



Spring Workshop – Briefing Note

April 2017

Overview

In November 2016, the POLIS Water Sustainability Project and the BC Water Funders Collaborative co-hosted a Joint Strategic Water Workshop in Sidney, B.C. The workshop participants, which included a subset of the water leaders and members of the BC Water Funders Collaborative, identified several recommendations regarding opportunities for action to advance freshwater protection and watershed governance in B.C.

This focus of this Briefing Note is to provide an update and further assessment of the opportunities identified at the fall workshop in four key strategic areas, including:

1. Keeping Water on the Agenda
2. Indigenous Water Laws, Planning and Capacity Building
3. Environmental Flows Protection
4. Pooling Water Knowledge: Water Monitoring & Reporting

PART 1: NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Based on our discussions with water leaders about actions to advance opportunities identified at the joint workshop, we have identified a few key gaps and opportunities. These are by no means exhaustive and are bounded by the focus areas coming out of the leaders-funders workshop. Our intention is to provide funders with a tangible sense of some of the current or emerging funding needs and to help inform the upcoming water funders workshop.

PART 2: SUMMARY OF RECENT ACTIVITIES & FUTURE OUTLOOK

Part 2 shares summaries of findings from our discussions with key water leaders that were charged with advancing action items following the water funders-leaders workshop. This part is oriented around the four strategic themes of that workshop: Keeping Water on the Agenda, Indigenous Water Laws, Planning & Capacity Building, Environmental Flows Protection, and Pooling Water Knowledge. Each section includes a short overview of the theme, the action items coming out of the leaders-funders workshop, opportunities and plans for future work, and an update on activities since the workshop.

PART 1: BC FRESHWATER COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

*Based on conversations with water leaders.

STRATEGIC AREA	GAPS	OPPORTUNITIES
Keeping Water on the Agenda: Public Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of a strong public constituency and political will around freshwater protection. • Provincial capacity builders and local NGOs in this network do not have long term core funding which makes strategic planning and staffing difficult. • No collaborative funding mechanisms or strategies are in place to support public engagement and communications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Opportunity to build upon momentum, engagement and list building generated around 2017 Provincial Election. Canadian Freshwater Alliance's recent hire of a BC Provincial Campaigner has positioned it to become the provincial campaign and communications hub - able to link diverse local initiatives to overarching provincial asks (eg. water pricing, e-flows, local governance). CFA's existing multi-year funding will end in Fall 2017. Key groups working with CFA include Watershed Watch and Organizing for Change. ➤ Opportunity to support local organizing efforts in 5-7 priority regions. The ability for CFA to catalyze a provincial campaign will depend directly on the capacity of local organizations to engage. ➤ Opportunity to support peer learning and share lessons from successful local initiatives such as One Cowichan and WaterWealth.
First Nations Capacity Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIER and FNFC's Systematic Review (2016) confirmed significant institutional barriers and capacity gaps for First Nations seeking to advance watershed governance or co-governance in their territories. • While relationships with First Nations capacity building organizations have been strengthened over the last year, the freshwater community seeks to establish stronger collaborative relationships directly with First Nations communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ First Nations Fisheries Council has emerged as the central provincial network builder and convener of First Nations working on water initiatives (eg. FNFC First Nations Water Network and First Nations Capacity Builders Network). FNFC Water for Fish Program recently received a \$39K grant from the New Relationship Trust to develop a 3-year strategic plan which will be informed through a series of First Nations roundtables over Summer 2017. The Strategic Plan will be completed in Fall 2017 to coincide with a multi-year fundraising effort. ➤ CIER, POLIS and FNFC have developed a proposal to co-host a 1-day peer learning and catalyzing workshop in June with 15 First Nations across BC that have made significant advancements in the management and governance of freshwater in their territories. Key insights will be shared with other First Nations, water funders and water leaders increasing the collective knowledge of the BC's freshwater community and creating opportunities for collaboration. In-kind support is being provided through CIER/POLIS (Sitka Fdn) and FNFC (New Relationship Trust). There is \$25K to be raised. BC Freshwater Legacy Initiative is looking for matching funders to support this workshop.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Opportunity to support specific watershed governance initiatives in collaboration with First Nations communities (eg Treaty 8, ONA, Ktunaxa, Cowichan Tribes, Tsilhqot'in, Carrier Sekani Tribal Council) in partnership with the BC Freshwater Legacy Initiative.
Environmental Flow Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently lacking provincial support for an eflows regulation (enforceable laws, more public input and legally binding) in light of gov't plans for a policy (provides guidance, less transparency, not legally binding). • Province's failure to acknowledge First Nations rights in the consideration of environmental flows. • Require clear processes for community engagement in the setting of environmental flows thresholds and standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ POLIS Water Sustainability Project and Ecojustice are developing a legal options brief on the elements of an effective environmental flows regulation. The Province has expressed willingness to engage with this work and POLIS will be following up with government to advance the eflows regulation discussion. ➤ POLIS WSP proposes to co-host a second Eflows forum after the election (follow up to last year's forum), ideally with buy in from, or in partnership with, MOE. (Estimated \$20-25K) ➤ Opportunities exist to advance the need for an eflows regulation as targeted theme within the other three areas of focus: Keeping Water on the Agenda (targeted campaign as well as tracking of eflows issues in BC), First Nations Capacity Building (new FN Water Network technical working group), and Pooling Water Knowledge proposal (eflows regs as a driver of monitoring).
Pooling Water Knowledge: Monitoring & Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition that we do not have an accurate picture of what water monitoring and reporting information is currently available and where the gaps are. • Several organizations are currently engaged in regional or national water monitoring and reporting initiatives but there has not been a collaborative provincial dialogue around this work. • BC Water Funders Collaborative Working Group and Ministry of Environment have acknowledged a need for integration of existing data and a desire to identify opportunities for strategic alignment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The BC Water Funders Collaborative's Working Group on Water Monitoring & Reporting has developed and funded an initiative to convene a Roundtable with representatives across sectors to develop a shared vision around water monitoring and reporting. ➤ To catalyze the Roundtable discussion, the Working Group is implementing a provincial landscape scan with the guidance from a Steering Committee including Okanagan Basin Water Board, Pacific Salmon Foundation, Columbia Basin Trust, Environment & Climate Change Canada, Living Lakes Canada, BC Ministry of Environment and First Nations Fisheries Council. The insights from the Provincial Scan and Fall Roundtable will help to identify gaps and opportunities, promote strategic collaboration and ensure data is informing decision-makers. While the Proposal is fully funded, additional funding could allow for expanded scope of research or analysis of results. In-kind data and recommendations for key resource people are also invited. ➤ Living Lakes Canada Network has developed a proposal to convene a Data Hubs Workshop in November 2017 to identify best practices for housing data from across Canada. The Workshop has been partially funded by Gordon Foundation but will require additional funding support.

PART 2: SUMMARY OF RECENT ACTIVITIES & FUTURE OUTLOOK

KEEPING WATER ON THE AGENDA

OVERVIEW

Building active freshwater constituencies in B.C. is required to sustain public interest and pressure for freshwater protection as a critical element of achieving the overall goal of high-bar implementation of the *Water Sustainability Act*. Building momentum and pressure will be particularly important in B.C. in 2017 to elevate water as a strategic priority leading into the May provincial election and as a government priority as part of post-election activities.

BACKGROUND: FALL 2016 WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS

Keeping Water on the Agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Hiring a provincial campaigner (CFA ASAP)● CFA, POLIS and Watershed Watch to meet after workshop to discuss opportunity for 2-day campaign strategy workshop (Jan 2017)
-----------------------------------	--

FUTURE OUTLOOK & OPPORTUNITIES

- **Canadian Freshwater Alliance Post-Election Strategy (May - December 2017)** - After the election, the CFA aims to work with the newly elected BC Government to advance legal protections for water through robust implementation of the Water Sustainability Act (WSA). Activities to include:
 - Launch petition calling for new legal protections for BCs waters with 5000 signatories from all regions of the province;
 - Send 2000 welcome letters and host 25 meetings with new MLAs, and Ministers;
 - Attend and/or host 15-20 summer festivals and events;
 - Launch traditional and social media campaign to reach 1 million BC residents with campaign messages;
 - Initiate social media advertising to reach new and more diverse audiences;
 - Host 200 “Love BC’s Water” events throughout the province.CFA funding is ending this Fall 2017.
- **POLIS Water Sustainability Project** will continue to provide up to 5 op-eds per year.

UPDATE ON RECENT ACTIVITIES (Nov 2016 to Present)

1. In December 2016, CFA hired a provincial campaigner, Coree Tull. In January 2017, CFA, Organizing for Change and Watershed Watch met for a one day workshop to catalyze discussions around key elements of a provincial campaign strategy. CFA has taken the lead role in developing and implementing Election Campaign Strategy and Post-Election Campaign Strategy.
2. **CFA's Election Campaign (March 14 - May 9, 2017):**
 - a. Website includes a [Pledge to Vote for BC Water](#) and [Our Water BC](#) as well as a dashboard to gather NGO Campaign endorsements.
 - b. Watershed Watch and CFA drafted, circulated and delivered a “**Letter of Expectations** for the Effective Implementation of the Water Sustainability Act” which was signed by 16 NGOs in March 2017 and sent to all political parties.

- c. CFA co-hosting regional **All-candidates Meetings** in key ridings including:
 - i. [Chilliwack](#) with Water Wealth, Watershed Watch, and Council of Canadians (March 22) Estimated 80-100 attended.
 - ii. Tri-Cities with Watershed Watch, Force of Nature, Rivershed Society of BC, Coquitlam River Watershed Roundtable, Fraser Riverkeeper and Sierra Club of BC (April 12). Estimated 85 attended.
 - iii. Pitt Meadows-Maple Ridge-Mission with Friends of Katzie Slough, Fraser Riverkeeper and Watershed Watch Salmon Society (April 26). Estimating 80-100 to attend.
 - iv. Courtenay/Comox with Watershed Watch Salmon Society, Comox Council of Canadians and Comox Valley Land Trust (April 27). Estimating 150 to attend.
- d. **Media strategy** includes Strategy op-eds, writing letters to the editor, online and written. Our Shared Water Campaign focuses on 5 key themes (H2O Quality, H2O Quantity, H2O Pricing, Shared Decision making with First Nations, and Local Control).
 - [Canada Water Week and World Water Day Media Release](#) with Mark D'Angelo on World Water Day.
 - Tri-City News [Living Green: Defend Our Life Source- Vote For Water](#) (Mar 22)
 - The Chilliwack Progress [Water Issues Dominate at All Candidates Meeting](#) (March 23)
 - Comox Valley Record [Water rights activist leads public forum in Courtenay](#) (March 22)
 - Scheduled Op-Eds for next 3 weeks
 - Okanagan Nation Alliance- Environmental Flow Needs
 - Watershed Watch Salmon Society- Local Control with Coquitlam River Watershed Roundtable case study
 - Fraser Riverkeeper- more resources for enforcement of the WSA specific to section 46
 - Freshwater Alliance- Water as an election issue and the need for WSA
 - Freshwater Alliance- Why water needs to be an election issue- Opportunities of the WSA
- e. **Engagement and list-building** during election will strengthen post-election strategy.
As of April 18th, CFA has secured
 - 360 individual "Pledge to Vote for BC Water" endorsements
 - 199 letters written to MLA
 - 10 NGO Campaign endorsements
 - On-line social media – organic reach of 30,000+ since campaign launched
 - 3045 on CFA contact list

3. **BCWF 2017 Provincial Election Campaign** includes [party and candidate questions](#)
4. **POLIS WSP *Op-Ed: Progress and peril for B.C.'s most precious natural resources*** (December 30, 2016) This Op-Ed provides a "year in review" through the lens of freshwater issues and priorities in B.C.

5. **Watershed Watch Salmon Society:** On March 2nd, 2017 Tanis Gower covered the Eco Assets Symposium that took place in Courtenay in her [regular newspaper column](#), discussing the value of natural assets like watersheds and floodplains.
6. **Outdoor Recreation Council/BCWF:** [“Opinion: Care of waterways must be part of political party platforms”](#) by Mark Angelo (February 25, 2017) featuring Outdoor Recreation Council and BCWF as well as need for BC Water Sustainability Trust.
7. **Watershed Watch Salmon Society:** [Defend the Wild Salmon Policy.](#) WWSS’s efforts to bring attention to proposed changes to the wild salmon policy.

KEEPING WATER ON THE AGENDA NETWORK

- Canadian Freshwater Alliance
- Watershed Watch Salmon Society
- Organizing for Change
- BCWF
- Outdoor Recreation Council
- POLIS WSP
- Water Wealth
- Coquitlam River Watershed Roundtable
- Comox Valley Land Trust
- Fraser Riverkeeper
- Rivershed Society
- Water Matters
- Friends of Katzie Slough
- Sierra Club of BC
- CEED Centre Society
- Golden Ears Transition Initiative
- Comox Valley Council of Canadians

FURTHER RESOURCES & INITIATIVES

- *Watersheds 2016: Building Capacity for Collaboration and Watershed Governance in British Columbia* [Edited Proceedings](#) & [Watersheds 2016 Video](#).
- [Organizing for Change - Protecting Water for Fish](#)
- Canadian Freshwater Alliance [BC Program](#) & [Communications Toolkit for Strengthening BC's new Water Sustainability Act](#)

INDIGENOUS WATER LAWS, PLANNING AND CAPACITY BUILDING

INDIGENOUS WATER LAWS, PLANNING AND CAPACITY BUILDING

OVERVIEW: A demonstrated appetite exists from water leaders and water funders to better understand how to further support the advancement of Indigenous co-governance of watersheds in BC. There is also recognition of the need of First Nations communities to have a clear understanding of their own watershed planning priorities, water values and laws, and watershed governance mechanisms before (or in parallel with) engaging in co-governance. Several First Nations communities are articulating their water laws prompting an emerging discussion about how Indigenous water laws may ultimately inform the regulatory development of the *Water Sustainability Act*.

BACKGROUND: JOINT FALL WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS

Indigenous Law, Planning & Capacity Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support opportunities identified in CIER and FNFC Opportunities Brief• Explore opportunities to support First Nations' technical capacity: for instance, training for First Nations to do formal water monitoring• Support peer-to-peer learning forums: e.g. invite a higher-capacity community(ies) that has made water planning and water laws a priority to share learnings with a lower-capacity community(ies). POLIS, FNFC & Collaborative to explore a potential peer-to-peer workshop to profile some of the Indigenous-led governance law/planning initiatives with a mix of First Nations, funders and water leaders. (next 6 months)• Continue to re-evaluate how First Nations can be better involved in the water leaders workshops and meetings: continue to hold a space for UBCIC & BCAFN at this table; invite communities that are advancing water plans/laws to share learnings with this group; potentially explore co-hosting with First Nations Fisheries Council to attract a different cohort. (co-organizers, ongoing)• Ensure all communications to the Province highlight that First Nations consultation has been and continues to be inadequate. (everyone, ongoing)
---	--

FUTURE OUTLOOK & OPPORTUNITIES

- **FNFC Water For Fish Program** has recently secured funding from the New Relationship Trust in the amount of \$39,000 to develop a 3-year strategic plan for FNFC's Water for Fish Initiative. The strategic plan will be informed by FN communities through a series of roundtables held over the summer.
- **CIER, POLIS & FNFC First Nations Peer to Peer Roundtable:** The Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources (CIER), the First Nations Fisheries Council of BC (FNFC), and the POLIS Water Sustainability Project (POLIS) are co-hosting a First Nations Water Roundtable to advance peer learning and catalyze advancements in Indigenous-led water governance in BC. This one-day gathering will convene a small and select group of approximately 10-15 staff and community leaders from First Nations communities across BC that have made significant advancements in management and governance of freshwater in their territories. The purpose of convening staff and leaders from "higher water capacity" First Nations in particular is to provide an opportunity for peer learning, explore governance and legal opportunities and tools to drive change, and to

provide a space for strategic collaboration and visioning to advance the collective impact of indigenous-led freshwater planning and governance initiatives in British Columbia. Key insights from the Roundtable will be shared with First Nations, the BC Water Funders Collaborative, and other initiatives and organizations that are working to advance First Nations capacity in freshwater planning and governance.

- **FNFC WFF Working Groups:** Beginning Spring 2017, FNFC Water For Fish Program will convene a First Nations technical working group on Environmental Flow Needs and a First Nations groundwater working group.
- **FNFC's Freshwater Planning and Governance Guide for BC First Nations:** The forthcoming Freshwater Planning and Governance Guide will consist of a brief 20-30-page resource that will assist First Nations staff and Chief & Council navigate the basics of water planning and governance, including highlighting existing resources (CIER guidebooks, FBC and POLIS governance resources, Julian Griggs' Shared Decision Making Project in BC etc.). The guide is designed around 5-6 deep case stories from BC First Nations that each pull out different approaches to water governance (eg articulating indigenous water laws, making a water declaration, collecting baseline data etc.).
- **Sustainable Funding for First Nations:** FNFC WFF is developing a prospectus on Sustainable funding options for BC First Nations freshwater planning and governance initiatives. Coordinating initiative with SFWGI to ensure that research and initiatives are aligned.
- **CIER/POLIS FN Watershed Governance & Planning Workshop (Fall/Winter):** A First Nations Watershed Governance/Planning workshop will take place in Winter or early spring of 2018 organized by POLIS-CIER (potentially with a local co-host or another organization as a co-host). The workshop will utilize existing CIER resources (e.g., Watershed Planning Guidebooks) based on the clear interest in watershed planning from participants in the CIER-FNFC Systematic Review. Other funds and partnerships will be sought to leverage this event. A detailed proceedings will be shared.
- **POLIS and CIER concept paper on Collaborative Consent Model for Decision-making** in the context of B.C. freshwater (late spring).

RECENT ACTIVITIES (Nov 2016 to Present)

1. **New Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources (CIER) BC Associate:** In December 2016, CIER & POLIS partnered and have jointly hired Natasha Overduin as Research Associate & Watershed Governance Project Manager. The purpose is to carry out a joint program intended to catalyze and build capacity for watershed governance in identified First Nations and local governments across BC.
2. **BC First Nations Capacity Builders' Network.** This Network is comprised of initiatives and organizations currently engaged in providing capacity support for BC First Nations to advance freshwater planning, management, governance activities and indigenous laws revitalization. Initiated by FNFC in October 2016, the purpose of the Network is to share updates, and ensure alignment where possible in order to take an intentional approach to these challenges. Current members of the Network include: FNFC, Centre for Indigenous

Environmental Resources, Decolonizing Water initiative at UBC, Environmental Law Centre at UVic, Indigenous Law Research Unit at UVic, POLIS Water Sustainability Project, Sustainable Funding for Watershed Governance Initiative, BC Freshwater Legacy Initiative and West Coast Environmental Law.

3. **POLIS & FNFC Webinar, "Indigenous Water Initiatives: Achievements and Capacity Gaps" (March 2017):** In March 2017, POLIS & CIER organized and co-hosted a webinar as part of the POLIS Water Sustainability Project's Blue Dialogue series on First Nations-led water initiatives and capacity needs in BC, to an audience of 200 First Nations, academics, provincial and federal government representatives, and community groups across Canada. The webinar recording and summary will be available by the end of April at <http://poliswaterproject.org/outreach>.
4. **First Nations Fisheries Council Water For Fish Program Engagement with Province:** FNFC Strategic Development Manager Deana Machin and *Water for Fish* Project Manager Susi Porter-Bopp met with staff from the BC Ministries of Environment, Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations, and Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation in Victoria in March 2017. The purpose of the meeting was to share results from FNFC and CIER's Fall 2016 research report on indigenous-led freshwater governance initiatives, and to discuss opportunities for improving how FNFC works with MoE and FLNRO on First Nations freshwater management, governance and legislative issues. Outcomes include a follow-up meeting to discuss priorities, and how the various Ministries are currently working together to implement the *Water Sustainability Act*.
5. **POLIS/CIER Webinar:** "Mapping Traditional Archaeological, Cultural, Ecological Values for Integrated Shoreline Decision-making,"(April 6, 2017).
6. **CIER/POLIS Local Gov't Relationship Building Workshop Series:** POLIS has held 3 workshops in Regional District Central Kootenay (Jan), Silverton (April) and Regional District Kootenay Boundary (April). One of the goals of these workshops is to build awareness and reveal insights and best-practices around how local governments and First Nations can work together to advance water initiatives.

INDIGENOUS CAPACITY BUILDING NETWORK

- First Nations Fisheries Council
- POLIS Water Sustainability Project
- Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources
- Environmental Law Centre at UVic
- Indigenous Law Research Unit at UVic
- Decolonizing Water Initiative (UBC)
- WCEL
- BC Freshwater Legacy Initiative
- Sustainable Funding for Watershed Governance Initiative

FURTHER RESOURCES & INITIATIVES

- Joe, N., Bakker, K. & Harris, L. "[Perspectives on the BC Water Sustainability Act: First Nations Respond to Water Governance Reform in BC](#)" (March 2017)
- Overduin, N. & Simms, R. "[Wayfinding: Rethinking B.C.'s Approach to Freshwater Through Partnerships & Shared Decision-Making](#)" in WaterCanada (March 2017)
- [Yinka Dene 'Uza'hné Surface Water Management Policy](#)
- UBC Program on Water Governance & Keepers of the Water, "[Sustainable Water Governance and Indigenous Law Research Project](#)" (2016-2023) also known as the [Decolonizing Water Project](#)
- CIER & FNFC's "[Indigenous Watershed Initiatives and Co-Governance Arrangements: A British Columbia Systematic Review](#)" (Sept 2016) Also see the [Commuque](#)
- UVic Environmental Law Centre and Indigenous Law Research Unit: [Water Laws: Lessons from Indigenous and Colonial Stewardship](#): The project team will work with three Indigenous communities to map their Indigenous water laws and draw parallels between Indigenous water stewardship and licensed water user behaviour.
- [Revitalizing Indigenous Law for Land Air and Water \(RELAW\)](#): RELAW is a project of West Coast Environmental Law and the Indigenous Law Research Unit at the University of Victoria. Through the RELAW project, participating Indigenous nations will work with community researchers and lawyers to develop a written summary of legal principles related to environmental governance and land and resources for their nation.

ENVIRONMENTAL FLOWS PROTECTION

ENVIRONMENTAL FLOWS PROTECTION

OVERVIEW

The *Water Sustainability Act (WSA)* provides an overall legal framework to significantly improve B.C.'s approach to environmental flows protections. The environmental flows provisions in the WSA are some of the most important aspects of the legislation. However, outstanding concerns persist, including a lack of clarity in how environmental flow needs are actually being considered in licensing decisions and what additional science knowledge will be needed for a precautionary and evidence-based regime. Advancing implementation of a robust environmental flows regime in B.C. (including development of an environmental flows regulation) remains a priority for the implementation of the WSA.

BACKGROUND: FALL WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS

E-Flows Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide a workshop communiqué to the Province that explicitly references the need for an environmental flows regulation (Co-hosts, post election to begin re-engagement with government under new mandate)• In short term, support First Nations who wish to proactively establish and define environmental flow and critical flow levels, and call on the Province to protect environmental flows through a presumptive standard established in regulation. (All, ongoing)• Provincial government staff presented on WSA implementation, and outlined the intent to initiate provincial pilots to implement the WSA (Province, expected announcement post-election)
----------------	---

FUTURE OUTLOOK

- **FNFC Water For Fish Working Groups:** Beginning Spring 2017, FNFC Water For Fish Program will convene a First Nations technical working group on Environmental Flow Needs.
- **Environmental flows regulation:** POLIS and Ecojustice are working to develop a legal options brief on the elements of an effective environmental flows regulation. The Province has expressed willingness to engage with this work. The POLIS team will be following up with government to advance the eflows regulation discussion, and have been invited to discuss options going forward with the Ministry of Environment senior executives post-election.
- POLIS (with potential partners) will be leading a follow-up environmental flows forum (building on the 2016 POLIS-WWF Forum on Environmental Flow Needs in B.C.). This is anticipated in early 2018.
- **CFA Post Election Campaign:** CFA post election strategy to include targeting a specific area around e-flows and tie it into Our Water BC initiative.

RECENT ACTIVITIES (Fall 2016 to Present)

1. **First Nations E-Flows Workshop:** FNFC partnered with World Wildlife Federation–Canada to deliver a workshop on environmental flow needs in Vancouver on February 7- 8, 2017. Over 40 First Nations staff and leadership attended from nearly 30 different Nations. Key topics discussed included an overview of methodologies for establishing thresholds, case studies from First Nations in BC, and options for establishing EFNs both within and outside of the *Water Sustainability Act*.
2. **Skeena Water Sustainability Workshop:** On December 14-15, WWF and the Bulkley Valley Research Center co-hosted a Water Sustainability workshop in Smithers, BC on the traditional territory of the Wet'suwet'en. The purpose of the workshop was to build on the knowledge and understanding of water sustainability and environmental flow needs in the Skeena Watershed. James Casey (WWF) and Oliver Brandes (POLIS) presented on different aspects of the BC Water Sustainability Act, with a specific focus on the potential for eflows protections under the new Act along with regional cumulative effects assessment from the Skeena watershed. Other presenters included staff from MoE and FLNRO, First Nations, and local stewardship groups. Overall the group agreed that coordination of water planning and water sustainability initiatives was an import step for the ecological and economic sustainability of the Skeena region.
3. **Watershed Watch Salmon Society - Our Connected Waters Campaign:** Through this campaign to reconnect waterways impacted by the dikes, pump stations and floodgates in the lower Fraser, a study of federal and provincial legislation was commissioned from UVic's Environmental Law Center. The legal scan was to help understand the protections afforded to aquatic species (with a focus on salmon) impacted by diking infrastructure. The study found that water (and fish) behind dikes fall within a regulatory grey area with no real protections in place. There may be some (limited) potential within the WSA (s. 11) to ensure fish-friendly infrastructure is a requirement. Other options for protection exist at the local government level where resolutions can be passed to consider fish-friendly factors when upgrading dike infrastructure.

ENVIRONMENTAL FLOW NEEDS NETWORK

- POLIS Water Sustainability Project
- First Nations Fisheries Council
- EcoJustice
- Organizing for Change
- Watershed Watch Salmon Society
- World Wildlife Federation

FURTHER RESOURCES & INITIATIVES

- [Okanagan Environmental Flow Needs Project](#)
- [Environmental Sector Statement of Expectations for an Environmental Flow Needs Regulation -](#)
- –POLIS-WWF [2016 Forum on Environmental Flow Needs in B.C.](#)
- [Organizing for Change - Protecting Water for Fish](#)

**POOLING WATER KNOWLEDGE:
WATER MONITORING & REPORTING**

POOLING WATER KNOWLEDGE: WATER MONITORING & REPORTING

OVERVIEW: A growing appetite exists for information regarding the opportunities and gaps related to water quality and water quantity measuring and reporting in British Columbia. Across sectors, there is recognition of the need to understand the state of B.C.'s water and watersheds to facilitate planning and effective decision-making. With the implementation of the B.C. Water Sustainability Act, there currently exists a window of opportunity to articulate a shared vision for effective water monitoring and reporting in B.C. and identify the challenges and opportunities that exist with regards to community-based monitoring, water monitoring technology and provincial guidelines regarding data availability and accessibility.

BACKGROUND: JOINT FALL WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS

(Excerpt from Fall Workshop Summary)

Pooling Water Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Highlight concerns about reduced scope of state of our water reporting in letter to government (Co-hosts when timing appropriate)● Explore linkages to a potential water issue atlas (POLIS, 2017)● Funders collaborative to explore opportunity to bring freshwater community together with Province for water monitoring workshop (2017)
--	---

FUTURE OUTLOOK & OPPORTUNITIES

- **Webinar Series:** POLIS webinar in collaboration with BC Water Funders Collaborative Working Group on Water Monitoring & Reporting - "**Casting the Net**" webinar aimed at identifying the various sources of water data (June TBD). An additional BC Water Funders Collaborative webinar on water monitoring & reporting with a focus on regional examples of water monitoring & reporting initiatives.
- **Provincial Landscape Scan:** The Collaborative's Working Group on Water Monitoring & Reporting has convened a Steering Committee to oversee implementation of a landscape scan. The Landscape Scan Steering Committee will provide direction to the Okanagan Basin Water Board (OBWB), with representatives from the OBWB, Pacific Salmon Foundation, Columbia Basin Trust, Environment & Climate Change Canada, First Nations Fisheries Council, Living Lakes, and the BC Ministry of Environment. The Steering Committee will be supported by subject matter experts from other agencies and organizations as required. The scan will take place between May and October and is intended to inform a Fall Roundtable.
- BC Water Funders Collaborative hosting **Fall Roundtable** to discuss shared vision for water monitoring & reporting in BC and identify opportunities for collaboration.
- Living Lakes Canada Network to host a **Data Hubs Workshop** in November 2017 (TBD) to look at data housing opportunities including best practices in Alberta and across Canada.

RECENT ACTIVITIES (Fall 2016 to Present)

1. **POLIS Webinar: *Strengthening Water Monitoring and Reporting in BC*** (December 2016). In this webinar, Elizabeth Hendriks (VP Freshwater, WWF-Canada) provided an overview of information gaps, and some of the solutions and tools available to improve watershed monitoring. Katrina Connors (Director, Skeena Programs, Pacific Salmon Foundation) shared her experience in the Skeena watershed to develop collaborative partnerships and the Salmon Explorer tool. Ben Kerr (CEO, Foundry Spatial and Senior Water Scientist) offered a brief look at the data visualization tools his team has developed, such as the B.C. Water Tool.

2. **BC Water Funders Collaborative Working Group on Water Monitoring & Reporting**

The Working Group on Water Monitoring & Reporting has developed a proposal to foster discussion on a shared vision for water monitoring and reporting in British Columbia. The proposal is comprised of three parts: (i) an inventory and landscape scan; (ii) a webinar series; and (iii) a roundtable discussion in the fall. Proposed outcomes for the landscape scan, webinar and workshop include the following:

1. Identify current initiatives and information gaps related to water monitoring reporting in B.C.
2. Bring together key leaders in the field (across sectors) to share their knowledge on watershed and water monitoring and reporting initiatives.
3. Identify a shared vision and objectives for water monitoring reporting in BC as well as common framing language.
4. Identify opportunities to test and further develop collaborative approaches, alignment of strategies and potential partnerships.

The scan and webinar series are intended to lay the foundations for a roundtable in early Fall.

POOLING WATER KNOWLEDGE NETWORK

- OBWB
- Pacific Salmon Foundation
- Columbia Basin Trust
- Environment & Climate Change Canada
- REFBC
- First Nations Fisheries Council
- Living Lakes Canada Network
- BC Ministry of Environment
- POLIS Water Sustainability Project

FURTHER RESOURCES & INITIATIVES

- Columbia Basin Trust has recently released its report on water monitoring in the region entitled, "[Water Monitoring and Climate Change in the Upper Columbia Basin: Summary of Current Status and Opportunities](#)" (2017). The Highlights are [here](#).
- Carlson, T., Cohen, A., and Hartwig, K. (2017). "[A Snapshot of Community Based Water Monitoring in Canada](#)"
- National Report, "[Realizing the Potential of Community Based Monitoring in Assessing the Health of our Waters](#)" (Sept 2016), Kat Hartwig & Liz Hendricks
- [Counting Every Drop: The Case for Water-Use Reporting in B.C.](#) (2013)
- [BC Water Use Reporting Centre -Pilot: Okanagan Basin Water Board](#)
- [BC Water Use Reporting Centre - Pilot: Regional District of Nanaimo](#):
- [Mackenzie Data Stream](#): an open access platform for exploring and sharing water data in the Mackenzie River Basin
- Pacific Salmon Foundation's Skeena Salmon Program & data visualization program, the [Pacific Salmon Explorer](#)
- Shared Decision Making in BC Project – "[Backgrounder: Information Portals for Shared Decision-Making](#)" (June 2014)
- [Top 5 Water Challenges that will Define British Columbia's Future](#), Oliver M. Brandes and Rosie Simms (September 2016)