



CWRA ACRH
Canadian
Water
Resources
Association
Association
Canadienne
des Ressources
Hydriques

Promoting Effective Water Management

Canada Needs a National Water Strategy

A Presentation to the

Canadian Water Resources Association

ONTARIO BRANCH WORKSHOP

Trans-boundary Issues in Water Quality Management

Andrew Szojka
National President, CWRA

February 5, 2010



***“Today most people know the price of everything
but the value of nothing.”***

- Oscar Fingal O’Flahertie Wills Wilde (1854 – 1900)





Vision

...Involves the process of having original ideas that have VALUE and comes about through the interaction of different disciplinary ways of seeing things.



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***“If you don’t much care where you want to get to,
then it doesn’t much matter which way you go.”***

- Lewis Carrol



CWRA – Who we are

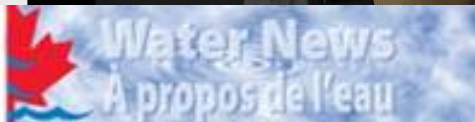


- Formed in 1947 with Alberta roots
- Membership comprises wide variety of water professionals – water users, managers, scientists, academics, citizens
- Vision – *Canada's water is managed with a commitment to environmental, economic and social sustainability*



What we do

- Raise awareness on water management issues through:
 - Conferences, workshops
 - Publications, special studies
 - Quarterly *Canadian Water Resources Journal*
 - Quarterly *Water News*
 - Scholarships and awards
 - Project WET (**Water Education for Teachers**)

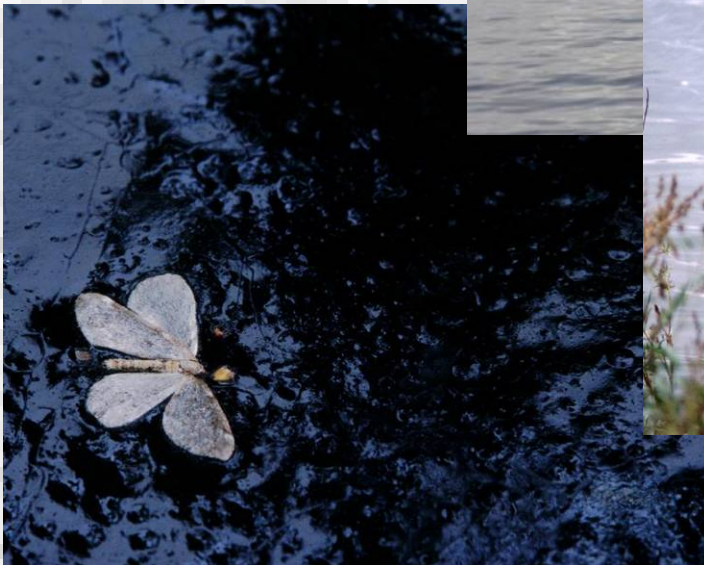




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Water is Life





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Water Issues/Threats

- Floods
- Water supply shortages – droughts, overuse, misuse
- Water conflicts



Photo by Tahir Rasul Black Creek crossing @ Finch Avenue 08/19/05



Water Issues/Threats

- Unsafe drinking water
- Aging Infrastructure
- Degraded ecosystems





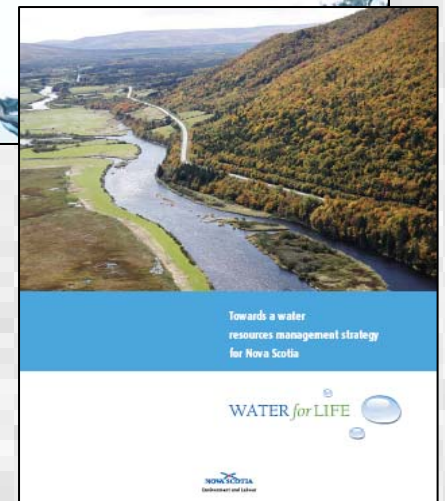
Complexity of Water Management in Canada

- Water essential for human life, economy, nature.
- Water is limited in quantity and resilience to degradation
- Alternate visions values and demands on water create conflict
- Management responsibility distributed among all levels of government
- Many sectors of civil society have management roles.



Provincial and Local initiatives

- Alberta's Water For Life a model
- Other provinces and NWT have followed
- Initiatives on municipal and local watershed basis across Canada





Other Provincial Initiatives

Quebec's "Politique nationale de l'eau 2002"

- Recognizes water as a collective resource
 - Right of all citizens to water accessibility
- Aims at protecting public health and aquatic ecosystems
 - Revision of the law on the quality of drinking water
 - Maintain the integrity and quality of aquatic ecosystems
- Promotes sustainable, integrated management of water
 - Water stewardship through integrated water management, starting with St. Lawrence drainage basin
 - Continue to improve water treatment and stormwater management
 - Protect the quality of aquatic ecosystems
 - Promote recreation and tourist activities related to water



Other Provincial initiatives

British Columbia: “Water Smart Living”

- BC’s Plan to keep water healthy and secure
- Introduced in 2008
- Review of governance underway
- POLIS Discussion Paper May 2009 : “Water Governance Reform Options and Opportunities”



Remaining Management Gaps

- Lack of common vision and principles to harmonize decisions
- Lack of full coordination among levels of government, sectors dependent on water
- Lack of agreement on how to set priorities
- No shared commitment to action by all stakeholders on agreed priority actions
- No comprehensive management plan for Canadian water → overlap or omissions



A pan-Canadian Water Strategy (CNWS) would fill these gaps !

- Shared vision and values provide a framework for effective coordination of multi-faceted management
- Increases capacity for efficient site-specific local management through clear allocation of responsibility within a comprehensive perspective





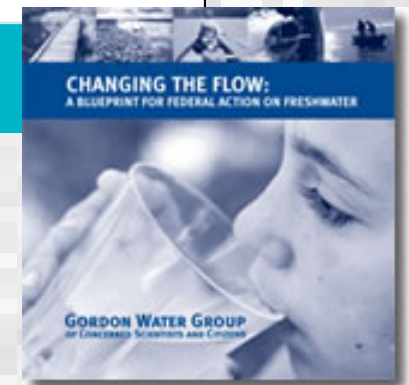
Benefits of a CNWS

- Increased accountability due to broader stakeholder participation in governance.
- Enhanced environmental protection and a stronger foundation for economic productivity.
- Stronger capacity to respond to threats and crises.
- Better positioning to meet international expectations.
- General public acceptance and support for water management decisions = less unproductive conflict.
- Greater integration within and among sectors.
- Clarified responsibilities = more efficient actions.
- More consistent and effective responses to both national and local concerns (e.g. climate change, water exports, drinking water).



Other groups are calling for a comprehensive water strategy

- Canadian Chambers of Commerce
- Conference Board of Canada
- Energy Council of Canada
- Insurance Bureau of Canada
- Pollution Probe
- Gordon Water Group
- Many authors in *Eau Canada* (Bakker, 2007)
- Canadian Environmental Law Association
- National Council of Women of Canada
- Council of Canadians





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Guy Laliberte

source: Globe-Net





CWRA's Vision for a CNWS

- Form, content and priority actions determined by participatory process involving all stakeholders
- Commonly endorsed goals and principles
- Specific commitments to action on key areas
- Able to evolve and adapt
- Mechanism to track implementation progress
- Full participation from all levels of government, First Nation and aboriginal leaders, all sections of civil society the key to success

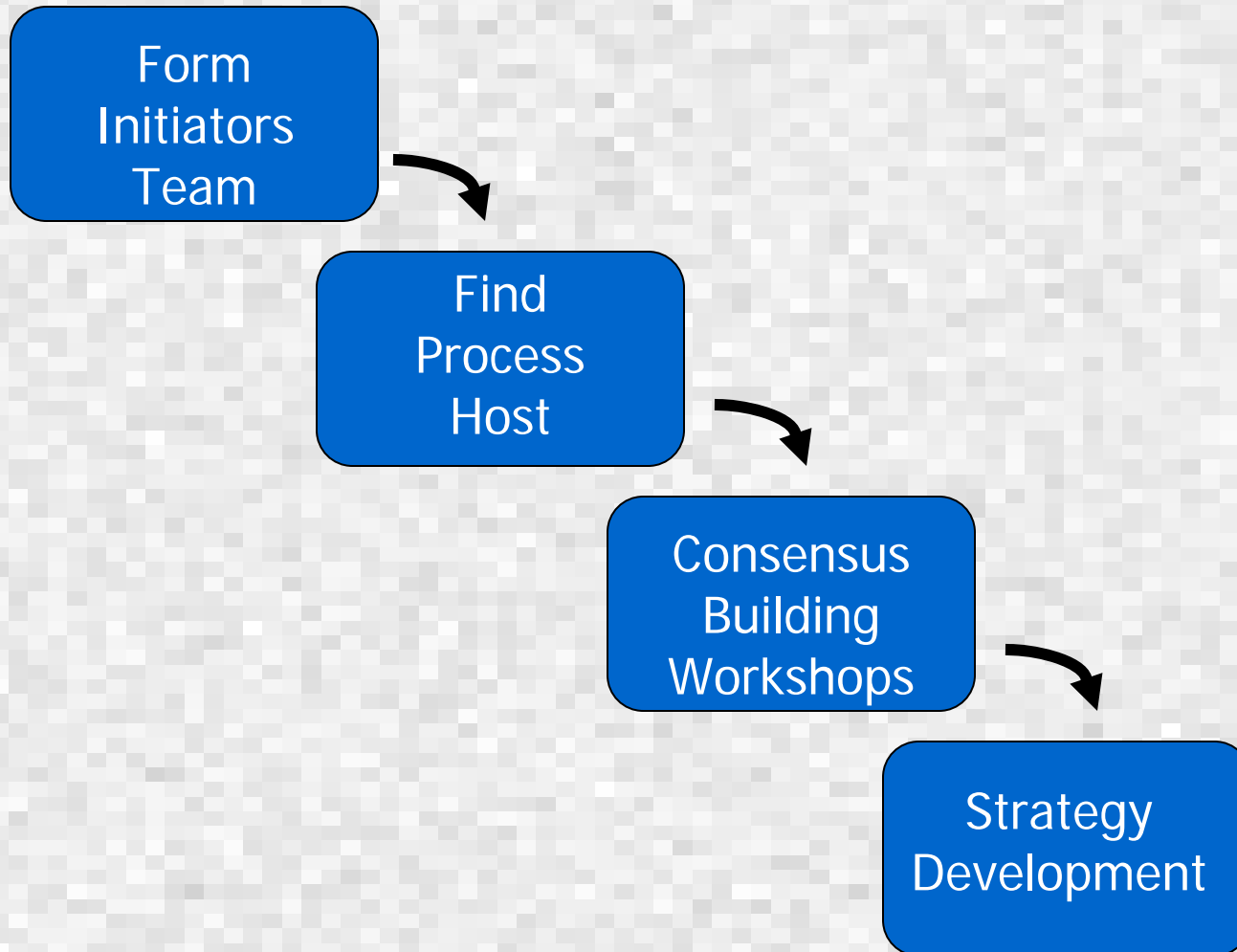


What does “National” Mean

- **NOT** a federal government plan – (but federal AND provincial participation essential)
- Covers all of Canada by active participation of all sectors of society and all levels of government
- Coordinated and comprehensive but local in application



Proposed Process for Development of a CNWS





CWRA's Next Steps

- Approach prospective initiators
- Convene an initiators group to seek host for CNWS process
- Once process is underway CWRA will contribute to development of a CNWS as one of many stakeholders.

Check out www.cwra.org

For the report “Towards A Canadian Water Strategy”

Comments welcome:

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