

Convening for Action in British Columbia



Shared Responsibility Underpins a Regional Team Approach to Creating Our Future in British Columbia

The Province has enabled local government by providing law and policy tools to help achieve *water sustainability* and *settlement change in balance with ecology*

Convening for Action in BC: Visualize What We Want Our Regions 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***

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A Call to Action

Partnerships	Better Information
Legislation	Incentives

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 Province of British Columbia has put in place a policy framework that enables local governments to commit to doing business differently: *This is what we want our communities to look like in 50 years, and this is what we will do starting now to ensure it happens.*

Call to Action

"The program goals for **Living Water Smart, BC's Water Plan** and the companion **Green Communities Initiative** constitute a 'call to action' on the part of British Columbians to manage *settlement change in balance with ecology*," states **Tim Pringle, Director of Special Programs** for the Real Estate Foundation of British Columbia.

Living Water Smart contains a key message – green development makes sense. Fostering new approaches to development will lead to more green spaces, more water and fish in streams, improved community vitality, reduced demand for water, and reduced expenditure on infrastructure.

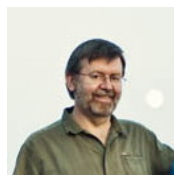
"Achieving the vision for settlement change in balance with ecology will require a 'regional team approach' that is founded on the notion of shared responsibility," states **Kim Stephens, Program Coordinator** for the *Water Sustainability Action Plan for British Columbia*.

Moving from Awareness to Action

"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," observes Kim Stephens.

"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 agreement 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," concludes Kim Stephens.



Balance Settlement Change with Ecology for two reasons.....



- Ecology can exist without habitation
- Habitation cannot exist without ecology!

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How Government Works in British Columbia

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

Local Autonomy

“As a result, BC local government is among the most autonomous in Canada, and the BC provincial government is perhaps the least prescriptive province,” continues Laura Tate.

“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.”

Driver for Action

“This enabling philosophy has become a driver for a *regional team approach* to achieving water sustainability outcomes through implementation of green infrastructure policies and practices,” reports **John Finnie**, Chair of **Convening for Action on Vancouver Island**, known by the acronym CAVI. John Finnie is with the Regional District of Nanaimo and is General Manager, Regional and Community Utilities.



Regional Team Approach Explained

“A ‘regional team approach’ is founded on partnerships and collaboration; and seeks to align local actions with provincial and regional goals. Vancouver Island is demonstrating the *regional team approach*,” explains John Finnie.

“On Vancouver Island, a convergence of interests has created an opportunity for all the players to set their sights on the *common good*, challenge the old barriers of jurisdictional interests, and make water sustainability real,” explains John Finnie.

“CAVI has brought together those who plan and regulate land use (local government), those who build (developers), those who provide the legislative framework (the Province), those who advocate conservation of resources (stewardship sector), and those who provide research (university and college). We will also be reaching out to those who grow food (agricultural sector).”

“Major breakthroughs happen when decision makers in government work with grass-roots visionaries in the community to create desired outcomes,” concludes John Finnie.

The ‘regional team approach’ is founded on partnerships and collaboration; and seeks to align actions at three scales – provincial, regional and local.



“Everyone needs to agree on expectations and how all the players will work together, and after that each community can reach its goals in its own way.”

Eric Bonham
CAVI Leadership Team

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Shared Responsibility Explained

The Green Infrastructure Partnership is contributing to curriculum development for the educationally-based CAVI program; and is represented by **Susan Rutherford, Staff Counsel** with West Coast Environmental Law. Susan Rutherford has provided the law and policy content for the 2008 and 2009 Vancouver Island Learning Lunch Seminar Series.

"Shared responsibility can work at different levels.



Senior government, regional government, municipalities, the development community and their consultantsall of us have an impact on the land, on the water, and on the way things look," states Susan Rutherford.

"Policy and legal tools can help developers, regulators and designers collaborate to implement green infrastructure solutions and ensure responsible outcomes. Each party in the process has a responsibility."

Responsibility Matrix

"Building on the experience we have gained on Vancouver Island through the CAVI program, the Green Infrastructure Partnership is in the process of framing a **Responsibility Matrix** that regulators, developers and designers will be able to use as a decision support tool."

"For the first part of the matrix, think in terms of three columns: GOAL, PARTY and TOOL. Our focus is on the linkages – that is, how people interact and/or collaborate to achieve community development sustainability goals."

"For the second part of the matrix, again think in terms of three columns that elaborate on the first part: DESIRED OR REQUIRED OUTCOMES, RELEVANT STAFF OR OTHER ACTORS and INSTRUMENTS FOR ACTION. Under desired outcomes, we will be defining a series of objectives and/or situations – for example, ensuring that the minimum topsoil requirement is achieved and maintained over time."

"Each party in any process has a responsibility," reiterates Susan Rutherford.

Responsibility Matrix		
Goal	Party	Tool
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Objectives ▪ Situations ▪ Responsibilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regional staff and elected representatives ▪ Municipal staff and elected representatives ▪ Private actors (developers, builders, homeowners, stewardship groups, universities and colleges, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Law ▪ Bylaw ▪ Policy ▪ Procedure ▪ Incentive ▪ Penalty ▪ Security ▪ Budget
Desired or Required Outcomes	Relevant Staff or Other Actors	Instruments for Action

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Imagine

“Our purpose in developing the Responsibility Matrix is to encourage players with different perspectives to talk candidly with each other about green infrastructure or other sustainability goal implementation,” continues Susan Rutherford.

“If someone says something is not working – that barriers prevent success - then our challenge for them is: *Think about what would make it work, and what are you going to do to make that alignment of goals happen?* Our theme is ‘imagine’.”

“What we have in mind when we say ‘imagine’ is that players would imagine a legal tool or procedure that would ensure that barriers are removed or other parties in the process more effectively fulfil their piece of the sustainable development puzzle.”

“Imagine what we could each do differently – for example, consider how the City of Courtenay imagined that things would be better if they could get their inspectors on-board with inspecting for topsoil and/or other green infrastructure features”.

Outcome-Oriented

“There are solutions to be found if all parties in the community development process, i.e., staff within local and regional governments as well as private and other actors external to government but no less involved in the development process, simply talk to each other about how they could all work together more effectively, using law reform or other process changes as tools.”

“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*. All of us ...whether we are regulators, developers or designersneed to understand and care about the goal if we are to know our role in relation to it and to create the future that we all want.”

“What this underlines is that we are all interconnected – our actions influence whether others will succeed, and our own achievement of goals is influenced by how we’re supported. We are all working at this together...and we all have a role to play,” concludes Susan Rutherford.

Application of Responsibility Matrix

Desired Outcome	Relevant Actors	Instruments for Action
Onsite Rainwater Management	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Regional Government 2. Municipal Government 3. Developer 4. Builder 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. LivingWater Smart policy direction; Regional liquid resource management plan 2. Regional targets translated to site level action using Water Balance Mode tool and Land Use Planning, site standards; linkage made between watershed plan and development practices/neighbourhood plan; Official Community Plan direction; visible political leadership on issue 3. Bylaws require a) onsite rainwater management facilities b) security for performance c) regular inspection and reporting re: maintenance (e.g. on business license renewal); departments charged and funded to inspect 4. Communication, contractual provisions, occupancy permit

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Alignment with Living Water Smart Vision

“Living Water Smart and the Green Communities Initiative must be viewed as an integrated package. Living Water Smart presents the vision, and the Green Communities Initiative provides enabling tools to achieve the vision. The solutions and commitments go beyond what government does. Living Water Smart supports planning that is as much about land as water,” states Tim Pringle of the Real Estate Foundation.



Together with the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Community of Community & Rural Development, the Real Estate Foundation works to advance green value approaches to managing the built environment. Commencing in 2007, the three agencies have co-funded **Convening for Action on Vancouver Island** under the umbrella of the Water Sustainability Action Plan.

Regional Approach versus Regional Team Approach

“Through CAVI, we are promoting a *regional team approach*. The term ‘regional approach’ has been part our vocabulary for a generation or more, but it has never resonated the way ‘regional team approach’ has resonated this past year.”

“It is revealing that inserting the word **team** could have such a profound impact on how practitioners view their world. Inclusion of the team word implies there is personal commitment – that is why the *regional team approach* is fundamentally different than a *regional approach*.”

“The team concept also resonates with the notion that it is important to build local government talent to cope with demanding issues pertaining to settlement change,” concludes Tim Pringle.

Provincial Context for Regional Team Approach

“By choosing to live water smart, communities will be more prepared for climate change and their quality of life will be enhanced. If we can show how to get the water part right, then other parts are more likely to follow,” summarizes **Lynn Kriwoken** of the BC Ministry of Environment.



Lynn Kriwoken is Director of the Water Stewardship Division, and is the Province’s lead person for development and delivery of Living Water Smart.

“At the end of the day, planners and engineers and other disciplines must come together to determine the issues and solutions.”

“This is why we constantly emphasize that Living Water Smart is about motivating and inspiring everyone to embrace **shared responsibility**. Influencing behaviour and attitudes is at the heart of moving from awareness to action.”

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