



**Columbia Basin Watershed Network Society**

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## CBWN Spring Member Meeting

### Summary

May 27, 2017

Room 187/188

College of the Rockies

Cranbrook BC

### Sustainable Funding and Partnerships for Watershed Stewardship

**Welcome:** The Columbia Basin Watershed Network Spring Member Meeting participants were welcomed to Ktunaxa traditional territory by Marty Williams. Marty spoke of the importance of the hydrological cycle and especially of the glaciers in the face of climate change. He spoke of salmon and their importance to riparian areas. He shared a traditional prayer that evoked a sense of communion, laying the foundation and tone for the rest of the gathering.

CBWN coordinator Tara Clapp introduced the member survey results, where 25 respondents participated, 10 CBWN member groups. The survey builds on prior work in surveys and workshops, in establishing our identity and priorities as a network of watershed stewardship groups and individuals. This survey introduces some measures of the health and connectivity of the network, but the real focus is on the highest priority issue identified by groups in the workshops across regions: sustainable funding.

The CBWN members major interests and concerns remain with water quantity and quality, and those larger ecological elements that affect it. Typically, CBWN members are not much involved with individual species activities or conservation, but attend to watersheds as ecological wholes. The activities of water monitoring are set in the context of the landscape.

Major themes identified included collective group concerns regarding the need for seed project and multi-year funding to ensure projects are well planned and organized, more opportunities for training to ensure credible data and projects. It was also identified that members seek to influence local and provincial decisions but only half directly participate in any decision-making processes. For more information on the member survey and for further survey results, please see [cbwn.ca](http://cbwn.ca).

The CBWN then investigated how innovative non-profit watershed stewardship groups are working with others and finding sustainable funding.

Three panellists joined us from across the basin. Firstly Jon Souder, Oregon State University and Network of Oregon Watershed Councils spoke of the importance of coffee klatches, or coffee table discussions with community members to assess landowner and local concerns or needs. He discussed

the importance developing shared perspectives, values, visions and goals for stakeholders within the planning stages to move forward with projects that are a priority, well organized and well communicated such as their Action Prioritization Criteria that was developed for the Estuary Management Plan update. This was funded by the US federal government through multi-year funding.

Gerry Wilke and Juliet Craig spoke of the Kootenay Conservation Program and the Columbia Valley Local Conservation Fund that has raised over 1 million dollars since its establishment at \$20/parcel/year from landowners of areas elected to establish the fund. They spoke of the benefits of using the fund to leverage other funders and partners for water stewardship and conservation initiatives. The Kootenay Lake Conservation Fund was established in 2015. KCP helps manage both of these projects, helps select experts for the project technical review committee which makes recommendations to the regional district, providing bridges for partnership between multi-stakeholder groups. The program provides opportunity for successful projects due to strong technical oversight, general public acceptance due to the establishment of the tax in those areas that projects will be developed and using in-kind and collaborative partnerships for further leveraging of other stakeholders and funders. (See KCP Conservation Fund Video here: <http://kootenayconservation.ca/conservation-fund/cvpcf/>).

Stella Swanson with the Elk River Alliance was the final panellist to discuss sources of funds – old and new- for watershed stewardship in the basin. With the floods in 2013 the ERA was able to leverage funds in a reactive time. Through identifying existing needs, values and goals of a variety of stakeholders in the Elk Valley moving forward after the floods the ERA developed the Elk River Flood Strategy. The success of this project was due to seed funding, experts involved to provide oversight, fund leveraging through in kind support, universities and MITACS.

All three panelists offered compelling examples of how they were able to partner effectively with local governments and others to create new opportunities for watershed stewardship over the longer term. The importance of partnerships to sustaining these multi-year projects and agendas was consistent across all three presentations. All three examples included important roles played by key staff in addition to Boards, as staff were important in sustaining the effort and gathering more resources over time.

Please see break out session discussion themes below.

*Understanding Basin Water Resources* the recent CBT report presented by Dr. Martin Carver provided the Spring Member Meeting with a larger lens to water issues in the basin. Dr. Carver shared basin climate change projections and what this looks like for the water resources. He shared what is currently being monitored and gaps to those monitoring initiatives including northern, high elevation small watershed systems, glaciers, groundwater and wetlands. For more information and the complete gap analysis here (<https://ourtrust.org/learn-more-water-resources-basin/>). There was a clear need for an increase in collaboration, increase capacity through community-based monitoring (CBM), increase access to public data and a need to assemble a big picture understanding for groups to work collaboratively from. Through discussion many questions touched on the usefulness of overlaying the papers existing research maps in order to identify data gaps and locations that CBM could focus on and relate these efforts to the climate change projections identified through the study.

The current state of CBM across Canada from *A Snapshot of Community Based Water Monitoring in Canada* co-authored and presented by Kat Hartwig, provided groups the opportunity to compare and contrast their respective projects. The survey of CBM groups across Canada provided insight to other project goals, equipment, engagement and technology and how and where the data are being used. Find the full CBM scan here

(<http://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/pwrc/PDFs/CBM%20Snapshot%20Report.pdf>). Major highlights of the scan included that 70% of CBM projects do not include Traditional Ecological Knowledge, the need for open source data sharing and data hubs so that data is useable, standardized and accessible to decision-makers. It was mentioned that the BC Water Funders are doing a similar scan for BC, further delving into CBM projects and who's doing what with whom.

Bonnie Harvey summarized the days presentations and shared wu?u?naTa "Ripple in the Water" for all of the groups efforts amounting make a difference, constructive damage to the status quo. She encouraged groups to reach out to their local band offices to include First Nation communities. She compared language, culture and spiritual beliefs to the tipi poles and water being the rope holding them all together, that intertwines everything.

### **Breakout sessions**

*Sources of Funds:* What are the sources of fund and resources – old and new- for watershed stewardship?

Private, Government (municipal, district, provincial, federal), Foundations, Industry, Boards, Legacy Funds, universities and colleges

- larger amounts of money= bigger impacts
- support for small groups to access initial funds
- more grants/resources to pay employees, not only project based funds
- limit competition but provide support for collaboration initiatives – how can partnerships apply for funding together fairly.
- When large grants end, how do these gaps get filled?

*Needs and Priorities: goals/gaps:* What are the goals that your group has that are not currently being resourced?

- Water quality monitoring is getting to expensive for small organizations, how can (government) support these initiatives to fill the gaps.
- More technical support, protocols and expertise for more credible and comparable data
- More seed funding for planning and research before project implementation – who determines monitoring locations and protocols to be used
- More administrative capacity

- Resources for outreach, granting and follow up
- Need greater efficiency in how funds are paid out
- Citizens need training to become citizen scientists to help with data collection, trainings for standardization of protocols between monitoring groups
- What are the existing data hubs? → EcoCat database (need to be government sponsored), RDI (need to integrate with other data sets), who owns the data?

*Funding Strategies: shared values and partnerships:* What potential partners might share some part of those goals?

- how can First Nation, local governments and non- profits collaborate better? Leveraging of funds, communication, sharing of information, identifying shared priorities
- more government support on higher levels
- regional collaboration
- BCLSS as example for government partner with NGO (discontinued 2014, gov't employee would oversee, NGO perform data collection)

Suggested Future roles for CBWN via group discussions:

- Assistance with groups and grant writing – providing resources – professional grant writer
- Role for moving data “up the chain”, provide road map to data trail, how to find data, data hub
- Provide opportunities for protocol training or re-certification programs to ensure credible data

### **Next Member Gatherings**

Fall Member Meeting: September 23, Nelson BC

Watch for the Data Hub, Fairmont Hot Springs