

First Nations Integrated Watershed Planning

4. Achieving Consensus on the Plan: Design the Plan



Project Team:

Sarah Cooper, Daniel Gladu Kanu, Lisa Hardess, Amanda Karst, Merrell-Ann Phare, Krista Scott

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Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources

Tel: (204) 956-0660

Fax: (204) 956-1895

E-mail: earth@cier.ca

Web: www.cier.ca

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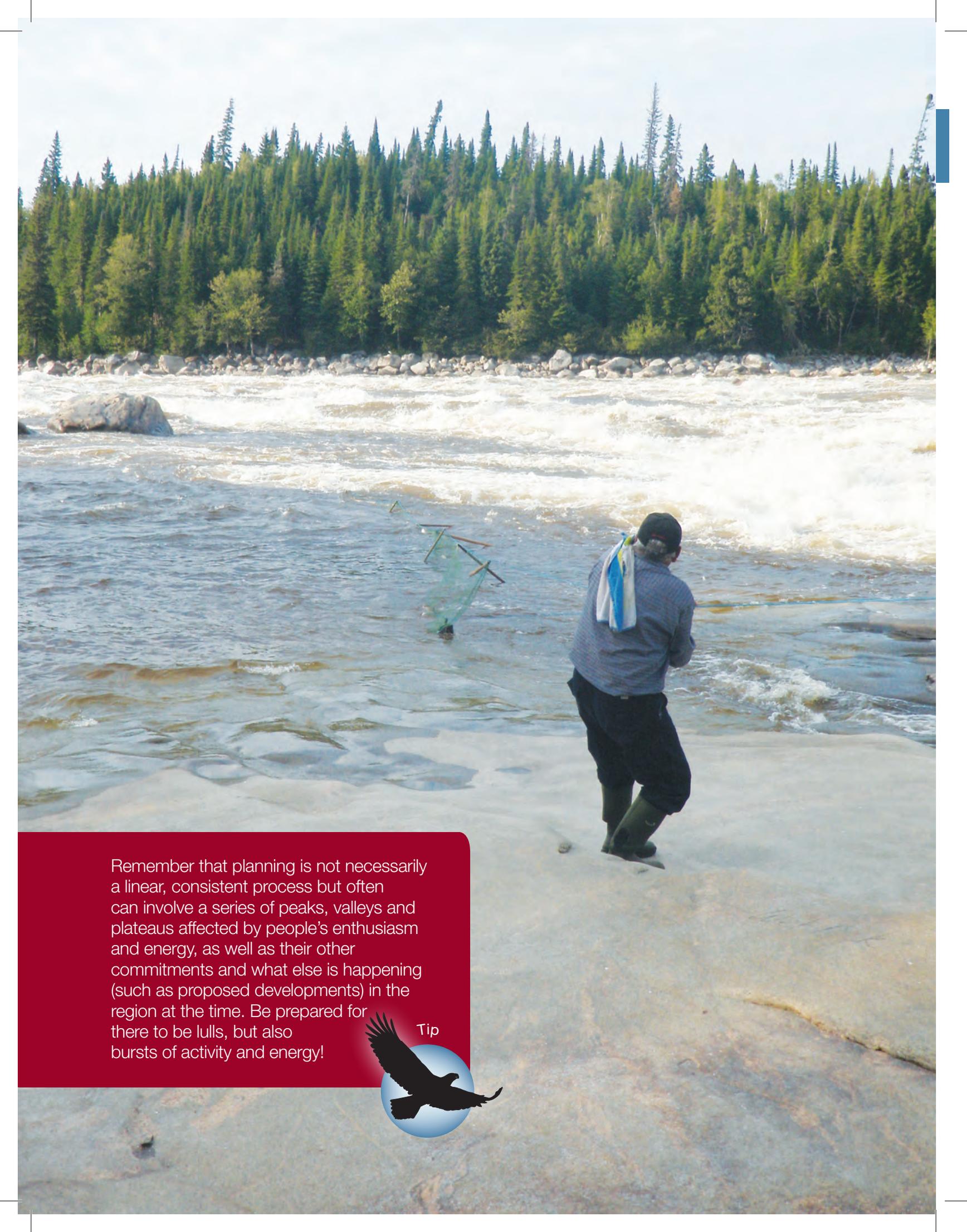
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A person wearing a blue and white checkered shirt, dark pants, and green rubber boots is standing on a sandy bank, fishing in a river. The river has white water rapids. In the background, there is a dense forest of evergreen trees. A fishing net is visible in the water.

Remember that planning is not necessarily a linear, consistent process but often can involve a series of peaks, valleys and plateaus affected by people's enthusiasm and energy, as well as their other commitments and what else is happening (such as proposed developments) in the region at the time. Be prepared for there to be lulls, but also bursts of activity and energy!

Tip



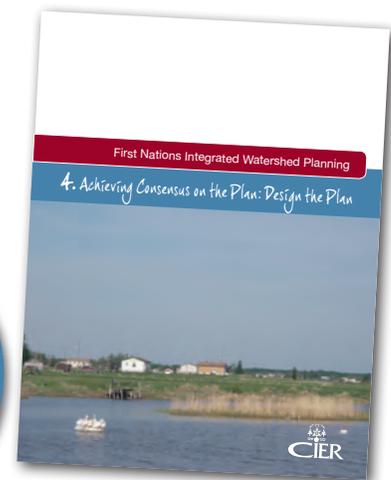
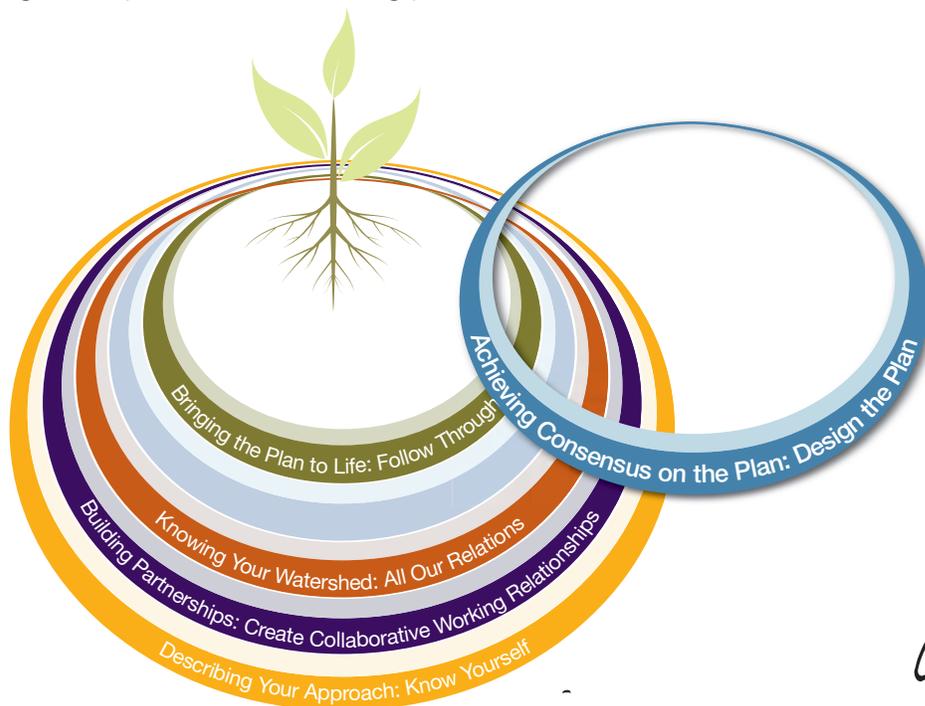
INTRODUCTION

With a Steering Committee in place and the process for how you will work together developed, you can begin to work on the formal watershed plan. The Steering Committee will begin to make decisions and work as a group to define a vision, identify issues, solutions and priorities, set goals and objectives, and create measures to evaluate success. The way the plan is developed is critical because to truly move forward on implementation everyone has to contribute and agree on the vision, goals, priorities and actions.

During this stage of the planning process, you will be drawing on all the work that was done in the previous three guidebooks. Your First Nation's approach to planning and your relationship to the watershed (explored in the first guidebook, *Describing Your Approach*) is defined so it can be incorporated throughout all aspects of the plan. You have or are building trusting relationships within the Steering Committee and will be applying the agreed-upon decision making process to

develop the watershed plan (discussed in the second guidebook, *Building Partnerships*). You will be relying on Indigenous and scientific knowledge to understand the state of the watershed (gathered through the third guidebook, *Knowing Your Watershed*) and will set priorities and goals based on this information.

Where you start in this guidebook will depend on where you are in the process of developing a watershed plan. Watershed planning processes can develop in different ways, involve different stakeholders and rights-holders, and address different priorities depending on the region. Your focus can also depend on whether your First Nation has taken a leadership role in the watershed planning process, has been part of another's watershed planning process from early on, or is jumping into a process that is already significantly underway.



Guidebook #4

ENTERING THE PROCESS

Whether you are leading the watershed planning process or not, this guidebook is not meant as a linear step-by-step guide to developing the plan (although you may use it that way if that works best to meet your needs). You may find that some areas are higher priority than others, or that some work has already been done. As you read through this document, flag the areas that are most important to you, and concentrate on those first. Before getting into the plan itself, this section provides a brief overview on engaging community members as the plan is developed.

Community Engagement

Throughout the first guidebook, *Describing Your Approach*, we talked about the importance of gathering input from the community as the watershed planning process begins. You will have already done some work to understand your First Nation's perspective through identifying a community vision, values and issues relating to your watershed, and can continue this important work during the planning process. Other members of the Steering Committee should also be checking in with decision makers and their constituents to share information about the process, and to hear and include their concerns and priorities in the process as well.

Just as you grounded your part of the process in ideas and feedback from your First Nation, the ongoing process will be stronger and more responsive to everyone's needs if input from all the communities in the region is included throughout the planning process. If there is strong disagreement at the community level about the

directions identified in the watershed plan, implementing the plan could be very difficult. Although it may not be possible to meet everyone's needs, it will be to your advantage if there is, at minimum, agreement about the general direction of the plan.

For this reason, it is important to talk to the broader community about the watershed planning process. The Steering Committee may have already generally discussed when and how this input and feedback will be gathered, but now is the time to finalize how that will be accomplished. A formal strategy for outreach, sometimes called a community engagement plan or outreach plan, with the various communities, stakeholders and rights-holders is highly desirable.

Each participating organisation or government will have its own purpose for and ways of communicating and engaging with its members or constituents. However, it is important to reach agreement, as a group, on how much engagement should take place, and at what points in the process. Being clear about what information will be shared, when, and with whom, is necessary to ensure that the broader stakeholder and rights-holders groups are included and accountable in the process to the extent necessary to meet everyone's needs, concerns, and requirements. Developing and publicising this kind of plan means that all the stakeholders and rights-holders will know in advance when and how they will have the opportunity to comment on the plan, and how their perspectives will be taken into account.

A Community Engagement Plan generally includes:



Purpose: What is the intended outcome of the outreach activities (e.g. building partnerships, building awareness, sharing information, gathering feedback and direction, developing support)?

Message: What are the key messages that will be conveyed through the outreach?

Audience: Who will be engaged in the outreach activities? Who should be included? Who will be responsible for organising and carrying out the activities?

Methods of outreach: What kind of activities will be used (e.g. open house, surveys, radio announcements)? Will they be the same across the watershed, or are there different activities for different areas or groups of stakeholders or rights-holders?

Timing: When will outreach happen? At what stages in the process?

Location: Where will the activities take place?

Feedback: If you gather feedback, how will it be gathered and incorporated into the plan? How will you incorporate the feedback received throughout the planning process? Will the Steering Committee report back to the wider community? How will this communication and outreach be implemented throughout in the process? Will the Steering Committee be seeking interim or final approval of the watershed plan from participants? Is feedback all that is required?

Throughout this guidebook, suggested opportunities for engagement both with the wider community and with members your First Nation are provided. Being an advocate for good community engagement by sharing your ideas about the engagement process and encouraging others to reach out to their own members can dramatically increase the quality of the feedback the Steering Committee receives.





It is important to consider the details of your engagement plan early on, as the answers will determine what kind of information is shared and gathered from the different communities in the watershed. For example, if the intent is to share basic information, distributing an informational flyer may be appropriate. On the other hand, if the information is to share information and hear back about people's concerns and priorities relating to the watershed, an open house may be a better option.

You may find that it is best to offer a few different ways of engaging people. Some people enjoy attending open houses and will be more than happy to participate. Others will be more comfortable reviewing a website, and offering feedback via email or an online questionnaire. Others may not be interested in participating in community engagement processes at all. The important thing is to offer opportunities for people to know and learn about the watershed planning process and to provide input if they wish. Depending on the different interests and groups within the watershed, it may be a good idea to host an event to bring all the different communities and groups together. Alternatively, each local government could be responsible for engaging its own constituents.

Timing

One of the important questions about community engagement, especially in a lengthy process such as watershed planning, is about the timing of the engagements. When in the process is it helpful to receive feedback from the public?

Basically, the more feedback you can gather as the planning process proceeds, the stronger the plan will be because you have more opportunities to ensure that it addresses the needs and concerns of the constituencies within the watershed. Gathering feedback early in the process will ensure that the direction of the plan is solid; continuing to gather feedback throughout will ensure that you remain on track.

As you think about engaging the broader community in developing the watershed plan, also consider how to engage your First Nation membership. At which stages in the process is it important to share information and hear input from community members? Should some information be shared with just the First Nation watershed planning group, while other information should be shared with the whole membership? As you develop the plan, remember to build in time for these conversations. See *Guidebook One: Describing Your Approach*, for more information on community engagement.

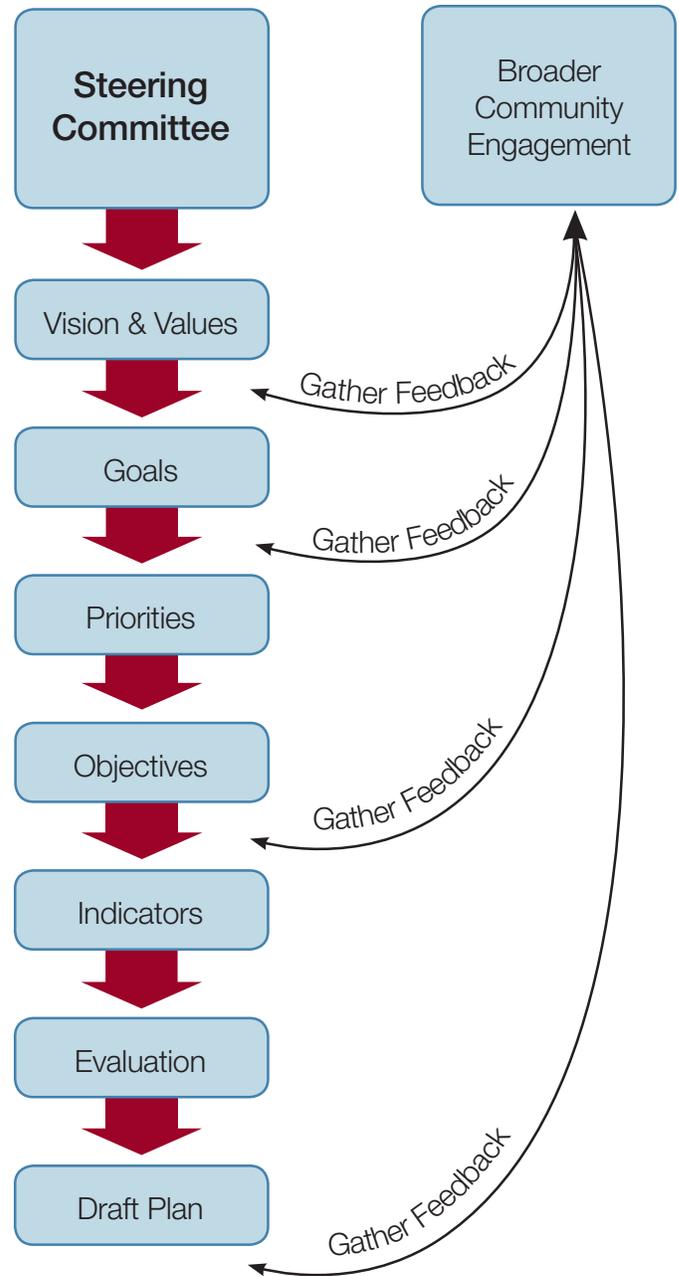
Tip



At the same time, having too many community engagement events will be tiring and time-consuming for the Steering Committee, and may begin to seem repetitive for community members. Although you may want to gather feedback and reactions regarding each aspect of the plan as it is developed, consider instead the key elements of the plan. For example, you may want to check in with the broader community about:

- The draft vision and statement of values
- The draft goals and discussion of issues
- The goal priorities and objectives
- Key elements of the draft plan as it is developed
- The draft plan.

This will ensure that you have enough information to continue with the next step of developing the plan, and will also to make sure you are on track and that the plan will



Track how decisions are made – keep a written record of the process for how decisions were made, and what kinds of community engagement took place. Especially when dealing with potentially contentious topics, good records can show the integrity in the process that was used.

Tip

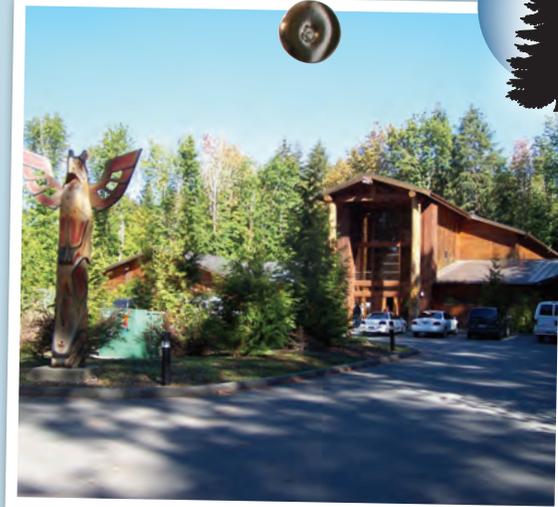




Story

Reaching the Wider Somass Watershed Community

Hupacasath First Nation hosted meetings and public open houses for the Somass Basin Watershed Management Planning Committee (SBWMPC) at their House of Gathering. At these meetings, the SBWMPC shared its work with the wider community, and invited the wider community to provide feedback on the proposed directions and projects it was undertaking.





Holding an Open House

Holding an open house can be a good way to share information and hear feedback. An open house can include 'stations' or areas with information about different aspects of the watershed or planning process. Since people can drop in and leave, and can move among the stations to find what they are most interested in, it is a flexible way to hear from a wide range of people.

When thinking about how to bring people together, first review your goals. What you want to achieve should inform how you structure and communicate the event. For example, you may include posters or expert presentations about certain aspects of the work or have Steering Committee members on hand to answer questions if your main goal is to explain and share information. If you wish to receive feedback and ideas from the public, provide opportunities at the open house for people to write, draw, or speak about their perspective on the watershed. If you wish to maintain communication, provide sign-up lists where participants can be contacted to maintain engagement in the process, participate in future meetings or receive documentation.

To plan an open house, find a time and location that is as accessible to everyone as possible. A door prize can encourage attendance – you may be able to get a prize donated from a local business. Set up any displays and posters and equipment needed to allow for presentations and feedback. Keep in mind that different people may share information in different ways. Some people may prefer to sit and chat over a cup of coffee, while others may be comfortable writing out a page of comments. Ways of engaging people include:

- Posters with questions for people to answer, along with sticky notes and pens.
- A short questionnaire that people can fill in as they walk around. If you have a door prize, link it to a completed questionnaire to encourage more people to provide feedback.
- Maps of the region that people can draw or make notes on.
- 'Dot-mocracy' is a tool where people can show how they agree or disagree with a statement by putting sticky dots onto a poster (see page 48 for more detail about dot-mocracy).

And there are many other possibilities – *The Community Planning Handbook* by Nick Wates has excellent ideas on how to engage people in the planning process.

activity



WRITING THE PLAN

As you work your way through this guidebook, you will be developing and writing the watershed plan. Although all plans are different, depending on the context and participants in the process, plans usually include the following:

Background context to the plan:

- Where are the watershed boundaries?
- What are particular features, concerns, or strengths of the watershed that would affect the plan?
- Who are the stakeholders and rights-holders in the watershed?
- What other relevant plans exist?
- What development is planned?
- What are the relevant legal or policy considerations?

The summary of the watershed planning process:

- Who was involved?
- How was the plan developed?

The summary of the state of the watershed:

- What are the key findings from the 'State of the Watershed' report (developed in *Guidebook Three: Knowing Your Watershed*)? Some plans include the full 'State of the Watershed' report as an appendix or supplementary document that describes the current context of the watershed and is summarised in the watershed plan.

The vision statement:

- What do you hope the watershed will look like in the future?

Statement of values:

- What is the importance of water and the watershed to the stakeholders and rights-holders?

Goals and objectives:

- What are you going to do to address the issues in your watershed?

A timeline or schedule for implementing the plan:

- What actions will happen when?

Indicators and an evaluation plan:

- How will you know you've achieved what you set out to achieve?

If there is anything else that you feel is important to include, don't be limited by this list!

The Steering Committee already has at least some of this information – for example, you have set a boundary for the plan, gathered stakeholders and rights-holders, and have developed a process for developing the plan. You have gathered information about the watershed, and about the values of the people building the watershed plan. This is a great beginning, and this guidebook will help you work through the rest of these components. By the end of it, you should have a draft watershed plan ready to be finalised!

Remember, too, that planning is part of a process, an ongoing cycle. Once you have developed the plan, the next steps are to implement, monitor and revisit the plan. These steps are discussed in *Guidebook Five: Bringing the Plan to Life*.

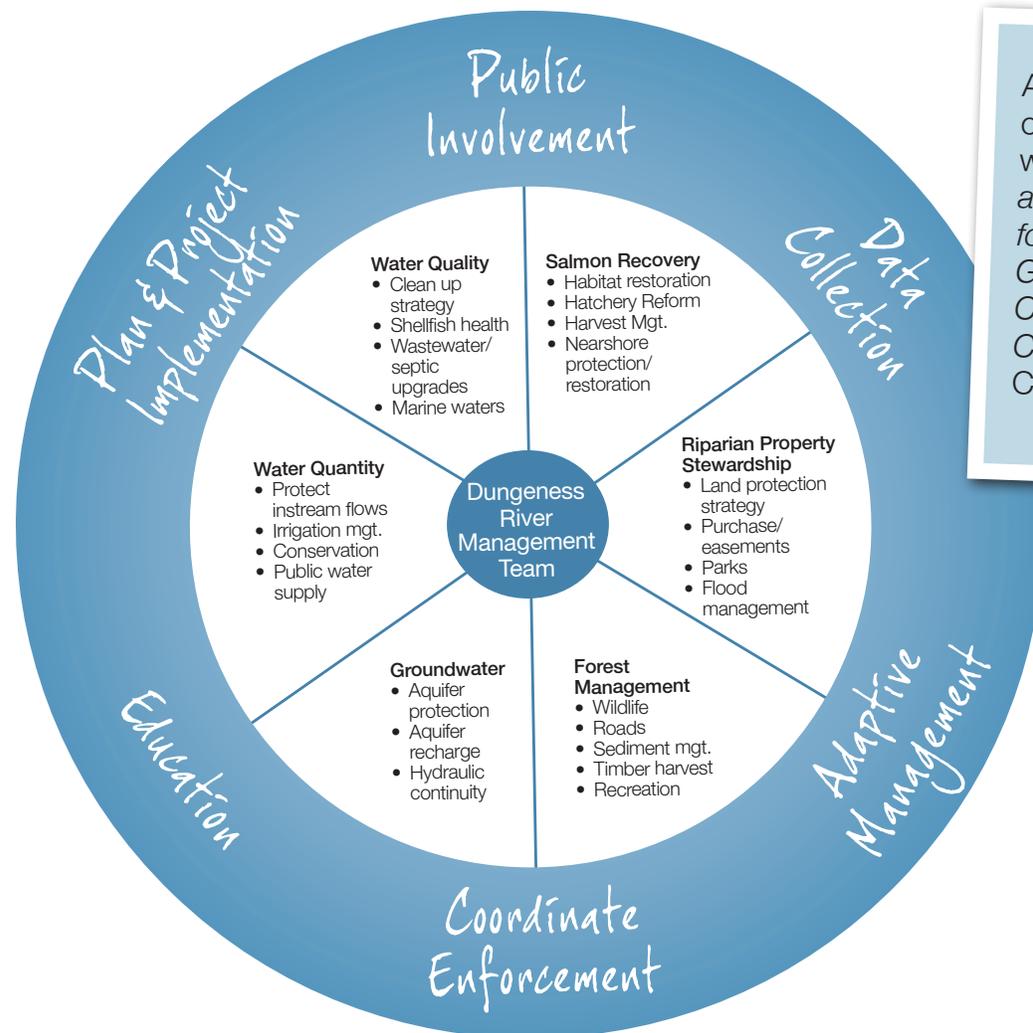
Watershed planning processes will take different amounts of time, but they are rarely quick. Because there are so many stakeholders and rights-holders to be included, expect the process to take at least a year, and maybe even a few years.



Explaining the Watershed Planning Process

Creating an image that expresses the process you used and the major areas of work can be a powerful way to demonstrate the relationships among different areas of work, and the ways in which the Steering Committee has worked to develop the plan. You may want to include this in the plan as a way of illustrating the context of the work that has been undertaken.

For example, this image is included in the Dungeness Watershed Plan, Washington State, U.S.A., to explain the activities of the Dungeness River Management Team, which is co-led by the Clallam County Board of Commissioners and the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe.



Another useful resource on developing a watershed plan, is *Water and Watershed Planning for Communities: A Guide to Navigating Change in British Columbia* (Fraser Basin Council, 2011).

Tip



More Details



Adapted from Figure 2-1 of *Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe Watershed Plan*

VISION AND VALUES

The first step in creating a plan is to develop a statement of common vision and values with the Steering Committee. The vision is how you imagine or hope the watershed will be in 30, 50 or 100 years – a time farther into the future than your watershed plan will reach. The values are the foundation, ideals, or ways of relating to water that motivate you to work towards that vision.

Although people are often excited and enthusiastic to begin the process of developing the watershed plan, it is important to build trust and partnerships before beginning the visioning process. This is why we recommend you take the time to build trust in *Guidebook Two: Building Partnerships*, so that the Steering Committee members become more comfortable with each other and know each other a bit better before sitting down to develop the vision and values together. Taking the time to do this will help you to understand others' perspectives, build relationships among the participants, and make better decisions together.

You might have already talked about values in your relationship-building stage when you shared stories or talked about what the watershed means to you. This current step is about formalising and agreeing to a vision and a set of common values with the Steering Committee. This section will review the purpose of, and how to go about, developing a statement of vision and values.

The Vision

There are two main purposes to developing a common vision statement for the watershed. The first is that the vision will serve as the overarching hoped-for results – the desired end point – of implementing the plan itself. The second is that the process of developing your vision will help you to identify the main concerns, priorities and even preliminary solutions for the plan.

A good vision statement is inspiring. When the going gets tough, the vision statement will remind you of why you are doing this work. It will also help you to make decisions, because every step will bring you closer to achieving your vision. Creating the vision is an exciting part of the process – and it is fun because it allows us to let go of the practicalities that seem to block our way and just dream about the future.

Tip



Sometimes we want to just jump into the road and go, but it's not clear which direction we should take. Thinking about our final destination will help us figure out the best way to get there.

Alice: "Could you tell me please which way I ought to go from here?"
Cheshire Cat: "That depends a good deal on where you want to get to."
~ Lewis Carroll (1865)

As the Steering Committee talks about the vision – what you see as the best possible future for the watershed – it’s likely that it will also talk about the current challenges for the watershed. Although you want to stay focused on a positive future for the watershed during your discussions, you may find it useful to make notes about the major concerns and challenges that come up. These are the areas where you will focus the plan later on, so this information will be useful in later stages of the plan development.

Tip



If you find that the conversation veers away from its intended focus, it may be helpful to create a chart paper titled ‘Parking Lot’ where you can write down these issues or ideas as they come up. Then you can return to them at a more appropriate time.

Vision Statement vs. Mission Statement

A vision statement should be written in the present tense and describes what the desired future looks like when it is achieved.

More Details



“The Simpcw are a culturally proud community valuing healthy, holistic lifestyles based upon respect, responsibility and continuous participation in growth & education.”

~ Simpcw First Nation (2011)

“The Vision for the Shoal Lake watershed is one of a healthy ecosystem with excellent water quality, and healthy communities with strong and sustainable economies that respect the cultural and traditional values of the communities served”

~ Shoal Lake Watershed Working Group (2002)

A mission statement describes how the watershed plan will achieve the vision.

“The mission statement of the RRIW is to promote, provide and conduct an international alliance between Manitoba and Minnesota which will work towards the proper management of the resources of the Roseau River Watershed, including flood control, economic, human and natural resources, and water quality and quantity”

~ Roseau River Watershed Plan Steering Committee (2007)

“We, the Indigenous Tribes/First Nations from the headwaters to the mouth of the Yukon River, having been placed here by our Creator, do hereby agree to initiate and continue the clean up and preservation of the Yukon River for the protection of our own and future generations of our Tribes/First Nations and for the continuation of our traditional Native way of life”

~Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council (2008)

The Values

A statement of values outlines common values that are important to the watershed and its inhabitants. These values guide the behaviours of the Steering Committee and direct the outcomes of the decision making that will create the watershed plan. A statement of values sets out the standards: when the Committee has decisions to make, the values can help to think through the impacts of the decision and how it might fit with the Committee's values.

As discussed in the first and second guidebooks, *Describing Your Approach* and *Building Partnerships*, talking about values is an important part of the planning process. Talking about why water is important ensures that people are thinking about water and the watershed in a broad, holistic way, rather than through a single lens (e.g. in economic terms). It also allows people to identify values they may share, and to understand more about the perspectives of those whose values they may not share.



Perspective Matters...

Sometimes different participants in the watershed planning process will have very different values, often based upon cultural differences. For example, while many First Nations would consider that a value such as 'respect' or 'respect for water' includes the idea that a river, watershed or the earth itself has rights (e.g. rights to exist, rights to nourish and sustain humans and other life), in the western world this would likely be considered a value possessed by humans (Water-Culture Institute, 2010). In the first perspective, the value statement indicates that a river has the right to be healthy in and of itself, aside from any benefits to humans. In the second perspective, that may not be the case.

If this is an important consideration for your First Nation, be explicit about what this means for your First Nation and for the planning process. This will emphasise the rights of the land and waters to ensure they are respected throughout the planning process.



Statements of Values

Here are two different examples of statements of values from two different organisations.

Our Values for the watershed

- Spiritual qualities
- Ecosystem integrity
- Natural beauty
- Native bio-diversity
- Natural resources
- Public access
- Home/Heritage/Culture
- Responsibility to protect
- Recreation
- Protected areas
- Sustainability.

~ Coquitlam River Watershed Strategy, Coquitlam, British Columbia (2009)



Common Values

The following values are derived from existing laws, treaties, agreements, policies, community-based conservation efforts, and a 2008 meeting of the Roundtable on the Crown of the Continent. The values are not listed in any order of priority.

- We value healthy landscapes, and will work to maintain their many attributes, including but not limited to water quality, water quantity, and wildlife habitat and corridors.
- We appreciate and respect diverse cultures, beginning with First Nations and Native Americans, and including the ranching, mountain, conservation, motorized and non-motorized recreation, arts, and other cultures.
- We are committed to fostering liveable communities, including rural lifestyles and emerging urban centers.
- We value local economies based on agriculture, small business, geo-tourism, natural resource management (e.g. timber and oil and gas), ranching, and outfitting, and will work to enhance such opportunities and protect private property rights.
- We value working lands, and will work to sustain the region's agricultural heritage, open lands, native plant communities, and habitat for fish and wildlife.
- We value public lands and resources for multiple uses, and will work to restore and protect these lands and resources.
- We value public access, and seek to protect and enhance access for hunting, fishing, camping, and other outdoor recreation pursuits in wilderness areas and other public lands.
- We support community-based partnerships, and will work to enable them to achieve their goals and aspirations.
- We value learning about the region's history, communities, and landscapes, and will promote opportunities for education and research about this special place.
- We appreciate the need to work across boundaries, and will facilitate communication, cooperation, and partnerships across international, jurisdictional, cultural, public and private sectors, and other borders.

~ Friends of the Crown, Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park, Alberta and Montana (date unknown)

Story



Developing a Vision and Statement of Values

Developing the Vision

When the Steering Committee begins talking about its vision, think about how far into the future it should be. The plan you will create may be for 5, 10 or 20 years, but the vision should be for more than that – a minimum of 30 years, and maybe even 50 or 100 years. The vision should represent the future, even long after this watershed plan is over. Be sure to bring in your First Nation's way of thinking about the future. The plan that you will develop will lead you towards the vision, so it needs to be far reaching and like a 'light at the end of the tunnel' that everyone is working towards.

The first guidebook, *Describing Your Approach*, talked about developing a community vision with your First Nation. You can use similar exercises with the Steering Committee to develop a vision for the planning process. As you begin the conversation with the Steering Committee, share the vision your First Nation developed. Explain the key elements that the vision is built on. Use this as an opportunity to invite others to share your vision, and to build on it. Others may have pieces to add, or they may have a different vision to share.



For many First Nations, traditional decision making is done in consideration of seven generations. Some people talk about the impacts of decisions on the next seven generations. Others talk about standing in the middle of the seven, living with the decisions of the past three generations and considering how our actions and decisions will affect the next three. Often, the generations are not limited to human generations, but include the ancestors and offspring of all species and entities.

Share your First Nation's approach to the time scale for planning to encourage the Steering Committee to take a long-term view so that all needs of all generations can be considered.



Activity



Developing a Common Vision

One way to develop a common vision is to gather the members of the Steering Committee together. Talk about the four aspects of sustainability (social, economic, environmental, cultural) and what each area represents in the watershed. Now, sit in silence and close your eyes for a couple of minutes. Imagine that you have a bird's eye view of the watershed. What does the watershed look like? What are people in the watershed doing?

Distribute sticky notes and invite people to write one idea per note for what they see in the future. Stick them onto a board with the headings of the four aspects, and see where there are common themes, or gaps. Maybe one aspect has lots of ideas; another may not have many. Have a conversation about why that may be. Are there more ideas that can be added through the conversation?



To develop your vision statement, look at the main themes or keywords that pop out from the four aspects. Write these up on a flipchart and play around with them. How do they fit together to create a vision of the future? Add in other words to fill it out. Although the vision is of the future, write it in the present tense – it makes a stronger impact that way. Using the present tense also makes a statement that this is what we will see in the future, versus what we only hope or dream of seeing.

For a detailed description of a visioning exercise see *Guidebook One: Describing Your Approach*, page 60-61

Sharing the Vision

When you are thinking about how to share the vision with others in the watershed, don't feel limited to mere words. You can also use art or a logo to illustrate the vision. This might be an opportunity to hold a logo competition, or to invite students and youth to draw pictures of how they see the vision.

Activity



Developing The Values

In the second guidebook, *Building Partnerships*, we talked about values and the importance of discussing values. This is an opportunity to formalise those values into a statement. Although people may not be comfortable just writing out a list of values, you can review the storytelling and sharing you've already done and use that as a starting point.

With the ideas you gathered previously, draft a statement of values that expresses both the diversity of the Steering Committee and the shared or important values to be reflected in, and guide, the watershed plan. It may not be possible to include all the values – pick the ones that are most important to the group, and that are most important to the watershed. As you have these conversations, keep notes on the major issues that arise as you talk about the watershed.

Quote



“Cultural values and environmental ethics are at the foundation of water policies and management decisions.”
~ Water-Culture Institute (2010)



Because values determine how and what decisions are made, but are often not discussed, they can remain hidden and unclear. Sometimes how people act, or the policies that determine actions, don't match with their stated values. This can be frustrating, to say the least!

Do current watershed policies and laws match the Steering Committee's values? If not, use your statement of values as an opportunity to ensure that you discuss what kinds of values you want to see reflected in watershed policies. Acknowledge that sometimes behaviour doesn't match values, and talk about how to change this. As well, think about how to build new values into the plan. Simply having a good plan isn't necessarily enough to change people's actions. What is needed for people to change their values and actions (e.g. education, incentives)? How can this be incorporated into the plan?

Check back to your statement of values throughout the process to make sure that the decisions reflect the values. Be creative as you develop actions to ensure that these new actions (e.g. programs, policies) incorporate the stated values, rather than falling back on 'the way things have always been done'.

Tip



STATE OF THE WATERSHED

Now that the vision for the watershed is top of mind, but before you begin a discussion of issues and goals, the Steering Committee needs to discuss the information gathered to 'Know Your Watershed'. You want to be clear about the actual state of the watershed and what this means in order to understand the issues and make informed decisions about goals and priorities for action.

The third guidebook, *Knowing Your Watershed*, outlined the many pieces of information required to understand the state of the watershed and resulted in a technical document – a State of the Watershed Report – that both characterised the watershed and assessed the overall issues. The watershed plan itself does not need to include the full watershed assessment report – it would be a very long and technical watershed plan if it did! – but it should provide a summary of key findings and assessments that inform the vision, goals and actions that follow.

Story

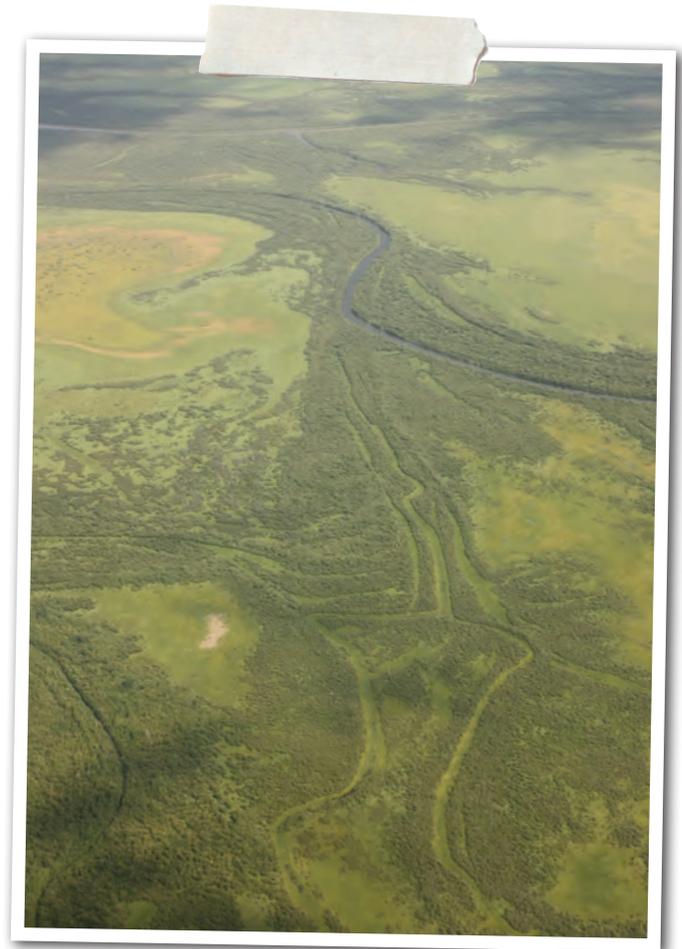
Roseau River Watershed Resource Inventory



In the Roseau River Watershed Plan, the description of the watershed is in a separate technical background paper 'Roseau River Watershed Resource Inventory'. This is a supporting document to the plan, and is summarised in the actual watershed plan to provide context and background to the users.

~ Roseau River Watershed Plan Steering Committee (2007)

At this point, the Steering Committee could ask its sub-committee responsible for the State of the Watershed report to provide an overview of the findings; if an external consultant was used for the report analysis and writing, invite them to give a presentation to the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee should discuss this information and share their understanding and interpretation of the findings in relation to the priorities of their members. This discussion will prepare the Steering Committee to begin identifying the issues and goals for the watershed that reflect both community desires and scientific and Indigenous Knowledge assessments of the region.



ISSUES AND GOALS

Issues are easy to brainstorm and identify – most people will easily be able to recite a long list of concerns and challenges about the watershed! While it is important to identify the main issues that affect the watershed, you don't want the Steering Committee to get bogged down in them – this is a good opportunity to develop goals for the watershed at the same time. Goals can be a little harder to identify than issues but they provide a few of the necessary steps towards achieving the vision for the watershed – what the watershed plan sets out to achieve.

Issues

Issues are the challenges facing the watershed – the concerns that may have prompted the watershed planning process in the first place. It's likely that everyone will have different concerns and priorities – area residents, fishers, farmers, government representatives, and so on. Hearing from as many people as possible will help to gather a broad picture of the issues the watershed is facing. Share your First Nation's perspective on the issues. This may broaden the Steering Committee's discussion and understanding of the issues by illustrating the range of considerations for water, such as water as a source of drinking water for humans, as a source of life for all our relations, and as an element of ceremonies.

Keep the discussion relevant. Lots of things relate to water, and people are bound to go off on tangents. If someone starts to go on a tangent, the Steering Committee (or a facilitator if one has been hired to assist at this stage!) needs to keep the conversation focused, and ask how it relates to water. Take the time to explain the connections to water from your First Nation's perspective, which may not be immediately understood by other members of the Steering Committee. For example, non-Aboriginal participants may not know or understand about your First Nation's cultural connections to water.

Activity



Brainstorming Issues

A good way to identify issues facing the watershed is to begin with a brainstorm. Use a flipchart and take notes as people talk about their concerns about the watershed. You may want to add in notes that you have been compiling throughout the conversations to develop a statement of values and vision for the watershed. You can also revisit your State of the Watershed report (described in the third guidebook, *Knowing Your Watershed*) in your discussion of issues, to review what concerns were raised there.



Tip





As you talk about the issues facing the watershed, you may find that there is one major issue that everyone is concerned with, or there may be a number of different concerns. People may discuss water quality and watershed health issues, but they may also include impacts of water quality and watershed health from their direct experience. For example, they may talk about changes in the fish, or about not being able to swim in the river any more, rather than specifically naming pollution or algae as concerns.

It is possible that not everyone will share the same concerns. Sometimes people will disagree that something should even be considered a concern; a particular issue may be a concern for some while others may not be worried about it at all. Talking about impacts, rather than causes, is one way to address this. For example, if some people say that a particular industry is polluting the river and others disagree, focusing on not being able to eat fish from the river anymore is a concern more people can readily agree on. Details on the causes of these impacts could be included in the State of the Watershed report, or further research can be done to identify the causes of the impact.

Story



Talking About Impacts

How arguments are framed matters. Mr. Robert (Bob) Sandford, the Chair of the Canadian Partnership Initiative of the United Nations International 'Water for Life' Decade, met with a prominent member of parliament (MP) in Alberta. Knowing Bob would try to talk to him about climate change, the MP started the meeting off by saying that his constituents didn't think climate change was happening, and that talking about it was probably a waste of time. Bob then asked the MP how he felt about drought (one of the impacts of climate change in Alberta). "Drought!" exclaimed the MP. "DROUGHT! Drought is something I understand. Yes, we can definitely talk about drought!"



What Issues are Addressed in a Watershed Plan?

In your watershed plan you will describe the main issues you want to address and how you will be addressing them. The process of identifying the main issues and opportunities in the watershed, and preparing to write the plan itself, will guide you in creating this part of the plan. Every watershed plan is different and is grounded in the issues and opportunities in the region, the challenges facing the watershed, and the priorities of the plan-makers. Nevertheless, there are key topics and considerations that should be included in every watershed plan. Most plans address some or all of these issues:

- Water use and conservation
- Energy use
- Land use
- Cultural uses and spiritual areas
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation
- Drought and flood management
- Source water use and protection
- Groundwater use and protection
- Pollution prevention and control
- Nutrient management
- Wetland management and protection
- Riparian management and protection
- Resource development
- Biodiversity and habitat protection
- Environmental and in-stream flows
- Community education and engagement.

Each of these issues should be incorporated at least at the general level in your watershed plan. For example, water conservation may be a goal or objective of your watershed plan and may refer to existing water conservation plans and programs, or outline the direction for new work. However, if any of these topics are of particular concern within your watershed, they may require the development of a secondary plan in order to address the issue in depth, especially if there isn't existing work that has been done in this area. For example, one action within the water conservation objective may be to develop a water conservation plan, which would take place in the implementation stage of your watershed planning process.

In some cases, research may have been done, or plans already created, to address these issues. For example, each municipality should have a land use plan; there may also be a source water protection plan to protect the local source of drinking water; or a program aimed at stopping invasive species from entering the watershed. Some of the topics described here may be addressed in other plans. For example, cultural uses, or spiritual areas may not have detailed, separate plans, but may be part of a land use plan. In these cases, the watershed plan does not need to duplicate these other plans and programs, but link to them and possibly build on them.

Ideally, within a watershed plan, all of the water-related plans would be integrated and aligned to ensure a coordinated approach to using and protecting the water. Developing a regional watershed plan offers the opportunity to align plans and policies, not only those to be developed and used in the future, but also those that are already in use. This helps avoid duplication of efforts and resources that have already been invested in related initiatives. It also ensures that all water-related activities are, to the best extent

possible, being carried out with the same overarching vision for the watershed. By bringing together the decision makers who created these plans and policies, you have the opportunity to build on the work that has already been done and use resources and energy as efficiently and effectively as possible.

The Steering Committee should determine what water-related plans are already in place in the watershed. To better understand existing plans and their synergies with the watershed plan, invite someone involved in their development or implementation to present to the Steering Committee, if they are not already part of the group. If you find that some plans do not support the approach you are taking in the watershed plan development, encourage those responsible for that plan to align it with the watershed plan the next time that plan is reviewed. Point out the advantages to integrating the various plans with the over-arching watershed plan to the different groups involved so that they understand the value of doing this and the opportunities to share resources and program delivery to achieve common goals.



Don't forget about all the work you did in *Guidebook One: Describing Your Approach*, to learn about your First Nation and your First Nation's knowledge and priorities relating to water. Be sure to include this information in the watershed plan, as appropriate.

Water use and conservation

‘Water use’ generally refers to the human uses of water within a watershed (e.g. domestic, commercial, industrial, agricultural). ‘Water conservation’ is the practice of reducing water use, whether in homes, institutional buildings (e.g. schools), factories, agriculture, or other locations. Often, when there is more demand for a resource than existing supply, people look for additional resources to solve the problem rather than identifying ways to reduce demand. Many watershed plans do not address water conservation; instead, they focus on protecting water quality and quantity, primarily for human uses.

Although quality and quantity are important components of any water-related plan, there is growing understanding that others in the watershed – fish, plants, animals – need water, and that the ecosystem itself requires a certain amount of water, to be healthy. In many areas, the amount of water available changes with the seasons, but human consumption does not change to reflect these variations in availability. Reducing human demand for water, particularly in areas where water is scarce or relies on non-renewable sources, will benefit the whole ecosystem.

Reduced human demand will result in reduced energy consumption (i.e. from reduced pumping, linking this plan to energy planning), reduced sewage and need for water and wastewater treatment (i.e. less water in, less wastewater out), and will lower water treatment costs, as well as preserving more water in the water system. Maintaining clean water in waterbodies and ecosystems maintains ecosystem health.

Currently, most approaches to reducing demand for water involve technology (e.g. low-flow appliances), consumer education (e.g. an information campaign, metering of water use), pricing (e.g. the cost of water increases as more is used; higher energy costs at different times of day), and/or government regulation (e.g. restrictions on certain activities or types of water use). While these approaches are very useful, they do not address the long-term sustainability of water resources (Brandes, Brooks and Gurman, 2009).

Instead, what is needed is a shift in how we think about water. For example, shifting the focus from ‘demand management’ (e.g. how can we reduce the amount of water needed to flush a toilet?), to the water ‘soft path’ to reduce or eliminate need for water (e.g. why do we use toilets that require water?). Shifting our mindset requires that we reconsider how we use water in a more thorough and sustainable way.

In this sense, water conservation is a principle or approach to planning that should form the foundation of a watershed plan and should direct human water use. Water conservation is fundamental to supporting ecosystem health (and humans are part of the ecosystem!), and so should be reflected in the values, vision, goals, and objectives for the watershed plan. Depending on the context of your region and future predictions for water availability and use, you may also want to develop a secondary plan (whether at the First Nation or watershed level) to undertake actions to conserve water and protect ecosystem health.

What is in a Good Water Conservation Plan?

The POLIS Institute has set out the characteristics of what a good water conservation plan should be. These characteristics would also apply to a watershed plan.

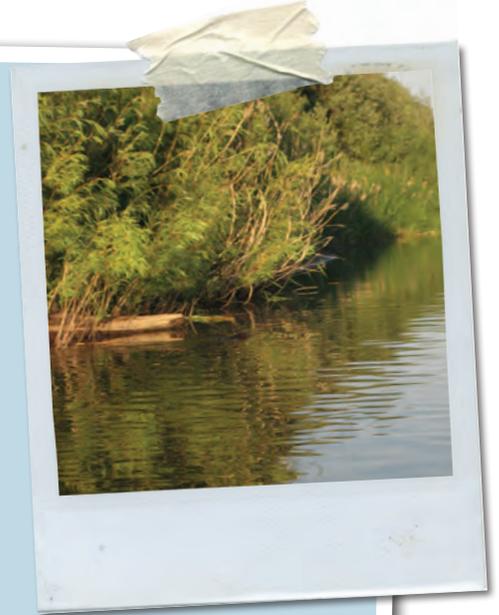
“A strong conservation plan is characterized by:

- At least a 20 to 50 year timeframe.
- A comprehensive and thoughtful rationale for water conservation.
- An integrated approach to water conservation linking with other plans, such as wastewater, land use, asset management and other planning.
- An effective implementation strategy.

An excellent conservation plan goes further to include provisions that:

- Place ecological health at its core.
- Are tailored to a community’s watershed context and consider the community’s impact on the watershed.
- Blend innovative legal tools such as water restriction and land use planning bylaws with practical measures such as rebate and metering programs.
- Make managing demand a part of daily business, rather than a stop-gap measure designed to merely buy time needed to increase supply.
- Build in measures that are geared toward rainwater capture, wastewater reclamation, reuse and recycling to better match water quality to end uses.
- Implement outreach and education programs that go beyond information dissemination to engage and inspire citizens to permanently change behaviour.
- Use a ‘triple bottom line’ [i.e. environmental, economic, social] approach to valuing water.”

~ Wong et al., J. (2009, p. 29)



Energy use

‘Energy planning’ is the development of policies and plans to address energy consumption. Many local governments have created community energy plans to address current and future energy consumption needs. These energy plans usually detail the current energy consumption of the community, including current energy sources, set out projections for future consumption, and addresses challenges and concerns relating to future consumption levels (e.g. rising costs due to peak oil levels).

Water and energy are deeply connected. In Canada, vast amounts of water are used to produce energy, through hydropower and oil development. Energy is also used to treat and distribute water for residential, industrial and agricultural uses, as well as to process the wastewater produced through these uses. Because of this connection (also called the ‘water-energy nexus’), any conservation of water or energy can result in conservation of the other.

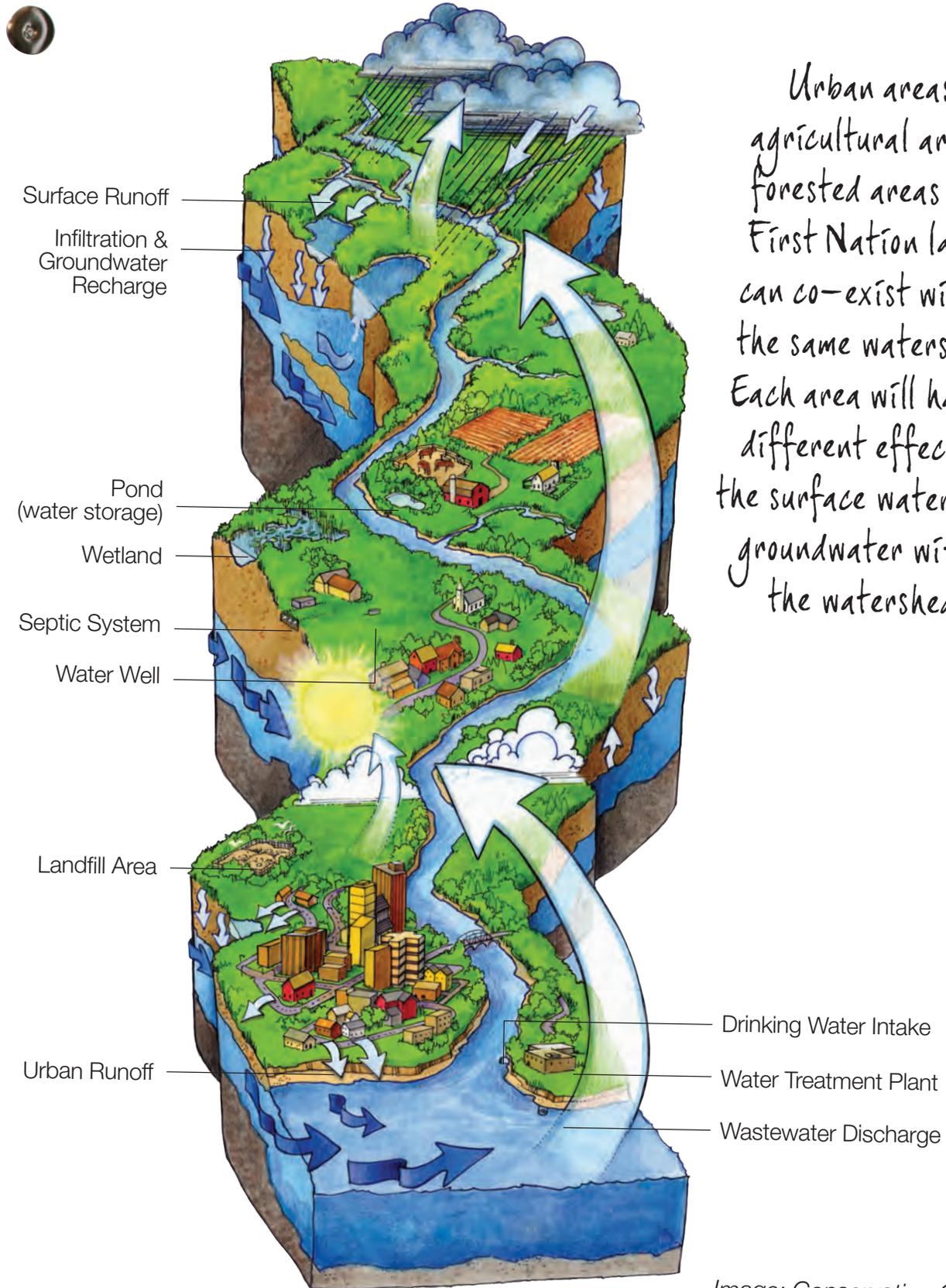
Depending on your region’s context, you may have different concerns relating to energy planning (e.g. how self-sufficient the region is in terms of energy, the impact of energy production on the environment). As you develop the watershed plan, consider your First Nation’s energy source and how energy use could be reduced to minimise demand for water (including the water required to produce energy). Some First Nations may have already developed energy plans, which can be aligned with the watershed plan; if energy use is of concern in the region, you may include the development of a regional energy plan as an action in the watershed plan, with an added emphasis on the water-energy nexus.



Land use

‘Land use planning’ is a way of determining what areas of land will be used for what purposes (e.g. residential, industrial, recreational, commercial, agricultural) within a specific geographic area. Land use plans set out both how land is currently used, and what the vision for land use and land development is for the future. How a community is planned – whether it’s a First Nation reserve or traditional territory, an agricultural area, or a city – will affect its relationship with the ecosystems in which it is located.

As discussed in *Guidebook Three: Knowing your Watershed*, land and water cannot be separated; although land use plans are not generally intended to address any one particular type of water concern, the ways in which lands are used can have a substantial impact on water. For example, how sewage is treated and where septic systems are located relative to the waterbody will affect water quality. For this reason, the way that a community or region is designed can benefit or damage the waters around it. If separate (i.e. not coordinated) land and water use planning efforts are taking place in your region, it will be up to your committee to bring the land use planning work into your watershed plan.



Urban areas, agricultural areas, forested areas and First Nation lands can co-exist within the same watershed. Each area will have a different effect on the surface waters and groundwater within the watershed.

Image: Conservation Ontario



Most municipalities will already have land use plans, which may or may not include water-related issues. Your First Nation may also have developed a land use plan for its reserve lands or traditional territory, including areas designated for particular uses or for protection from resource development. As your First Nation and the municipalities revisit your respective land use plans, consider watershed-related issues and identify ways of reducing or changing land uses that have negative impacts on the water. This may be an objective or action within the watershed plan; local governments should also determine how existing and future land use plans can be best aligned with the watershed plan.



One way to evaluate and integrate the multiple land use plans in your watershed is to combine them using GIS. GIS (Geographic Information Systems) is a tool used by cartographers to make maps. By joining together all the land use maps for the watershed, you will be able to see the big picture of how different uses overlap in different areas, and get a better picture of land uses, and the connections between them, in the whole region. This will help to identify areas of concerns that may need discussion and review.

Cultural uses and spiritual areas

First Nation and other people use lands, waters and resources for a number of cultural purposes. Hunting, fishing, gathering foods and medicines, holding ceremonies, burial sites, and transportation are just a few of the ways that First Nation people use the lands and waters in their territories. Protecting these cultural uses is likely important to your First Nation and would have been identified in discussions outlined in *Guidebook One: Describing Your Approach*. In fact, resource users in your First Nation may have noticed changes in the waters, lands and species within your watershed that impact your culture, or your members may no longer be able to carry out some cultural practices because of these changes. This may be one of the reasons your First Nation is working on watershed planning.

Cultural practices may take place in specific areas of the watershed (e.g. a berry-picking patch or fishing area) or they may be spread out throughout large areas, or even the whole of the watershed (e.g. hunting or trapping). Your watershed plan could provide the opportunity to restore areas where your First Nation's use has been compromised or ensure these areas will be left for your grandchildren's use into the future. Sometimes internal measures are needed to maintain these traditions – for example, a program to teach youth about the animals and plants in the area, if this is no longer taking place – but often partnerships with others will be needed to protect or restore areas or landscapes that are important for cultural uses.



Tip

In some cases, you may have to explain to others about the importance of the spiritual area or sacred site. Depending on the relationships you have with other members of the Steering Committee, you may simply assert the sacredness of the site and the need to protect it, or you may choose to ask people to sign a non-disclosure agreement (a legal agreement to keep confidentiality about a particular topic) and share basic information about the site with them. In either case, be sure to discuss the issue with the knowledge holders in your First Nation who are aware of or responsible for the spiritual area or sacred site.

Spiritual areas, or sacred sites, are areas that hold spiritual significance to members of your First Nation. They could be areas tied to your First Nation's Creation story, burial sites or locations for specific ceremonies. These areas may require special consideration during your watershed planning process because they are often crucial to a First Nation's well-being and conveying the importance of these areas

to those with different worldviews can be very difficult. In addition, discussion of these areas by your representatives in the planning group may be restricted because in many cases this information is held in confidence by the First Nation, or even by specific people within the First Nation.

Protecting Cultural Uses and Spiritual Areas Through the Watershed Plan

In order to address and protect cultural uses and sacred sites, you will need to identify their locations. In many cases, it will not be just the specific area that should be protected but also a buffer zone around that area. In addition, your First Nation should identify the types of activities (e.g. resource development) that the First Nation members feel are and are not appropriate in or near these areas. This means determining the allowable uses for different areas (e.g. no development/protected, development okay/open for business, special management, cultural uses only, etc.), and sharing these with the Steering Committee.





Hupacasath First Nation's Land Use Plan

Mapping out sacred areas and important areas before resource development takes place will enable First Nations to make better decisions about when and where development can take place in their traditional territories. Hupacasath First Nation developed a land use plan for its traditional territory, which included areas where resource extraction could occur, and areas where it should not. In addition, the plan created 'zoning categories' for lands that are sacred and must not be used in certain ways, as well as for areas within which certain sites are protected.

The maps that are included with the plan show only the general information about the different zones and do not explain in detail where sacred sites are or why they are protected, as that information is confidential to Hupacasath First Nation. However, the maps do provide enough information that a resource development company would be able to identify areas that are available, and areas where restrictions apply. A company would have to sign a non-disclosure agreement with Hupacasath First Nation to find out more about the areas where restrictions apply (e.g. to see more detailed maps).

Taking the time to bring members together to discuss Hupacasath's traditional territory and to set out the areas that must be protected ensured community support for the land use plan. It also means that today, Hupacasath First Nation negotiates directly with resource developers.

You may already have this information if your First Nation has completed a comprehensive community plan or a land use plan for your reserve lands or traditional territory. You may have talked about the location of spiritual and cultural areas, and what is needed to maintain and protect these areas in these plans or other initiatives in your First Nation, or you may have mapped out this information as part of the data gathering about the watershed (see *Guidebook Three: Knowing Your Watershed*, for more information). Remember that cultural uses or spiritual areas may be within your protected First Nation treaty or Aboriginal rights and this is another way to ensure that this protection continues.

In order to protect these special areas, they should be identified in all the plans that might affect them, including the watershed plan. There may be particular uses or sacred sites that relate to water that should be named or included on maps in the watershed plan. Whenever an area of special significance for your First Nation is being discussed by the Steering Committee, share your concerns and maps, so that the members understand your First Nation's needs and priorities. This can also be an opportunity to connect with other groups (e.g. other First Nations, or hunting groups) who may share similar goals and interests, and would be willing to work with you and support you to protect these areas. Because the watershed plan is a way to bring together all the stakeholders and rights-holders in a region, this can be a good opportunity to share the importance of these areas and to protect these areas through a process supported by all these groups.

Climate change mitigation and adaptation

The word “climate” refers to long-term weather patterns (usually averaged over 30 years) that are typical of a region. While it is normal for the climate to change over thousands of years, there is a concern that over the last few decades, the climate has been changing too quickly as a result of human activities. The global indicators of climate change are rising global temperatures, decreasing sea ice, melting glaciers and sea level rise. The primary impact of climate change is that the average temperature of the oceans and the land has increased, although the changes in weather patterns in each region will be different (e.g. some areas may get colder).



The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has identified a number of current and potential future impacts of climate change on human and non-human communities. These include:

- Changes in Arctic and Antarctic ecosystems, including changes in permafrost and increased runoff from glaciers
- Temperature increases in rivers and lakes, affecting water quality
- Changes in animal behaviour (such as bird migrations) and plant species, including changes in range of particular species or ecosystems
- Changes in range of fish, algae and plankton species, as well as the timing of migrations (especially relating to changes in water temperatures)
- High risk of extinction for up to 30 percent of plant and animal species
- Wetter areas will get wetter and drier areas drier with increasing global temperatures; at the same time, the risk of floods will increase
- Increases in crop productivity in some areas, but decreases in crop productivity in many areas
- Increased coastal erosion and damage to coastal wetlands due to rises in sea levels
- Challenges to ecosystem health and resilience (IPCC, 2007).

Communities that depend on their local environment for economic and subsistence resources will be more vulnerable to climate change impacts (IPCC, 2007).

Climate change will exacerbate any water quality and quantity issues already facing your watershed. Since climate change is expected to have a significant impact on water resources, it will affect your (and all other members of the Steering Committee's) plans to use those water resources in the future. It will also affect the health of the watershed and the plants, wildlife and fish that live in it.



First Nations and Climate Change

First Nations will likely be one of the populations in Canada most affected by climate change. This is because of a number of factors, including:

- First Nation's close and enduring relationship with the lands and waters
- The remoteness of many reserve lands and community sites
- The limited opportunities for economic diversification in many First Nations
- The lack of transportation options in many communities
- Challenges relating to energy security
- Subsistence activities and reliance on local ecosystems for resources (CIER, 2008).

Because of this increased exposure to climate change impacts, it is especially important for your First Nation to ensure that climate change is integrated into the watershed plan.

'Climate change mitigation' means reducing human contributions to climate change, while 'climate change adaptation' means responding to climate change impacts to reduce the vulnerability of human and non-human systems. Since climate change will be a growing concern for all communities and ecosystems in the next few decades, mitigation and adaptation should be incorporated into your watershed plan.

Climate change mitigation is essential because climate change will continue to increase in severity due to the amounts of greenhouse gases already present in the atmosphere. If humans continue to add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere climate change will continue to worsen, and may become irreversible. Everyone should do their part to reduce their contributions to climate change, and this watershed plan is an excellent opportunity to plan for the future and incorporate this objective. This could be tied in with the energy use component of the watershed planning.



Adaptation also needs to be a part of any watershed plan, since the impacts of climate change are being felt currently and will increase in the future. Planning for adaptation to climate change – being proactive – is cheaper and more effective than reactive adaptation, as it enables people and governments to make considered decisions regarding a greater number of options, rather than waiting until only a few options remain. Since your watershed plan is built on a vision of the future, a realistic model needs to take into account how climate change will affect everyone's use of the watershed. Climate change adaptation strategies will be different in each region, depending on the local impacts of climate change.

Some local governments may have already started working on climate change plans, which can be used and built on within the watershed plan. One of your objectives could be to develop a regional climate change plan that builds on existing plans and fills any gaps. You may also want to create a climate change adaptation plan for your First Nation, as you (or other members) may have particular concerns that relate to how your First Nation will be able to adapt to climate change. As you develop the watershed plan, consider the current climate change impacts that you are seeing, as well as potential future scenarios. If climate change is a concern in your region, mitigation and adaptation may be one of the goals for your plan, or you may want to include further research on climate change to determine what impacts might be felt in your region.



Tip

For more information on climate change mitigation and adaptation planning, see:

Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources
Project opportunities and tools (including climate change planning tools) to address climate change for First Nations and Aboriginal people in Canada.
www.cier.ca/taking-action-on-climate-change

Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada – Climate Change Adaptation Program?
Resources and information about climate change for Aboriginal and northern communities.
www.aandc-aadnc.gc.ca/enr/clc/index-eng.asp

Natural Resources Canada – Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation Division
Tools, research and information about climate change in Canada.
adaptation.nrcan.gc.ca/tools/abosuj_e.php

Drought and flood management

‘Drought and flood management’ means planning ahead to reduce the impacts of floods and droughts. Although droughts and floods are part of the water cycle, new factors, such as climate change and changes to the flow of rivers and lakes (i.e. as a result of dams, diversions, over-use) have affected the severity and frequency of floods and droughts in many areas. Due to these changes, in many areas, floods and droughts occur unpredictably, taking place out of season and make preparing for these events difficult.

Often drought and flood management means only considering the impact of droughts and floods on humans. However, many plants, animals, and ecosystems depend on cycles of flooding or drought to stay healthy. The changes in flooding and drought cycles, combined with other negative impacts, can be very challenging for many ecosystems. Balancing ecosystem needs with human needs can be difficult.

In some cases, drought and flood management will be addressed through actions taken in other areas (e.g. to mitigate climate change, or to conserve water). However, if drought and/or flooding are particular concerns in your region, the watershed plan should address these, ideally from a holistic perspective that includes the needs of the ecosystem as well as human priorities.

Source water use and protection

‘Source water’ is the untreated water from surface water and/or groundwater that people use for drinking water and other domestic uses. Having a source of safe domestic water is essential for human health, and is particularly important for communities in areas without water treatment facilities (including rural areas and many First Nations). When source water quality is high, the cost of treating it for human consumption is lowered; good quality source water also benefits animals and overall ecosystem health.

Often, local governments are concerned with source water protection at a local scale. However, the best way to protect source water is through a watershed approach. This is a holistic way to address source water protection, because by protecting the whole watershed, source water for drinking is protected.



Some local governments may have already created source water plans intended to protect the water by managing the impact of human activities. In this case, where source water protection plans has already been created, the watershed plan can draw attention to source waters and point to the local plans while still creating a regional overview for source water protection.

If local source water plans have not been created, or if a regional focus is needed, the overall watershed plan should include discussion of source water protection. Source water protection plans can also be (and often should be) aligned or integrated with groundwater management plans. The cleaner water is, and the more it is protected for all uses; the watershed plan is one way to ensure a holistic approach to protecting source water.

Groundwater use/protection

‘Groundwater’ is the water found in the cracks and gaps between rocks and sand underground, in aquifers. According to the Geological Survey of Canada, the total amount of groundwater in Canada is unknown (Expert Panel on Groundwater, 2009). Groundwater is important because approximately 30 percent of Canadians rely on groundwater for drinking; in rural areas, over 80 percent of people depend on groundwater for all uses (Expert Panel on Groundwater 2009). The Assembly of First Nations personnel estimates that over 50 percent of First Nations may depend on groundwater for drinking. Since groundwater is often the source for other waterbodies, its health will affect the health of the whole region.



“Our traditional culture also tells us that we all have a responsibility to Mother Earth, and, that we should consider our ‘source water’ the blood of our Mother Earth.”

~ Six Nations Council
(2007, p.6).

Quote



Drinking Water Protection

Sometimes people talk about protecting drinking water. This means taking care of the water that humans use for drinking and other domestic uses (e.g. showering, cooking), and in essence, this is the same as source water protection. Protecting all uses should be addressed in the same way, through source water protection plans or watershed plans.

Contamination of groundwater can occur both horizontally (moving through the groundwater from farther away) and vertically (from runoff through unsaturated soils). In many cases, groundwater can take a long time – years, or even centuries – to recharge (i.e. replacing what has left the aquifer), and in these cases it should not be considered a renewable resource. It is critical to protect groundwater from contamination as it is very costly and frequently impossible to remediate it once it has been contaminated.

Accurate data about the quantity and quality of groundwater is essential to managing groundwater resources effectively. However, it can be difficult to measure the amount of groundwater in an aquifer, and data about groundwater use is often unavailable or incomplete (Expert Panel on Groundwater, 2009). Concerns about the health of groundwater across Canada have been growing and include impacts caused by:

- Rising populations and resulting increased pressure on ground and surface waters
- Intensified agriculture, including nutrient runoff and increased demand for groundwater resources
- Mining and contaminated sites on both surface and groundwater resources
- Climate change (Expert Panel on Groundwater, 2009).

These concerns point to the need for greater knowledge about the quantity, quality and uses of groundwater across Canada, so that these resources can be better managed.

One additional consideration in developing a groundwater management plan is that the movement of groundwater does not necessarily correlate with the movements of surface waterbodies. For this reason, the boundaries of a watershed may not be the same as the boundaries of a groundwater aquifer – an aquifer may be bigger than a watershed, or may be only partially in the watershed, and partially in surrounding watershed(s).

A groundwater management plan should connect with the related source water protection and water conservation plans. Groundwater management and protection plans should aim to gather data about the quality and quantity of groundwater, as well as to identify hydrologically sensitive areas (e.g. wetlands) and potential sources of contamination.

Because groundwater aquifers do not necessarily have the same boundaries as watersheds, you may have to work with neighbouring watersheds (and the various jurisdictions there) to be able to protect the groundwater. However, because of the important connection between groundwater and surface water, you should still consider groundwater protection or management in the watershed plan, including ways of eliminating and preventing contamination of groundwater and remediating (where possible) contaminated groundwater.

Pollution prevention and control

The intent of pollution prevention and control is to reduce the amount of pollution that is released into an ecosystem, and to manage pollution once it is in an ecosystem. When pollutants enter an ecosystem, they can damage the air, water, plants, fish and animals living in the ecosystem, as well as humans. The best approach to addressing pollution is prevention (i.e. to not allow pollutants into the ecosystem to begin with); when pollutants are already in the ecosystem, they should be controlled and limited to minimise impact and spread.

Because pollution comes in so many forms, and can enter the ecosystem through both point and non-point sources, it can be difficult to track. Point source pollution is easier to measure and control, and can be addressed on a point-by-point basis. Non-point pollution does not have a specific origin, and so can be more difficult to control. Runoff or stormwater management and emissions control are two approaches that address non-point pollution. (See *Guidebook Three: Knowing Your Watershed* for an overview of point and non-point source pollution.)



Runoff/Stormwater management

'Runoff' is the water that flows over the ground, and may absorb into the ground or reach a waterbody. Along the way, it can pick up contaminants, such as fertilisers, pesticides, and manure in agricultural areas, and in urban areas, stormwater (i.e. precipitation) can pick up contaminants from roads, lawns and parking lots. In some older urban areas, stormwater drains are combined with the sewer system, resulting in overflows of both stormwater and sewage into the river or waterbody during major rainstorms and snowmelts. Contaminants then enter the water system, and can alter or damage ecosystem processes.

Another concern arising from runoff is the effect on water flow. Impermeable surfaces, such as roads or buildings, as well as some practices such as forest clearcutting, can lead to increased runoff as the water cannot absorb into the soil. The increased flow of water to and within waterbodies caused by runoff can result in erosion and flooding, increasing stress for natural and human systems.

In urban areas, reducing impermeable surfaces is key to addressing stormwater runoff, so that water can absorb into the ground rather than flowing (directly or through sewers) to waterbodies. In rural areas, vegetation and buffer zones between agricultural areas, roads and waterbodies can slow or contain runoff. As well, any plans to address runoff and stormwater should include measures to reduce contamination of water, such as by ensuring that only the minimum amount of fertiliser required is applied to a field (see page 39 for more on nutrient management).



Emissions control

Air pollution – emissions of contaminants into the air – causes health problems for humans and others, and damages ecosystems. Pollutants may be released into the air through natural processes such as volcanic eruptions or forest fires, and through human-created means, such as emissions from cars, airplanes, landfills or factories. Even in areas where these sources of pollution are not present, or are only present in small numbers, such as northern Canada, there is increasing air pollution because of pollutants and emissions travelling from sources in other parts of Canada and the world. As particulates of air pollution are deposited onto lands and waters, they also lead to water pollution. For this reason, because it does not only have localised effects, it is important to address air pollution.

At the same time, air pollution can be challenging to address. Air pollution also comes from both point and non-point sources, and as with runoff or other kinds of pollution, it can be particularly difficult to address non-point sources of emissions. Air pollution can be addressed through prevention or through mitigation, and the choices you make about how to address it will depend a great deal on your context. If there are sources of air pollution within your watershed, your watershed plan should include those. If however, the majority of the air pollution within your region comes from outside the watershed, you will need to work with others (i.e. those where the pollution originates) to develop strategies to reduce and manage it.

More Details



Arctic Haze

‘Arctic haze’ is the name given to a particular type of smog seen in the Arctic, particularly in the spring. This haze, which is similar to smog seen in industrialised areas, is made up mostly of sulphur and nitrogen compounds, as well as pesticides and heavy metals. These chemicals do not originate in the North, but are carried there by winds and waters.

Because of the colder climate and periods of darkness in the Arctic, these chemicals take longer to break down, and so can become concentrated. Although the full impact of Arctic haze is not known, it is thought that it will reflect heat back to the earth’s surface, increasing average temperatures. As the chemicals in Arctic haze make their way to lands and waters through precipitation, they will affect the health of animals, plants and ecosystems, as well as humans.

As discussed previously in the section on water conservation, one way to approach water pollution is to change your mindset and instead of asking ‘how can we reduce our use of fertilisers/pesticides/etc?’ ask ‘do we need to use fertilisers/pesticides/etc?’ to see if there is a way to eliminate them, or begin phasing them out, rather than simply reducing.

Banning Pesticides

In 1991, the town of Hudson, Québec, banned pesticides for cosmetic use. It was the first town in Canada to implement such a bylaw, and it was challenged by pesticide companies. In 2001, the Supreme Court of Canada supported the town's right to develop such a bylaw to protect the health of its residents, based on the precautionary principle that if there is a potential risk to the public, caution should be exercised. Now hundreds of municipalities and even some provinces/territories have banned cosmetic pesticides.

Story



It is important to have a comprehensive approach to addressing pollution, because it is such a major concern in many areas. Plans to reduce and control pollution should align with, or be incorporated into, groundwater and source water protection plans, as well as with land use planning, and riparian and wetland management and protection plans. In the watershed plan, one of your goals may be to address pollution; depending on the level of concern, you may want to create a plan to focus specifically on pollution, or even on particular kinds of pollution that affect the waters in your region.

Nutrient management

A 'nutrient management plan' is a plan that controls how many human-added nutrients (e.g. fertiliser and/or manure used in agricultural operations, lawn fertilisers, household detergents, and personal care products such as shampoos) enter our water systems. Managing the amount and types of nutrients coming into the ecosystem is essential to reduce the amount of nutrients, especially phosphorus and nitrogen, entering waterbodies.

If these nutrients are not carefully managed, they can create imbalances in ecosystems, and lead to concerns such as eutrophication (i.e. when excessive amounts of nutrients leads to excessive algae and plant growth), which can damage and even kill life in and near lakes and other waterbodies. Nutrients that are found in abnormally high amounts are considered pollution. Most nutrients enter the ecosystem as non-point source pollution, which means that it can be difficult to identify how much of what kind of pollution comes from where.

Developing a plan to manage and reduce nutrients is something that must be done in partnership with farmers, agriculturalists and citizens. Plans should consider the soil types in the area, types of farming (or other nutrient using or creating) activities, and actions aimed at reduction, mitigation, and control of nutrients.

Nutrient management plans should be aligned with the watershed plan, to ensure that water quality goals are being met, as well as with source water plans and plans to address wetlands protection or restoration. If nutrient management and reduction is a concern in your area, it should be included in the watershed plan as a goal or objective.

Wetland and riparian management and protection

‘Wetlands’ are areas where the soil is saturated with water (e.g. a swamp or marsh). Riparian areas are those areas located next to waterbodies (e.g. the banks of a river or the shores of a lake). Both wetlands and riparian areas act as buffers, and can reduce the amount of pollution that reaches a waterbody and groundwater through the uptake of nutrients and pollutants by plants in these areas. Wetlands and riparian zones also provide habitat for numerous species of plants and animals, and contribute to the overall health of ecosystems. Protecting existing wetlands and riparian zones, and restoring degraded areas, can protect against flooding and against pollutants entering the water system.

However, many wetlands and riparian areas have been degraded or eliminated. Wetlands are often drained to make way for residential, agricultural or other development. Riparian areas may be built up, or may suffer damage from livestock and farming practices. As well, wetlands and riparian areas experience the effects of pollution, leading to damage to the waters and ecosystems around the wetlands or riparian areas.

Ducks Unlimited, a non-profit organisation committed to wetland protection and restoration, estimates that in the more populated areas of Canada, up to 70 percent of wetlands have vanished

~ Ducks Unlimited (2011)



Wetland and riparian protection, restoration and management can be part of a broader watershed plan, or specific plans can be created to address specific areas (e.g. a particular marshland or wetlands along one particular river). In either case, plans to support wetland and riparian health should be aligned with source water, groundwater, nutrient management, and land use plans.

Resource development

‘Natural resource management’ is the organisation, administration and use of renewable and non-renewable resources such as lands and soils, water, plants and animals. Although sustainable development is often stated as a focus of natural resource management, often this has not been the case in practice. There are many different perspectives on how natural resources should be used and not used, within and between different communities, governments, and industries. In addition, First Nations have often been excluded from decision making and management relating to resources, leading to tension among First Nations, industry, and other governments about the management and extraction of resources. Sometimes, co-management of natural resources by First Nations and other governments is used as a tool to address the challenges involved in resource management, most successfully where First Nations have an equal decision-making role.

The economy in many parts of Canada is highly dependent on natural resource extraction and management. In these areas, it is especially important to develop a natural resources management plan, including maps and data about what resources are available,



to determine when and how resources can be extracted and used and how to do this with minimal impairment of water systems in the watershed. As with the development of the watershed plan, a natural resources management plan should involve input from stakeholders and rights-holders, to ensure that local priorities are integrated and respected in policy and projects relating to resources in the area. It is best to be proactive rather than reactive, and to develop a natural resources management plan before resource extraction begins. Even if this is not possible, bringing all the stakeholders and rights-holders together can offer the opportunity to develop a collective position, and to strengthen the region's position.

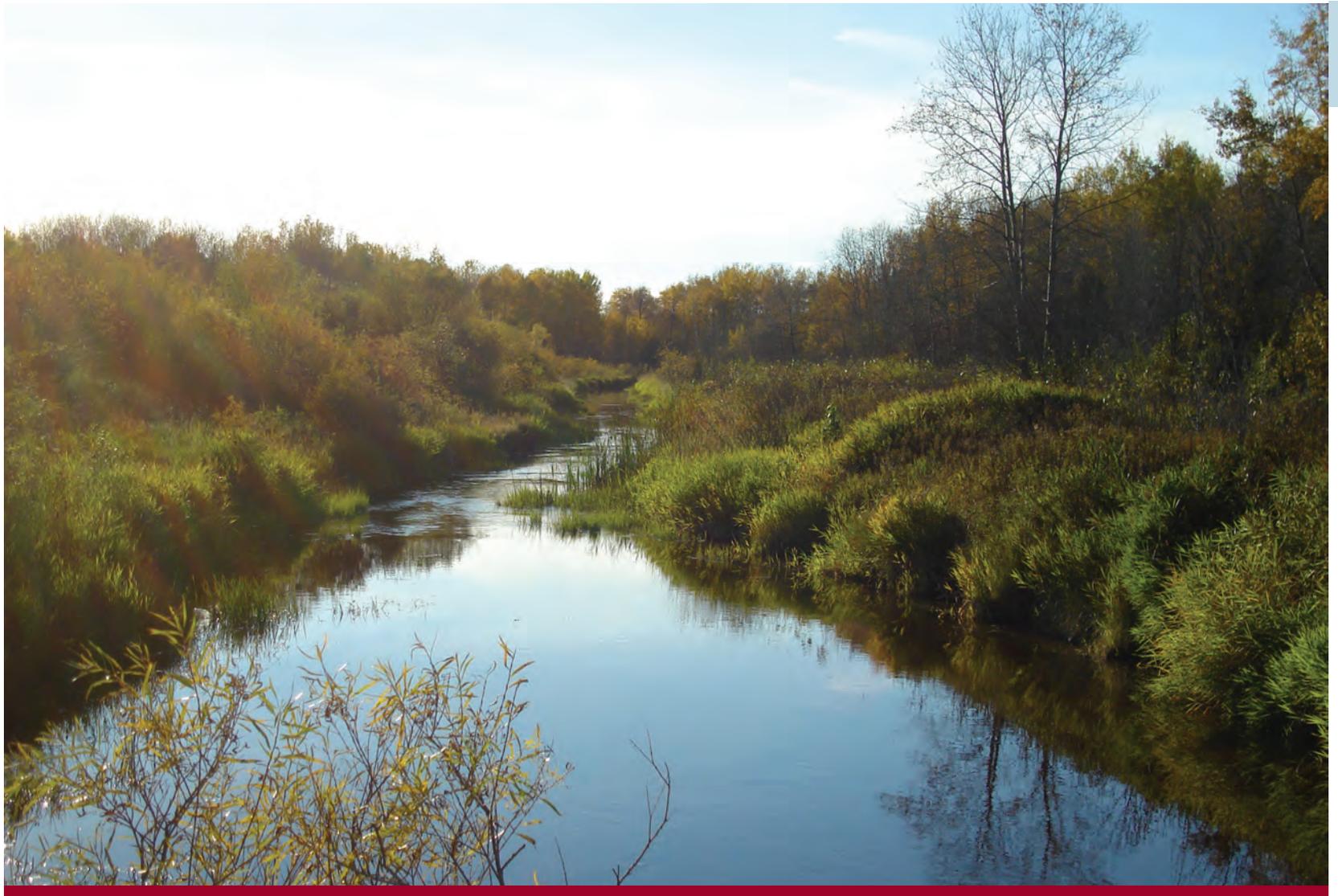
Even if your watershed is not in a region that depends (or wishes to depend) on natural resource extraction, natural resource management should be integrated with the watershed plan. Consider how natural resources are used in your watershed, and what the impact may be on the waters. In a broad sense, all water-related plans are about natural resources management, but in particular, natural resources management should be included in or aligned with the source water and groundwater management plans.

Biodiversity and habitat protection

'Biodiversity' is the diversity (i.e. the number and variety) of species within a given ecosystem. Biodiversity enables ecosystems to provide services that plants and animals, including humans, rely on for everyday needs and is often used as a measure of ecosystem health. In many ecosystems around the world, biodiversity is threatened by habitat loss and fragmentation, invasive species, over-harvesting, pollution, and environmental degradation. Many native species are at risk of extinction, and invasive species continue to spread and damage ecosystems. These concerns are exacerbated by climate change, as temperatures and levels of precipitation become more unpredictable and extreme.

Because the challenges facing biodiversity are so broad, the solutions to address these challenges must be comprehensive. In many areas, the solutions will be broader than the watershed itself, and will require partnerships extending beyond the watershed boundaries. Nevertheless, within the watershed, you may already know, or can undertake studies to find out, about the particular challenges facing biodiversity in your area.

Biodiversity protection and (if necessary) restoration should be incorporated in the watershed plan. In some cases, you may want to develop specific plans to address species at risk, or invasive species, but maintaining and restoring biodiversity should be a lens through which all plans (relating to water or not) are considered. Considering biodiversity status and needs can have a particular impact on land use planning, riparian and wetlands protection and climate change planning, and may be included as objectives or actions in the watershed plan.



Environmental and instream flows

‘Environmental flow’ (e-flows) refers to the water that an ecosystem requires for its own health. ‘Instream flow’ is the water that flows within a river, which can fluctuate over time through flooding and other processes. Humans have modified the flow of rivers and ecosystems through dams, agricultural and urban infrastructure, among other uses. These modifications have had a negative impact on ecosystems, by removing water, changing its path, or changing its timetable of flooding and drought. It is becoming increasingly clear that water systems require a certain base level of water to maintain their health.

E-flows and instream flows are important because not only do they benefit the animals and plants that rely directly on an ecosystem, they benefit the humans who live in the ecosystem and also rely on it. Without sufficient water to meet its own needs, an ecosystem’s health will degrade rapidly, and will affect human systems as well. An ecosystem is adapted to the amount of water it contains and, in this sense, it uses 100 percent of its water when humans are not present. Therefore, any amount removed from the system can present a potential risk to the ecosystem.

One approach to address e-flows and instream flow needs is to develop watershed plans that are founded on a goal of ensuring ecosystem health. This is a very different approach from developing plans that are based solely on human needs. Flows of water change seasonally, and different species rely in different ways on the waters at different times of the year. Analysis of e-flows and instream flows can be used to better understand how ecosystems use water, and how humans can use water without damaging the ecosystem.

This kind of analysis can be integrated into various plans and types of research, and can, in a way, provide a 'voice' for the ecosystem and its needs in human planning processes. This information can also be used in restoring waterbodies or watersheds, to better understand the water processes within the ecosystem. For these reasons, including an analysis of e-flows and instream flows, and approaching watershed planning from an ecosystem health perspective will affect how and what actions are included as part of the watershed plan. This analysis and approach should be incorporated into all water-related plans.

Community education and engagement

Educating community members both within and outside your First Nation is a key part of ensuring the success of the watershed plan and so the watershed plan should include this element. The best plan in the world can fail in implementation because the public does not understand the reasons behind its creation. It is essential to explain to members of the public, especially those who may be affected by it, why the decisions are being



made and to provide as much information as possible so that they can participate in the decision making process.

Throughout these guidebooks, community engagement and education have been an ongoing theme. As the Steering Committee develops its watershed plan (or any other plans), build in time and resources for providing information and tools to help community members get involved in and informed about the plan. Consider what information and knowledge community members already have, where the gaps might be, and what the best way to fill those gaps might be (e.g. workshops, informal gatherings, brochures or newsletters, presentations on the local TV or radio station).

Engaging community members is important not only in the development of the plan, but also in carrying out the plan once it has been completed. One of the goals of the watershed plan may relate to community engagement and education, or you may develop a separate communications plan to address all aspects of communication, including relationship building and community engagement. Making sure that everyone is on-board with the intentions of the plan and is aware of the reasoning behind the plan's development will make the implementation of the plan much smoother.

Goals

Goals are what the watershed plan sets out to achieve. They are steps towards the vision that you have created, but have a shorter time-span and will be completed within the life of the watershed plan.

As you talk about the common concerns for the watershed, revisit your vision. Where are the gaps between the vision you see and the current state of the watershed? What are the biggest or most urgent issues or areas of concern? Addressing these will become the main goals for your watershed plan.

When you developed your vision, you looked far into the future – fifty or one hundred years. As you develop goals, think about what you can reasonably achieve in the next five, ten or twenty years (or whatever the life of your plan is). If people come up with other goals that are longer than the lifespan of this plan, keep these aside in a different list. These may be useful to break down into smaller goals that may be achievable in a shorter timeframe (i.e. in the current plan) and lead towards that larger, longer-term goal.

People often have trouble identifying goals or solutions. They can see the issue or concern, but may not have the experience or technical knowledge to identify a solution. However, it is in large measure the job of the Steering Committee to develop goals and objectives, and to start this by asking why a concern is a concern. It can be difficult to figure this out – there may not be an obvious answer – but knowing why something is a concern or a priority will help to ensure that the right

goal is set to address that concern. For example, if someone identifies lack of winter ice on a lake as a concern, why are they concerned? There could be many reasons – increased danger while ski-dooing, impact on fish, changes in lake vegetation – and the solutions to address the problem will depend on the many underlying ‘whys’.

Similarly, goals should address the issues facing the watershed, rather than the impacts of those issues on the watershed. For example, if one impact is that people can no longer swim in the river, ask why they can’t – is it that the water is polluted? The flow is too fast? There are no longer any access points? More information about the concern will help create the best goals possible. Another way of thinking about this is that the goal needs to address the core issues in order to generate real solutions (rather than the surface issues that may result in ‘band-aid’ type solutions).

As you develop your lists of issues and goals, focus on common areas of concern. If there are conflicts about unrelated things, agree to let them go (even if only for the time-being) and keep the focus on water. Identify shared concerns, and work to address these. If conflict is building, you may need to be clear and remind yourselves about what is on the table for discussion – and what is not.

Tip



Turning Issues into Goals

Now that you have identified a number of issues and concerns, how can you develop goals from them?



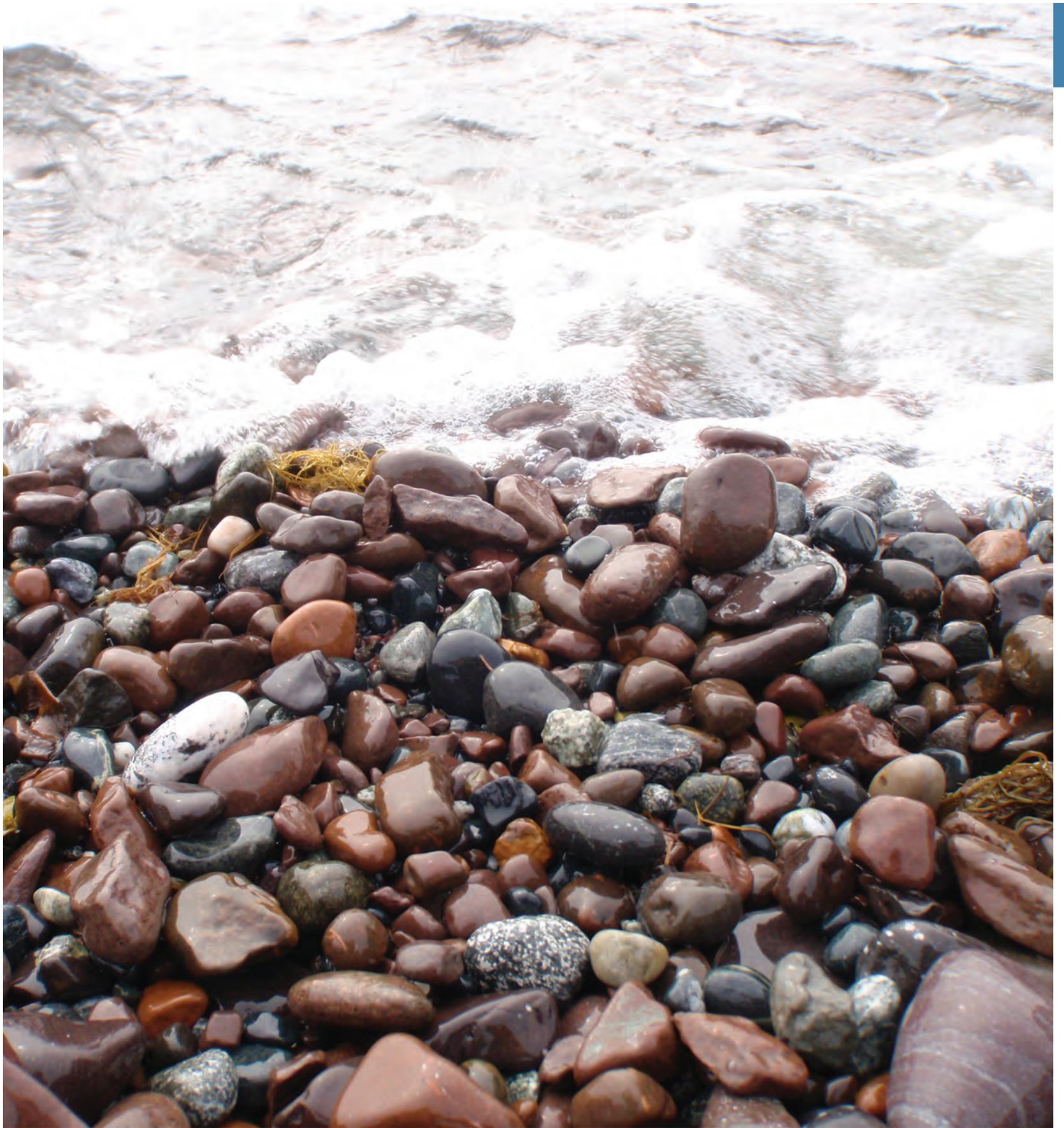
You can create a table like the one below to help with the process of identifying goals from the issues at hand. In the first column, under Issues, list the issues you have come up with. These are the concerns that the watershed plan is going to address. You can brainstorm these with the Steering Committee, or base them on the list you have already developed.

In the second column, reframe the issue as a positive outcome. It can be challenging sometimes to figure out what the positive might be – think of it as an alternative scenario where things are as they should be. What is the ideal resolution of this issue? What would the watershed look like if this concern no longer existed? This step moves the discussions away from ‘issues’ and helps the committee to start thinking positively.

Then, in the third column, develop a goal that addresses the issue or concern, leads towards the reframed scenario, and is achievable. When you are writing the goals, remember that each goal will have a series of objectives associated with it that you develop later (see page 50). The Steering Committee may actually start by articulating objectives (more detailed, tangible actions), but it is better at this stage just to write these down to come back to later. Right now, try to keep focussed on setting out the goals.

To each of these possible goal statements, ask yourselves ‘why?’ and if you can answer with more details, keep this idea as a possible objective and keep digging deeper. When you can no longer answer ‘why’ – when the answer becomes ‘just because’ or ‘because this is critical to our community/life etc.’ – you have reached the goal statement. For example, the sewage lagoon is full and wastewater issues are a problem in the community. The committee may start by suggesting ‘address production of wastewater to reduce flow into lagoon’ or ‘increase capacity of the lagoon’ as possible goals. Take time to ask each other ‘why?’ Because we want our lagoon to last for many more years...because the community is growing and we are building more houses...because we need to address our overall use of water in community in order to reduce wastewater amounts...etc. These are very helpful sub-goals or objectives that you can come back to. Perhaps the overarching goal, for this example, is ‘To have a community water and wastewater system that conserves water while meeting the needs of our growing community’.

Issues	Reframing	Goals
E.g. Levels of mercury in fish are high. People cannot eat fish from our lake system.	We are able to eat the fish we catch and remain healthy and safe.	To improve water quality and the ability of the ecosystem to support life, including human life.
E.g. The sewage lagoon is full.	The sewage lagoon has sufficient capacity.	To have a community water and wastewater management system that conserves water while meeting the needs of our growing community.



GOAL PRIORITIES

As you've identified the goals and major challenges that are facing your watershed, some issues may have been identified as more pressing than others. You may find that some clear priorities exist. You may also find that everyone has different priorities! In this case, discussion is needed to agree upon a selection of priorities to focus on in the plan. Prioritising your goals is key to creating a plan that is realistic and will see improvement in the watershed. Prioritising is also a good way to make the most effective use of limited human and financial capacity to address watershed concerns.

It is tempting to skip this step and move directly to developing objectives and actions, but prioritising goals is essential. All the goals that the Steering Committee have identified are important – but some will be more important or more urgent than others, and these will be the priorities that you will work on for the life of the watershed plan. Don't get rid of the rest of the goals – keep them, but just set them aside for the time being. When the time comes to evaluate the plan, it will be important to check in on these goals too, as they may have changed over time. You may want to include them in the watershed plan in a section on additional concerns, to ensure that they are not lost.

Aim for between three to five priority goals in the plan. This may not sound like enough, but as you develop objectives and then actions, three to five goals can turn into enough work to keep a team of people busy and begin addressing many of the major issues in the watershed.

Story



The Cowichan Basin Water Management Forum developed a water management plan for the Cowichan Basin. The plan included “one vision, 6 goals, 23 objectives, and 89 actions for water management in the Cowichan Basin”

~ Westland Resource Group Inc.
(2007, p.9)



Once the Steering Committee has developed a list of goals, reach out to the public for feedback on the goals and priorities. Take them back to your First Nation and involve community members in identifying priorities and looking for gaps before the Steering Committee makes decisions. Although the final list of overall watershed priorities may not match your First Nation's priorities exactly, engaging your community members in the process will give your Nation a strong voice and ensure that you are representing your First Nation's priorities when you speak within the Steering Committee.

Finding ways to include everyone

While the ideal is to create a group situation where people feel safe and comfortable sharing their perspectives, in diverse groups, there may be people who aren't comfortable talking about their priorities. Our hopes and dreams of reaching consensus depend, in part, on our capacity to trust others and to share our positions as fully as possible. Power differentials and past relationship histories among the stakeholders and rights-holders involved in the watershed planning process may make it difficult for people to honestly share their positions.

One way to address this situation is to develop ways of prioritising that maintain

a certain level of anonymity. The activities suggested here allow people to select options without having to stand up in front of a group to state their position. Although there will undoubtedly be discussion, these activities can take the pressure off by offering some anonymity, and can allow people to express their priorities without feeling put on the spot.

Once you have determined your priority goals for the watershed plan, you can start getting into the action elements of the plan – the objectives that set out how you will implement and address these goals and work towards the vision. The next section looks at developing objectives and actions to address priority goals.

Establishing Priorities and Timelines Through Dot-mocracy

'Dot-mocracy' is a tool that can be used to identify priorities and establish timelines. Once you've brainstormed or identified a number of goals, write them on chart paper and tape them to the wall. Give each participant 'dots' – little circular stickers – that they can stick to the paper to show the goals they are most concerned with. You can use colours to identify the priority or timing for the goal (e.g. red – not a priority, long-term; yellow – medium priority, short term; green – high priority, immediate). You can also assign points to each colour, to rank the priorities once the exercise is done (e.g. one point for a red sticker, two for yellow, and three for green).

Once participants have had a chance to prioritise their goals, have a look at them and discuss which goals you will focus on. There may be a clear priority, where everyone agrees on one or two key issues. Or there may be a number of different priorities, in which case you can use the points to determine which is highest. If a few are relatively close, it may be best to discuss the priorities again, considering the feasibility of addressing the goals and the urgency. You may also want to repeat the exercise, but with fewer goals (e.g. the goals that were prioritised most highly in the first round). Don't drop any of the goals – keep track of them, because even if they are not priorities in this plan, they will remind you of the broader scope of the plan.

More Details



Interest vs. Positions

Understanding what people want is important, but understanding why they want those things is important too. A position is what people want (e.g. a public boat dock in the lake), while an interest is why they want that (e.g. to develop a program for youth to learn canoeing and sailing).

If we only know people's positions, it may be hard to find a solution that meets everyone's needs. For example, if there are already three private docks on the lake, and ecologically the lake cannot sustain an additional dock, adding an additional public dock may not be an option. But if we know the interest – for youth to learn boating skills – it may be possible to set up an agreement with one or more of the private dock owners to use the docks for this purpose.



"Put Your Money Where Your Mouth Is"

Using 'watershed money' is another way to determine priorities by allowing participants to 'invest' in the goals that they think are most important. This works especially well with larger groups. Be clear that the amount of money that is 'invested' through this process has no relation to the actual cost or potential investment through the watershed plan of each goal.

Print out some 'watershed dollars' or use toy money, such as Monopoly money, and distribute the money equally to all participants (e.g. ten \$100 bills, or \$1,000, for each participant). Write each goal on a separate piece of paper, and place an empty envelope by each goal. Invite the participants to walk around and read all the goals, then to 'invest' their money in the goals that are most important to them. They can put all their money in one goal, or spread it out among a range of goals.

Once everyone has had a chance to 'spend' their money, count how much is in each envelope. The goals that have the highest level of 'investment' are those that people felt most strongly about. Because this method is an aid in focussing the discussion (it is not fool-proof) talk about the results as a group to see if there is agreement; if there are a few goals that were all well invested in, discuss why this is the case. Keep track of the other goals to remind you of the broader scope of the plan even if they are not immediate priorities.

Activities



DEVELOPING OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

Now that you have identified the issues and concerns in the watershed, and developed and prioritised goals to address these issues, you are ready to start identifying solutions. Objectives and actions are the more active parts of the plan. Objectives are particular aims that will achieve the goals set out in page 44, while actions are the steps to implement that will achieve these objectives, and eventually, the goals. This section will help you to identify objectives and actions that relate to the priorities you have identified.

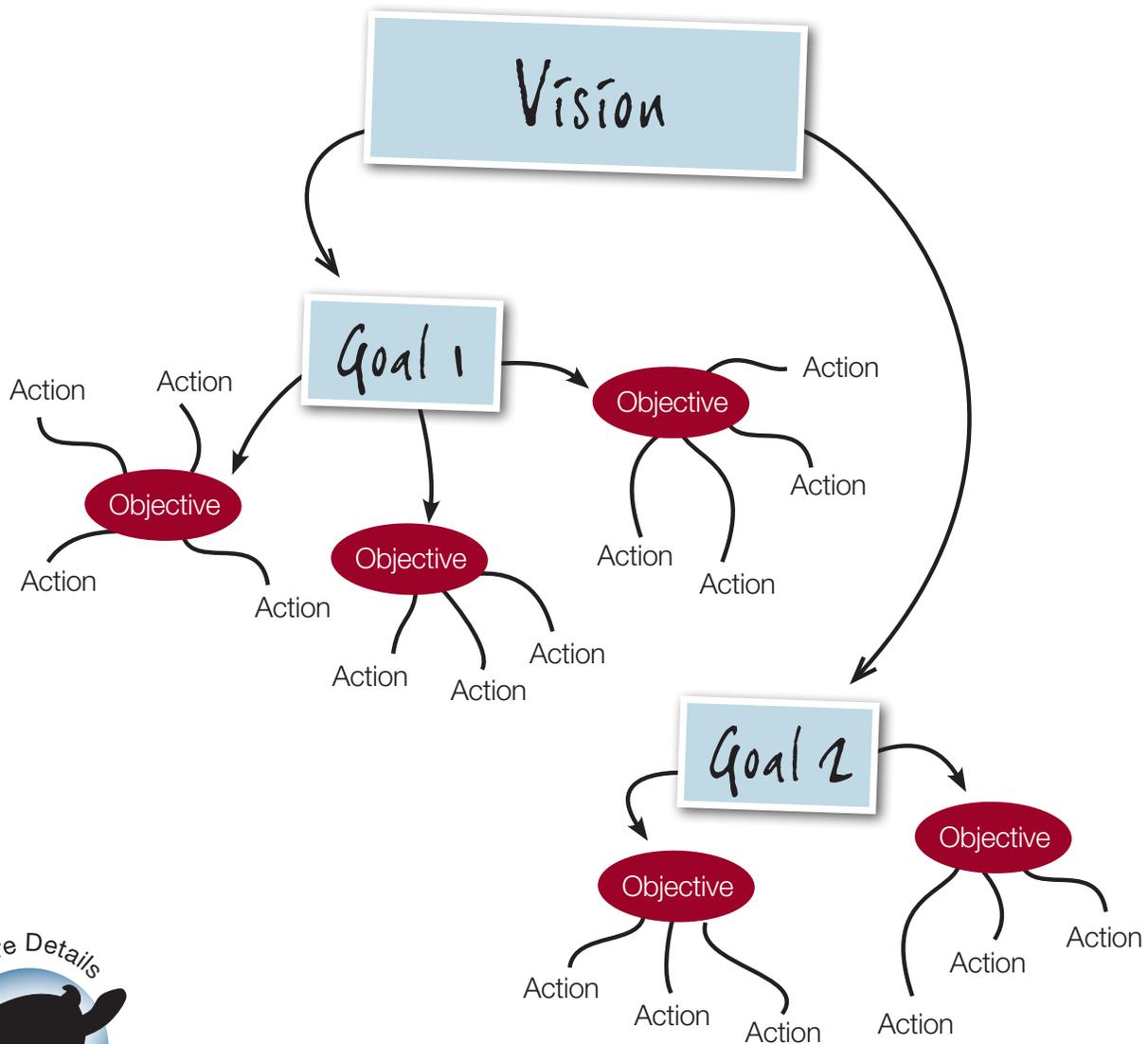
Developing Objectives

When the Steering Committee begins to discuss objectives, stay focused on the three to five priority goals you have already established. For each priority goal, try not to have more than two to three objectives – if you have more than that, you may want to reconsider the goal, to see if it should be split into a few more specific goals.



Goals and Objectives

The difference between goals and objectives is that goals are broad and somewhat intangible, while objectives are specific and measurable. It should be clear if you are achieving your objectives, based on the criteria you have developed. At the same time, your objectives should be clearly tied to your goals, so if you are achieving your objectives, there should be progress made towards your goals as well. The goals, ultimately, will lead to your vision – and actions, which are the steps you will take to reach your objectives, are what move you in a concrete way toward your vision (actions are discussed on page 53).





Tip

One way to make sure that your objectives will be able to be accomplished is to check if they are SMART. This is a simple way to evaluate your objectives to make sure that they will do what you want them to. Objectives should be easy to assess and evaluate and the SMART criteria will make it easy to do.

Using SMART criteria can help to ensure that your objectives (and actions) will achieve the desired results. Are the objectives proposed in the implementation plan:

- S Specific:**
Is the objective focused?
- M Measurable:**
Can you assess the objective's success easily?
- A Attainable:**
Is the objective achievable?
- R Relevant:**
Does the objective address the goal?
- T Time-bound:**
Does the objective include a timeframe for completion?

Objectives should relate to the goal, and should clearly set out steps toward achieving the goal. Start with the goal, and brainstorm some ideas of actions that would address the goal. Think about what would be required to achieve the goal. Once you have a few solid ideas, draft them up using the SMART criteria to ensure that they will actually address the goals you have identified.

There are many kinds of objectives. Some categories are:

- Technical objectives (e.g. improving water quality, water conservation targets)
- Planning process objectives (e.g. developing relationships)
- Environmental education objectives (e.g. building community awareness of watershed issues)
- Capacity building objectives (e.g. developing skills necessary to implement the plan)
- Governance objectives (e.g. developing institutions, laws and policies needed to implement and monitor the plan).

You may find more as you develop your objectives, and you may not use all of these, or you may have others. It's useful to keep these in mind, however, to make sure you don't get bogged down in the technical objectives, which are often the first ones planning processes tackle.

As a Steering Committee, choose objectives that everyone is passionate about, so that momentum builds quickly. And while it may be tempting to jump right into working on the hardest problems, choose a mix of easier, short-term objectives and more challenging, long-term objectives. You may also be able to break the long-term objectives down into a number of steps or smaller actions. Keeping a blend of long-term and short-term objectives will build up some early success, to keep momentum going and create a sense of accomplishment, while still keeping the long-term direction and vision in view.

Developing Actions

Now that you have developed your objectives, you can move on to developing actions. What steps do you need to take to achieve each objective? These are your actions. Each objective should have a list of actions associated with it. These actions should be solution-oriented, and should provide a means to achieve the objective – and thus the goal. Use the SMART criteria again, to ensure that the actions will result in tangible, relevant, and timely solutions.

Some of these actions may be undertaken soon, but some will take place a few years into the future. At this point, focus on the steps that will be needed to achieve the objective, and don't worry about the timeline – once you have all the steps (the actions) set out, then you can figure out timelines for how they will be implemented. You will also review and revisit the plan as part of the ongoing work of monitoring the plan, so you will have a chance to update and change actions to ensure they are relevant as the plan unfolds.



Using Social Marketing to Encourage Participation

Social marketing is a way of using marketing techniques to accomplish goals that benefit society. For example, one study found that using social norms to encourage hotel guests to hang up their towels for re-use, rather than leaving them on the floor for laundering, was more effective than an environmental message. Signs in the hotel bathrooms that advised guests that “Almost 75% of guests who are asked to participate in our new resource savings program do help by using their towels more than once” (Goldstein, Griskevicius and Cialdini 2007, p.148) were much more effective (at 44 percent) than signs advising guests to “HELP SAVE THE ENVIRONMENT. You can show your respect for nature and help save the environment by reusing your towels during your stay”, which only resulted in a 35 percent participation rate (p.146). This suggests that people are not necessarily motivated by environmental messages. Social marketing is one tool that might get people thinking about the actions in the plan from a different angle.

Coordinating existing plans and programs

As you develop the actions for each objective, consider existing federal, provincial, municipal, and First Nation land and water management measures. Are there plans or management regimes in place already that are related to the watershed, and therefore to the watershed plan? Work may already be taking place to address some of the concerns you have identified, and may offer some 'low-hanging fruit' or 'easy wins' (actions that will be easiest to complete) that are already underway elsewhere in the watershed.

For example, in your watershed are there plans, programs, or research or monitoring projects relating to:

- Land use?
- Water conservation?
- Source water protection?
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation?
- Drought and/or flood management?
- Nutrient management?
- Resource development?

These plans or programs may only cover part of the watershed, but may still be relevant to understanding and protecting the health of the watershed. Reviewing these plans and coordinating them under the umbrella of watershed planning will strengthen your plan. It will also ensure that the watershed plan is integrated with other work that is taking place in the watershed, to avoid duplication and inefficiencies. The more synergies that exist and can be built on between the various planning initiatives the easier it will be to move on implementation.

If this is the first time that a watershed planning process has been undertaken in your region, it is unlikely that these programs are coordinated across the watershed. Nevertheless, you may be able to build on other plans and projects as you develop your objectives and actions, for example, by incorporating work that is being done in a particular area (e.g. manure management) as an action towards one of your objectives (e.g. reducing agricultural runoff; improving water quality). There may also be opportunities for new related and/or secondary plans to come out of the watershed plan to address a particular concern. In either case, remember that one of the benefits of watershed planning is the opportunity to bring together and coordinate all of the different activities that affect water in your watershed.

You may also research or revisit the plans and programs in your First Nation specifically. Are there areas where you could connect with or build on the watershed plan to achieve some of your First Nation's goals? If you have a comprehensive community plan and/or a land-use plan consider how to connect and integrate the watershed plan. As your First Nation or other governments or organisations in the region develop new plans (e.g. conservation plans, source water protection plans), remember to build the actions, objectives and goals of the watershed plan into these new plans to help you create linkages between them and move towards your long term vision.



Connecting Plans in your First Nation

Develop a matrix to compare and connect the watershed plan with your First Nation's existing plans and programs to help you to identify areas of overlap, as well as find gaps that could be addressed the next time a plan is reviewed or a project is developed. You can also use this type of matrix to compare the watershed plan with other work occurring in the watershed.

Add the objectives and actions from the watershed plan to the left column of the table. Across the top, create a column for each of the other plans or areas of work. Place a tick mark, or add some details where the watershed objectives and actions intersect with the other plans listed in the table to illustrate the connections. You could also include information on whether this connection already exists or if it is a new opportunity.

Objectives and Actions	First Nation CCP	Housing Plan	Sewage and Infrastructure program
Objective: Reduce water consumption by promoting water conservation.	✓	✓	✓
Action: Review government policies to ensure that they include principles of water conservation.	Include these principles in next review of CCP		
Action: Develop and include water conservation strategies in community and land use plans.	Include these strategies in next review of CCP		Reduce pressure on sewage lagoon through land use (e.g. increasing housing density)
Action: Develop a program to support household low-water use options (such as low-flow taps and composting toilets) for watershed residents.		When new houses are built, include low-water use options.	Reduce pressure on sewage lagoon



Linking Actions to Goals and Objectives to Identify Synergies

Since the process of developing actions described here flows from goals to objectives to actions, it can be useful to also check back to see if the proposed actions address more than one objective or goal. You may find that an action meets two or three objectives, and can be therefore be associated with more than one goal or objective. Identifying these relationships can reduce overlap and fill gaps, as it gives you a chance to map out the whole plan and look at it all at once. It can also help with funding applications, as funders appreciate coordination of efforts and partnership; whenever you can, point out how funding is being used efficiently and effectively!

Cross-Referencing Actions Within the Plan

The table on the right can be used to compare the actions you will undertake with the objectives and goals of the plan. In the left-hand column, list the actions included in the plan. Across the top, list the goals and objectives.

Consider each action in the context of the whole plan, and put an X (or add more detail if this would be useful) to show where the action connects with goals and objectives. There should be at least one or two Xs in each row, as each action will connect with the goal and objective from which it was derived, but it may connect with multiple goals and objectives.

(Sample Goals, Objectives and Actions drawn from The Cowichan Basin Water Management Plan, Westland Resource Group Inc., 2007)

Actions

1a-1. Minimize leaks in major water distribution systems by developing and implementing a comprehensive leak detection and system maintenance program.

1a-2. Install water meters on new water connections and retrofit existing connections.

1b-1. Create a consistent volume-based pricing structure throughout the Basin, and request that the Ministry of Environment apply similar mechanisms.

1b-2. Implement a conservation based sewer charge (i.e., link sewage treatment costs to water consumption).

5a-1. Develop and implement an on-going communications and outreach strategy to share information with the community through print and electronic media about the Basin and its valued water resources.

5a-3. Develop education initiatives to enable elementary and secondary school students to understand important water issues and stewardship initiatives in their community.

5a-4. Engage the Cowichan Tribes in water management in ways that ensure cultural values are reflected in decisions.

5b-1. Seek opportunities to involve volunteers and form partnerships with nongovernmental organisations as the Water Management Plan is implemented.

5b-2. Engage Basin residents, government agencies, and decision-makers in an open and continuing dialogue about water management.

6a-1. Establish a Cowichan Basin Water Advisory Council (CBWAC) to guide the implementation of the Water Management Plan and improve the quality of water management decisions in the Cowichan Basin.

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Maximize efficiency of water use.	Objective 1a. Initiate improvements to water infrastructure.	Objective 1b. Improve management of water demand in all sectors.	Goal 5: Educate, engage, and empower citizens in water management.	Objective 5a. Foster basin thinking among all water users in the Cowichan Basin and ensure they understand and support water management initiatives.	Objective 5b. Build trust among water users, managers, regulators, and residents through communication and involvement.	Goal 6: Establish clear, accountable, and responsive water management decision processes and governance structures.	Objective 6a. Establish and fund a water management advisory council that represents Basin-wide interests, maintains ongoing dialogue among stakeholders, and builds trust and ownership among the participants and the public.
X	X	X					
X	X	X					
X		X					
X		X					
			X	X			
X			X	X	X		
			X	X			X
			X		X		
			X	X	X		
X			X			X	X

(Page 57 Activity continued)

Once the table is complete, you should be able to see all the interconnections between different parts of the plan at a glance. You may spot some overlaps (maybe there are too many actions relating to one area that achieve basically the same thing) or maybe there is one goal that is high priority, yet doesn't have sufficient actions associated with it. As you finalise the actions for the watershed plan, check back see if everything is fitting together the way you would like it to.

Assigning Actions

The Steering Committee will also have to determine who is responsible for each of the actions in the plan. As the committee assigns responsibility for various actions, it should consider both mandate and capacity. A mandate is the authorisation to pursue a particular action or kind of work; most organisations have a 'mandate' that defines the scope of their work. If an action falls outside this scope an organisation may not be able to work on it; however, if the action falls within its mandate, it likely also has the capacity for it.

Capacity can mean many things – it can refer to staff time, to funding, to particular skills or training. If an organisation does not have the capacity to undertake an action, either the action should not be assigned to it, or resources to increase its capacity should be provided. When you begin implementing a plan, there will likely be many areas where additional capacity will be needed. This is an opportunity to incorporate capacity building into the proposals or projects, to increase the ability of local organisations to take on the work required for the plan in the longer term.

Create actions to address these capacity building challenges, and set timelines that address what you want to work on first. Research funding opportunities, and be realistic about what is possible.

Sometimes more than one government or organisation may have the mandate and the capacity to undertake an action. If there are two organisations, consider assigning shared responsibility for the implementation of the action. If there are more than two, it is better to designate one organisation as the lead for the action. Assigning the lead to one group may make it more likely that the action will be completed – if it is assigned to multiple groups it may fall between the cracks.

As a First Nation, you may find that some actions will not pertain to you and others are quite important. Capacity may become a challenge, simply because there are too many actions and not enough people. Be strategic about where you invest your energy, money and time. Go back to the priorities your community identified while the plan was being developed, and make sure that your energy and resources are directed there.

If there are multiple priority actions for your First Nation, this may be an opportunity to build capacity within the community. As with the main implementation plan, actions relating to funding, hiring staff, or training requirements will be required. Relate any funding proposals you write or are involved in to the watershed plan to show potential funders the linkages to regional initiatives.



There Are Many Ways to Build Capacity

Formal education (e.g. college or university) is not the only way to build the capacity of your staff in the area of watershed planning and management. Consider incorporating capacity-building requirements into contracts with consultants, or talking with others in the watershed about mentorship opportunities for your staff. Many people are willing to mentor or support someone by sharing their knowledge and expertise. This can be a good way to gain practical experience.

'Circuit Rider' Programs are an example of a capacity building program available to First Nations. The Circuit Rider Training Program (CRTP) in Alberta and Ontario provides hands-on training and mentoring to increase the knowledge and skills of First Nations to operate and maintain their community water and wastewater systems. The Circuit Rider Program of the Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council is of a different sort: it provides hands-on technical assistance to its First Nation members in managing grants funded under the Environmental Protection Agency (APA). They provide assistance in a variety of areas including: grant writing, Tribal Council/Board training, bookkeeping and accounting support service, and facilitation of tribal government strategic planning sessions.

A First Nation's Mini-Plan

You may want to create a mini-plan that focuses almost entirely on implementation to address the concerns that relate specifically to your First Nation. This plan will track the actions that your First Nation is undertaking, or goals, priorities and objectives that your First Nation is particularly interested in.

Designate someone as the lead on the watershed plan work within the First Nation. It may be the same person who has been involved thus far, or it may be time to bring in a new person. This person will follow the implementation plan and ensure that your First Nation's watershed work happens, either by delegating it to the appropriate department or staff or by undertaking it themselves. They can liaise with the other stakeholders and rights-holders in the region who will be important to include in ensuring the work gets done.



Building in Traditional Roles

If your community has a strong sense of its traditional roles and responsibilities relating to water (explored in the first guidebook, *Describing Your Approach*), or if it wants to strengthen these roles and responsibilities, consider incorporating them when you begin to think about who in your First Nation will take on certain actions in the watershed plan. For example, maybe there is a clan (or clans) that traditionally holds responsibility for water, or maybe men and women have different roles in caring for water.

Creating Timelines

Now that you know the actions you will undertake to meet your objectives and who will lead each action, you can begin to lay out a timeline for when each action will take place. In part this will depend on the priority that you assign to each action.

Setting Priorities

As the Steering Committee considers the level of priority for each action items, it should consider both timing and urgency in developing these priorities.

Schedule and Timing: Certain actions can only take place at particular times of year; some actions will depend on other actions being taken first; and others will depend on the resources available to undertake them. In setting priorities, consider how ready you may be to undertake each action. If an action is relatively easy to undertake, the resources are in place, and it is just a matter of starting, it can be a high priority.

Story



Keepers of the Water, Keepers of the Fire

In 1986, Site 41 was proposed as a garbage dump in Simcoe County, in southern Ontario, near three First Nations: Beausoleil First Nation, the Chippewas of Rama First Nation, and the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation. Questions were immediately raised about the choice of site, but in 2009, construction began. A large group of First Nation and non-First Nation people protested the proposed dump through Walks for Water and by setting up a protest site across from Site 41. They argued that the dump would contaminate the pristine aquifer below the site. Five Anishinaabe Kweag (women), or keepers of the water, led the group. They were joined by the men, who were the keepers of the fire (Black, 2009). One of these women, Vicki Monague, said “As Anishinaabe Women, it is our duty to stand up for the water to ensure its preservation for generations to come” (Monague 2009, p.21). After many years of hard work to stop the plans, in May 2010 the Certificate of Approval for the project was revoked and the land was rezoned with covenants included to ensure that it would never be used as a dump (Stop Dump Site 41, date unknown).

Tip

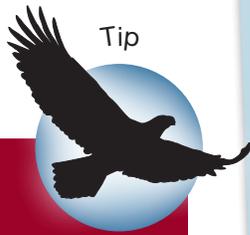


If you don't have the money or the people with required skills to address a particular action, it can't be an immediate priority. These other steps, such as fundraising or training, will need to be undertaken before you can begin to work on the action itself. Make the action of fundraising or training a priority so that you can address future actions fully resourced.

It's a good idea to look at all the actions together, to see if actions are evenly spread out, or if there are clusters of activity and periods of inactivity. You may find that you have many more actions at the beginning of the timeline than towards the end. Since you will be reviewing and revisiting the plan along the way, the actions you will take a few years down the line don't have to be as specific or as detailed at this point as the actions to be undertaken in the next year or two.

Urgency: Some actions may simply be more urgent than others. Perhaps there is a serious threat facing the watershed which should be addressed as soon as possible. In this case, prioritise the relevant actions highly, but be sure to consider if the resources are all in place or if there might be other, earlier, actions required.

Tip



The two activities suggested on pages 48 and 49 to prioritise the watershed plan goals, can be used here too, to prioritise the actions in the plan. Be sure to discuss what kind of priority you are considering – whether it is a question of urgency (what are the most important actions to address first?) and/or of schedule and timing (in what order should the actions be taken?).

Setting Out a Timeline

Imagine you have a ten-year plan. Write each year on a different piece of chart paper, and each action on a sticky note. Stick the notes on the appropriate year (divide the piece of chart paper into quarters, or months as needed). When you step back from the paper, you should be able to see how busy each year will be.

You could also do this in an Excel spreadsheet, by putting each year in a separate column at the top, and the actions below under each year.

Activity



EVALUATION AND INDICATORS



It may seem early to start talking about indicators and evaluation, given that the plan hasn't even been finished yet, but in fact this is the perfect time to start talking about a plan to measure success. Evaluating the plan is the process of reviewing it to see whether and to what extent goals are being met; indicators are the signposts or measures that help you to evaluate the success of the plan and the overall health of the watershed.

Why evaluate? Developing an evaluation plan helps you determine if your objectives do in fact reach your goals and ultimately, take you closer to your vision. Thinking about and planning for evaluation early on will make the plan stronger; knowing what is needed to make these assessments ahead of time prepares people to collect the information needed and will make it easier to evaluate later.

Evaluation will help you to learn from both the planning successes, failures and everything in between. Being aware of and able to talk about your successes is also a way to build community support (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992). Basically, evaluation shows the public and funding bodies how the plan will be accountable and measurable. This section will talk about developing an evaluation plan, and how to use indicators in evaluation.

Indicators

Indicators are the signs or measures of success of a particular activity, project, or plan. Indicators can also be measures that make it possible to assess the overall health of the ecosystems in a watershed, or key variables that reveal the overall health of the ecosystems. They are the signs that will demonstrate if your actions are having their intended effect. It is a good idea to have three to four indicators to make a strong argument for the success of each objective.



See Guidebook Three,
Knowing Your Watershed,
for more information about
indicators.

As you think about indicators, consider what would be important measures for your First Nation. Think back to the priorities your First Nation identified during the goal setting stage. How will your First Nation know if these priorities are being met? What would be some markers or signs that your First Nation would find important? When you talked with community members about a vision and goals for the watershed, were there any indicators discussed then? What will make the watershed plan a success?

This may be an opportunity to use IK to identify appropriate indicators relating to the watershed plan. Rather than simply relying on western indicators, talk to knowledge holders to understand how they might know about the kind of impact the plan will have on the watershed area. Are there indicator species that would show if the watershed's health is improving or declining? What are other ways of knowing about watershed health that could be used as indicators?



The indicators that you choose will be the ones that are relevant to your particular ecosystem and to the particular challenges that you are addressing with your watershed plan. What is the intended result of each action? And how will you know if the result has been achieved? If you have three kinds of objectives, you should have indicators that relate to them, for example:

- Technical indicators (e.g. water quality parameters, water conservation targets)
- Planning process indicators (e.g. development of planning relationships)
- Environmental education indicators (e.g. community awareness of watershed issues)
- Capacity building indicators (e.g. training received)
- Governance indicators (e.g. development or implementation of relevant laws or policies).

To determine appropriate indicators, you may need to call on a range of people with different expertise. For example, although you may have established an objective of reducing nutrient loading in the river, you may not know what would be an appropriate indicator to demonstrate if this is happening. A scientist may be able to identify some indicators; IK holders may also know.

Keep your indicators as specific as possible, and always ask “how can we measure that?” If you used the SMART criteria in developing your objectives and actions, indicators should be relatively easy to develop, because they should also be SMART:

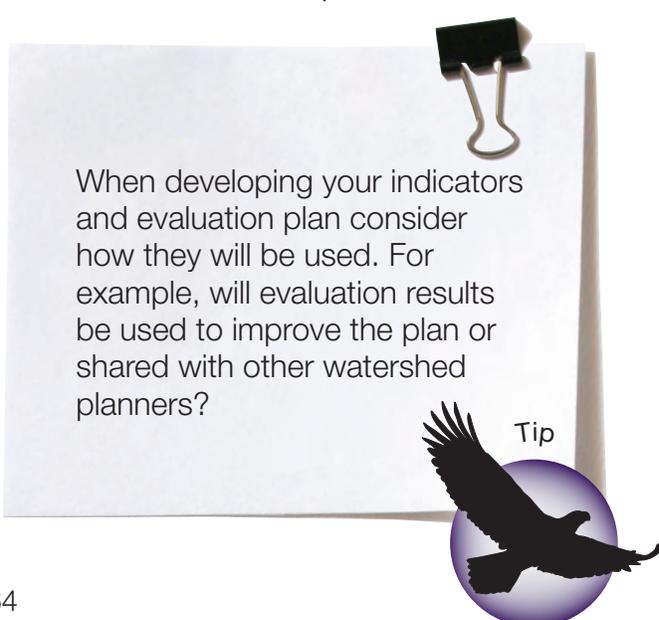
- S Specific:**
Is the indicator specific/clear?
- M Measurable:**
Is there information that can be used to measure the indicator?
- A Attainable:**
Is there enough capacity and resources to obtain the indicator?
- R Relevant:**
Is the information provided by the indicator necessary for decision making or just nice to know?
- T Timely:**
Will the indicator tell you what you need to know in the time to make changes?

As you work, check your indicators against these criteria. Keep the best criteria, and if there are some that are important and good, but not the best, you may want to develop a category of secondary indicators to use as necessary. Also consider what you ‘need to know’ versus what would be ‘nice to know’. Evaluation can be time-consuming and expensive so stay focused and targeted when developing indicators.

You may want to include two kinds of indicators in your evaluation plan. The first kind relates to each action in the watershed plan, and will tell you how successful that particular action is. These indicators can be integrated into the watershed plan, by attaching them to the action tables so that you can measure progress as you work through the action and the plan. Alternatively, you can develop a specific evaluation plan as an appendix to the watershed plan, and the indicators can be built into the logic models. (Logic models are discussed in *Guidebook Five: Bringing the Plan to Life*).

The second kind of indicator is the broader measures that will demonstrate the overall health of the ecosystem. These indicators are less likely to be directly linked to one particular action, and are more likely to reflect the overall trends in the watershed. You may want to review these indicators every few years, or whenever the plan is to be updated.

Once you have developed the indicators and evaluation plan, the draft watershed plan should be close to completion!



When developing your indicators and evaluation plan consider how they will be used. For example, will evaluation results be used to improve the plan or shared with other watershed planners?

Tip

APPROVING THE PLAN



Before you can implement the draft plan, it must be approved. There may be a particular body or bodies (e.g. the province/territory, your Nation, local governments) that is responsible for the final approval of the plan (this may be the case even if these bodies are represented on your Steering Committee). Before the plan goes for final approval, each of the organisations or governments that participated in the development of the plan – all the stakeholders and rights-holders – will want to review and approve the plan with their respective constituencies.

A Last Chance for Feedback on the Plan

At this stage, are there particular people that should provide feedback on the draft plan, and how can you check in with them? This is the last chance to gather feedback on the plan, so it is important to ensure that everyone who is interested has a chance for review.

At this point in the process, the plan should not need major changes. As the planning process proceeded, the Steering Committee will have checked in with decision makers and the public along the way (according to its outreach plan) to make sure that the plan development was going in the right direction. Assuming this communication and feedback loop was done well, there should not be any surprises in the final draft of the plan. If the goals and priorities, as well as the objectives, actions and indicators, were developed with input from your First Nation and other decision makers and participants in the watershed, then the support for this final draft should be easy to secure.

As you consider how to bring the plan to all the constituencies that participated in its development, you may find that this final review of the plan is an opportunity to hold an open house for all the stakeholders and rights-holders. Gathering everyone together in this way may be a good way to hear feedback and comments on the plan, as well as to inform residents and other interested people about what they can do to support the plan and the watershed. Particularly if you have held open houses at other times in the plan-making process, this may offer a chance to review the plan as a whole, to spark connections and energy among visitors to the open house, and talk about next steps. (See page 7 for some ideas on how to organise an open house).

As well as inviting the members of your First Nation to be a part of a regional open house, you may need to also need to bring the plan directly to your First Nation depending upon

the decision making process used in your First Nation's governance. More people might share their comments if the plan comes to them, rather than if they have to go to the plan. There may also be sensitive issues that are better discussed within the community, rather than in a larger gathering with multiple interest groups. Holding a community gathering, or taking the plan around to the people who offered input at earlier stages may be a more effective way to gather comments. How you gather people together will depend on your First Nation's protocols, preferences and requirements.

It is likely that your Chief and Council will want to review and officially approve the plan. This should not be the first time the formal leadership is being introduced to the details of the plan. They should have been aware of the planning process from as early on as possible and at least one member of leadership should have been involved in the planning process in some way, possibly through the Steering Committee. Depending on your First Nation's protocols, a Band Council Resolution or an approval based on your First Nation's customary or Indigenous laws may be necessary to officially approve the plan.

Community Engagement on Bingo Night

Sometimes, to gather feedback from community members, you need to go to them rather than waiting for them to come to you. One way to share the draft final plan could be to hold a presentation during a popular event in your First Nation.

When working with Deschambault Lake Community to develop a community vision, CIER hosted a bingo night to bring people together. CIER booked the school gym and bingo machine, and organised bingo cards, prizes and posters advertising the event. The event started with a short presentation, and there were opportunities for people to talk in groups about their vision for their community in between playing bingo. Information, maps and blank chart paper with key questions were put up around the room and members of the planning project talked with people about the planning process before and after the bingo games. Even though it was a cold night, more than 130 people came to play bingo and to share their ideas for the future! (CIER, 2006)



Story



Publicising the Plan

As you finish up the plan, don't forget to share it with your First Nation and with the general public. You may already have gathered feedback on the draft plan through your outreach plan, and this is the last step in that outreach plan – a chance to make people aware of the finalised plan, encourage them to keep the plan in mind, and invite them to support the implementation of the plan. You could create a poster, or hold a community celebration to acknowledge all the work that has been done up to this point, and to energise people for the work that lies ahead.



Tip

Some ways to publicise the plan include:

- Holding a regional celebration, or a celebration with your First Nation
- Creating and distributing a poster or brochure
- Calling media or writing a press release to talk about the plan
- Hosting presentations in the schools
- Holding a contest or quiz to raise awareness of watershed issues
- Having a booth at community events (e.g. treaty days, pow wows, bazaars).

Creating a Commemorative Community Banner

Activity



One way to get people involved is to have a banner commemorating the plan. You can do this with your First Nation, or in a larger gathering with all the stakeholders and rights-holders in the region. Talk about the watershed and implementation plans, and explain what people can do to support the plans and the watershed itself. Encourage everyone to sign the banner as a personal commitment to bringing the plan to life. This is a great visual reminder of the plan, and can be hung at the Band Office, or circulated among the offices of all the participating organisations and government.

Time to Celebrate!

And now... you have a plan! Congratulations! Working through the development of the plan has undoubtedly been a long process with challenges along the way. From identifying your First Nation's knowledge, concerns and priorities, to building relationships with other stakeholders and rights-holders, researching your watershed, and developing the plan itself, a lot of hard work went into creating this plan. Completing a watershed plan is a major milestone, and the Steering Committee should take some time to celebrate, and to acknowledge the many people who contributed to the process.

After all, you're not done yet – the next step is to implement the plan!



Tip

If your First Nation has a traditional way of marking achievements or successes, such as a feast, a song or dance, or a ceremony to acknowledge the water, you can share this with the Steering Committee, or have your own celebration or event to recognise the watershed plan.

CONCLUSION

This guidebook focused on the process of developing the watershed plan itself. It began with an introduction to this phase and how community engagement should happen throughout the phase. The guidebook went on to discuss the development of a vision and statement of values, of issues and goals, and what could be included in a watershed plan. It then reviewed how to prioritise these goals, and how to develop objectives and actions from the goals. It also discussed how to connect the plan to other work in the watershed. Finally, it looked at evaluation and indicators to determine the success of the plan, and discussed the process of approving the plan.

At this point, if you've worked your way through this guidebook, you will have:

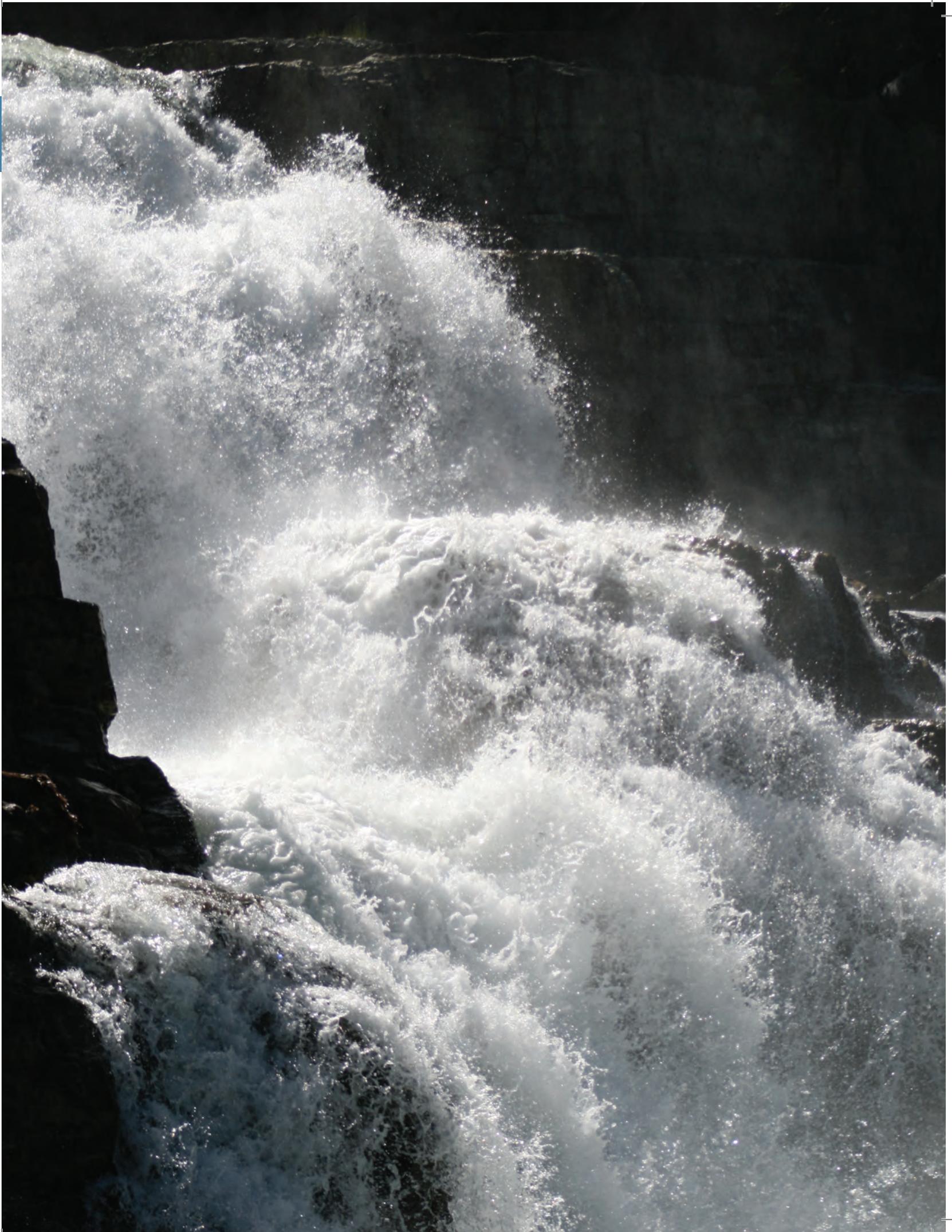
- A regional vision and statement of values for the watershed
- A list of goals for the watershed plan
- Priorities among the goals identified for the plan
- Objectives and actions relating to each of the goals

- An understanding of how the watershed plan connects with other work happening in your First Nation and in the watershed
- Indicators and a draft evaluation plan
- A completed watershed plan!

The next guidebook, *Bringing the Plan to Life*, will discuss how to implement the plan. It will talk about the transition from developing the plan to implementing it, and about reviewing the plan regularly to make sure that it is on track. It will also look at monitoring the plan, and finally revisiting the plan to update it and adapt it as needed. This is an exciting transition, representing the end of the journey to create the plan and the beginning of the journey of implementation. This can also be a challenging leap, as it involves a substantial shift to now putting the plan into action. The following guidebook will help to adapt and keep momentum going as you move into this new phase.



Guidebook #4



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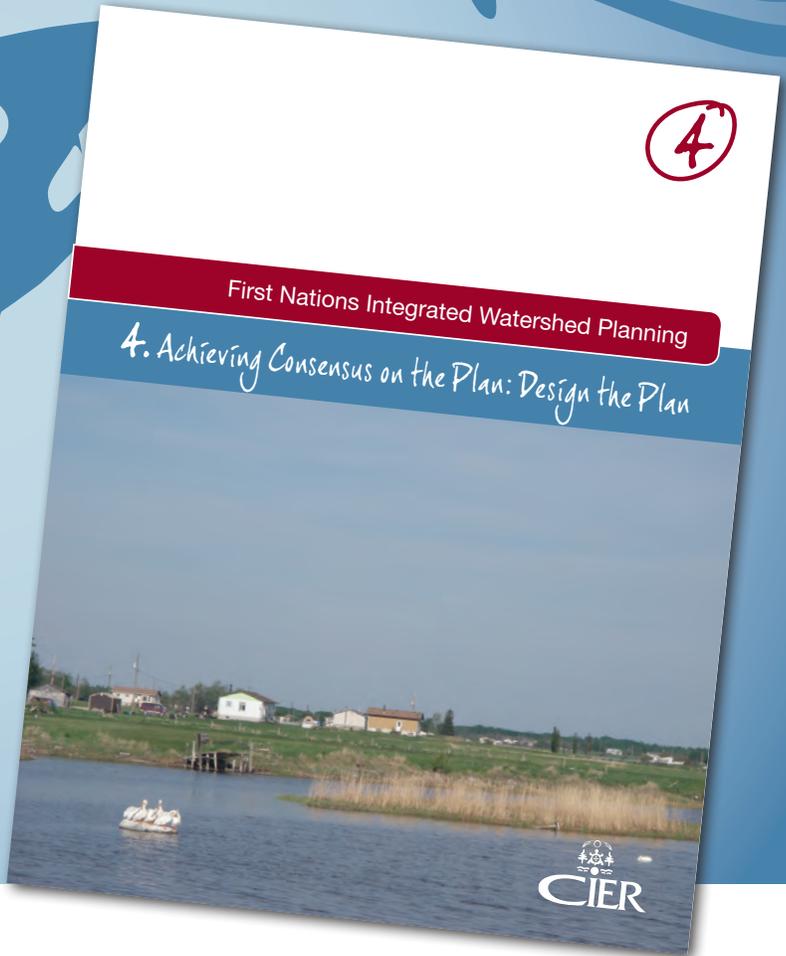
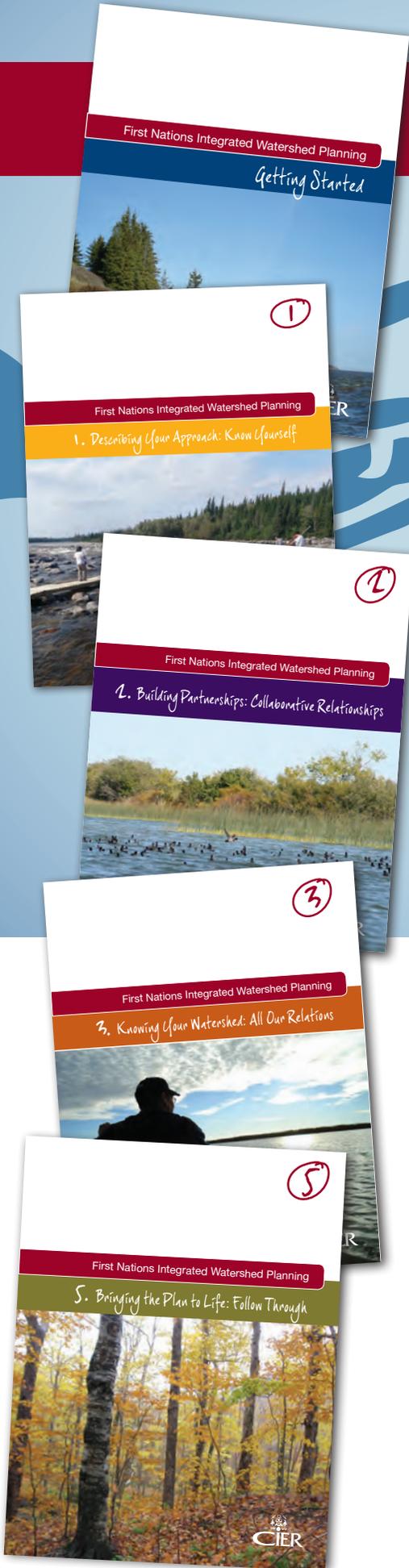
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Evaluation