



Charter for Sustainability



Fraser Basin Council



VISION

The Fraser Basin is a place where
social well being
is supported by a **vibrant economy**
and sustained by a
healthy environment



Members of the Fraser Basin Management Program (predecessor to the Fraser Basin Council) gather with federal, provincial and local representatives on the New Westminster waterfront in 1997 to celebrate the launch of the Fraser Basin Council as a non-profit society. The centerpiece of the celebration was the newly signed Charter for Sustainability, a good-faith agreement to advance social, economic and environmental sustainability in the Fraser Basin.

A Charter for Our Times



When people share a common vision, so much is possible. At the Fraser Basin Council our vision is to see the Fraser River Basin as a place where social well-being is supported by a vibrant economy and sustained by a healthy environment. This vision, and the principles and goals that underlie it, are eloquently set out in the 1997 Charter for Sustainability.

The Fraser Basin Council was formed that same year, a first step in fulfilling the aims of the Charter. One of the Council's strengths is collaborative decision-making, bringing together on its thirty-six member Board representatives of the four orders of government (Federal, Provincial, Local and First Nations) and citizens at large representing business, environmental and civic interests. We take pride in bringing such talented and experienced people together to recognize and resolve sustainability issues. Our work focuses on the four directions of the Charter: to strive for a greater understanding of sustainability, to care for ecosystems, to improve decision-making and to build stronger communities.

Today the Council works on sustainability issues in all regions of the Fraser Basin and across BC. We are privileged to build partnerships among decision-makers and various interested parties on such issues as flood hazard management; sustainable fish and fisheries; climate change action; air quality improvement and smart planning for communities, along with many other regional initiatives. The Charter remains our touchstone, and most importantly, a document we share with public and private sector organizations.

It has been my privilege to follow in the footsteps of earlier Chairs of the Council: The Hon. Iona Campagnolo, Dr. Jack Blaney and Patrick Reid. I acknowledge their leadership and foresight, and the accomplishments of all the directors and staff who have served the Council over the years. I am pleased to celebrate the Charter as more than words on paper. It is an inspirational and enlightening guide in our collective journey to sustainability.

Yours truly,

Dr. Charles Jago

About the Charter

The Charter for Sustainability, first published in 1997, was republished in 2002 and 2013 with minor data updates. It is available online at www.fraserbasin.bc.ca.



Introduction

WHAT IS THE CHARTER FOR SUSTAINABILITY?

The Charter for Sustainability is a good-faith agreement among Fraser Basin residents and organizations to work towards the social, economic and environmental sustainability of the Fraser Basin. The Charter for Sustainability provides principles and goals that will lead to a better future. It is not a legally binding document, nor does it interfere with any existing laws, agreements, treaties or policies.

The individuals, organizations, governments and communities who support the Charter accept the overall intent and principles of the Charter and agree to do their part to pursue the goals.

The Charter for Sustainability has a vision, principles for sustainability and four directions. Each direction features goals and suggestions on how those goals can be achieved. The four directions are:

- **Understanding Sustainability**
- **Caring for Ecosystems**
- **Strengthening Communities** and
- **Improving Decision-Making.**

The Charter takes a watershed approach, which means that planning and decision-making occur within watershed boundaries. Watershed boundaries remain stable over time, are easily recognized and provide natural limits for managing social, economic, environmental and institutional connections.



WHY THE FRASER BASIN?

The Fraser Basin drains more than 25% of BC's land and supports more than two-thirds of the province's population. Known as BC's economic engine, the Fraser Basin contributes 80% of the province's gross domestic product and 10% of Canada's gross national product. The Fraser River and its tributaries provide important transportation corridors and position the Basin as a gateway to the Asia-Pacific.

The Basin also boasts the world's most productive salmon river system, supporting seven salmon species and over 50 other species of fish, including giant sturgeon. It is BC's most productive waterfowl breeding area. More than 300 species of birds and many species of mammals make use of the area. The Basin contains 21 million hectares of forest, almost half of BC's agricultural land, and eight major producing mines. Recreation and tourism opportunities abound.

For thousands of years, the Basin has been home for many Aboriginal people including the Sto:lo, Nlaka'pamux, Secwepmec, Stl'atl'imx, Tsilhqot'in, Carrier and Okanagan Nations. Today, 2.9 million residents from a variety of backgrounds call the Basin home. The history, strength and diversity of Aboriginal and other communities within the Fraser Basin is fundamental to the sustainability of the Basin and reinforces the critical importance of fostering the long-term health of the Basin.

The population of the Basin is expected to increase significantly over the next 20 years. While human activities in the Basin have had a significant effect on the natural environment, the Basin's diversity gives us a unique opportunity to "get it right" for future generations.

The Fraser River has been designated as a BC Heritage River and as a Canadian Heritage River. These designations offer special recognition of the diverse cultural, natural, recreational and economic values of the Fraser River and its many watersheds.



HOW DID WE ARRIVE AT THIS CHARTER?

Over several decades, attention has been focused on social, economic and environmental issues in the Fraser Basin. The Fraser Basin Management Board and Program were created by the federal, provincial and local governments on May 26, 1992 to address sustainability issues and to develop a strategic plan for sustainability of the Fraser Basin. The Board created a draft Basin Plan and circulated it for input. Using that input, the Board developed this Charter, the strategic plan for the Fraser Basin.

Everyone must support an emphasis on the individual as the prime factor in favourably effecting change in the Fraser River Basin

THE FRASER BASIN VISION

We want to see the Fraser Basin as a place:

WHERE social well-being is supported by a vibrant economy and sustained by a healthy environment

Understanding Sustainability

WHERE governments, community groups and individuals recognize why and how they can contribute to building vibrant communities, developing strong and diverse economies and maintaining the air, water, land and living species that make up our ecosystems.

Caring for Ecosystems

WHERE we are all stewards of resources such as water, forests, fish, wildlife and land.

As stewards, we conserve and enhance our ecosystems to maintain strong and diverse economies and to support growing communities. In this way, we not only enjoy our natural environment, but also conserve it to support our high quality of life.

Strengthening Communities

WHERE communities benefit from local experience, skills and values.

Strong communities are built on a diverse economy, an educated workforce, safe neighbourhoods, accessibility to basic commodities, shared goals, local action and a sense of belonging.

Improving Decision-Making

WHERE decision-making is shared and we work together to reach creative agreements and achieve common goals that reflect the interests of a growing population mixed in gender, culture, religion, age and interest; and

WHERE Aboriginal rights and title now being defined are reconciled in a just and fair manner.

This Vision guides the goals of the Charter for Sustainability.

Principles

FRASER BASIN PRINCIPLE FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Mutual Dependence

Land, water, air and all living organisms including humans are integral parts of the ecosystem. Biodiversity must be conserved.

Accountability

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

Equity

All communities and regions must have equal opportunities to provide for the social, economic and environmental needs of residents.

Integration

Consideration of social, economic and environmental costs and benefits must be an integral part of all decision-making.

Adaptive Approaches

Plans and activities must be adaptable and able to respond to external pressures and changing social values.

Coordinated and Cooperative Efforts

Coordinated and cooperative efforts are needed among all government and non-government interests.

Open and Informed Decision-Making

Open decision-making depends on the best available information.

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 for sustainability.

Recognition

There must be recognition of existing rights, agreements and obligations in all decision-making.

Aboriginal Rights and Title

We recognize that Aboriginal nations within the Fraser Basin assert Aboriginal

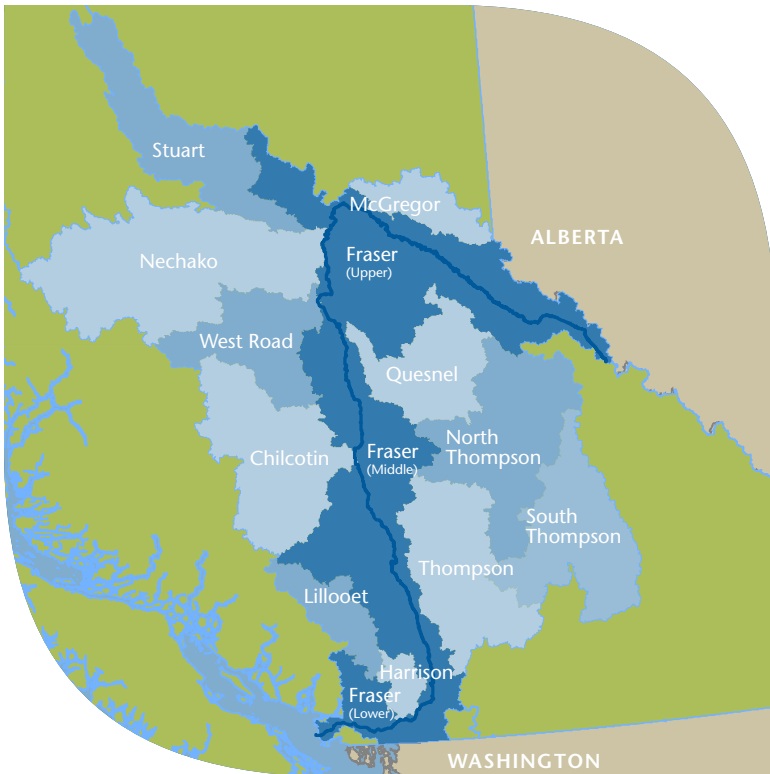
rights and title. These rights and title, now being defined, must be acknowledged and reconciled in a just and fair manner.

Transition Takes Time

Sustainability is a journey that requires constant feedback, learning and adjustment. In the short-term, the elements of sustainability may not always be in balance.



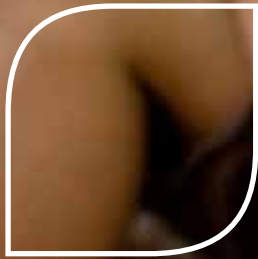
Watersheds of the Fraser Basin



Succeed at the
watershed level
and the rest will follow



Understanding Sustainability



Sustainability means living and managing our activities in a way that balances social, economic, environmental and institutional considerations to meet our needs and those of future generations

The highlighted goals that follow within the charter, and the suggested means to achieve these goals will guide us towards a **sustainable future**

Lifestyle choices that consider and enhance Basin sustainability

Every day, the 2.9 million residents of the Fraser Basin make lifestyle choices that affect sustainability. Lifestyle choices include how we move ourselves and our goods around the Basin, what we produce and consume, how much waste we make, how we get rid of it, and other aspects of how we live. The choices we make affect our ability to balance the social, economic and environmental costs and benefits associated with a growing population.

Once we understand sustainability and believe that we can make a difference, we can turn our awareness into actions that will contribute to sustainability.

Some of the ways this goal can be achieved

- communications and education programs that explain and foster interest in sustainability
- information on specific individual actions and lifestyle choices that lead to sustainability
- incentives and benefits for those who make sustainable lifestyle choices, and disincentives for those who continue to live high-consumption lifestyles.

Encourage leaders to promote sustainable lifestyles

A sustainable environment encourages prospective leaders to step forward, supports them when they do, and ensures that they feel rewarded for their contribution.

Some of the ways this goal can be achieved

- a climate that encourages champions and leaders
- public recognition of achievements by people and groups contributing to sustainability.

Sharing ideas to help others contribute to sustainability

Sharing information, ideas and success stories through a range of networking opportunities allows greater numbers of us to contribute to sustainability. Face-to-face meetings and print and electronic media are all part of educating for sustainability.

Some of the ways this goal can be achieved


- information-sharing at the local level through local media, community meetings, clubs, societies, and service and stewardship groups
- use of electronic and print media
- teaching ecosystem and sustainability concepts at all levels of formal education
- media that understand and promote the importance of sustainability issues.

Life-long learning that enables residents to achieve sustainability targets

Sustainability requires us to learn from our successes and our errors. Setting measurable targets and evaluating our efforts allow us to correct mistakes and adjust direction to improve chances for success in sustainability.

Some of the ways this goal can be achieved

- continued research into all aspects of a sustainable Basin
- individual and collective targets against which we can evaluate efforts
- regular evaluation of progress against these targets
- adjustment of actions as required
- opportunities that allow all of us to learn by being involved.

A silhouette of a heron stands in a marsh at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a golden glow across the sky and reflecting on the water. The heron is positioned on the right side of the frame, facing left. In the background, there are tall reeds and a few trees. A green callout box with a white outline is positioned on the left side of the image, containing text.

Stewardship only works well if all inhabitants of a watershed work together, feel a shared responsibility for the condition of the watershed and make a sustained, collective effort to maintain and protect it

Caring for Ecosystems

Management of water resources to protect and maintain water quality, support maintenance of ecosystems and provide certainty of access for all users

Water quality and quantity are important to the health of ecosystems, including salmon and resident fish species. The Basin's water must be of a quality that allows for all uses, including drinking, aquatic life, recreation, irrigation and wildlife.

Water quality has been affected by pollution from single sources such as municipal sewage and industrial activities. It is also impacted by non-point source pollution associated with activities such as agriculture, development of neighbourhoods and communities, use of fertilizers, pesticides and urban road run-off. In many cases, water quality management has focused on clean-up as opposed to pollution prevention.

While water resources in the Basin are abundant, demands are increasing. Ensuring a sustainable water resource is becoming increasingly difficult. Water quantity issues include water consumption, export and diversion of water, groundwater management and water allocation.

Other water issues include wetlands management, river stewardship and flood hazard management.

Some of the ways this goal can be achieved

- recognizing and addressing the cumulative effects of the many different decisions made within one watershed
- water pollution prevention
- full-cost pricing of water for domestic consumption, commerce, industry and power generation
- identification and monitoring of indicators for water quality.

Diverse and abundant fish stocks, supported by healthy habitat, to provide for the needs of all users

The fisheries resources of the Basin are diverse, including all seven species of salmon – Sockeye, Pink, Chum, Chinook and Coho, as well as Steelhead and Cutthroat Trout. In fact, the Fraser Basin is the world's most productive salmon river system. In addition to salmon, the Basin supports over 50 non-salmonid species, including resident species that exclusively inhabit freshwater environments such as trout, char and whitefish as well as those that move between freshwater and marine habitats such as sturgeon. All of these species contribute to the biodiversity and integrity of the Basin's ecosystems.

All of these fish populations make a very significant contribution to the economic, social and cultural well-being of BC. Aboriginal people, commercial fishers, recreational anglers and others share this resource. They are concerned about the long-term sustainability of fish stocks and habitats. The general public and community stewardship groups share their concerns.

Some of the ways this goal can be achieved

- cooperative approaches to managing fisheries
- community efforts that promote stewardship of streams
- codes of practice and effective land and water use planning activities to conserve fish habitat
- conservation principles applied to fisheries management decisions
- identification and monitoring of indicators for fish stocks and habitat
- protection and, where appropriate, restoration of fish habitat
- selective harvesting and the use of appropriate harvest rates to facilitate sustainability of a diversity of fish stocks harvested in mixed stock fisheries.



Ultimately, not
only property
owners but
all citizens
are co-managers
of the environment



Diversity and abundance of natural species and habitats in the Basin

Wildlife in the Basin include a diverse range of plant and animal species. Plants include trees, flowers, shrubs and grasses as well as fungi and lichen. Animal species include vertebrates such as mammals, fish, reptiles, amphibians and birds, and invertebrates such as insects and spiders.

The wealth of plant and animal species and their habitats is referred to as biodiversity. Biodiversity is critical to the long-term health of the Basin's ecosystems; each form of life is part of nature's "balancing act." Maintenance of wildlife and habitat determines our ability to maintain biodiversity in the Basin.

Wildlife supports important recreation, aesthetic and cultural values and is a vital component of the Basin's heritage. In addition, our tourism industry and its economic benefits rely on healthy and diverse wildlife.

Timber harvesting, agriculture, wetland destruction, urban sprawl, and water and air pollution are all affecting the habitats and ranges of Basin wildlife.

Some of the ways this goal can be achieved

- planning and management on a watershed basis
- land and water management practices that support wildlife and habitats
- management regimes that result in a variety of ecological stages and habitat patches across the landscape.

Forest lands for economic, recreational and aesthetic use are managed to respect ecological systems

The more than 21 million hectares of forest lands in the Basin contain a variety of ecosystems that support many important plants, animals and fish. They also support timber harvesting, ranching, recreation, tourism and agroforestry sectors. Forest-based activities provide a foundation for the economy of many communities and the Basin as a whole. Other forest resources include vegetables, herbs, mushrooms, medicinal products, floral greenery products, wild berries and fruit, landscaping plants and craft products.

Forest lands include watersheds that provide drinking water for communities as well as a place for recreation and spiritual renewal. As the Basin's population grows, so does pressure on forest lands.

Some of the ways this goal can be achieved

- forest land management that reflects all uses and activities
- recognition of social, economic and environmental costs and benefits of all activities affecting forest lands
- maintenance of the forest land base to support a diverse range of economic activities
- development of partnerships among interests active in or influenced by management of forest lands.



Individuals, organizations, federal, provincial, local,
First Nations and aboriginal governments are important
to the Charter For Sustainability because

our common interests in protecting the Basin

reach to the very roots of our existence now and in the future



It is through the individual efforts of private landowners that sustainability will be achieved in this category

Agricultural lands to balance economic opportunities with the protection of ecological systems

The Basin contains about half of BC's prime agricultural lands. These lands support farming and ranching, and agri-food, food processing, food service and retail industries, and are important contributors to the Basin's economy.

Agricultural lands help maintain habitat, natural ecosystems and green space, as population growth puts pressure on rural areas. At the same time, unsustainable agricultural practices impact the environmental health of the Basin's ecosystems.

Some of the ways this goal can be achieved

- educational programs that link agriculture and sustainability
- promotion of private land stewardship
- maintenance of the agricultural land base
- all parcels of land, large or small, managed for sustainability
- development of partnerships between agricultural and non-agricultural sectors
- supporting the maintenance of an economically viable agricultural sector

Outdoor recreation opportunities to enhance social and economic well-being, connect us with natural systems, and minimize our impacts on the environment

The Basin offers a wide range of outdoor recreation opportunities, which play an important role in our economy and the social well-being of the Basin. Many people seek activities that put them in touch with the earth and its natural processes – the air, trees, water and wildlife – but outdoor recreation activities can also have significant impacts on the environment.

Some of the ways this goal can be achieved

- incorporation of outdoor recreation interests in land use and other planning
- a clear definition of the role that outdoor recreation plays in the Basin's economy and social well-being
- awareness and minimization of the impacts of outdoor recreation on the ecosystem
- codes for environmental protection within the outdoor recreation sector
- promotion of outdoor recreation as a learning tool for understanding sustainability and natural processes.

Mining activities to support the social and economic diversity of the Basin's communities and the integrity of the Basin's ecosystems

Mining and processing of the Basin's minerals produce commercial products that help sustain our economy and lifestyle. Extraction, transportation and processing of minerals can have major impacts on our environment.

Some of the ways this goal can be achieved

- reuse and recycling of metals and mineral products
- mining codes of practice that reflect modern technologies and practices
- reclamation of closed mine sites
- enhanced economic opportunities for mining activities by streamlining and updating regulations.

An energy system to provide for social and economic needs, reduce our reliance on non-renewable energy sources and support the well-being of ecosystems

The use of renewable and non-renewable energy sources, such as hydroelectric power, oil and natural gas, support our lifestyles and provide economic opportunities for Basin residents.

Energy use is closely linked to a broad range of sustainability concerns. Environmental concerns include global warming, air quality and water quality and quantity. Addressing the environmental concerns involves a range of social and economic issues such as recognition of the full costs associated with different energy sources, dependency on domestic energy sources, acceptance of alternative energy sources, transportation and land-use planning decisions.

Some of the ways this goal can be achieved

- reduced individual energy use
- policies and programs that reduce energy consumption

- supply and demand options for energy that respect the full range of social, cultural, health and environmental impacts
- incentives for research and development of new technologies for energy conservation and renewable energy sources such as wind and solar power
- management of hydro-electric reservoirs for both ecosystem and energy goals.

Air quality to allow for vibrant and healthy communities and healthy ecosystems

Clean air is essential for a sustainable future. It is needed for healthy ecosystems, forests and crops, good jobs and our own good health.

Air quality is a major concern in some areas of the Basin. The largest single cause of air pollution is transportation. Emissions from transportation sources contribute to the formation of ground-level ozone or smog. As population increases, so do the sources of air pollution. Other sources of air pollutants include: burning of fossil fuels such as coal, oil and gas, burning of wood and wood wastes, wood products industries, smelting, crop and livestock production, cement manufacturing and waste disposal. Other related air quality issues include the use of ozone depleting substances and greenhouse gases.

Some of the ways this goal can be achieved

- development and use of alternative modes of transportation
- communities and neighbourhoods that are planned to minimize reliance on motor vehicles
- promotion of energy-efficient and "clean" technologies
- planting of trees and other vegetation that absorb pollutants
- identification and monitoring of indicators for air quality
- increased awareness of lifestyle choices affecting air quality (e.g., wood stoves and fireplaces, automobile use)
- control of ozone-depleting substances and greatly reduced production of greenhouse gases.





Fraser Basin Charter for Sustainability

Vision • The Fraser Basin is a place where social well-being is supported by a vibrant economy and sustained by a healthy environment

Our Principles are:

MUTUAL DEPENDENCE

Land, water, air and all living organisms, including humans are integral parts of the ecosystem. Biodiversity must be conserved.

ACCOUNTABILITY

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

EQUITY

All communities and regions must have equal opportunities to provide for the social, economic and environmental needs of residents.

INTEGRATION

Consideration of social, economic and environmental costs and benefits must be an integral part of all decision-making.

ADAPTIVE APPROACHES

Plans and activities must be adaptable and able to respond to external pressures and changing social values.

COORDINATED AND COOPERATIVE EFFORTS

Coordinated and cooperative efforts are needed among all government and non-government interests.

OPEN AND INFORMED DECISION-MAKING

Open decision-making depends on the best available information.

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 for sustainability.

RECOGNITION

There must be recognition of existing rights, agreements and obligations in all decision-making.

ABORIGINAL RIGHTS AND TITLE

We recognize that Aboriginal nations within the Fraser Basin assert Aboriginal rights and title. These rights and title now being defined must be acknowledged and reconciled in a just and fair manner.

TRANSITION TAKES TIME

Sustainability is a journey that requires constant feedback, learning and adjustment. In the short-term, the elements of sustainability may not always be in balance.







To be a sustainable society,
we must be
cohesive
not divisive

Communities provide a major focus for change because:

- people are looking to local groups, rather than government agencies, for local knowledge, support, security and decision-making; and
- community and local initiatives are having ever greater impacts on regional, provincial, national and international issues.

Community well-being to enable residents to meet their economic, social and environmental needs

Community well-being is affected by many factors including employment and income, housing, child care, health, safety, education, environmental quality, culture, history and recreation. Creating a sense of community well-being means building on existing capacity for local leadership, services and skills. Community well-being also involves a sense of pride and belonging and recognizing common interests.

Some of the ways this goal can be achieved

- identification of clear and achievable community goals developed with full community involvement
- variety of housing that meets all needs
- safety initiatives and community policing
- community-based social, educational and health care activities
- conditions that encourage job creation and entrepreneurship
- preservation and creation of green space
- post-secondary education and training available to all community members
- support for heritage appreciation
- opportunity for cultural development.

Sustainability requires innovative planning, creative problem-solving and new ways of working together at the community level

Strengthening Communities

Community stewardship to enable residents to take action to protect, restore and enhance the local natural environment

Communities and their residents have an important role as stewards of the environment. Stewardship is the act of taking responsibility for the well-being of the environment and doing something to restore or protect that well-being. Stewardship activities include: picking up litter, marking storm drains, counting and monitoring fish and birds, replanting along stream banks, composting, reporting violations, protecting trees that support wildlife, fundraising, and teaching landowners about stewardship of private lands.

Some of the ways this goal can be achieved

- technical assistance to and support for community groups working on stewardship initiatives
- good stewardship of private land, sites and structures with cultural and heritage value
- identification and protection of environmentally sensitive areas
- publication of successful community stewardship activities
- access to information on stewardship.

Aboriginal communities to enable residents to preserve their culture, develop strong economies and interrelate with non-Aboriginal communities

Aboriginal people have a strong sense of community, yet are commonly isolated from other communities close by even though many opportunities exist for joint initiatives. Building relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities will provide Aboriginal people with opportunities to participate more fully in the economy, build safe and healthy communities and retain a sense of cultural identity.

Some of the ways this goal can be achieved

- involvement of Aboriginal people in local social, economic and environmental initiatives
- access to effective education and employment
- preservation and celebration of Aboriginal nations' history and culture
- joint economic ventures
- cross-cultural orientation initiatives
- access to capital and resources
- resolution of matters related to Aboriginal rights and title now being defined through appropriate processes that provide results unique to each Aboriginal nation.

Growth management to protect clean air and water, provide for affordable housing, and conserve farmland, wilderness and unique natural areas

Population growth and urban sprawl are creating social, economic and environmental challenges throughout the Basin. Pressure from growth is increasing in both urban centres and rural areas.

Some of the ways this goal can be achieved

- more compact communities that feature infilling and other types of densification
- controlled development that is planned for areas where adequate facilities exist or can be provided in a timely, economic and efficient manner
- mechanisms to ensure that transportation and other infrastructure investments are linked with local government growth management policies
- specific community-based green space strategies that include an inventory of environmentally sensitive lands to be protected
- financial programs and incentives that discourage urban sprawl
- enhanced partner planning between municipalities and regions.

Transportation to enable the efficient movement of people and goods without contributing to pollution

Transportation is the largest single source of air pollution in parts of the Basin. Burning of fuels for transportation sends toxic chemicals and particulate matter into our air, adds to the greenhouse gases in the atmosphere and contributes to smog.

Dependence on and continued financial support of the automobile, primarily in urban areas, is our greatest problem. Increased traffic congestion in and around urban areas is hindering efficient movement of people and goods and forcing us to look at transportation alternatives.

The freight transportation system in the Basin plays a critical role in ensuring the timely delivery of goods. The demand to transport cargo faster, more reliably, more cheaply and with more infrastructure while maintaining stringent environmental standards will provide carriers with ever greater challenges.

Some of the ways this goal can be achieved

- transportation choices that support sustainability – walking, cycling or public transit
- an integrated system of transportation that allows people and their goods to link with different modes of transportation
- “carrots and sticks” that influence driving behaviour
- transportation planning that takes into account the full social and environmental costs of motor vehicles and freight transportation systems.

Adequate infrastructure to support community needs

Infrastructure includes transportation, water, sewers, power, communications and buildings. In older communities, some infrastructure is aging and must be replaced. Newer communities and neighbourhoods face the dilemma of servicing new developments and planning adequate infrastructure for growing communities. Infrastructure is also important for protecting communities from the consequences of natural hazards.

Some of the ways this goal can be achieved

- efficient use of existing infrastructure
- assessment of the need for new or additional infrastructure based upon optimal standards
- protection measures that minimize the risks associated with natural hazards
- striving for true-cost accounting and tax structures for the use of natural resources such as water pricing strategies.

A diverse economy to provide jobs in all communities while protecting environmental and social values

The Basin and its communities are an “economic engine” of BC. Our primary resource industries – fishing, forestry, agriculture and mining – play a major role in supporting the Basin’s economy. In order to compete in today’s global marketplace and to reduce our economic dependence on primary processing, our traditional resource-based economy is shifting to an economy built on technology, manufacturing and information. Communities and regions with a diversified economic base and an educated workforce are better prepared to meet the challenges of change and to take advantage of new opportunities.

Some of the ways this goal can be achieved

- access to capital for new sustainable industries and value-added enterprises
- a first-rate public education system, practical on-the-job training and upgrading of skills resulting in a productive and globally competitive work force
- implementation of local economic diversification strategies that support the unique communities throughout the Basin
- development of clean industries and technologies, pollution prevention equipment and environmentally sensitive practices
- opportunities for workers and communities most affected by economic restructuring to design and manage adjustment and transition strategies.





Improving Decision-Making

Every day millions of decisions are made that impact on the sustainability of the Fraser Basin. These decisions include individual lifestyle choices, government policies, private sector investment and operational decisions.

Adoption of common boundaries based on natural watershed boundaries

Currently, there is a maze of overlapping administrative boundaries and mandates for the activities carried out by governments. These boundaries define areas on such factors as population, political units, land use, economic activity, forest resources and others. They are often in conflict with each other, thereby creating challenges to coordination and integration.

Basin boundaries provide an excellent alternative to the current overlapping boundaries. Basin boundaries remain stable over time, are easily recognized and understood by residents, and provide a natural limit for managing the connections between current administrative boundaries. Aboriginal people have historically established their traditional area boundaries by language groups within watersheds.

Some of the ways this goal can be achieved

- a review of current administrative boundaries to define the areas of overlap and to create strategies to move to common boundaries
- adoption and application of the principles of a watershed approach to government, business and non-governmental organizational settings
- use of watershed boundaries for administrative processes wherever possible.

Collective and cooperative decision-making that promotes the use of partnerships to achieve sustainability

Collective approaches to decision-making ensure that efforts are better coordinated and that overlap and duplication are reduced. Decisions made collectively better reflect the concerns of citizens and help reduce conflict between interests.

Some of the ways this goal can be achieved

- development of partnerships among Basin interests to address commonly identified problems
- cooperation among jurisdictions and organizations to eliminate duplication of effort
- availability of clear information on government systems, processes and legislation
- creation of mechanisms and forums for sharing expertise and information
- improved communications within and among sectors and agencies
- harmonized and streamlined decision-making
- consultation with affected jurisdictions and other interested parties when evaluating or implementing projects with Basin-wide implications
- coordinated project review processes.



Participation of aboriginal people in decision-making to ensure that decisions respect their cultures and rights

Aboriginal rights exist. Their exact nature will be clarified over time through ongoing treaty negotiations, court decisions and other processes. While we cannot predict outcomes, it is clear that municipal, regional, provincial and federal government management approaches must be flexible to accommodate Aboriginal perspectives.

Some of the ways this goal can be achieved

- involvement of Aboriginal people in the creation of new decision-making processes
- review of existing processes with Aboriginal people to ensure that the processes are respectful and acceptable to all
- capacity-building for participants to support their participation in decision-making
- raised profile and understanding of Aboriginal interests and issues by publication of histories, success stories, newsletters and other materials that describe sustainability from a cultural perspective
- greater public awareness and understanding of Aboriginal rights
- developing awareness and understanding of Aboriginal culture and values.

Local decision-making to allow residents to be involved in making decisions that affect them directly

It is important to ensure that residents can learn about, participate in and make informed decisions about issues facing their communities. Local

solutions to local problems are based on the knowledge and experience of residents committed to their community.

Some of the ways this goal can be achieved

- government policies and legislation that are adaptable to local needs and requirements
- increased capacity of residents to participate in their community's decision-making through training and resources
- availability of accurate and timely information about current issues and ongoing programs
- establishment of broad-based community and regional watershed management initiatives.

Inclusive decision-making to incorporate input from a wide variety of groups and individuals

The Basin's residents represent a mix of cultures, ages, genders and interests. Their experiences and ideas are an important resource for decision-makers to call on. Involvement of a mix of voices ensures a diversity of input and results in stronger, more widely acceptable decisions.

In addition to the wide variety of cultural voices, it is crucial to ensure that a wide range of opinions are heard and considered. Non-government organizations play an important role by bringing new information and perspectives to a decision-making process.

Some of the ways this goal can be achieved

- active involvement of a range of people in decision-making processes
- decisions and processes that respect the diverse values, traditions and aspirations of all peoples in the Basin.

Each of us has a **responsibility**
to understand how our
decisions and lifestyles affect our
natural environment
and the **health of our communities**

Transparent and accountable decision-making to allow residents easy access to all decision-making processes and ensure that decisions, once made, are followed up by action

Transparency ensures that everyone in the Basin, even when they don't participate directly, can clearly understand how and why a particular decision was made. Transparency requires that both the information and the process used to make a decision be readily available to the public.

Sustainability requires that decision-makers be accountable for their decisions. First, decision-makers must ensure that decisions are responsive to the needs of the community the decision-maker represents, as well as to the broader public. Second, the decision-maker is responsible for the results of the decision and its impact on sustainability.

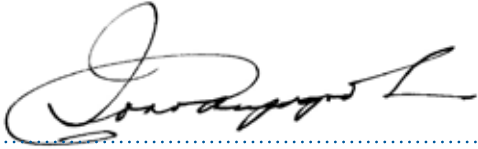
Some of the ways this goal can be achieved

- independent reporting on the progress and results of public programs relative to their stated objectives
- regular reporting on compliance with laws, regulations and guidelines
- enhanced freedom of information legislation.



Charter for Sustainability

Signed in 1997



Iona Campagnolo

Chair, Fraser Basin Management Board



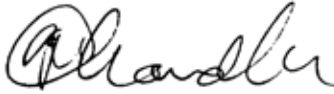
Susan Anderson Behn

Director, Treaty Negotiations, Resource Management & Environment,
BC Federation of Labour, Vancouver



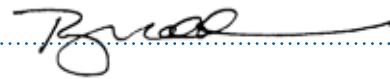
Andy Motherwell

Director, Cariboo Regional District, Quesnel



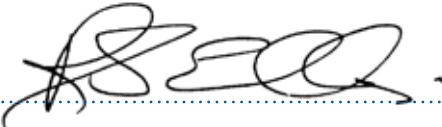
Trevor Chandler

President, Landscape Consulting Corporation, Lillooet



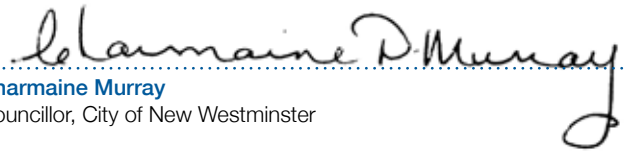
Reg Mueller

Vice Tribal Chief, Carrier-Sekani Tribal Council, Prince George



Bob Ellis

Director, Thompson-Nicola Regional District, Savona



Charmaine Murray

Councillor, City of New Westminster



Al Lill

Director, Green Plan Initiatives, Fisheries & Oceans Canada




Roy Mussell

Aboriginal Consultant, Chilliwack



Ken MacLeod

Assistant Deputy Minister, Local Government Services,
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing



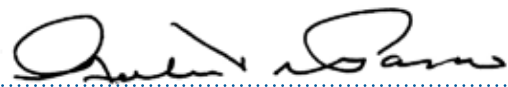
Jon O'Riordan

Assistant Deputy Minister, Regional Operations,
Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks



Ruth Madsen

Director, Thompsons Institute, Kamloops



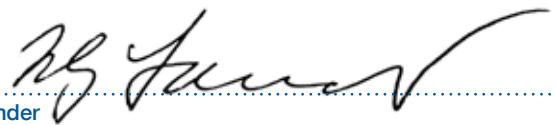
Bob Pasco

Chief, Nlaka'pamux Nation Tribal Council, Lytton



Darlene Marzari

Former Minister of Municipal Affairs, Vancouver



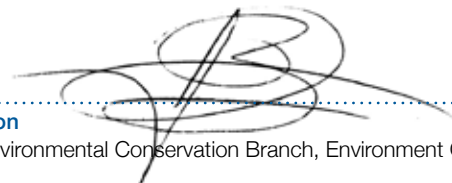
Horst Sander

Retired, Former President and CEO,
BC forest products company, Prince George



Marie Mervyn

Rancher, Alkali Lake Ranch, Alkali Lake



Brian Wilson

Director, Environmental Conservation Branch, Environment Canada

Words from Chair Iona Campagnolo at the signing of the Charter for Sustainability

February 27, 1997

The Fraser Basin is a place where social well-being is supported by a vibrant economy and sustained by a healthy environment.

– *Vision from the Fraser Basin Charter For Sustainability*

This Fraser Basin VISION has been developed by a remarkable coalition of interests who care about the Fraser River system including its tributaries and the many communities that depend on its health.

The Fraser Basin is one of the world's largest salmon-producing river systems. It contributes about 80% of British Columbia's gross provincial product and 10% of Canada's gross domestic product. It is home to 2.4 million people today and will have a population of 3.6 million within 20 years. The Fraser Basin is the province's primary economic engine, the backbone of industry and tourism, essential to our quality of life.

The Fraser River system flows from Mount Robson and the Nechako River, east from the Thompson Nicola, west from the Chilcotin and south through the Fraser Valley, and out to its estuary. The system binds us together and challenges us to work together for its protection.

The Fraser Basin Management Board mandate was to create both a long- and short-term plan for the Fraser Basin. This plan is called a *Charter for Sustainability*. The mandate of the Board is now completed. The Charter will live on. It is expected that it will be revised on a regular basis to ensure that collective movement towards sustainability of the Fraser Basin remains on course.

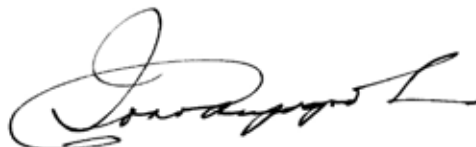
Individuals, organizations, federal, provincial, local, First Nations and aboriginal governments have joined together to sign the *Charter For Sustainability* because our common interests in protecting the Basin reach to the very roots of our existence now and into the future. We value our communities, our local economies and our environment, and this Charter focuses on our recognition that we must all continue to work together to protect what we value and what sustains us.

The *Charter for Sustainability* marks a new era in stewardship for the Fraser Basin. To guide and encourage the attainment and implementation of Charter goals, the Fraser Basin Management Program is being succeeded by the Fraser Basin Council. The Council has representation throughout the Basin, reinforcing the positive partnerships that created the Charter. The Fraser Basin Council is a non-governmental, non-profit organization that facilitates government and non-government involvement in this important sustainability initiative.

Our most important goal is to protect and sustain the unique life-giving Fraser Basin, which generations before us have enjoyed and which generations that follow us equally deserve to enjoy. Let us be the ones to ensure one of the world's most precious river systems remains healthy and vibrant.

Thank you for committing your efforts, with the new Fraser Basin Council, to the sustainability of the whole Fraser Basin.

Sincerely,



Iona Campagnolo
Chair, Fraser Basin Management Board



(left) Fraser Basin Council offices
 (right) The Fraser Basin in British Columbia

The Fraser Basin Council (FBC) is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing sustainability in the Fraser Basin and across BC.

Basin-Wide Office
 1st Floor, 470 Granville St.
 Vancouver, BC V6C 1V5
 T 604 488-5350
 F 604 488-5351
 info@fraserbasin.bc.ca
 www.fraserbasin.bc.ca



Fraser Basin Council