

Parksville 2019: Second Annual Vancouver Island

# **Symposium on Water Stewardship in a Changing Climate**

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*THEME: Improving Where We Live Through Restorative Land Development*

## **Re-Cap and Reflections**

### **Improve Where We Live – Good Strategies are Our Path to Success:**

- Reconnect hydrology and ecology  
– what happens on the land in  
creeksheds matters to streams!
- Decrease our destructive footprint  
while at the same time increasing  
our restorative footprint – sustainable  
is attainable!



May 2019

# Parksville 2019 Symposium

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*The City of Parksville was the setting for the second in the annual Vancouver Island symposium series on water stewardship in a changing climate. Close to 200 delegates attended this 3-day event.*

*Parksville 2019 comprised a field day followed by a 2-day symposium. Dave Derrick, charismatic stream restoration innovator, was the star attraction for the field day. The symposium headliner was Storm Cunningham, author of **The Restoration Economy** and two other books on how to decrease our destructive footprint while at the same time increasing our restorative footprint.*

*Parksville 2019 was an ambitious undertaking. At the conclusion of the event, the Organizing Committee conducted an online survey. This provided both a remarkable quantitative measure and gratifying qualitative feedback on how well Parksville 2019 had achieved program objectives and desired outcomes.*

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To download a PDF copy of this document, visit the waterbucket.ca website at:  
[https://waterbucket.ca/viw/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2019/05/Parkville-Symposium\\_re-cap-and-reflections\\_May2019.pdf](https://waterbucket.ca/viw/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2019/05/Parkville-Symposium_re-cap-and-reflections_May2019.pdf)

A supporting legacy resource of videos and PowerPoint presentations is found at:  
<https://waterbucket.ca/viw/category/convening-for-action-in-2019/parkville-water-stewardship-symposium/>

## Acknowledgments

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## What the Reader Will Learn

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**This “re-cap and reflections” is written for two audiences** – first and foremost, for those who attended Parksville 2019 and wish to have an accessible and quotable reference document at their fingertips, so that they can share the story with others; and secondarily, for those who have heard about Parksville 2019 and are curious to learn more about the ‘story behind the story’, so that they may understand why this event represents a watershed moment for so many who were there.

**The document is structured in four parts** to provide both a synopsis and a flowing narrative of what the Parksville 2019 Symposium was about:

- **The first part** explains why the Nanaimo 2018 Symposium established a high bar for Parksville 2019 to exceed, and describes the leap of faith implicit in developing a 3-day program that would resonate with a diverse audience.
- **The second part** then describes how the program objectives provide a framework for judging how desired outcomes were achieved, and presents invaluable data yielded by the remarkable response rate (40%) of delegates who completed the online survey. 95% of delegates checked the box to show that the 3-day event met or exceeded their expectations.
- **The third part** identifies how and/or why program elements stood out. This includes reflections on key successes and challenges, as well what could be better. A legacy value of this part is that it provides a succinct overview of the program modules for future reference.
- **The fourth part** draws on reflections by Storm Cunningham to explain why it take a process to create an actionable vision, both for community revitalization and creekshed restoration, in order to do business differently so that we ‘improve where we live through restorative development’.

The narrative is told through the eyes of Kim Stephens, Executive Director of the Partnership for Water Sustainability in British Columbia. His area of responsibility on the Parksville 2019 Organizing Committee was technical program development.



## Nanaimo 2018 Established a High Bar for Parksville 2019

### Water Stewardship in a Changing Climate



**Kim Stephens**

Partnership for Water  
Sustainability in BC

“Parksville 2019 was an ambitious undertaking for the Partnership for Water Sustainability and our NALT and MVIHES partners, and the collaborating agencies – Regional District of Nanaimo, Province of BC and DFO. It was the first time that we hosted a 3-day event, which is an exponential increase in workload compared to a single-day event,” stated Kim Stephens, Executive Director, Partnership for Water Sustainability in British Columbia.

### *A Bold Leap of Faith by Organizing Committee*

“A challenge that the organizing committee faced, and this was viewed by all as a positive challenge, was to both recapture and build on the energy that was released at the Nanaimo 2018 Symposium. The energy, the enthusiasm in the room that day in April 2018 was simply amazing. It was palpable.

“In his closing remarks at Nanaimo 2018, our moderator Richard Boase boldly announced the committee’s spur of the moment decision to organize a follow-on symposium in 2019 – and with Storm Cunningham as the headliner. The audience erupted in a cheer! How often does that happen?

“Looking ahead a year, the bar had been raised indeed. Expectations were high. The Parksville 2019 Organizing Committee had our work cut out for us. Now we had to deliver.”



**Richard Boase**

District of  
North Vancouver

Richard Boase brings three ingredients to the role of moderator: passion, enthusiasm and a sense of humour.



# Parksville 2019 Program at a Glance

**Learn why and how local government partnerships with stewardship groups can be transformational and 'make where we live better'!**

**DAY 1:** Tuesday, April 2nd

## **In the Field**

Option 1 (free):

### **Tour the new Englishman River Water Treatment Plant**

Plant serving Parksville and Nanoose Bay Peninsula

Option 2 (pay to attend):

### **Stream restoration training workshop with Dave Derrick**

Part in class, part on stream at Shelly Creek

*For both options, participants will meet at the Parksville Conference Centre (132 Jensen Rd. E)*

*Bring appropriate clothing & footwear. Must pre-register. Space limited.*

**DAY 2:** Wednesday, April 3rd

## **Full Day Symposium**

Parksville Community Conference Centre (132 Jensen Rd. E)

### **Theme: Sustainable Stream Restoration**

with catered lunch

**What happens on the land matters to streams – reconnecting hydrology & ecology**

Doors open at 7:30 am, begins 8:30 am.  
Four modules of speakers with panel discussion and town hall dialogues.  
Goes to 4:15 pm

**Free Evening Lecture by Author Storm Cunningham:**  
**"The Challenge: Design With Nature"**

**DAY 3:** Thursday, April 4th

## **Full Day Symposium**

Parksville Community Conference Centre (132 Jensen Rd. E)

### **Theme: Restorative Land Development**

with catered lunch

**How we can decrease our destructive footprint while increasing our restorative impact**

Doors open at 8 am begins 8:30 am.  
Four modules of speakers with panel discussion and town hall dialogues.  
Goes to 4:15 pm

**A Key Message: Restorative Land Development Results in Sustainable Stream Restoration!**

## A Perspective on Citizen Science in Action



**Eric Bonham**

Partnership for Water  
Sustainability in BC

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*“Engagement of community through stewardship is a credible formula to be encouraged and mainstreamed at every opportunity.*

*“Collaboration, teamwork and a recognition that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts is the energy that stokes creativity and determination.*

*“When this combination of citizen talent is aligned with a local government that is both visionary and focused, outstanding achievements are not only possible, but realistic.”*

## **An Over-Arching Message: Collaboration is Powerful**

“In embarking on this year-long journey, our vision and mission was to demonstrate the power of collaboration between the stewardship sector and local governments, and give folks hope that good things would flow from such collaboration. Hence, our main focus was on showcasing success stories that would be inspirational. At the same time, we had to bring to life the phrase **‘improving where we live through restorative development’**.”

“This meant that we had to connect the dots between the two ideas in order to demonstrate that some communities are moving beyond rhetoric. Or, expressed another way, an over-arching message is that collaborative successes over a long period of time are the first steps in proceeding along a pathway that ultimately results in restorative development.

## **Compelling Program Resonates with a Diverse Audience**

“It was a balancing act to weave together the elements that became the *Parksville 2019 storyline*. We had to keep in mind the breadth of our target audience, ranging from streamkeepers to elected representatives. We strived to ensure that the storyline would resonate with all. In other words, that there would be something compelling for everyone.

“Clearly we succeeded. Not only did close to 200 delegates come from far and wide, they represented a spectrum or continuum of backgrounds and interests. It was indeed a diverse audience. The feedback comments in the online survey indicate that delegates coalesced around the idea of an **actionable vision for improving where we live,**” concluded Kim Stephens, in distilling what the online survey revealed.

**Delegates came from far and wide** – from Sooke at the southern tip of Vancouver Island to the small town of Port McNeil on the northeast coast; from the Metro Vancouver region on the mainland east to the province of Alberta; and from Washington State, Virginia and Mississippi in the United States.



## Program Objectives Provide a Framework for Assessing Symposium Outcomes

### What Delegates Told Us in the Online Survey



**Laura Dupont**

Councillor,  
City of Port Coquitlam

*“Thank you so much for the immense amount of work you do to protect ecosystem services and teach us all about taking responsibility.”*

*“The Vancouver Island symposium on water stewardship was so inspiring and informative.”*

*It was a wonderful experience. I left Parksville feeling hopeful. Thanks for inspiring us. It was a wonderful conference. Sincere gratitude.”*

“We succeeded in delivering on what we promised,” continued Kim Stephens. “The results of the online survey, both quantitative and qualitative, show that Parksville 2019 met or exceeded expectations for 95% of delegates.

“Did it have the same WOW factor as Nanaimo 2018? No, it did not. In retrospect, Nanaimo was unique in the way it brought together *‘the right people in the right place at the right moment in time’*. The crowd that day was on fire. How often does that happen?

“Parksville 2019 had a different impact on the audience. In a way, the response could perhaps be described as ‘more thoughtful’. When all is said and done, however, Parksville 2019 was successful because so many of the right players were present, the urgency for meaningful collaboration was recognized, and examples of ‘can do’ success stories were shared.”

#### At Parksville 2019, we set out to build on Three Takeaways from Nanaimo 2018

1. An informed and educated stewardship sector is a catalyst for action.
2. Align stewardship and local government efforts to re-establish creekshed function in the mid-Island region.
3. Learn from those who are leading change.



**Laura Beckett**

Municipal Planner &  
Deputy Approving Officer  
District of Highlands

*"I just wanted to say thanks to you and everyone behind the great symposium! Great job!!"*

*"It was an exciting few days, and I left feeling inspired and even somewhat empowered about finding ways to protect water."*

*"The importance of ecological services really hit home for me. There is lots of great work happening out there – thanks to all the organizers for bringing it all together."*

## **Program Objectives / Desired Outcomes**

"Realistic self-assessment is essential when judging the extent to which an event met the stated objectives for characterizing success.

"In embarking on the program design for Parksville 2019, the organizing committee set out to achieve three objectives which in turn defined three desired outcomes:

1. attract an audience balanced across sectors;
2. demonstrate the power of collaboration between the stewardship sector and local governments; and
3. create an environment for sharing and cross-fertilizing experiences.

**Create Awareness and Establish Expectations:** "Attracting a balanced audience depended on the effectiveness of the communication plan. It was the lynch-pin. Clearly, the plan worked. Over a period of 6 months leading up to Parksville 2019, we systematically published a series of e-newsletter articles that foreshadowed what would be addressed in storyline elements. This process both informed and established expectations.

"The organizing committee was ecstatic over the audience mix, and the balance. While Nanaimo 2018 attracted delegates with a range of backgrounds, the audience mix was weighted heavily in favour of stewardship groups. At Parksville 2019, in contrast, there was a virtual balance between stewardship and local government sectors."







## Storm Cunningham

Author & Publisher

*"The goal of making the world 'less worse' does not go far enough. Rather, we have it within our power to undo previous damage and make the world better.*

*"At the same time as we are decreasing our destructive footprint, we can also be increasing our restorative footprint. That is a core message of restorative development."*

Collaboration opens doors to opportunities:

*"When collaboration goes beyond the watershed restoration 'silo', it can yield partnerships with local and regional revitalization efforts.*

*"This, in turn, can yield new funding and political support for restoration."*

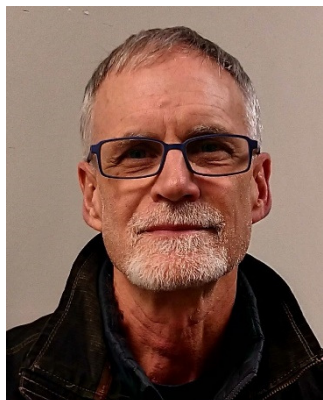
**Program Design:** "Collaboration for the sake of collaboration is not enough. There must be a technical foundation that guides the collaboration. Thus, the daily themes for the symposium came into focus. To provide relevance for streamkeepers, the theme for Day One was **Sustainable Stream Restoration**. To capture the attention of those in local government, the theme for Day Two was **Restorative Land Development** (*agenda included as attachment*).

- On Day One, we gave a crash course on 'what you need to know' to have a science-based understanding of causes-and-effects vis-à-vis stream health. The takeaway message was that one must understand what causes *changes in hydrology* before one can truly hope to restore ecology.
- On Day Two, our goal was to inspire delegates by showcasing 'good news' examples where there is a decade-long track record of success. It has so much more impact when one talks about what has been done versus what is still to come.

"Held in the evening to make it accessible to the Parksville community at large, the public lecture by Storm Cunningham was the bridge between the two days.

"Everywhere one turns these days, some form of the words 'renewal', 'restoration' or 'regeneration' appear. Storm Cunningham was the catalyst of that global 'RE' trend when he published *The Restoration Economy* in 2002. This was followed by *reWealth* in 2008. His third book, *RECONOMICS: The Path to Resilient Prosperity*, will be published later in 2019."





**Nick Leone**

Fisheries & Oceans Canada

In the fourth module on Day One, Nick Leone closed the loop on what (Chris May &) Bill Derry presented about the whole-system approach in the first module.

Experience shows that decades of in-stream restoration work have not been sustainable because communities have yet to address the root causes of ‘changes of hydrology’ resulting from alterations to the landscape by the Built Environment.

So, what was Nick Leone’s key message?

Reconnect hydrology and ecology: focus on root causes and integrate restorative solutions!

**Group Dynamics:** “The intangible is what will happen when one brings together a diverse group. There is no way to predict the group dynamics. The objective is to create a safe environment so that individuals will feel comfortable sharing their views, and others will be respectful in listening and reflecting.

“One strives to find the right mix of ‘presenting at’ and ‘interacting with’. At the end of the day, what happens does boil down to who is in the room.



## ***Module Structure for Engaging an Audience***

“We organized each day as four modules in order to proceed at a relaxed pace by allowing ample time for each module. Each had an educational objective (*to learn more, refer to accompanying table*). Because memories are short, each morning and afternoon session kicked off with a 15-minute context presentation. These set the scene for what was to come, while at the same reminding delegates of the big picture.”

**Day One – Sustainable Stream Restoration**

- A. KEYNOTE: **Science Behind Whole-System Approach**
- B. PANEL & TOWN-HALL: **Watershed Health & You**
- C. MINI-WORKSHOP: **Closing the Data Gap**
- D. REFLECTIONS: **Lessons Learned Over a Generation**

**Day Two – Restorative Land Development**

- A. PARTICIPATION: **Creating an Actionable Vision**
- B. PANEL & TOWN-HALL: **Improving Where We Live**
- C. BEACONS OF HOPE: **Bowker & Brooklyn Success Stories**
- D. REFLECTIONS: **We Can Create the Future We Want**



# Parksville 2019 Symposium on Water Stewardship

Day One – Sustainable Stream Restoration		
Module & Theme	Context	Educational Objective
A “Getting It Right”: The Whole-System Approach	Puget Sound research in the 1990s correlated the relationship between land use changes and impacts on stream health. This led to the whole-systems, water balance approach to rainwater management in BC.	Provide historical context as to why ‘ <i>design with nature</i> ’ land development and drainage practices are necessary to reconnect hydrology and ecology.
B Panel & Town-Hall Session: <i>Watershed Health and You</i>	The Englishman River story illustrates elements of whole-system thinking. What happens on the land in a watershed matters to streams, especially when the changing climate is altering the water balance.	Appreciate that a stewardship group can be a catalyst to bring together watershed players and facilitate restorative outcomes.
C Make Better Decisions: First, Understand How Water Reaches a Stream	Conducted as a ‘mini-workshop’, the session was designed to inform and educate a non-technical audience with a ‘ <i>what you need to know</i> ’ understanding of the water balance and surface / groundwater interaction.	Explain why and how stewardship groups can fill a data collection gap at the micro-scale in 1 <sup>st</sup> order creeks where flow data are sparse to non-existent.
D Back to the Future: Reconnect Hydrology and Ecology	Experience shows that decades of in-stream restoration work have not been sustainable because communities have not addressed the root causes of ‘ <i>changes of hydrology</i> ’ resulting from alteration of the landscape.	Reinforce why the need is urgent for restorative land development that restores hydrologic function and thus results in sustainable stream restoration.
Day Two – Restorative Land Development		
A “Getting It Right”: Make Better Land Use Decisions	Conducted as an engagement session to inform program development for water policy and planning in the second decade of the Regional District of Nanaimo’s Drinking Water & Watershed Protection function.	Help the RDN develop an ‘ <i>actionable vision</i> ’ for land and water in order to tackle regional water issues and chart a new course to a sustainable water future.
B Panel & Town-Hall Session: <i>Improving Where We Live</i>	Inspirational in scope, five initiatives demonstrated what may be achievable when there is a restoration imperative. Halt the decline and bend the curve in an upwards direction to make where we live better.	Explore lessons learned from processes that require long-term commitment, patience and perseverance by those who are leading change.
C Moving Towards Restorative Land Development	Bowker Creek (Capital Region) and Brooklyn Creek (Comox Valley) are beacons of hope. Each demonstrates how local government partnerships with stewardship groups can ‘ <i>improve where we live</i> ’.	Celebrate outstanding achievements that result from a ‘ <i>top-down &amp; bottom-up</i> ’ approach that connects with community and gets the vision right.
D We Can Create the Future We Want	Visionaries, designers, planners, policy makers, and project managers abound. Strategists are rare. As a result, resilience and revitalization efforts often fail due to 1) bad strategy, and 2) no strategy.	Understand why essential ingredients for restorative development encompass: vision, strategy to deliver the vision, and commitment to implement ongoing program.



## Quotable Quotes from Delegates

*“Everything learned was valuable and complementary, from Dave Derrick to Storm Cunningham and all the presenters in between, there wasn’t one presentation I did not learn something from.”*

*“I am a new streamkeeper and attending the Symposium for the second year really helps to inform me about how to move forward with restoration and remediation and to not lose hope for positive changes from municipal, regional, provincial and federal jurisdictions.”*

*“The symposium reloaded/refreshed my tool belt with science, connections, examples of how tools are used, and how to build or re-purpose tools.”*

*“From learning to look at a waterway differently from Dave Derrick; to learning more about strategy and processes from Storm Cunningham; every presentation and conversation taught or expanded my knowledge in some way.”*

*“The practical techniques that I learned at this conference can be applied to projects in my neighbourhood. I will look at streams – now that I have a better understanding of how they function and move over time.”*

“The minimum time for each topic was one hour - that is far longer than the norm for conferences and workshops. The intention was to prime delegates for a discussion. We wanted them to absorb and reflect on what was most important.

“Yet, even with all the time set aside for audience interaction, folks said they wanted more. At times, it was hard to prevent a module from going overtime. And some folks let us know about that afterwards! They also wanted more networking time. This is great because it shows the audience was engaged.

## Online Survey Yields Invaluable Data

“Did Parksville 2019 achieve the stated educational objectives of the committee? Yes, it did, and in spades. The online survey provides conclusive evidence. It is a treasure trove of information. The number of responses exceeded expectations, by far. And delegates spent on average of almost 14 minutes describing what they learned, etc. Wow!

“The remarkable size of the sample (40%) gives the organizing committee absolute confidence that the findings are definitive and truly representative of delegates as a whole.

“The survey generated an overwhelming number of positive comments. These were gratifying because they provided the organizing committee with a strong measure of reassurance on the nature of how expectations were met. We appreciate that delegates took time to provide thoughtful and inspiring reflections.

**Quotable Quotes:** A selection of ten ‘stand-out’ quotes that capture the moment are listed below and in the sidebar opposite:

- *“The connections I made/strengthened and the knowledge gained at this symposium will be a great asset in allowing me to move forward with sustainability actions. I have a relatively clear picture of what actions I can take and which organizations I can partner with*
- *“It always comes down to communication and collaboration. Local Governments are rarely in complete control of the land or have all of the resources to make change. Partnerships are crucial. Also, watershed restoration is a long game that can take place incrementally over a very long period of time. Each increment should be measured as success, not just the final outcome.”*

- *“I learned important information regarding what others are doing about issues that we are having in our own local watersheds and how to present information regarding our water quality. It was especially exciting to have the very people who can help us right there at the symposium and how willing they were to follow up with us.”*
- *“The Bowker Creek presentation was inspiring. I liked that they developed a broad vision and a plan, which became the go-to for any other planning and development events or opportunities that arose.”*
- *“Please keep up the good work of providing such a good place for scientists, stewards and others to learn about our rivers, streams. It’s important to see the connection to everything that lives in this environment and especially us and how we can learn to be much less destructive,”* is a quote that sums up the big picture and captures the essence of why folks attended.

## What Next?

One delegate offered the following idea:

*“I would suggest you develop a template for a facilitated meeting, maybe an afternoon once a year per watershed, between stewardship groups and the local government of that watershed. This would include staff and elected officials with stewardship groups, to discuss successes, what could be improved, goals and future plans.*

*“I would like to up the level of importance of communication between local governments and stewardship groups.”*

## What Next: Vision for Reconnecting Hydrology and Ecology

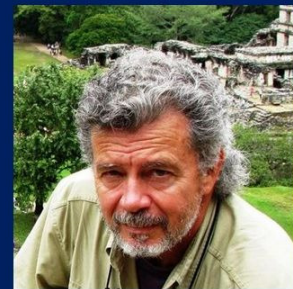
“There was an abundance of written suggestions from delegates as to **WHAT NEXT** for the *Vancouver Island Symposium Series on Water Stewardship in a Changing Climate*. One that stood out was the ambitious idea for watershed meetings (see quote opposite).

“In essence, the writer describes what is ultimately necessary to create the energy and momentum to achieve this desired outcome: **implement an actionable vision that would reconnect hydrology and ecology**. Realization of this outcome would fundamentally improve where everyone lives,” stated Kim Stephens, in providing a summary assessment.

**Reconnect hydrology and ecology so that restorative land development results in sustainable stream restoration!**

“In my experience, the civil engineering profession has trouble adopting the restorative mind-set. The main problem is that engineering is all about control and certainty. Urban planners have a similar problem.

“But living systems---like watersheds and cities--resist control, and exhibit surprising behavior when they are healthy.”



Storm Cunningham

## A Perspective on How / Why Program Elements Stood Out

### Why feature Shelly Creek?

Because it is representative of many smaller streams on the east coast Vancouver Island that support several fish species.



**Peter Law**

President, Mid Vancouver  
Island Habitat  
Enhancement Society

*“The Symposium has provided a huge boost to MVIHES, in our efforts to draw attention to our ‘watershed health depends on you’ program, whether it is Shelly Creek water balance restoration or future monitoring of Englishman River watershed health.”*

### Key Successes and Challenges

“Parksville 2019 started strong with the Dave Derrick stream restoration workshop and walkabout, and finished strong with the Storm Cunningham presentation on restorative development,” emphasized Kim Stephens.

### Shelly Creek Workshop & Walkabout

“The field day at Shelly Creek was a big hit, in large part due to the charismatic personality of stream restoration innovator Dave Derrick in conducting both the classroom and outdoor lectures. He shared a lot of great ideas on how to create different hydraulic complexity and great habitat in small streams.

“Formerly the in-house trouble-shooter for the US Army Corps of Engineers, Dave has provided expert guidance for stream restoration in every state in the USA over the past four decades.







**Neil Goeller**

Regional Hydrologist  
Province of British Columbia

*“Stewardship groups have local knowledge about local water resources; and are the most invested and most connected to the land base.*

*“Involving them in streamflow measurement would fill a gap at the micro-scale where flow data are sparse to non-existent.*

*“Their participation in streamflow data collection is a way to educate them about creekshed hydrology.*

*“My vision is to develop relationships and partnerships with stewardship groups, local governments, federal government and First Nations to expand our collection and understanding of data.”*

## **Mini-Workshop on Surface and Groundwater Interaction**

“In a classroom part of the workshop, Dave Derrick primed participants for the creek walkabout in the afternoon at Shelly Creek Park. On-site at the creek, Dave was joined by Neil Goeller and Richard Boase who demonstrated and provided hands-on training for flow measurement and water quality sampling, respectively.

“Neil’s demonstration was a prelude to the mini-workshop that he and Sylvia Barroso, Regional Hydrogeologist, conducted on surface and groundwater interaction on Day One of the symposium.

**How Water Reaches a Stream:** “Neil is the provincial lead for a grass-roots provincial program to train streamkeeper volunteers to measure flow in streams. Streamflow measurement that builds an understanding of how small creeksheds respond to rain and drought is a critical data gap in a changing climate.”

“It requires a long-term commitment to build stewardship sector capacity to do flow measurement,” continued Neil Goeller. “It is also a word-of-mouth process to expand participation in the initiative. That is the value of the Parksville 2019 Symposium – it raised awareness and encouraged volunteers to get involved. I see this as a self-selecting process to grow the collaboration.”



## Across Generations

The RDN collaborates with the Master of Community Planning Program at Vancouver Island University to provide students with real-world experience.



**Julie Pisani**

DWWP Coordinator  
Regional District of Nanaimo

*“The engagement session for the RDN’s Drinking Water & Watershed Protection program was a great example of the interactive nature of the event, where participants could share ideas and learn from each other, as well as the speakers.”*

*“The involvement of the students extended the collaboration across the generations, providing an opportunity for future leaders and planners to be involved in the discussions.”*

## Improving Where We Live through Restorative Development

“The third day of Parksville 2019 was especially strong for two reasons. First, the involvement of twenty Master’s students from Vancouver Island University as table facilitators in an engagement session (for the RDN’s Drinking Water & Watershed Protection program) was impressive, especially when the students entered the room as a group after Julie Pisani primed the audience.



“Secondly, the inspirational nature of the module titled **Beacons of Hope** exceeded expectations. This was due, in large part, to the outstanding presentations that brought to life the Bowker Creek and Brooklyn Creek partnership success stories (in the Capital Region and Comox Valley, respectively).

## Creating an Actionable Vision for Land and Water in the Regional District of Nanaimo

“In the RDN engagement session, delegates contributed to the visioning of the second decade of drinking water and watershed protection in the region. An important aspect of the program is that it is regional in nature, with a focus on the natural boundaries of watersheds and aquifers to frame program activities, rather than political boundaries.

“When Julie Pisani set the context for the engagement session, she said it is the successful cultivation of awareness and data that will inform policy and planning in order to make better land and water decisions and tackle regional water issues in the next decade.”





**Jody Watson**

Past-Chair, Bowker Creek  
Renewal Initiative  
Capital Regional District

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*"The Bowker Blueprint is a truly integrated plan to restore hydrologic function over time. Agree on the vision. Set the targets. Provide planners with the detail necessary to guide site level decisions as opportunities arise. Then implement."*



**Al Fraser**

Parks Superintendent  
Town of Comox

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## ***Beacons of Hope on Vancouver Island***

"When citizen talent is aligned with a local government that is focused, outstanding achievements are not only possible, but realistic, and often with nominal financial outlay. In essence, engagement of community through stewardship is a credible formula to be encouraged and mainstreamed at every opportunity.

"On Vancouver Island, the Bowker Creek and Brooklyn Creek restoration success stories are beacons of hope. They are inspirational because they demonstrate how local government partnerships with stewardship groups can achieve this outcome: *'improve where we live'*.

**A Blueprint for Action in the Capital Region:** "A decade in the making, and approved as of 2012, the *Bowker Creek Blueprint* is a 100-year action plan to restore the Bowker Creek watershed. It resulted from a unique multi-jurisdictional effort. Outreach proved to be a powerful tool for building community and political support.

"The Bowker process demonstrates that four ingredients are essential for a successful creekshed restoration strategy, namely – champions inside and outside government, broad-based collaboration, perseverance by individuals in all walks of life, and sustained commitment over decades by local governments. Ultimately, Bowker Blueprint implementation hinges on embedding details into operational work plans. This is happening.

**A Tale of Two Creeksheds in the Town of Comox:** "In what we branded as the 'Comox hour', the 3-person team blended the stewardship and long government perspectives to showcase the long-term value of collaboration guided by a shared vision for the Brooklyn Creek corridor, a regional amenity destination.

"Al Fraser highlighted the importance of the Town's financial commitment. Council is supportive of funding requests, he said. This leverages other sources of funding; and has a snowball effect. More citizens get involved when they see volunteers working in the creek.

"Brooklyn Creek is a working example of how to apply the *Ecological Accounting Process* (EAP) to value the worth of a creekshed, its hydrology, and ecological systems. The Town has integrated this understanding of worth into its strategy for land development.



## One Water – Always Moving

Because he looked at groundwater differently in the Englishman River, Dr. Gilles Wendling has advanced the science and has developed a practical application of water balance thinking.

His contributions to science-based understanding extend beyond the technical and into the communication and education realm. His work provides a bridge between rainfall and stream health thinking.

*“Characterizing aquifers is a complex and costly exercise because you need wells in order to reach aquifers and to monitor the depth and fluctuation of the level of the water table, states Gilles Wendling.*

*“The approach that we took with MVIHES in the Englishman River Watershed was to involve the community. The long term health of watersheds depends on the stewardship of the people who live in them. By getting residents involved, the community connects to its watershed, its complexity, and how it works.”*

## Panel & Town-Hall on Day One

“The panel followed the opening keynote by Bill Derry, one of the first stormwater utility managers in Washington State. Originally designed as a co-presentation with Dr. Chris May of Kitsap County, Bill delivered both parts when Chris was sidelined by back surgery. The focus of their storyline was on the science behind the whole-system, water balance approach; and the seminal research by Chris May that correlated land use changes with stream health consequences. Kitsap County experience provided an RDN-type frame-of-reference for the panel and town-hall that followed.

**Stewards of the Englishman River Watershed:** “The organizing committee selected the Englishman River as the panel theme because it is a great story of long-term collaboration; and with the MVIHES stewardship group playing a catalyst role to facilitate restorative outcomes.

“Over time, MVIHES has morphed from *Stewards of the Englishman River Recovery Plan* to *Stewards of the Watershed*. It is not a coincidence that operation of the Englishman River Water Service is guided by this statement: **“An environmentally sensitive use of water to improve fish habitat and domestic water supply”**.

“MVIHES initiated and secured funding for a community-based and innovative approach to assessing groundwater and surface water interaction in the watershed. It is **One Water – Always Moving**.

“Because survival of Coho salmon in the Englishman River depends on the health of the Shelly Creek tributary, restoration of the water balance is the key to sustainable stream restoration.

### DAY ONE PANEL & TOWN-HALL SESSION:

The panel used the Englishman River ‘big picture’ story as a backdrop for developing a shared understanding of the whole-system approach because ...what happens on the land in a watershed matters!



Peter Law

*Stewards of the Watershed*



Julie Pisani

*Linking Water Quality & Land Use*



Vaughan Figueira

*Water Supply, A Balancing Act*



Gilles Wendling

*One Water – Always Moving*



Domenico Iannidinardo

*Maintaining Hydrological Balance*



**Marvin Kamenz**

Municipal Planner  
Town of Comox

Marvin coined the term  
'package of ecological services'

*"The package of ecological services concept refers to the combined range of uses desired by the community. This is the 'what is it worth to us' lens.*

*"Thus, a strategic plan that supports this diversity will appear worthwhile to the greatest number of interested parties.*

*"The package of ecological services is supported by and interrelated to hydrology of the creekshed. Ecology and hydrology are core municipal services.*

*"Looking through the EAP 'worth lens' was transformational. The Town changed its approach to development in mid-project."*

## Panel & Town-Hall on Day Two

"The panel and town-hall followed the RDN engagement session. Emphasis was on how lessons learned in neighbouring regional districts might inform the DWWP update, so that restorative development ultimately results in sustainable stream restoration.

### DAY TWO PANEL & TOWN-HALL SESSION:

A vision for restorative land development could be guided by the mantra:  
*Sustainable is attainable. We can make where we live better.*

Halt the decline and bend the trend-line in an upwards direction!



Kate Miller  
*Poised for Action  
in Cowichan Valley*



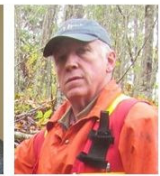
Marc Rutten  
*Collaboration in  
the Comox Valley*



Tim Ennis  
*Reconciliation  
through Restoration*



Tim Pringle  
*Calculating the Worth  
of Ecological Services*



Peter Law  
*Shelly Creek  
Restoration Vision*

**Natural Commons:** "Tim Pringle's snapshot presentation about EAP, the Ecological Accounting Process, was the centre of attention during the town-hall segment as most of the questions were directed Tim's way. He introduced and explained the concept of the *natural commons*, and its collary the *constructed commons*, in a way that was readily grasped by delegates. And this generated questions.

"EAP provides metrics that enable communities to appreciate the worth of natural assets and, said Tim Pringle, calculate the dollar value of the land occupied by the natural commons, thus generating real numbers for use in maintenance and enhancement budgets.





## ***Restorative Land Development would result in Sustainable Stream Restoration***



**Bill Derry**

Washington State local government innovator, consultant with cross-border experience, AND, stewardship sector leader

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*“In the 1980s, the lack of science was a real issue. Science is no longer the issue. While there will always be a need for more science, we have enough science to know what practices are good, and what needs to be done to reconnect hydrology and ecology.”*

*“This is why NGOs have a critical role to play. Governments respond to public opinion. They only fix things when the public forces them to do it. Elected officials will jump in to lead the parade only if voters get it started.”*

“There was a lot of information for delegates to absorb over a 2-day period. We strived to provide information in digestible bites, keeping in mind HOW adults learn. The learning process is gradual. Adults need time to reflect on new information, blend it with their own experience, test it, and eventually apply it. Therefore, it is necessary to bring an audience along at a different rates of learning.

**Reconnect Hydrology and Ecology:** “Given the symposium setting, the leap of faith for many in the audience was to first grasp, and then understand, WHY and HOW restorative land development would result in sustainable stream restoration. A program goal was to bring to life the phrase *reconnect hydrology and ecology*. Thus, Day One had book-end presentations - by Bill Derry and Nick Leone. They connected the dots between actions and outcomes.

**Foundation for Science-Based Understanding:** “In Module A, Bill Derry provided a critically important historical perspective when he explained the origins of the science-based approach to understanding how ‘*changes in hydrology*’ impact on stream health. Context is everything. Four decades ago, understanding was scant.

“An early pioneer in an emerging practice circa 1990, Bill Derry chaired the local government committee that framed eight key questions. These then defined areas of research by graduate students at the University of Washington, under the guidance of Dr. Richard Horner. Chris May then pulled together this original research in his PhD dissertation. His doctoral work is the foundation that we continue to build on as our understanding grows.

**Lessons Learned Over a Generation:** “The high-energy Module D presentation by Nick Leone was a barn-burner. He drew audience attention to the fact that 2019 is the *International Year of the Salmon*. This initiative has the potential to be a catalyst for outreach and research that inspires a new generation to ensure the **resilience of salmon and people** throughout the Northern Hemisphere. It is not just about the fish, emphasized Nick Leone, it is about us and our ability to adapt to change and resiliency.”





**John Finnie**

Chair, Parksville 2019  
Symposium Organizing  
Committee

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*“Parksville 2019 demonstrated that a group of 200 biologists, planners, engineers, streamkeepers, politicians, administrators, students and others, all with different backgrounds and responsibilities, can share a common learning experience and agree on strategies for water and land stewardship, and stream restoration.*

*“Truly a magical experience. The stage has been set for more and better things to come. Stay tuned.”*

## **Consensus of those in the Room**

“The online survey also showed that one can never satisfy everyone. There will always be outliers. Therefore, what is paramount is the consensus of the room. And the consensus view was that Parksville 2019 was inspirational.

“Judging by the overwhelming number of positive comments, there is little doubt that the many high moments predominated over the few soft moments.

“We set out to bring together a diverse and balanced audience. And we succeeded. We informed. We educated. We inspired. The bar is now raised even higher for Comox Valley 2020, the next in the series.”

## **What Could Have Been Better?**

“We strive to view all aspects of the 3-day program objectively. So, with the advantage of hindsight, what could the organizing committee have done better?

“Viewed through the committee’s own self-assessment lens, it is clear to the members that the **Panel & Town-Hall** sessions is one area where we should intensify our efforts in future - especially if we wish to replicate past successes in energizing an audience through town-hall interaction, especially such as at Nanaimo 2018.

“As is invariably the case, judging expected versus actual outcomes depends in large part on who was in the room and what were their expectations in attending. Another key consideration is facilitation effectiveness in drawing out those who are reluctant to put up their hands and ask questions or simply share their experiences.

**In Summary:** “Expectations were high coming into Parksville 2019. Expectations were clearly met. Delegates certainly left with copious amounts of food-for-thought. Yet, we can always do better. That is our mantra. **Do, learn, adapt and do better.**”

“The public lecture and finale presentation by Storm Cunningham on restorative development struck a responsive chord with the audience. The audience response had an impact on Storm. So much so, that he wrote an article about his reflections.”

## It Takes a Process to Create an Actionable Vision for Community Revitalization + Creekshed Restoration



**Storm Cunningham**

Author & Publisher

*“Most people who are traditionally seen as being responsible for creating community revitalization---mayors, economic developers, private developers, planners, etc. - don’t actually know how to think about revitalization. Most of them tend to think of it as a goal, rather than as a process.”*

*“As a result, they have ‘magical’ expectations: they assume that revitalization will automatically emerge if they just keep doing more of whatever it is they know how to do.”*

### The New Business as Usual

“It was the result of serendipity that Storm Cunningham was part of the program,” stated Kim Stephens. “Just weeks before Nanaimo 2018, he had reached out to me when he chanced to learn about the symposium and our interest in restorative development. His reaching out made the subject real to us, and opened the door to building him into the Parksville 2019 program.

### Public Lectures Inspired an Article about Process

“Storm Cunningham delivered two public lectures while in British Columbia. First, at the Parksville 2019 Symposium his theme was *Nature is Regenerative: We Should Be Too*. Then, in Duncan in the Place-Making Vancouver Island Speakers Series, he spoke about *Revitalizing Communities by Restoring the Environment*.

“Afterwards, Storm Cunningham reflected on whether the two audiences fully grasped **why** they should care about **how** communities revitalize. His reflections prompted Storm to write an article that would close the loop.

“The article provides a lens through which to understand why **DECONOMICS** describes the old way of doing business and **RECONOMICS** captures the new way. Storm Cunningham’s reflections serve as a good takeaway for Parksville 2019.

“Storm’s finale presentation at Parksville 2019 focussed on process, and the components that are necessary for a successful process. He identified six steps that comprise the RECONOMICS Process.

“Most of the communities and regions he has encountered have two or three of the six elements of that process, said Storm Cunningham. A few have four, or even five. But he has yet to find one that had the complete process, and a process that is not complete is not a process at all, Storm underscored.”

## Hope is not a Strategy

*“One might wonder what interest someone who is a streamkeeper might have in learning how places revitalize themselves,” said Storm Cunningham.*

*“The short answer is that such understanding is the key to attracting more funding and more support for their projects. If they better-understand how their work contributes to economic renewal and quality of life, they will be far more persuasive when it comes time to justify their budget. And if they better-understand the process of revitalization, they will know where best to insert themselves into local decision-making.*

*“The major flaw in that last statement is that most places don’t actually have a process for local renewal. They just tend to do a lot of projects, and hope that revitalization (or resilience) just magically appears as a reward for their hard work. But hope is not a strategy.”*

## Create an Actionable Vision to Build Momentum for Restorative Land Development

“The first step is to create an ongoing revitalization (or resilience) **program**, which constantly initiates, perpetuates, evaluates and adjusts local renewal efforts,” wrote Storm Cunningham.

“Without an ongoing program, you have little chance of building momentum, which is essential to increasing confidence in the future of the place, which—in turn—attracts more residents, employers and funding.

“The first job of that program (which is usually housed by a foundation or non-profit organization) is to facilitate a shared vision for the future. The second step is to create a **strategy** to implement that vision. Next, it’s best to do some policy work, adding policies to support that strategy, and removing policies that undermine it.”

**Implement Projects Through Partnerships:** “Once all of that is done, it’s time to move into action,” Storm Cunningham continued.

“Recruiting public and private **partners** into your program is the next step. This provides the human, financial and physical (such as properties) resources needed to do actual **projects**, which are the ‘final’ step of the process. I put ‘final’ in quotes because regeneration is a never-ending activity, so the process is circular, not linear. A place that is no longer revitalizing is devitalizing. Stasis leads to decline.”

**Role of the Stewardship Sector in the Process:** “Armed with a deep understanding of the above, Streamkeepers and other watershed heroes are no longer operating in a silo, dependent on others to champion and support their work. They are far more capable of being their own champions when face-to-face with funders, politicians and stakeholders,” Storm Cunningham noted.

“And, they will be better able to identify where in the revitalization / resilience process they or their organization should be engaged, in order to be most effective: the program, the visioning, the strategizing, the policymaking, the partnering or the projects.”



## The RECONOMICS Process Visualized

“Being the one at the table who actually understands how to organize local activities to increase their ROI (revitalization on investment) positions the stewardship sector to take on a real leadership role in the community or region,” Storm Cunningham pointed out.

“The components are familiar, so all places have some. But none have all. A process with missing components is not a process. You can add to it, but do not subtract.”

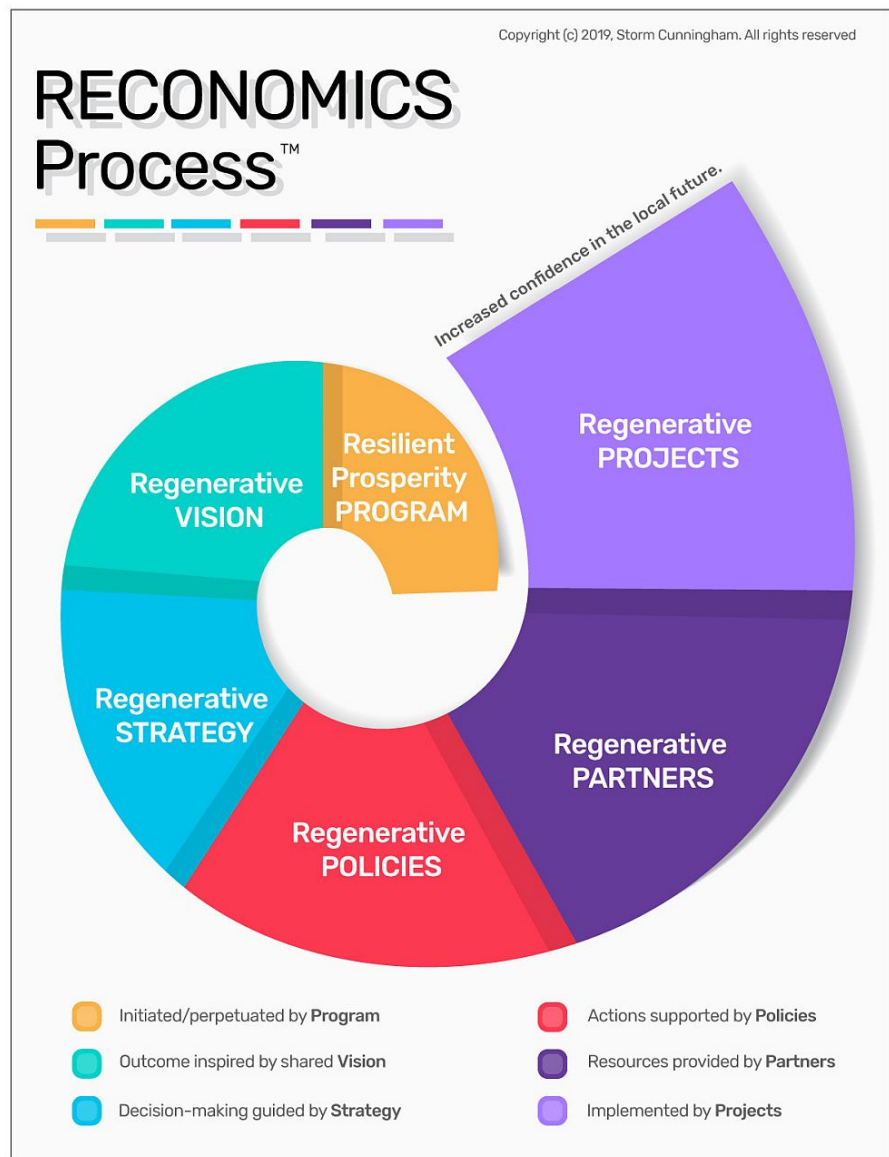


**Paul Chapman**

Executive Director, NALT;  
Co-Chair, Parksville 2019  
Organizing Committee

*“The model of restoration and renewal that is Storm Cunningham’s RECONOMICS offers relief from the gloom that can overtake considerations of climate change and the future.*

*“Storm maps out a way forward that not only allows for economic growth but the renewal of our natural systems too – the restorative economy.”*



## Cultivate a New Land Ethic

Jody Watson provided this perspective on bringing Bowker Creek back to life in the urban heartland of the Capital Regional District:

*"Our collective 'baseline' or memory of what a healthy urban creek should look like has shifted significantly through generations of development and decades of engineering practices designed to get the water off the land as quickly possible. This approach to land development has resulted in a loss of hydrological and ecological function in many areas.*

*"The multi-jurisdictional nature of our watersheds requires the collective commitment of local and senior government agencies, First Nations, and communities to improve creekshed health.*

*"Utilizing a 'Design with Nature' approach, we are changing the way we develop our land by attempting to re-engineer the hydrological function back into our urban landscape. We are, in some ways, cultivating a new land ethic."*

## A Vision with a Task is the Hope of the World

"Storm Cunningham's reflective piece prompted Eric Bonham to add his thoughts to provide an over-arching perspective on what Parksville 2019 represents in the Partnership's journey for the past two decades. A former Director in two provincial ministries, Environment and Municipal Affairs, Eric Bonham is also a founding member of the Partnership for Water Sustainability. 80-years young, he is a tireless champion of the idea for an elders mentoring program to help bring an intergenerational vision to fruition.

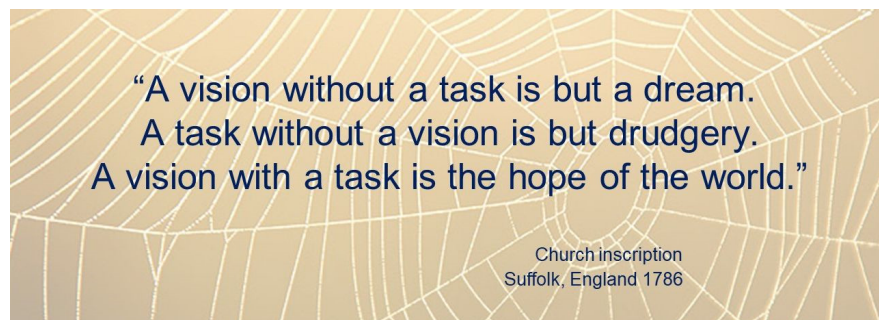
**A Step-by-Step Venture that Evolves:** "The article that Storm wrote is a powerful package," wrote Eric Bonham. "Storm succinctly captures the process which I believe the Partnership for Water Sustainability has doggedly tried to identify over time, not always knowing the next step.



"In essence, it is a step-by-step venture that has evolved over time through partnerships on a range of initiatives, some more successful than others, with local government, stewardship community, academy, First Nations and the business sector (Vancouver Island Economic Alliance).

"The Ecological Accounting Process (EAP) identifies the practicality, stewardship sector the passion, business sector the economy, and local government the policy. The call for integration is now timely and long overdue. The top-down bottom-up commitment still holds.

"Applying Storm's process brings a holistic dimension to development with Vision and Task being at its centre and inextricably linked," concluded Eric Bonham.



# Supporting Attachments

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## Agenda Overview for Each Day

- Sustainable Stream Restoration
- Restorative Land Development



## APRIL 3<sup>rd</sup> THEME: ***Sustainable Stream Restoration***

**KEY MESSAGE: Reconnect hydrology and ecology – what happens on the land in the creekshed matters to streams!**

7:30 *Registration / Meet & Greet*

8:45 **Event Welcome from Chair of the Organizing Committee** – John Finnie  
**Welcome to Parksville** - Mayor Ed Mayne

### 9:00 **MODULE A: “Getting It Right”: The Whole-System Approach**

**Nanaimo 2018: A Watershed Moment for Collaboration Success Stories**  
*Kim Stephens, Executive Director, Partnership for Water Sustainability in BC*

At 9:15 **Nanaimo Watershed Health Community of Practice: The Hard Work of Hope**  
*Paul Chapman, NALT*

At 9:25 **The Science Behind the Whole-System, Water Balance Approach**  
- Dr. Chris May (Surface & Stormwater Division Director, Kitsap County) & Bill Derry (formerly with Snohomish County and CH2MHill, and Past-President, People for Puget Sound)

10:40 *Refreshment Break / Conversation*

### 11:05 **MODULE B: Panel & Town-Hall Session: Watershed Health and You**

**Englishman River / Shelly Creek: Over time, MVIHES has morphed from “Stewards of the Englishman River Recovery Plan” to “Stewards of the Watershed”** - Peter Law, MVIHES

**Englishman River Water Service (ERWS): A Balancing Act – Regional Bulk Water Supply Needs & Environmental Flow Requirements to Sustain Aquatic Resources** - Vaughan Figueira, City of Parksville

**Groundwater & Surface Water Interaction in the Englishman River Watershed: One Water – Always Moving** - Gilles Wendling, GWS Solutions

**Sustainable Forest Management in the Englishman River Watershed: Maintaining Hydrological Balance is Critical for Success** – Domenico Iannidinardo, Mosaic

**Surface Water Quality Trend Analysis: Linking Water Quality Data Results with Land Use Factors** - Julie Pisani, RDN

12:30 *Lunch / Conversation*

### 1:30 **MODULE C: Make Better Decisions: First, Understand How Rain Reaches a Stream**

**Hard Work of Hope in a Changing Climate: Will We Adapt?** *Kim Stephens, PWSBC*

At 1:45 **Closing the Data Gap: Water Stewards, the Key to the Future**  
*Neil Goeller, Regional Hydrologist & Sylvia Barroso, Regional Hydrogeologist - Water Protection, West Coast Region, Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development*

*S-t-r-e-t-c-h / grab a refreshment & return to your seat*

### 3:30 **MODULE D: Back to the Future: Reconnect Hydrology and Ecology**

**Lessons Learned: Focus on Root-Causes; Integrate Restorative Solutions**  
*Nick Leone, Senior Resource Restoration Biologist, Fisheries & Oceans Canada*

4:15 *Day 1 adjourns*

## APRIL 4<sup>th</sup> THEME: ***Restorative Land Development***

KEY MESSAGE: **Yes, we can decrease our destructive footprint while at the same time increasing our restorative footprint!**

8:00	<i>Registration / Meet &amp; Greet</i>
8:50	Event Welcome from Co-Chair of the Organizing Committee – Paul Chapman
9:00	<b>MODULE A: “Getting It Right”: Make Better Land Use Decisions</b>
	<b>Value the ‘Water Balance Services’ Provided by Nature</b> - <i>Kim Stephens, PWSBC</i>
At 9:15	<b>Creating an Actionable Vision for the next 10 Years of Drinking Water and Watershed Protection</b> - <i>Julie Pisani, DWWP Coordinator, Regional District of Nanaimo</i>
10:30	<i>Refreshment Break / Conversation</i>
10:55	<b>MODULE B: Panel &amp; Town-Hall Session: <i>Improving Where We Live</i></b>
	<b>Poised for Action in the Cowichan Region: <i>Embedding Change through the Drinking Water &amp; Watershed Protection Service</i></b> - <i>Kate Miller, Cowichan Valley Regional District</i>
	<b>Comox Lake Watershed Protection Plan: <i>Collaborative Process = Community Support</i></b> <i>Marc Rutten, Comox Valley Regional District</i>
	<b>Kus-kus-sum Restoration on the Courtenay River: <i>Transforming a Decommissioned Sawmill Site into a Valuable Habitat Corridor</i></b> - <i>Tim Ennis, Comox Valley Land Trust</i>
	<b>Ecological Accounting Process (EAP): <i>Making it Straightforward for Communities to Calculate “THE WORTH” of Ecological Services and Incorporate in Financial Plans!</i></b> - <i>Tim Pringle, PWSBC</i>
	<b>Shelly Creek Demonstration Applications: <i>Implementing the Twin Pillars of “Sustainable Watershed Systems, through Asset Management”</i></b> - <i>Peter Law, MVIHES</i>
12:20	<i>Lunch / Conversation</i>
1:15	<b>MODULE C: Moving Towards Restorative Land Development</b>
	<b>Beacons of Hope: Bowker &amp; Brooklyn Restoration Success Stories are Inspirational</b> <i>Kim Stephens, PWSBC</i>
At 1:30	<b>Bringing Bowker Creek Back to Life in the Capital Region: <i>Community Buy-In is Key</i></b> <i>Jody Watson, Supervisor, Environmental Planning &amp; Initiatives, Capital Regional District &amp; Past-Chair, Bowker Creek Initiative</i>
	<i>S-t-r-e-t-c-h / grab a refreshment &amp; return to your seat</i>
At 2:30	<b>A Tale of Two Creeksheds in the Town of Comox: <i>Base Decision-Making on “Worth”</i></b> <i>Allan Fraser (Superintendent of Parks &amp; Property Manager) &amp; Marvin Kamenz (Municipal Planner) with the Town of Comox, and Christine Hodgson representing Brooklyn Creek Watershed Society</i>
	<i>S-t-r-e-t-c-h / grab a refreshment &amp; return to your seat</i>
3:30	<b>MODULE D: We Can Create the Future We Want</b>
	<b>Increase Our Restorative Footprint; Decrease Our Destructive Footprint</b> - <i>Storm Cunningham</i>
4:15	<i>Day 2 adjourns</i>