



Sustainable Funding for Watershed Governance Initiative (SFWGI)

Elk River, Sparwood, BC. (Picture BC)

BC's freshwater is central to ecological health and supports our communities and economies. Watershed governance is about decision-making and processes that govern how we use and impact water. The introduction of BC's *Water Sustainability Act* includes the possibility for new opportunities in watershed governance, highlighting a need to focus attention on the financial resiliency of our local watershed governance organizations.

The Sustainable Funding for Watershed Governance Initiative (SFWGI) was created to improve collaborative watershed organizations' capacity to secure sustainable funding. The SFWGI supports exploring and testing funding mechanisms (taxes, levies, social finance, etc.) to build capacity, nurture partnerships, and foster collaboration among organizations in BC's watershed governance community.

The time is now

Watershed organizations at all stages of development – new, growing and mature – need sustainable sources of funding to continue and enhance the work they do in BC communities. In many parts of the province, these organizations struggle to find ongoing funding or are uncertain about the risks or benefits of revenue tools (taxes, levies, etc.) available to help fund watershed governance in their communities.

With the *Water Sustainability Act* coming into force in February 2016, it is an important time to test funding options and to develop capacity building tools that will help support sustainable watershed management.



Watershed governance organizations work within an ecological boundary to address decision-making approaches, management and promote the stewardship of fresh water. Successful models of watershed governance are influenced by local priorities, geography, history, culture, and economics. The ultimate goal is healthy functioning watersheds, and to ensure sufficient, clean fresh water now and into the future. (adopted from POLIS, 2016)



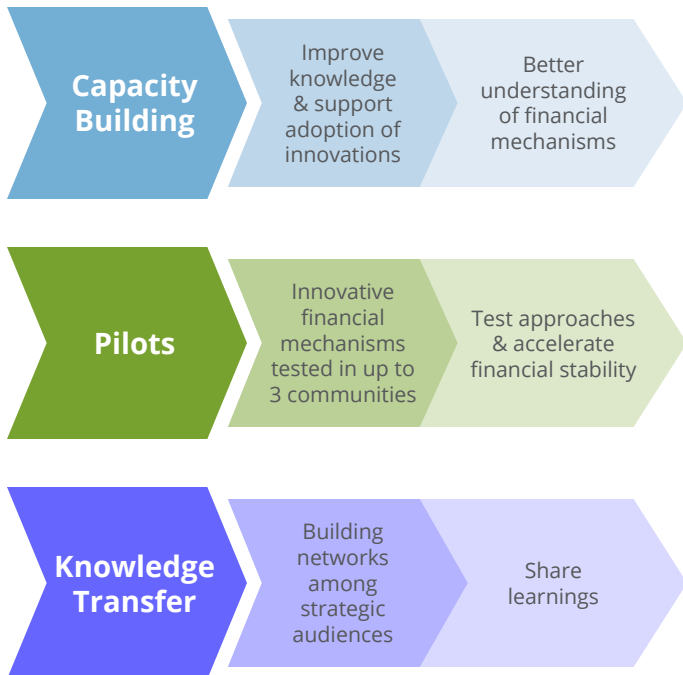
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The path forward

The SFWGI will help identify and accelerate the adoption of new funding mechanisms to support sustainable watershed governance and management.

With support of project partners, the SFWGI will:

1. **Improve knowledge about existing and new funding mechanisms** to support watershed governance and management activities;
2. **Test funding models** on a pilot project basis in specific watersheds to support specific watershed governance processes; and,
3. **Transfer knowledge** about funding watershed governance activities to other communities and watersheds across the province.



What does success look like?

By 2019, pilot communities will achieve the following outcomes:

- One to three local watersheds will pilot a sustainable funding mechanism for watershed governance.
- Local governments will be more engaged and informed about the value of collaborative watershed governance organizations in their communities.
- A higher capacity among a network of collaborative watershed governance organizations about sustainable funding mechanisms.

Who are we?

The Sustainable Funding for Watershed Governance Initiative comprises the following partners:

- POLIS Water Sustainability Project
- Real Estate Foundation BC
- BC Ministry of Environment
- Fraser Basin Council
- BC Water Funders Collaborative
- First Nations Fisheries Council
- Private Forest Landowners Association
- Local Governments

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