Looking ahead to Seminar #3, we will be seeking commitment to a regional team approach. The organizing team needs time to make this real. This is the reason we put several key concepts on the table at Seminar #1 - notably, *Water OUT = Water IN*. But the key message was the **Call to Courage**.

2009 Vancouver Island Learning Lunch Seminar Series

Comox Valley is Demonstrating the Regional Team Approach

Water Bucket Web Story #8 posted October 2009

2. Call to Courage

Water-centric planning is the theme for the 2009 Series. The Province's requirements for a *Comox Valley Regional Growth Strategy* and a *Comox Valley Regional Water Supply Plan* are drivers for demonstrating what can be accomplished through a **regional team approach**. On-the-ground action is the desired outcome.

Watershed Stewardship

To set the tone and establish expectations for the 2009 Series, Derek Richmond (City of Courtenay) and Jack Minard (Comox Valley Land Trust) kicked off Seminar #1 with a call to courage.

In doing so, they emphasized the need for a change in lingo, in particular embracing holistic *watershed stewardship* in place of the technocratic *watershed management*. Their key message was: 'it is time to move from awareness to action'.

Nature Without Borders: "In the Comox Valley we have talked the talk and now it is time to do the walking. 'The converted' are saying, show us the way and we will follow. The challenge is to work around and with boundaries so that we can focus on commonalities," stated **Derek Richmond**.



"We have recognized the need, realized the benefits, and talked about examples of an integrated watershed approach to settlement. The next step is to collaboratively define a process for implementation at the ground level that is easily understood by all parties," added **Jack Minard**.



Nature Without Borders – A Call to Courage!

The Challenge:

- ✓ Walk the talk
- ✓ Develop a process to move forward
- ✓ Be leaders

Moving from Awareness to Action

"When you think about it, the BC local government culture is actually conducive to the *call for courage*," observes **Kim Stephens**. "Unlike other regions of North America, we do not have an adversarial or prescriptive regulatory system. Our bottom-up way of doing business in BC does enable us to coalesce around a shared vision."

"It can sometimes take years for all parties to agree to take action to resolve an infrastructure issue; but once there is broad consensus on the need for action, my professional experience is that we typically align efforts around the right action."

"When people like each other and there is a broad consensus on what needs to be done, changes in planning or engineering practice tend to happen quickly. In addition to patience and perseverance, creating a forum that releases the passion and energy of the champions is essential."

Understanding How Government Works in BC:

"The relationship between the provincial and local levels of government in British Columbia has evolved differently than in other provinces, with a history of recognizing and appreciating local autonomy," explains **Dr. Laura Tate**, Manager, Growth Strategies – Vancouver Island (Ministry of Community & Rural Development).

"As a result, BC local government is among the most autonomous in Canada, and the BC provincial government is perhaps the least prescriptive province."

"Historically, the Province has enabled local government by providing policy and legal tools in response to requests from local government. Local governments can choose to act, or not."

"In general, the enabling approach means the onus is on local government to take the initiative because the Province recognizes that communities are in the best position to develop solutions which meet their own unique needs and local conditions."

Laura Tate is the principal author of **A Guide to Green Choices**, released in 2008.

2009 Vancouver Island Learning Lunch Seminar Series

Comox Valley is Demonstrating the Regional Team Approach

Water Bucket Web Story #8 posted October 2009

3. Convening for Action

Commencing in 2005, the Water Sustainability Action Plan has fostered 'convening for action' initiatives in three regions: on Vancouver Island, in the Okanagan, and within Metro Vancouver.

"A commonality is a desire for a *regional team approach* that is founded on partnerships and collaboration. Cross-fertilization between and within regions creates opportunities to build on the experience of others," states **Kim Stephens**.

It Starts With a Conversation

"The key to the success of the bottom-up approach is having conversations. This may well be our most important lesson learned after more than four years of 'convening for action' in three regions," states **Tim Pringle, Director of Special Programs** for the Real Estate Foundation, and a founding member of the CAVI Leadership Team.



"The Learning Lunch Seminar Series provides a neutral forum to have the conversations that otherwise might not happen. These conversations are *informed conversations* because there is an educational context and content. There is also a strong practitioner focus that encourages a sharing of related 'how to make it happen' experiences."

Seek to Understand:

To Build Trust & Respect,
It Starts with a Conversation.

Listen, Listen, Listen.

Because...
Conversations →
will lead to Dialogue →
will lead to Consensus

Examples Inform Policy

"When convening for action, we create a picture of the future that we want," states **Eric Bonham**, also a founding member of CAVI, and a former Director in the Ministry of Municipal Affairs.

"By bringing together the local government implementers in a neutral forum, the 2009 Series is enabling the implementers to collaborate. Their action-oriented focus will result in 'how to do it' examples that help decision-makers visualize what policy goals look like on the ground



"Never forget that examples inform policy decisions by elected representatives. So provide them with commonsense examples that make it easy for them to move from awareness to action."

When 'convening for action', we create a picture of the future that we want:

Vision: What our region will look like in 50 years
~WHAT~

Goal: Implement the New Business As Usual
~SO WHAT~

Strategy: What we are going to do better or differently to get from here to there ~NOW WHAT~

Breaking Down Silos

The observations by Tim Pringle and Eric Bonham are echoed by **Geoff Garbutt**, Executive Manager of Strategic and Long-Range Planning with the Comox Valley Regional District.

"Any time you can bring together a group of people face-to-face in a room....and especially when they are motivated by a common objective to resolve an issue of shared concern....well, then you can begin breaking down silos, whether those silos are inter-departmental or inter-governmental. Returning to the valley after three years, I can see a huge difference in the way people in local government are now striving to cooperate and collaborate."

2009 Vancouver Island Learning Lunch Seminar Series

Comox Valley is Demonstrating the Regional Team Approach

Water Bucket Web Story #8 posted October 2009

4. One Market - Cobble Hill to Campbell River

Research by the Real Estate Foundation, undertaken by Tim Pringle, concludes that the real estate development in the mid-Island region is a common market. This one market concept suggests that communities can choose from among development proposals, and can therefore control their destinies.



What Drives Large-Scale Real Estate Development in the Mid-Island Region?

In the mid-Island region, there are some 40 major development projects (mostly proposed) with significant residential allocation. There are a similar number of industrial, commercial and institutional projects proposed or under way. As defined by Stats BC, a 'major project' has a capital cost value greater than \$15 million.

Regional District	No. of Projects	
	2008	2009
Cowichan Valley	10	12
Nanaimo	14	17
Alberni – Clayquot	6	5
Comox Valley	9	7
Strathcona	1	2
TOTAL	40	43

The Development Context: "Vancouver Island offers large tracts of privately owned land, communities with urban/rural character, and unique natural amenities, in particular access to waterscapes, which attract large-scale development. We have observed that development proposals for complete communities, resort-based and mixed-use developments rely on these assets," stated **Tim Pringle**.

He noted that the Vancouver Island situation is unique due to the combination of three factors:

1. Most of the land base is privately owned. Forest companies are vending large parcels.
2. Provincial policy supports resort development.
3. There is a perception that local governments are willing to rezone land use.

"In effect, the message to the outside world is that here is a place to do business. Even with the global economic and regional real estate market downturn since early 2008, there has been growth rather than contraction in the number of large scale development proposals in the mid-Island region."

"As of mid-2009, the regional real estate market is recovering volumes and prices to approximately the high levels of 2007."

"The similar characteristics of the market for large-scale real estate development, suggest that mid-Island communities have choices. Demographics, as well as household and investor mobility based on choice and wealth, are conditions that will persist for 15 or more years. These conditions will continue to attract development proposals."

CONCLUSIONS

- ❑ There is one market for large scale real estate development projects in the mid-Island region.
- ❑ The similar characteristics of this market means that communities have choices.
- ❑ Major project proponents are much better prepared to make their case than are the regional and local governments.

2009 Vancouver Island Learning Lunch Seminar Series

Comox Valley is Demonstrating the Regional Team Approach

Water Bucket Web Story #8 posted October 2009

Comox Valley Can Pick and Choose

"In presenting our research findings regarding large-scale real estate development in the mid-Island region, we are commenting on the *context for development* and how to look at it differently. The value we provide is in bringing forward viewpoints that otherwise would not come up," states **Tim Pringle**.

"The synthesis of our conversations, interviews and statistical research has yielded a fuller and strategic understanding of the current, persistent context of settlement change. The data show that the number of development units exceeds population growth. This means the Comox Valley can pick and choose from what is being proposed."

Market Differentiation: "The one market way-of-thinking resonated with those who participated in Seminar #1," observes **Geoff Garbutt**. "It makes sense that mid-Island communities have choices. Knowing this, it means mid-Island communities can establish expectations as to what we want and what we will accept from developers."



"Because it is one market, the Comox Valley can really differentiate itself with our strong environmental focus and our emphasis on *quality of place*. Because we can pick and choose, we can position the Comox Valley to be a *region of choice* for the *right development in the right place*."

"An implicit message to the development community is that there is money to be made when *green development* is truly aligned with community values and regional goals."

"Tim Pringle's conclusions were an eye-opener," adds **Glenn Westendorp, Public Works Superintendent**, Town of Comox. "The one market concept means we can work together. The common vision is do-able."

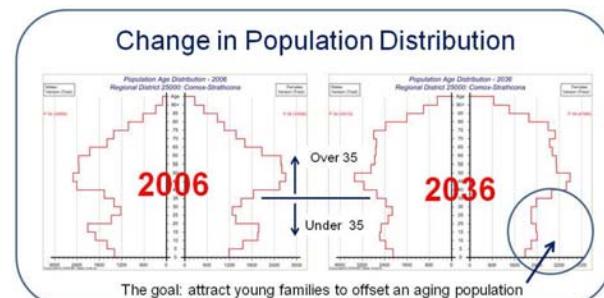


Characterizing Valley Residents: Tim Pringle presented a series of slides with demographic data and/or information to provide an understanding of who already lives in the valley and who will be moving to the valley; and how this understanding could influence pending development decisions.

Residents Today in the Comox Valley

- One-third moved to the valley in the past decade
- Average age of ~44 years versus ~34 in 1986
- More likely to reside within municipal area
- One in five residents rents their dwelling
- Live in dwellings worth ~\$320,000

Age Distribution: In commenting on what the demographic data are telling us, Tim Pringle pointed out the importance of considering the population mix associated with large-scale real estate development proposals.



He told the story of Kalamazoo, Michigan to illustrate how a community can re-invent itself. As an economic initiative, the community has implemented a scholarship program to attract young families and restore a balanced population age distribution. "Developing talent is an economic opportunity of the future," he observed.

In reflecting on the implications of this conclusion, **Glenn Westendorp** agreed: "Even though housing has been growing at a faster rate than population, Comox neighbourhoods typically have a mix of ages. Why would we want to cater to any single group? Why would we want to make that mistake?"

2009 Vancouver Island Learning Lunch Seminar Series

Comox Valley is Demonstrating the Regional Team Approach

Water Bucket Web Story #8 posted October 2009

Declaring Community Values

According to Tim Pringle, "Major project proponents are much better prepared to make their case than are the regional and local governments." He elaborated by listing these factors:

- Project proponents have financial resources to develop and purchase talent.
 - Project proponents will declare dramatically their vision and/or passion.
 - Regional and local governments lack the funds to develop their professional and staff talent; and these government bodies lack resources to purchase talent.
- NOTE: 'Talent' means practitioners who get support (time and funding) to advance their skills and reasonable financial support for their work.*
- Regional communities often do not declare values, and too often fail to align them passionately with an image of their futures.

"Proponents/developers of large projects....(to a great extent).....target buyers who are not living in the community, electoral area, or region where they plan to locate. These projects depend on migrants to purchase a significant portion of the above-median-price residential units."

Developing Local Talent: "In reflecting on the Kalamazoo story, what is important is that they decided to declare their values and *develop talent*, and that is what the Learning Lunch Series is doing for the Comox Valley," observes Tim Pringle.

"At Seminar #1, the room was full of talented people who would do more if they could. They are developing the talent to go on a journey to jointly use their capability to manage the community more effectively than in the past. The regional team approach will help them get there. Their willingness to work together is impressive."

"The Comox Valley will be seen differently by developers when community values are clearly reflected in the Regional Growth Strategy, and in the collective talent of the local planners and engineers and others."

Development Evaluation Tool:

At Seminar #1, Tim Pringle presented the first iteration of a matrix that can be utilized as an evaluation tool to determine the acceptability of developer proposals for large-scale real estate development. It is a work-in-progress.

Evaluation Framework: A set of seven questions have been developed to set up the matrix:

1. What kind of community is being proposed?
2. Who is going to live there now and how? In fifty years?
3. What values does the project highlight that will benefit larger community?
4. What indicators can be created to assess and measure these values?
5. How does project integrate or rely on natural attributes and the ecological systems of the land?
6. What are the implication of the proposed project's phases and time frame?
7. What do we know about the investment value to realize the development?

"We're just starting to explore these questions in the matrix," explained Tim Pringle. "We have produced three typologies and associated characteristics so that we can compare apples with apples. The three typologies are complete community, master planned community, and tract development. As a seminar outcome, going forward I anticipate we will change our language to refer to **integrated communities** rather than *complete, compact communities*"

Application of the Tool: "This is a tremendous new tool for assessing whether development proposals achieve green value," praised **Jack Minard**. "It will be very useful to a group such as the four CAOs, and to a planning department working with a neighbouring planning department, to make decisions about the types of development. I hope this tool will show up in the Regional Growth Strategy because it has deep implications."

2009 Vancouver Island Learning Lunch Seminar Series

Comox Valley is Demonstrating the Regional Team Approach

Water Bucket Web Story #8 posted October 2009

5. Regional Growth Strategy Encapsulates all the Plans

The purpose of the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) is to create a balance that protects the natural beauty and function of the Comox Valley. Water is a unifying element. The RGS is a tool that will help promote alignment of regional and municipal actions pursuant to an implementation plan for the Regional Water Supply Strategy.

From Boundaries to Commonalities

"Although the Province mandated that the Comox Valley develop an RGS, there is a commonality of purpose – our communities do want us to have a strategy," stated **Geoff Garbutt** when he provided participants with an overview of the RGS.

"Although many people view an RGS as being primarily about land use regulation, it is really about collaboration, and how we will manage growth to protect what we value as a community. A growth strategy comes down to two things: where people live, and how they get to work."

"Infrastructure plans need to align with community values. From a water perspective, as we grow for urban uses, there is a community mandate to support local agriculture. This is becoming one of the really important factors for the strategy."

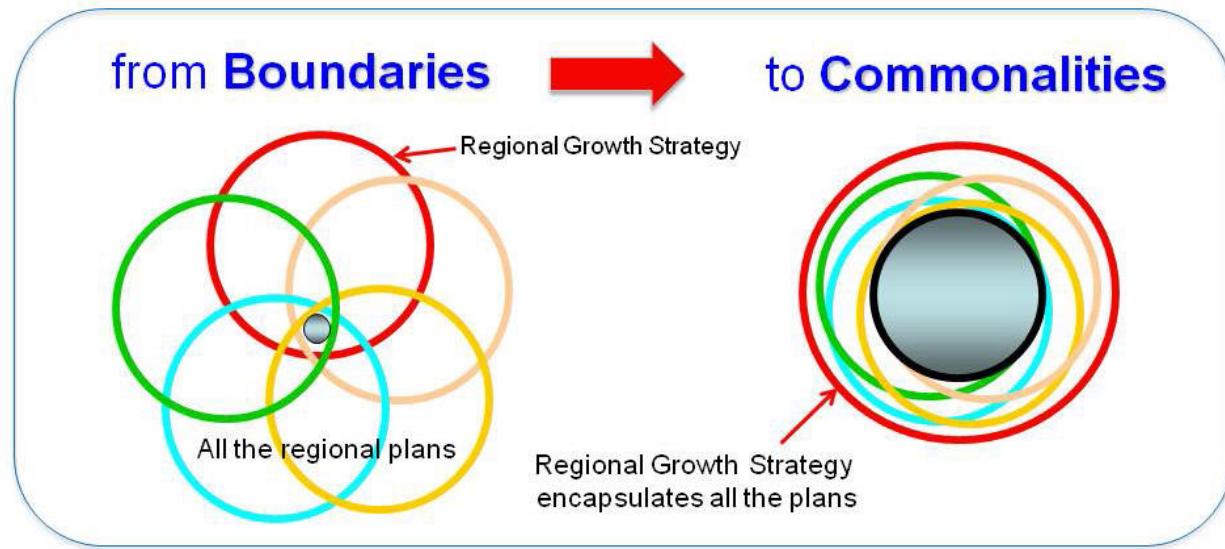
The Water Challenge

"Water is the underpinning of the community, and this is why an integrated approach to settlement and land development is essential for the Comox Valley," stated **Kevin Lorette, General Manager** of the CVRD Property Services Branch, when he explained the multi-faceted 'water challenge'.

"Water is a key component for all the regional strategies that we are currently developing simultaneously. All will have to be integrated into one plan. At the core is growth – we are bringing these strategies together in 2010 to manage growth. We will be looking at all aspects of water."

"When we move into the action phase, it will not be one organization doing it. This involves everybody. Job functions will be modified so that everyone has a role in implementation. If we all work together, we will be that much more effective."

Consistent Integration: "The value of the RGS is that it provides a way to encapsulate all the regional plans... so that municipal implementers will have the mandate they need to ensure that '*consistent integration*' happens on the ground," commented **Kevin Lagan, Director of Operational Services** with the City of Courtenay.



2009 Vancouver Island Learning Lunch Seminar Series

Comox Valley is Demonstrating the Regional Team Approach

Water Bucket Web Story #8 posted October 2009

6. Provincial Context for Regional Team Approach

"Living Water Smart, BC's Water Plan and the Green Communities Initiative must be viewed as an integrated package. Living Water Smart presents the vision, and the Green Communities Initiatives provides enabling tools to achieve the vision. Together they represent a call to action," **Kim Stephens** told participants at Seminar #1.

Living Water Smart

"Living Water Smart is an idea that people are embracing. The solutions and commitments go beyond what government does," stated **Lynn Kriwoken**, a Director in the Ministry of Environment, and the Province's lead person for delivery of Living Water Smart.



"Living Water Smart is a plan that is as much about land as water....because only with healthy water can we enjoy all the values that we take for granted. Times are changing and the way we do business is also changing."

"Living Water Smart is about adaptation - that is, collectively what we need to do...to adapt...to prepare for climate change. How we will get there is all about collaboration – that's my code for *silo jumping*. We must get out of our silos and broaden our perspectives. Learn from others, share with others – that is when we grow."

Shared Responsibility: To emphasize action, Lynn Kriwoken shared a quote from the book by Ronald Wright titled *A Short History of Progress*: "Now is our last chance to get the future right."

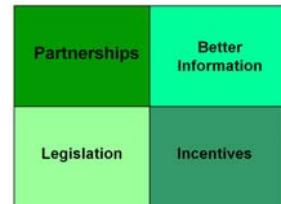
Shared Responsibility

"While legislative reform is a foundation piece, collaboration takes place outside the legislative framework. At the end of the day, planners and engineers and other disciplines must come together to determine the issues and solutions. No statute alone will help them do that."

Lynn Kriwoken, Director
Water Stewardship Division
Ministry of Environment
September 2009

Green Communities Initiative

The Green Communities Initiative provides a comprehensive framework for helping local governments in BC create **integrated communities**. The framework has four elements; and these elements encompass plans and strategies that complement and support Living Water Smart.



Incentives for Action: "Provincial grant programs provide incentives for moving forward with implementation of new ways of doing business," stated **Glen Brown**, Executive Director with the Ministry of Community & Rural Development, and the Deputy Inspector of Municipalities.

"On the implementation side, it is how those incentives feed back into the planning side. More and more, good implementation relies on good planning. Grant programs will be leveraged to achieve Living Water Smart targets, in particular that 50% of new municipal water needs will be acquired through conservation by 2020."

Rewarding Innovation and Integration: Glen Brown explained how infrastructure grant programs have evolved over the past decade. In the past, those municipalities which had poorly managed their infrastructure systems were essentially rewarded with grants to rectify problems resulting from a lack of planning. Now, those which are proactive and showing leadership are the ones which are being rewarded.

Grants Foster Innovation & Integration

"The reality of an increasing local government infrastructure deficit means that there will be even stiffer competition for available funding. As a result, there is a greater incentive for local governments to demonstrate how their innovation and integration will be effective in meeting the goals of both the Green Communities Initiative and Living Water Smart."

Glen Brown, Executive Director
Ministry of Community & Rural Development
September 2009

2009 Vancouver Island Learning Lunch Seminar Series

Comox Valley is Demonstrating the Regional Team Approach

Water Bucket Web Story #8 posted October 2009

7. Town Hall Sharing

The 2009 Learning Lunch Seminar Series is outcome-oriented. The organizing team has identified the opportunity to integrate the Development Permit Area (DPA) planning tool with engineering objectives to achieve Living Water Smart targets.

"Local governments have the knowledge. They have the policy, legal and technical tools. Hence, the purpose of the Town Hall Sharing segment was to initiate a conversation that will become a dialogue on how the four local governments in the Comox Valley can collaborate and integrate their efforts to apply the tools," reports **Kim Stephens**.

Integration Leads to Innovation

To provide seminar participants with an example of what integration looks like on the ground, Derek Richmond drew attention to a City project along Anderton and Cliff Avenues in the Old Orchard area of northwest Courtenay.

Imagine: "In a nutshell, an infrastructure replacement project evolved into a neighbourhood rehabilitation program," stated **Derek Richmond**. "We began with a traditional infrastructure project in our minds: replace a pipe with a pipe. And then something amazing happened – we lifted ourselves out of the traditional silo mentality and we began to function as an integrated, inter-departmental team."



"Through teamwork, a seemingly routine engineering project became the springboard for transforming the look-and-feel of an entire neighbourhood."

"If we can do this internally, imagine what we could do regionally," **Kevin Lagan** stated. "Integrated planning is all about teamwork. There is no limit to what we can do once we open our minds to the opportunities that can result from partnerships and collaboration."

Reflecting on the Day

"The research conclusions by Tim Pringle really struck home for me, in particular his finding that proponents of major development projects are



much better resourced than local government. We are always in a position of having to react," commented **Judith Walker, Municipal Planner** with the Village of Cumberland.

"By drawing attention to HOW we can apply the regional team approach to integrate the DPA planning tool with engineering objectives, Derek Richmond and Jack Minard have created the opportunity for Cumberland to develop criteria that we otherwise would not be able to do on our own. This is great."

Marvin Kamenz, Municipal Planner with the Town of Comox, echoed the reflections by Judith Walker. "Tim Pringle has provided an accurate picture.

His research makes it clear that macro forces are driving real estate development. The issue of developing local talent is a bona fide need that should be addressed at the Regional Board level."



"On the matter of *watershed stewardship*, the planners are already there. The missing piece has been the engineering part. The Learning Lunch process has been beneficial in bringing together the two perspectives. This was my ah-ha moment."

Inter-Region Sharing: "Keep in mind that the discussion is not just about the Comox Valley. CAVI is about Vancouver Island," stated **Smokey Stephens**, Development Services Coordinator with the City of Campbell River.

"**Greg Clark**, who is with the City of Nanaimo Development Services Department, made a timely and strategic contribution when he suggested that the Comox Valley consider the *Integrated Stormwater Management Planning* tool," noted Kim Stephens. "Greg is right - this tool can be employed to connect the dots between watershed-based land use planning and the DPA."

2009 Vancouver Island Learning Lunch Seminar Series

Comox Valley is Demonstrating the Regional Team Approach

Water Bucket Web Story #8 posted October 2009

8. Learning Lunch Program

The 2009 Learning Lunch Series is a progression. Desired outcomes include inter-departmental collaboration, inter-municipal sharing, and regional alignment. "The 2009 Series provides us with a vehicle to shift the paradigm from *boundaries* to *areas of commonality*; and it is happening," observes **Derek Richmond**.

Telling the Story of the 2009 Series

"As I see it, the power of the 2009 Learning Lunch Series results from the fact that it is internally driven by staff. As a result, the process of organizing the series and developing the curriculum is already enabling people in all four local governments to work together," continues **Judith Walker**.

"Communication is vital. Use of the Water Bucket website to tell the story of the 2009 Series is proving especially effective. The storytelling is leading to understanding about why we need to do business differently; and this is promoting competition and a *race to the top*," adds **Marvin Kamenz**.

Action Items: The three seminars in the 2009 Series represent only a small portion of the total work effort necessary to achieve tangible outcomes. The work effort in between seminars is part and parcel of bringing a *regional team approach* to fruition. Three action items resulted from Seminar #1:

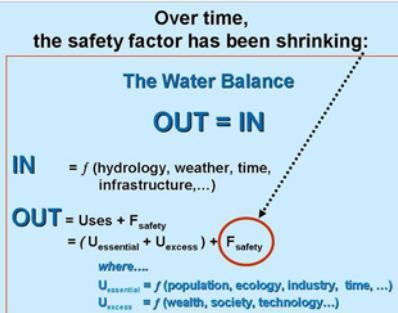
1. Organize a **Water Conservation DPA Working Group** to brainstorm ideas for a coordinated regional approach, and report back at Seminar #2.
2. Organize an **Development Evaluation Tool Working Group** to work with Tim Pringle to evolve the matrix-type comparison tool.
3. Convene an exploratory meeting with representatives of the local development community to inform them about the purpose of the regional team approach, and report back at Seminar #2.

Green Action Objectives

"The Water OUT = Water IN equation embodies a way-of-thinking about water that touches on all aspects of land development; and enables us to integrate the planning and engineering perspectives," states **Kim Stephens**.

"Furthermore, the Green Communities legislation known as Bill 27 provides local government with the ability to make the Water OUT = Water IN equation real. Looking ahead to Seminar #2 titled **Pathway to Water Sustainability**, we will explore how to apply the DPA tool to achieve Green Action Objectives as identified by Susan Rutherford in her paper titled *Bill 27: Opportunities and Strategies for Green Action by BC Local Governments*."

Water for Life & Livelihoods: This deceptively simple equation embodies principles and concepts that are key to balancing settlement change and ecology



Pathway to Water Sustainability: Seminar #2 will share lessons learned by the Regional District of Nanaimo and Metro Vancouver in developing their *Drinking Water & Watershed Protection Action Plan* and *Integrated Liquid Waste & Resource Management Plan*, respectively

A Perspective on Climate Change



"If mitigation is about CARBON, then adaptation is about WATER."

Jim Mattison, Assistant Deputy Minister
Water Stewardship Division
Ministry of Environment
April 2008