

Convening for Action on Vancouver Island
Leadership in Water Sustainability



Comox Valley Local Governments Showcase “A Regional Response to Infrastructure Liability”

Program Details for 2011 Comox Valley Learning Lunch Seminar Series



Convening for Action in the Comox Valley:
Visualize What We Want Our Region to Look Like in 50 years

**Create a Legacy:
Settlement Change in Balance with Ecology**

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

2011 Comox Valley Learning Lunch Seminar Series

A Regional Response to 'Infrastructure Liability'

Program Details for 2011 Comox Valley Learning Lunch Seminar Series

Preface

Commencing in 2007, the four local governments in the Comox Valley and the Comox Valley Land Trust have been collaborating to advance a 'regional team approach' under the umbrella of Convening for Action on Vancouver Island (CAVI). In 2011, the Town of Comox is the host for the Comox Valley Learning Lunch Seminar Series, a program for continuing education. Seminars will start at 10am and finish at 3pm on these dates:

- April 14
- May 19
- June 23

The target audience is land use and infrastructure professionals in the local government and development sectors. This article is the first in a weekly series that foreshadow program content. This article provides preliminary information about the vision and desired outcomes for the 2011 Series.

The 2011 Series is open to local governments from beyond the Comox Valley. Registration will be capped at 45. First priority will be given to those from the Comox Valley. The image opposite illustrates the program at a glance. A copy of the Program Outline follows.

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Organized under the umbrella of the Water Sustainability Action Plan for British Columbia
By the CAVI-Comox Valley Regional Team

2011 Comox Valley Learning Lunch Seminar Series

A Regional Response to 'Infrastructure Liability'

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2011 Comox Valley Learning Lunch Seminar Series: A Regional Response to Infrastructure Liability

Water is finite. People are not.

Seminar #1

("Managing Water = Managing Growth = Managing Infrastructure")

Understand Consequences of 'Infrastructure Liability'
Strive for 'Sustainable Service Delivery'
Recognize Benefits of 'Green Infrastructure'

Regional Collaboration 🏡

Seminar #2

("Too Little Water")

Climate Change = Droughts
So, Design with Nature
Make Level of Service Choices

Adaptation 🏡

Seminar #3

("Too Much Water")

Climate Change = Floods
So, Respect Power of Nature
Make Level of Service Choices

Risk Management 🏡



**Green infrastructure
will make a difference over time!**

2011 Comox Valley Learning Lunch Seminar Series

A Regional Response to Infrastructure Liability
Through Collaboration, Adaptation and Risk Management

Date of this Draft: 21-February-2011

Seminar Program Outline

Local governments in the Comox Valley are ‘convening for action’ around a water-centric theme:

- *Water is the finite resource; however, management of development is the control.*
- **Water OUT = Water IN** *is the mind-map for an holistic approach (refer to graphic on page 4)*
- *Water sustainability will be achieved through implementation of green infrastructure practices*

DESIRED OUTCOME: The four local governments will prepare a Joint Report that: summarizes the 3-year seminar program; describes how the regional team approach has developed leadership capacity; and proposes a policy framework for resolving the unfunded infrastructure liability.

Seminar Theme	Seminar Scope
<p>1 Collaboration – Comox Valley Regional Initiatives</p> <p>SO WHAT</p>	<p>a. Session #1 will build on the Developers Dialogue. The spotlight will be on the existing unfunded ‘infrastructure liability’, and why all those involved in land development have a role to play in Sustainable Service Delivery.</p> <p>b. The session will explore this premise: <i>Water sustainability is more likely to be achieved when land use planning and climate change adaptation are integrated with infrastructure asset management.</i></p> <p>c. A desired outcome is that participants will understand why the link between infrastructure asset management and the protection of a community’s natural resources is emerging as an important piece in Sustainable Service Delivery.</p>
<p>2 Adaptation – Design with Nature to Achieve Rainfall Capture & Water Conservation Goals</p> <p>NOW WHAT</p>	<p>a. Session #2 will focus on urban watershed protection and restoration issues, with emphasis on a ‘design with nature’ approach to climate change adaptation: <i>These are the values of importance to everyone; and this is the community standard that we wish to build to.</i></p> <p>b. Northeast Comox will serve as a case study to test the application of ‘green infrastructure’ and ‘green value’ approaches embodied in the <i>Water Balance Model</i> and the <i>Comparative Land Use Typologies & Matrix</i>, respectively.</p> <p>c. A desired outcome is that participants will understand how a ‘design with nature’ approach integrates rainwater management and drought management.</p>
<p>3 Risk Management – Respect the Power of Nature</p> <p>THEN WHAT</p>	<p>a. Session #3 will focus on floodplain and flooding issues, with emphasis on a ‘risk management’ approach to sea level rise and climate change adaptation.</p> <p>b. Recent flood overflows due to the combination of high river and high tide levels provide context for identifying guiding principles for a regional risk tolerance framework: <i>Because we have a limited ability to engineer change, we need to be cautious and anticipate nature’s extremes.</i></p> <p>c. A desired outcome is that participants will understand how a common-sense approach to determining ‘risk tolerance’ would inform the Comox Valley regional response to climate change.</p>

2011 Comox Valley Learning Lunch Seminar Series

A Regional Response to 'Infrastructure Liability'

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2011 Theme: A Regional Response to Infrastructure Liability

"History shows that local governments are very good at planning ahead, but not-so-good at looking ahead – for example: The initial capital cost of municipal infrastructure is about 20% of the life-cycle cost. The other 80% is an unfunded liability, and is increasing year after year," states Glenn Westendorp, Public Works Superintendent with the Town of Comox. He is Chair of the 2011 Series.



"The unfunded 'infrastructure liability' is a driver for local governments to consider longevity, focus on what happens after developers hand-off municipal infrastructure, get it right at the front-end, and prepare for the future. Climate change is part of the liability equation - adaptation has level-of-service implications for infrastructure," continues Derek Richmond, Manager of Engineering with the City of Courtenay.



"Thus, the unifying theme for the 2011 Comox Valley Learning Lunch Seminar Series is this: Water sustainability is more likely to be achieved when land use planning and climate change adaptation are integrated with infrastructure asset management," adds Judy Walker, Planner with the Village of Cumberland.



"Tackling the unfunded infrastructure liability involves a life-cycle way of thinking about infrastructure needs and how to pay for those needs over time. This holistic approach is described as Sustainable Service Delivery," emphasizes Michael Zbarsky, Manager of Transit and Sustainability with the Comox Valley Regional District.



"The link between infrastructure asset management and the protection of a community's natural resources is emerging as an important piece in Sustainable Service Delivery. By 'designing with nature', a local government could make a very strong case for having a higher level of service, at a lower life-cycle cost, with 'assets' that appreciate, not depreciate," concludes Jack Minard, Executive Director of the Comox Valley Land Trust.



Collaboration, a 'Design with Nature' approach, and re-use of resources are keys to mitigation of infrastructure liability and adaptation to climate change

To achieve higher levels of stream, wetland and marine environment protection:

- Protect and restore urban 'green' space
- Strive for a lighter 'water footprint'
- Re-use and recycle water, energy & nutrients from liquid wastes
- Develop compact, complete communities

