



the partnership for water sustainability in bc

Convening for Action in the Thompson Rivers Region

Framework for a Regional Team Approach to Water Sustainability in the Thompson Rivers Region

Consultation Report on Concept Development for a Water Forum

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

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Acknowledgments

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Preface

The Partnership for Water Sustainability in British Columbia (the Partnership) is a society that promotes and advances protection and management of natural and engineered water resources in British Columbia. The Partnership's Advisory Committee wished to replicate its 'convening for action' approach on Vancouver Island in another region of the province. It was decided that the southern interior would be a good choice; accordingly Ron Smith, P.Eng. a member of the committee was asked to lead the work on establishing this initiative. It was branded *Convening for Action in Thompson Rivers Region* (CATRR).

Ron with over 25 years experience in water/land management in the region contacted individuals with water/land responsibilities at different levels of government, and non-government, agricultural industry and academia representatives. The discussions brought out a concern about water sustainability and land use practices in this semi-arid part of the province. These individuals provided insight into the issues they and their organizations faced. A strong driver in support of an initiative to collaborate was that almost without exception organizations are so strapped for resources that they are challenged to efficiently and effectively meet their mandates.



The insights gained from these discussions helped the Partnership to develop an agenda that would incorporate participant input and seek commitment to a regional team approach. BC Hydro Power Smart provided financial support and Myles Gregory, Power Smart Specialist, assisted in organizing an exploratory session on September 20, 2011 at the BC Hydro conference room in Kamloops. The outcome of that session is summarized in this short-form 'consultation report'.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim Pringle". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

*Tim Pringle, President
Partnership for Water Sustainability
October 2011*

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Figure 1

Framework for a Regional Team Approach to Water Sustainability in the Thompson Rivers Region

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1. Context

In May 2010, the BC Hydro Power Smart team convened a group of community leaders from across BC to form the *Conservation Community-of-Practice*. The intention was to learn with and from each other about what can be done to advance community based efforts in creating a conservation culture in BC. The Partnership is a charter member of this group.

BC Hydro Power Smart then provided seed funding to help members of the *Conservation Community-of-Practice* initiate regional activities. This financial support created the opportunity for the Partnership to explore the potential for proceeding with the initiative that is now branded as *Convening for Action on Water in the Thompson Rivers Region*, or CATRR.

Conservation Community-of-Practice

BC Hydro has a mandate and commitment to reduce energy use throughout BC. The work of the Power Smart team toward this goal has led them to some key conclusions and assumptions:

- BC Hydro Power Smart defines conservation quite broadly, to include more than just conserving energy or reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This is based on the assumption that energy reduction/GHG reduction has some limitations in its appeal and potential as a goal.
- To achieve an environmentally-sustainable future (e.g. adequately functioning natural systems, including CO2 systems) will require the involvement and commitment of all citizens – it can't be achieved by large institutions themselves.
- Government and large institutions, while needing to put in place broad policies and support systems, do not have enough influence by themselves to encourage individual behaviour change in support of conservation, at the level that is needed to adequately conserve our natural systems.

- The nature of individual change that is needed to create a stronger conservation ethic lends itself to a social networks approach – working through local, existing communities (physical or other) and local leaders.
- There are few 'best practices' as such for building a conservation ethic (there are lots of good practices) and there is not a 'program' approach that can be rolled out. Rather, there is learning that needs to be drawn from communities, and adapted and supported locally.

Recognizing the need for collaboration among organizations and individuals within the province, BC Hydro Power Smart and the Climate Action Secretariat's office made the decision to build a provincial community network that can and will support regional based activities. This decision was the genesis for creation of the *Conservation Community-of-Practice*.

Convening for Action in BC

The Partnership is helping the Province implement the Living Water Smart and Green Communities initiatives. We are doing that through shared responsibility in delivering the **Water Sustainability Action Plan**. The Partnership is the hub for a 'convening for action' network in the local government setting. Refer to Figure 1 for a sense of geographic coverage.

The Partnership has a focus on community and regional planning systems, with the goal of influencing uptake of strategies that will integrate decisions about use and conservation of land with water sustainability outcomes. The guiding philosophy is "design with nature".

The Partnership brings people together in neutral forums to facilitate conversations that otherwise might not take place. We look for commonalities and points of departure so that participants can align their efforts towards a shared goal. It takes patience, perseverance and commitment. Success does not come overnight. But once there is commitment, our observation is that the rate of progress accelerates and is exponential.

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2. Concept Development Session for a Water Forum

During the period May through August 2011, the Partnership's Ron Smith engaged in a conversational process with water advocates, thought leaders and champions. This process yielded insights that then informed the agenda for an exploratory 'concept development session' on September 20, 2011.

Appendix A lists those who were contacted and/or participated in the September session.

Appendix B includes both the Preliminary Agenda and the Final Agenda. It is suggested that they be read together to have the full picture of how the session was structured.

Session Overview

The Concept Development Session served as an inaugural meeting of individuals with a role in water and land management within the Thompson Rivers Region. The purpose of the session was to discuss water and land issues within the Thompson Rivers Region and to determine the viability of a regional team approach to water sustainability within the region. Representatives came from provincial, regional and local government, academia, non-government organizations and the agriculture industry.



Morning – Sharing and Learning

The day was divided into two parts with the first one focused on sharing and learning. Eric Bonham led off with some insight into how the Convening for Action story began and continues to develop on Vancouver Island. Participants followed with their views and opinions of water/land issues within this region.



There was strong agreement that there are significant issues related to effective and efficient management of water within the region. There was a range of a sense of urgency to address the many issues confronting decision makers. The fact we live in a semi-arid part of British Columbia does not seem to be reflected in managing water or land. Common themes emerged: organizations have limited resources with some stretched to the point of crisis management so a recognition of the need to pool these limited resources; the need for increased public awareness of water related issues and the lack of recognition in the importance of head waters and tributaries and limitations created by organizational and geographic boundaries.

The apparent disconnect between water and land management was noted by many participants. There was concern over land use outside of municipal boundaries. Coordinated public education initiatives would result in consistent and efficient messaging as disjointed or contradictory public information initiatives could do more harm than good. Each person has part of the picture but no individual or organization has the whole thing. Given the demands on their time, the participation of individuals at this event peaks to the need to coordinate the limited resources available to address water sustainability at a regional level.

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Afternoon – Regional Team Approach

The afternoon session looked at the chemistry of the participants in collaborating on future actions. There was a definite energy generated within the group to work together to reduce overlap of efforts and a common theme of the need for increasing public awareness of water and land issues within the Thompson Rivers Region.

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



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

Glen Brown, Executive Director
BC Ministry of Community, Sport & Cultural Development
& Deputy Inspector of Municipalities

September 2009

There was discussion on next steps with some concrete suggestions such as watershed and sub-drainage mapping or supporting a Water Balance Model training session in Kamloops. Ted van der Gulik suggested the group could look at developing a water demand model similar to one done in the Okanagan. He advised that the Ministry of Agriculture has developed a plan to collect data required for such a model in this area.

There was discussion about how the efforts of a regional team would fit with the work of the Fraser Basin Council. A water focus group would be beneficial. The Council holds regular meetings and covers a broad range of topics related to economic, environmental and social issues. They have a series of workshops coming up with one in the Thompson Rivers Region on November 1, 2011 at Salmon Arm. The workshops are designed to launch a new guide, "Rethinking Our Water Ways: A Guide to Water and Watershed Planning for BC". There was a definite interest in a regional team by some and a need for clarification in the role a team would take.

3. Next Steps

The 'convening for action' mantra promoted by the Partnership is this:

When we gather; it is for a purpose. There must be an action item or an outcome.

The Partnership is helping land use and infrastructure professionals move from awareness to action by providing tools, bringing people together, and developing talent. To that end, tangible outcomes (actions) that emerged during the Concept Development Session include:

1. Ron Smith will represent CATRR in participating in the Salmon Arm Workshop organized by the Fraser Basin Council, and will work with Mike Simpson and Erin Viera to advance regional collaboration
2. The Partnership will organize a *Water Balance Model Workshop* at a Kamloops venue, ask local governments to co-host it, brand it as a CATRR event.
3. The Ministry of Agriculture will advance the vision for an *Agriculture Water Demand Model* under the CATRR umbrella.
4. CATRR can take ownership of a water-energy conservation initiative modelled upon a joint effort by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fortis BC.

Also, session participants identified the following as future considerations for the group:

- a. define a geographic area; produce a map
- b. develop a regional vision
- c. develop goals and objectives
- d. expand participants to include missing sectors, such as First Nations

In conclusion, there was a genuine interest in working together and to coordinate initiatives to more effectively deal with the realities of water and land management within the Thompson Rivers Region.

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Appendix A

Participants:

Marc Solomon	City of Kamloops	Sustainability Coordinator
Mike Simpson	Fraser Basin Council	Senior Regional Manager
Erin Viera	Fraser Basin Council	Assistant Regional Manager
Tom Owen	Thompson Rivers Univ.	Director of Environment and Sustainability
Lauchan Fraser	Thompson Rivers Univ.	Vice-Chair Grasslands Conservation Council of BC
Dan Ferguson	Interior Health Authority	Assistant Director of Health Protection
Valerie Cameron	Government of BC	Provincial Water Stewardship Manager
Craig Beeson	Government of BC	Water Section Head
Marcim Pachcinski	Columbia Shuswap RD	Plannner
Kim Schlaepfer	BC Cattlemen's Assoc.	Committee Coordinator
Judy Guichon	BC Cattlemen's Assoc.	President
Lucille Dempsey	Kamloops Stockmen's	Director
Andrew Petersen	Government of BC	Regional Resource Specialist, Ministry of Agriculture
Myles Gregory	BC Hydro	Power Smart Specialist
Kim Stephens	Partnership WSBC	Executive Director
Ted van der Gulik	Government of BC	Senior Engineer, Ministry of Agriculture
Eric Bonham	Leadership Team	Convening for Action Vancouver Island
Ron Smith	Partnership WSBC	Convener, Thompson Rivers Region

Regrets:

Tim Pringle	Partnership WSBC	President
Lynn Kriwoken	Government of BC	Director, Water Protection & Sustainability, Min. of Env.
Barbara Jackson	Thompson Nicola RD	Planner
Leslie Groulx	District of Clearwater	Chief Administrative Officer
Pam Moore	Interior Health Authority	Healthy Built Environment Specialist
Ivor Norland	Interior Health Authority	(Interim) Water Manager
Amber Cowie	Grasslands Cons. Council	Manager
Devan Matkowski	City of Kamloops	Engineering Manager

Others Consulted:

Ken Christian	Interior Health Authority	Director, Health Protection
Glen Farrow	City of Kamloops	Environment Services Supervisor
Andy Oetter	Government of BC	Manager, Crown Land and Resources, Min. Forestry, Land & Natural Resources
Erik Karlsen	Partnership WSBC	Past-Chair, Agricultural Land Commission

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Appendix A



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Appendix B

Preliminary Agenda

Context:	<p>Living Water Smart and the Green Communities Initiative provide a vision of what the regions of BC can look like if local governments prepare communities for climate change, choose to live water smart, and strive to build greener communities. Electricity conservation is part of this picture, especially when water and pumping are inextricably linked.</p> <p>The paradigm-shift for doing business differently starts with land use planning and determining what services can be provided sustainably, both fiscally and ecologically. An over-arching goal is to achieve more with less. Get the watershed vision right; create a blueprint; and then implement.</p> <p>In other regions, the Partnership has brought together water and land practitioners in neutral forums. This approach has enabled implementers to collaborate as regional teams (refer to page 3). Their action-oriented focus has resulted in ‘how to do it’ examples. These help decision-makers visualize what policy goals look like on the ground.</p>
Vision:	<p>Convening for action is the Partnership’s branding. When we gather, it is for a purpose. There must be an outcome:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Collectively this is what we want to incrementally achieve and, over time, this is how we will work together to get there.</i></p> <p>The Partnership and BC Hydro Power Smart are bringing together a group of water advocates, thought leaders and champions to determine whether there is an appetite for a <i>Water Forum for the Thompson Rivers Region</i>. The vision is that the Forum would be a transformational event that would be a springboard to action.</p>
Key Message:	<p>Major breakthroughs happen when decision-makers in government work with grass-roots visionaries in the community to create the future desired by all. Collaboration grows from a shared vision about the future and commitment to action.</p>
Session Structure & Desired Outcomes:	<p>The session will start at 10am and end at 3pm; and will comprise two segments. It will be conducted as a conversation. This will allow for a variety of ideas, questions and comments to flow easily and freely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p><input type="checkbox"/> MORNING (10am until 12 noon): SHARING & LEARNING</p> <p>The “convening for action” team members will share their experience in working across boundaries and aligning efforts within and among three regions: Okanagan, Vancouver Island, and Metro Vancouver. Participants will explore how they can adapt this experience, and how collaboration would help them achieve their organizational mandates.</p> <p>DESIRED OUTCOME: Inform, educate and inspire. Participants will have insight into, and will be excited by what they can accomplish through a regional team approach.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> AFTERNOON (1pm until 3pm): REGIONAL TEAM APPROACH</p> <p>Participants will discuss next steps for taking a regional team approach in the Thompson Rivers Region. They will also brainstorm what a Water Forum might look like, who should participate, and what it could lead to (for example, a <i>Thompson Rivers Sustainable Water Strategy</i>).</p> <p>DESIRED OUTCOME: Participants will commit to a regional team approach.</p>
Venue:	<p>BC Hydro is hosting the September 20th session at its Kamloops offices at 1155 McGill Road</p>

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Appendix B

Final Agenda	
0945	PART 1 - SHARING & LEARNING
	<p>SCOPE: The “convening for action” team members will share their experience in working across boundaries and aligning efforts within and among three regions: Okanagan, Vancouver Island, and Metro Vancouver. Participants will explore how they can adapt this experience, and how collaboration would help them achieve their organizational mandates.</p>
	<p>FORMAT: The morning segment is about getting to know each other. It will be conducted as a conversation. We describe our approach as ‘structured flexibility’. This means we are organized and have an end, yet we go with the flow to achieve an outcome. The conversational approach helps energize the room and produce “Ah-Ha Moments”.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose of Convening for Action in the Thompson Rivers Region (Ron) • Regional Team Approach (Kim, Eric, Ted and Lynn) • Insights and Perspectives (All) <p>Three questions will be the catalyst for a group conversation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What resonated with you when contacted by Ron? 2. What do you wonder about the “convening for action story”? 3. What would you like to get out of this session?
	<p>DESIRED OUTCOME: Inform, educate and inspire. Participants will have insight into, and will be excited by what they can accomplish through a regional team approach.</p>
1145	<i>Lunch and Continue Relationship-Building</i>
1230	PART 2 - REGIONAL TEAM APPROACH
	<p>SCOPE: Participants will discuss next steps for taking a regional team approach in the Thompson Rivers Region. They will also brainstorm what a Water Forum might look like, who should participate, and what it could lead to (for example, a <i>Thompson Rivers Sustainable Water Strategy</i>).</p>
	<p>FORMAT: The afternoon segment is about the group deciding to collaborate and explore organizing a Water Forum or identifying an alternative outcome for group action.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three questions will determine a future direction: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is there a group chemistry based on shared values? 2. Is there is a willingness to take a leap of faith and align efforts to make a difference? 3. Where might collaboration across boundaries ultimately lead?
1430	<p>DESIRED OUTCOME: Participants will commit to a regional team approach.</p>
	<p>Venue: BC Hydro offices, 1155 McGill Road, Kamloops</p> <p>Date: September 20, 2011</p>