



A Perspective on the Role of Champions in Leading Change in the Georgia Basin

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“The approach to watershed-based planning and water sustainability is happening through champions because, apart from some high-level enabling legislation, there is no strong top-down mandate ‘requiring’ that we do these things. I think in most organizations it is not a top-down priority.”

“Where it has surfaced as a top-down priority, it has been because individual champions have ensured that it was considered at those higher levels. At the June 2014 Inter-Collaboration Session hosted by Comox Valley-CAVI, I noticed that each participating organization had different champions, from different parts of the organization. In some communities it was the engineering department, or planning or environmental services, etc.”

“But each organization was where we in the Comox Valley were also at – how to get the other departments on board. The fact that we are all at the same point on the trajectory in terms of infiltrating these ideas into our organizations suggests that we are indeed on the right path. We each have come to the conclusion that collaboration is critical.”

“That so many people earnestly working on this have reached the same point suggests that we are on the tipping point of a breakthrough in collaboration. We will now be eager, I expect, to share just how we permeated these concepts into our own organizations. This is organizational transformation that we are discussing here, not just Water Balance any longer.”

“I also thought – wow, we are all really supporting each other. Once we know that we can just get to the work of ‘doing the work’. We are now all on the same page. I don’t have to explain to my other counterparts in other areas what it is I’m trying to do, or where we’re at in the process.”

“Everyone who has gone through the IREI it seems has been ‘seasoned’ to be nimble and open-minded in how they approach this transformation to water sustainability, and how to genuinely be of assistance to others.”

“They have learned to recognize the opportunities for building strengths within process and where weak links in the chain can occur. I was just so encouraged to see that we in the Comox Valley are not alone and that we now have others who are eager to help. This relationship building is key to accelerating the sharing and learning further and the Georgia Basin approach to water sustainability.”