



FRASER VALLEY WATERSHEDS COALITION

Operating Principles

Community Relations

Participation: The FVWC encourages active participation of all Fraser Valley communities and community members in addressing watershed issues.

Community Building: The FVWC seeks to build a sense of community by fostering relationships of understanding and mutual respect.

Cooperation and Collaboration: The FVWC recognizes the important linkages between communities, regions and organizations and tries to foster relationships based on cooperation and collaboration. The FVWC recognizes that each participant exists within the context of a larger community, group or agency that has existing relationships and obligations. Therefore the FVWC embraces strategies that aim to benefit the local and larger community.

Aboriginal Title: The FVWC recognizes that aboriginal nations within the Fraser Valley assert aboriginal title and rights. These rights and mutual responsibilities, now being defined, must be acknowledged and reconciled in a just and fair manner.

Capacity Building: The FVWC contributes to project deliveries by encouraging the acquisition of relevant skills and the development of supportive structures, methods, institutions and knowledge.

Diversity: Watershed issues and the approaches and capacity to address them vary from community to community; therefore FVWC actions may look different in each area.

Philosophy

Mutual Dependence and Integration: Land, water, air and all living organisms including humans are integral parts of the ecosystem. Watershed issues are not isolated from other social, economic and environmental concerns. Consideration of social economic and environmental costs and benefits must be an integral part of decision making.

Ecological Limits: The land, air and water sustains us and there are limits to human economic and other activities. The FVWC encourages processes, structures and initiatives that respect these ecological limits and supports work that is sustaining, regenerating, and nurturing of both the community and the earth.

Transition Takes Time: Watersheds and the way we go about managing this work is a journey that requires feedback, learning and adjustment. In the short-term, the elements of success may not always be in balance.

Processes

Open and Informed Decision Making: Based on the best available information, the FVWC will consider all options.

Accountability: Each of us is responsible for the social, economic and environmental consequences of our decisions and accountable of our actions.

Learning: Each of us and together, seek learning and maintain curiosity about the challenges and problems we aim to solve.

Adaptive Approaches: Plans and activities must be adaptable and be able to respond to changes, new knowledge and changing social values.

Exercising Caution: Caution must be exercised when shaping decisions to avoid making irreversible mistakes.

Managing Uncertainty: A lack of certainty should not prevent decisive actions towards sustainability. Such actions should be monitored using relevant indicators to facilitate adaptive management.

Appropriate Indicators: The FVWC monitors and evaluates its progress through community-derived and appropriate economic, social, cultural, and

ecological indicators, rather than through conventional measures and standards that may not apply to watershed health.

Recognition: The FVWC recognizes existing rights, agreements and obligations of participants in all decision making.