

Moving Towards Sustainable Watershed Systems, through Asset Management

Beyond the Guidebook 2015: *Towards a Watershed Health Legacy in the Georgia Basin*

Call to Action (2008)

In 2008, work over a 5-year period by a host of champions (inside and outside government) culminated in the Province's *Living Water Smart* and *Green Communities* initiatives. This work built on the foundation that had been laid over previous decades. The resulting policy, program and regulatory framework enables implementation of **collaborative solutions** that would achieve the Watershed Health Goal.

Figure 11 conceptualizes the essence of the two complementary initiatives.

Green Communities Initiative: BC is perhaps the least prescriptive province, and BC local government is among the most autonomous in Canada. The Province enables local government by providing policy and legal tools in response to local government requests.

The enabling approach means the onus is on local government to take the initiative and implement. The Province recognizes that communities are in the best position to develop solutions which meet their own unique needs and local conditions. This is why the *Green Communities Initiative* has four types of building blocks, in particular partnerships.

Being Enabled Means: *"It is exciting to see local governments acting creatively to address the pressing environmental challenges of our time. Good work in planning, service delivery and infrastructure development - that fits the unique context of individual communities - is contributing to making our communities not only more sustainable but also better places to live,"* states Dale Wall, former Deputy Minister, Community and Rural Development.



Living Water Smart – BC's Water Plan: Living Water Smart solutions and commitments go beyond what government does, and are ongoing. Actions and targets are grouped into five themes:

Living Water Smart - Implementation Themes

1. Governance, legislation, regulatory change
2. Efficiency, outreach, public awareness
3. Science, information & learning
4. Watershed planning & restoration
5. Community planning and development

Partnerships: The umbrella provided by the *Water Sustainability Action Plan* has allowed the Province to leverage partnerships to greatly enhance the profile and resulting impact of Living Water Smart. The Partnership for Water Sustainability, a non-profit society, is playing a key delivery role in several theme areas, in particular developing tools for local government and providing training to support an environmentally adaptive approach to community design.

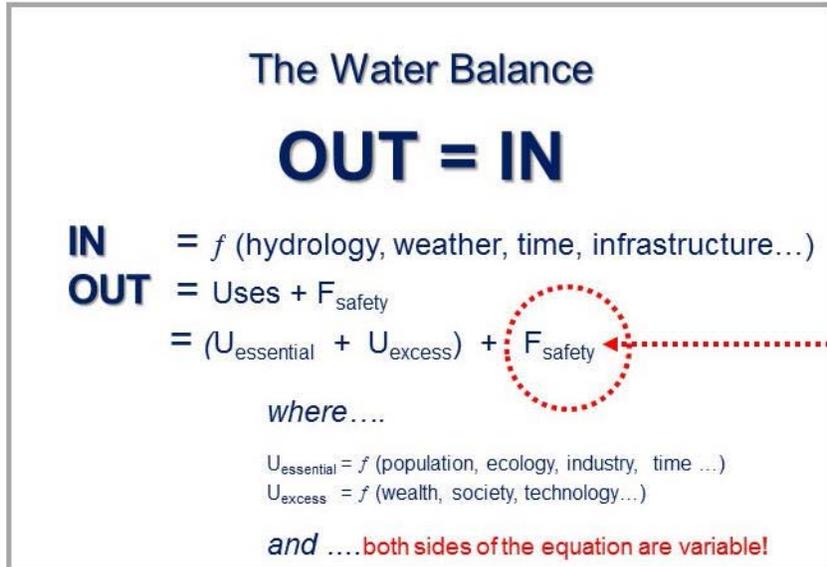
The outreach and education provided by the Partnership for Water Sustainability has been important in helping to realize the goals of Living Water Smart.

Collaboration: *"Living Water Smart acknowledges that what government does is only part of the solution. Living Water Smart challenges all British Columbians – individuals, families, communities, business and industry to step up and be water stewards. Embrace shared responsibility. Create a legacy for those who follow in our footsteps,"* states Lynn Kriwoken, Executive Director in the Ministry of Environment. Her responsibilities encompass Living Water Smart development and implementation.



Living Water Smart, BC's Water Plan

is founded on an understanding of:



HOLISTIC APPROACH:

This deceptively simple equation embodies principles and concepts for dealing with uncertainty and managing risk.

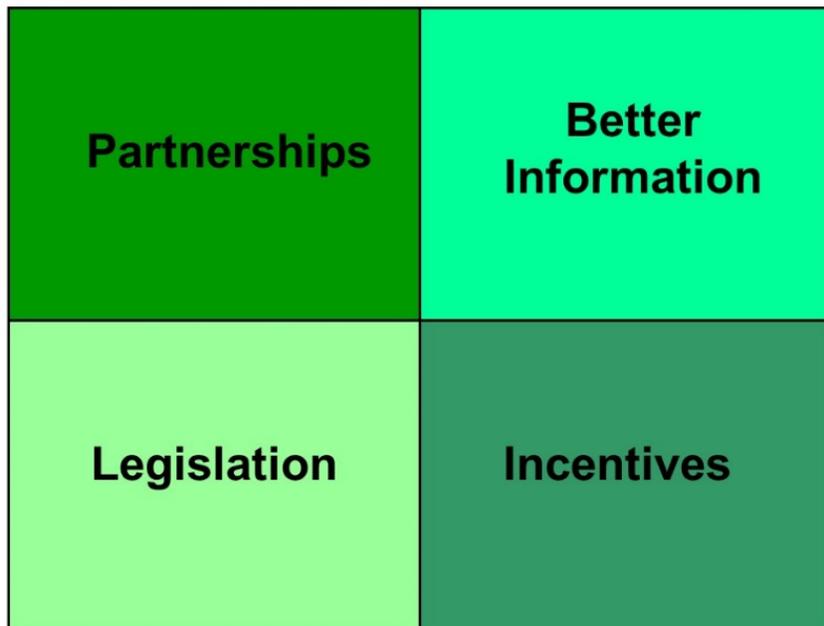
Over time, the safety factor has been decreasing in BC

LIVING WATER SMART ACTION:

“Adapting to climate change and reducing our impact on the environment will be a condition for receiving provincial infrastructure funding.” – p. 63

Green Communities Initiative

is comprised of four types of building blocks:



AUTHORITY TO ACT:

The Local Government (Green Communities) Statutes Amendment Act (Bill 27, 2008) removed legislative barriers for local governments. The legislation ensures local governments have the necessary authority to take action to reduce GHG emissions, conserve energy and water and make their communities more socially and environmentally sustainable.

Figure 11