

WORKSHOP ANNOUNCEMENT (Nov 28): Blue Ecology - for humans to adapt to a changing climate, a new culture of water is necessary!

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The warming of the planet’s atmosphere is causing water to move more quickly and disruptively through the global water cycle. Flood, drought, fire, wind and cold - extreme events are becoming the norm. Instabilities in the water cycle are increasingly apparent.

All one need do is reflect on what British Columbia has experienced in 2015, 2016 and 2017. Impacts are magnified by human interventions. We have arrived at a fork in the road.

On November 28th, in Richmond, the Partnership for Water Sustainability and Irrigation Industry Association are co-hosting the **Blue Ecology Workshop**. Attend and learn why the ‘Blue Ecology water cycle’ is a means to focus, with new watery eyes, because an attitude switch needs to be thrown on the current crisis of climate change. TO LEARN MORE & REGISTER, visit

<https://www.civicinfo.bc.ca/event/2017/Blue-Ecology>

Blue Ecology: A Bridging Philosophy

Blue Ecology is an ecological philosophy developed by Michael Blackstock, professional forester and scholar. Blue Ecology looks at the water cycle differently to interweave First Nations and Western thought.

Michael Blackstock has a vision: British Columbia water managers would embrace the Blue Ecology water cycle; our communities would become more water-resilient; and we would successfully adapt to a changing climate. His innovative thinking is recognized by UNESCO and the

International Association of Hydrological Sciences. Global recognition speaks volumes regarding the credibility of Michael Blackstock and Blue Ecology.

The Blue Ecology Workshop will have a town-hall format. Michael will be joined by two ‘water champions’ who have achieved national prominence - the **CBC’s Bob McDonald**, host of Quirks & Quarks; and **Member of Parliament Fin Donnelly**, who has twice swum the length of the Fraser – along with a supporting cast from the Partnership for Water Sustainability.

“Hydrologists and water managers can help build a brighter future by rediscovering the meaning of water, and interweaving the predominant Western analytical models with the more intuitive indigenous models. Blue Ecology’s philosophy is meant to be the bridge between these two cultural ways of knowing,” explains Michael Blackstock.

Rethinking Our Relationship with Nature

“Climate change is real. We are now living the ‘New Normal’ in BC. We do not have the luxury of time. It is a moment of truth,” emphasizes Michael Blackstock. He speaks from experience. He spent the summer of 2017 on secondment to Emergency Management BC in the Provincial Wildfire Coordination Centre in Kamloops. Michael was the Senior First Nations Liaison.

“It need not be doom and gloom. There is hope for future generations - if we take a **water-first approach** to setting priorities. This requires rethinking our relationship with nature. The journey to a water-resilient future starts with Western science acknowledging water for its central functional and spiritual roles in our world.”

The flood, drought and fire extremes of 2017 provide both the backdrop and a focus for the Blue Ecology Workshop. The process for adapting to a changing climate starts with an attitude change. Actually adapting requires transformational changes in how we apply

hydrologic understanding, value nature, and service land - this is a unifying theme for the Blue Ecology Workshop.

Blue Ecology is aligned with the whole-system, water balance vision for restoring **“Sustainable Watershed Systems, through Asset Management”**.



Michael Blackstock
“Blue Ecology –
An Attitude Switch”



Bob McDonald
“Water from a Global
Perspective & Beyond”



Fin Donnelly, MP
“Connect the Drops”



Ted van der Gulik
“The Fraser River,
Agriculture & Food Security”

A Call to Action

“To make the right choices moving forward, decision-makers at all levels and scales must understand how and where the rhythms of water are changing,” states Michael Blackstock.

The gravity of the situation calls for application of Sustainable Service Delivery principles to watershed restoration in the built environment. Successful implementation depends on all the players – in particular politicians, planners, landowners, designers, implementers and asset managers - collectively choosing to embrace a ‘design with nature’ philosophical foundation.

We must collaborate to then adapt our land use, infrastructure servicing and asset management practices appropriately!

The Challenge: Opportunities for land use, infrastructure servicing and asset management practitioners to make a difference are at the time of (re)development. To those folks we say: share and learn from those who are leading change; design with nature; 'get it right' at the front-end of the project; build-in 'water resilience'; create a lasting legacy.

Many land use, infrastructure servicing and asset management professionals in this province do know in principle what they ought to do. However, there is still a gap between UNDERSTANDING and IMPLEMENTATION. This results in a capacity-building challenge: *on the one hand, we can provide practitioners with water balance tools and resources; it is another matter for those folks to apply the tools and resources.*

Mission Possible: The Partnership spotlight is on how to 'bridge the gap' between talk and action. That is mission possible. And yes, British Columbia is progressing. Still, communities could do so much more if they would consistently capitalize on rather than miss opportunities. Apply the tools. Do what is right. Learn from experience. Adapt. Pass the baton.

Join us in Richmond on November 28 for the Blue Ecology Workshop!



The Blue Ecology water cycle and principles, designed by Michael D. Blackstock.

The five principles of Blue Ecology:

- **Spirit:** water is a living spirit.
- **Harmony:** harmonious sustainability in a functional rhythm engenders healthy bodies and ecosystems - *“the traditional understanding of water is closely connected to peace, and the principle of harmony with humankind, the elements and nature”*
- **Respect:** water through ceremony, education and giving back, else Earth Mother will retaliate by taking water away.
- **Unity:** water has the ability to connect and unify humans because of our common reliance on this basic unit of existence.
- **Balance:** restrained and measured water withdrawals in combination with and giving back (i.e. restoration, monitoring, or ceremony) to watersheds and water.