





DRINKING WATER WATERSHED PROTECTION ACTION PLAN



***Protecting Drinking Water and Watersheds
in the Regional District of Nanaimo***

November 5th, 2009 – CAVI

Why do we need Drinking Water – Watershed Protection?



- ❑ Growing population
 - *Demand for water is going up but the supply is finite*
- ❑ Increasing development
 - *Risk of contamination and ecological disruption is rising, reducing the security of water supplies*
- ❑ Climate change
 - *More intense storms and droughts means greater uncertainty about water sources*
- ❑ Responsibilities for water
 - *Many agencies but not enough coordination*
 - *Information and action gap between local government and the province*



□ Outcomes:

- Centralized resource information
- Regional education outreach program
- Incentives to improve water efficiency
- Improved well safety in partnership with residents
- More complete understanding of surface and groundwater resources
- Watershed management plans – ***improved land use decisions***
- Development standards to better protect watersheds
- Greater security of healthy water supplies for the future.

5 MAIN ACTIONS



1. **Healthy Water**
2. **Understand Risks**
3. **Reduce Risks**
4. **Use Wisely**
5. **Improve Awareness**

1. HEALTHY WATER



Some areas are at risk or already suffering from ground/surface water contamination. To protect water quality, AFW will:

- ❑ **Vulnerability Mapping Project**
 - Identify areas vulnerable to contamination, adopt best management practices
- ❑ **Set up well monitoring pilot program**
 - Opportunity for private well owners to have water quality tested to better understand local conditions
- ❑ **Forestry and agriculture**
 - Work with agencies and interest groups to influence practices affecting watersheds

2. UNDERSTAND RISKS



There's a lot we don't know about our water resources. To improve this situation, AFW will:

- ❑ **Gather up existing data, mapping, reports etc. regarding the watershed and aquifer resources.**
 - Build comprehensive picture of the Region's water resources

3. REDUCE RISKS



Better planning, guidelines and regulations are needed. Under AFW, we can develop:

- ❑ **“Low impact development” standards**
 - Best practices for new development

- ❑ **Watershed Management Plans**
 - Involve stakeholders
 - Prioritize watersheds and aquifers at risk
 - Generate integrated plans for high risk areas
 - Incorporate results into land/resource decisions

4. USE WISELY



Most areas are already subject to water restrictions, some already experience water shortages in dry summers. AFW will:

- ❑ **Rainwater and graywater use**
 - Develop and promote alternate technologies
- ❑ **Community water providers**
 - Form a working group to coordinate management actions around safe, sustainable water use
- ❑ **Water Conservation Plans**
 - With community water providers, lay out goals and actions for more efficient water use in different parts of the Region.

5. IMPROVE AWARENESS



We often don't know the impacts that our activities can have on water resources. To improve everyone's knowledge, AFW will:

□ **Team WaterSmart Education Outreach**

- Expand existing program to regional level
- Develop demonstration project partners
- Enhance existing seminar series
- Increase program presence in schools
- Support community groups already providing information about water conservation and watershed protection.
- Develop a comprehensive Social Marketing approach to aid our education outreach work

What Will the Action Plan Cost?



- **\$5.3 million over the first 10 years, or \$522,000 per year (average)**

- **In Electoral Areas, about \$25 per property per year**