

Convening for Action on Vancouver Island
Leadership in Water Sustainability



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

Nature Without Borders: Align Efforts at a Watershed Scale



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'

Nature Without Borders: Align Efforts at a Watershed Scale

Preface

Green infrastructure and water sustainability --- the Comox Valley is demonstrating what can be achieved through a 'regional team approach' that is striving for consistency at local government front counters. This is accomplished through sharing of experiences, collaboration, alignment, and pooling of resources to 'achieve more with less'.

At the 2011 Comox Valley Learning Seminar Series, the spotlight is on the unfunded 'infrastructure liability' confronting all local governments. This is a driver for a change in the way local governments plan, finance, implement and over time replace infrastructure.

*This article foreshadows what to expect when Jack Minard and Kevin Lorette speak to the following theme at the second in the 2011 Series: **Nature Without Borders: Align Efforts at a Watershed Scale.***

The scope of the 2011 Series is encapsulated in the image opposite. The Agenda for Seminar #2 follows on the next page.

*Kim A. Stephens, MEng, PEng, Executive Director
Partnership for Water Sustainability in British Columbia
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BRITISH COLUMBIA
The Best Place on Earth

Sustainable Service Delivery

AKA: What is Asset Management?

- Integrated approach involving **planning**, engineering and finance to effectively manage existing and new municipal infrastructure in a sustainable manner to maximize benefits, reduce risk and provide satisfactory levels of service to the community user in an **environmentally and ecologically responsible manner.** (National Asset Management Working Group)

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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!**

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Agenda for Seminar #2 on May 19
Adaptation – 'Design with Nature' to Achieve Rainfall Capture
and Water Conservation Goals

1000 - 1215	<p align="center">Establishing Expectations – This is what we want our valley to look like!</p>
	<p>1. Look Beyond Our Municipal Boundaries</p> <p>(a) Regional Response to Infrastructure Liability: What We Learned At Seminar #1 <i>(Glenn Westendorp & Kim Stephens) (15 minutes)</i></p> <p>Explain the three dimensions to the unfunded 'infrastructure liability'</p> <p>(b) Nature Without Borders: Align Efforts at a Watershed Scale <i>(Jack Minard & Kevin Lorette) (15 minutes)</i></p> <p>Introduce the Tsolum River case study</p> <p>2. Rainwater Management in a Watershed Context: 'Do More With Less & Achieve Stream Health Benefits' <i>(Jim Dumont) (~1¼ hours)</i></p> <p>Explain how watershed targets can be met at the development and site scales</p>
LUNCH	<p align="center">Take an extended break and continue the conversation! (60 minutes)</p>
1315 - 1500	<p align="center">Delivering on Expectations – This is how we can/will get there!</p>
	<p>3. Look Within Our Municipal Boundaries</p> <p>(a) Changes to the Built Environment in the Comox Valley: Understanding Where Northeast Comox Fits Into the Big Picture <i>(Tim Pringle) (15 minutes)</i></p> <p>Examine NE Comox through the lens of the <i>Comparative Land Use Typologies & Matrix</i></p> <p>(b) Rainwater Management in Northeast Comox: Vision for Green Infrastructure <i>(Glenn Westendorp) (15 minutes)</i></p> <p>What we want to achieve through green infrastructure – "maintain the water balance"</p> <p>(c) Town-Hall Sharing Session: Rainwater Management in Northeast Comox: Implementation of Green Infrastructure to Use Less Water and Prevent Runoff <i>(facilitated by Kim Stephens) (70 minutes)</i></p> <p>Explore how the Town could establish and implement rainfall capture and runoff control targets</p> <p>4. A Look Ahead to Seminar #3 <i>(Glenn Westendorp) (5 minutes)</i></p>

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Sustainable Service Delivery

Sustainable Service Delivery is the Province's term of choice for an holistic approach to infrastructure asset management. It involves a life-cycle way of thinking about infrastructure needs and how to pay for those needs over time. Moreover, the linkage to protection of a community's natural resources is an important piece in Sustainable Service Delivery.

One of the foundation pieces underpinning the program for the 2011 Comox Valley Seminar Series is this: *All those involved in land development have a role to play in achieving Sustainable Service Delivery.*

Seminar #2 Overview

In April, Seminar #1 painted a picture of the 'legacy liability' of existing hard infrastructure (i.e. roads, water, sewers). On May 19, Seminar #2 will deal with green infrastructure and how it enables 'sustainable urban drainage' at a lower life-cycle cost.

The Seminar #2 spotlight is on urban watershed protection and restoration issues, with emphasis on a 'design with nature' approach to climate change adaptation. A desired outcome is that participants will understand how a 'design with nature' approach to implementation of green infrastructure integrates rainwater management and drought management.



So What is Sustainable Service Delivery?

- It integrates all the principles of Asset Management
- It understands the value of land-use planning
 - And it understands the impacts land-use planning has on service delivery
- It integrates the 'Design with Nature' philosophy
 - Nature is a valuable asset that must be 'maintained' in order to 'operate' effectively
 - Nature's assets often appreciate rather than depreciate – What can we do to leverage this?
 - Nature provides multiple 'services' – some similar to traditional community services – i.e. Rainwater Management
 - Nature, and many of the resources it provides, are finite

Nature Without Borders

Released in July 2008, *Nature Without Borders* is the title of a report that lays out a community vision. Initiated by the Comox Valley Land Trust, the *Comox Valley Regional Conservation Strategy* is a long-term approach to use and conservation of land. The Strategy aims to assist in wise and informed land use decisions and conservation actions.

"Nature has no borders; it does not recognize political or philosophical boundaries and it is essential for the health of human and non-human communities alike," states Jack Minard, Executive Director of the Comox Valley Land Trust.



"To view nature in this way represents not a 'special interest' approach but a modern advance in civil society. We are realizing that the current loss of ecosystems and biodiversity cannot continue, yet pressures to develop land for human use are placing huge demands on what remains."

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Align Efforts at a Watershed Scale

Jack Minard and Kevin Lorette (Comox Valley Regional District) will provide community and local government perspectives, respectively, in setting the context for the day. Their co-presentation will:

- Refresh the vision for *An Integrated Watershed Approach to Settlement*.
- Introduce the Tsolum River case study that will be featured in Seminar #3.
- Connect the dots between land development practices and water balance management.
- Provide a segue to the "course within a seminar" that Jim Dumont will deliver.

"The story of Brooklyn Creek that Glenn Westendorp will be referencing in his opening remarks will provide the springboard for Kevin and my co-presentation," states Jack Minard. "The Brooklyn Creek experience epitomizes how stripping away the water storage capacity of the watershed landscape impacts on stream health in two ways: loss of baseflow...that is, too little water in dry weather; and channel instability and erosion...that is, too much water for too long during wet weather."

"Alignment of efforts at a watershed scale is a way of thinking that is weaved into the storyline for the 2011 Series," continues Kevin Lorette, General Manager of Property Services with the



Comox Valley Regional District. "Each seminar kicks off with a context presentation that speaks to this message. At Seminar #1, Jack Minard and Nancy Hofer connected the dots to the Comox Valley Developers

Dialogue that was held in December 2010. At Seminar #2, Jack and I will take a couple of minutes to describe what **align efforts at a watershed scale** means to us in practical terms."

Look Beyond Our Municipal Boundaries

Seminar #2 is structured in two parts. In the morning, the unifying theme is "*Look Beyond Our Municipal Boundaries*". The focus is on aligning efforts at a watershed scale to 'design with nature', protect stream stability, and save money.

In the afternoon, the theme is "*Look Within Our Municipal Boundaries*" because the spotlight shifts to the Northeast Comox case study and implementation of green infrastructure to achieve a 'lighter water footprint'.

An Integrated Watershed Approach to Settlement

"Everyone is so busy in their jobs such that it is a challenge to assimilate multiple plans and initiatives that are underway at a regional scale in the Comox Valley. To provide focus and clarity regarding the desired outcome of the 2009 Seminar Series, we defined the goal of a regional team approach to be **An Integrated Watershed Approach to Settlement**," explains Kevin Lorette.

"To help stakeholders conceptualize what a vision for balance and integration would look like, we then created a branding graphic (see next page). This shows the elements that must ultimately be integrated to achieve the goal of **An Integrated Watershed Approach to Settlement**."

"The ultimate goal of the regional team approach is to maximize the intersection of the elements. This means creating linkages among the different areas of action, thereby helping to create a stronger implementation plan – that is, *what all the plans will achieve*," concludes Kevin Lorette.

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