

## A Unique Council for Challenging Times

*The Fraser Basin Council is a group of people who have come together to help make sure that the decisions about how we live, work and play in the Fraser Basin can sustain a good quality of life.*

Established in the spring of 1997, it is a council dedicated to responsible decision making socially, economically and environmentally. The choices we make determine the sustainability of our communities and environment.

What makes the Council unique is the people who help to make choices that are best for *everyone* in the Basin. These men and women - the 36 directors on the Council - come from many walks of life, just like the 2.5 million people who call the Basin home. Like them, the directors work in the forest industry, on ranches, in government and corporate offices, on fishing boats, on farms and in small businesses.

They represent the five regions of the Basin, federal, provincial and local governments, and First Nations, and the economic, social and environmental sectors. They live in the Basin and know it well. More importantly, they care deeply about working together to sustain our quality of life.

The Council, autonomous and independent, seeks to foster cooperative effort needed to change attitudes and make optimal choices about social, economic and environmental activities in the Basin. With the Basin's population projected to rise to 3.6 million over the next 20 years, there is an urgent need to make good choices before it's too late.

Council Chair **Iona Campagnolo** notes that while the Council is an entirely new non-government organization, there has long been concern for the future of the Fraser Basin. In the 1980's the Fraser Cities Coalition was formed to focus on cleaning up the increasingly polluted river. It was followed *See "Council", page 4*



*Richmond Mayor Greg Halsey-Brandt speaking at the launch of the Fraser Basin Council while Cathy McGregor, Minister of Environment, Lands and Parks, Sergio Marchi, former Federal Environment Minister and Iona Campagnolo, Chair of Fraser Basin Council look on.*



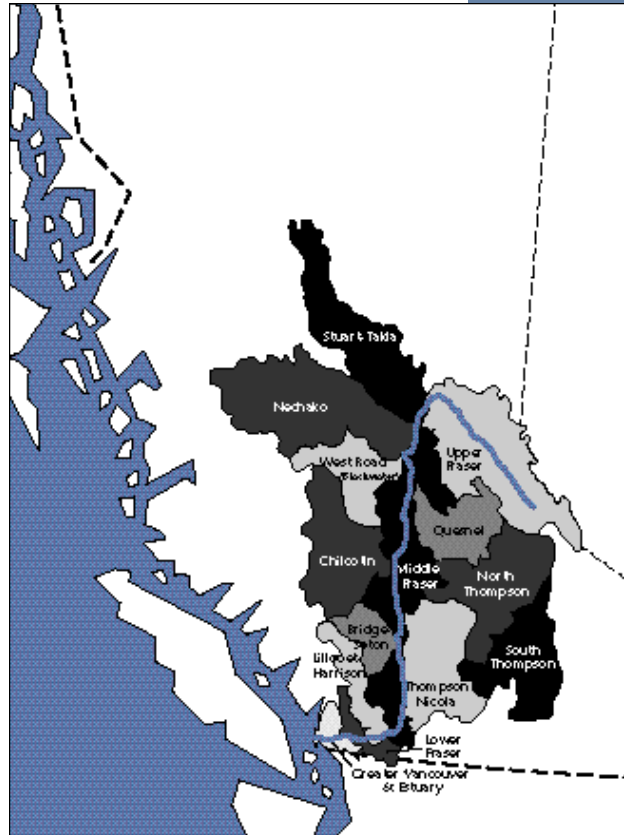


## What is the Fraser Basin?

The Fraser Basin, the area drained by the Fraser River and its tributaries, accounts for more than 1/4 of all the land in B.C., 2/3 of the population and 4/5 of the gross provincial product.

It's easy to see that a healthy Fraser Basin is key to a healthy B.C. The Basin is also essential to Canada's health, contributing 10% of the country's gross national product.

Today the Fraser Basin is home to 2.5 million people. In 20 years' time, the population is expected to be 3.6 million. The big question is how to balance this growth in ways that enhance social, economic and environmental health and wealth. There's a lot at stake. The Basin's forests alone cover more than three times the area of New Brunswick. Its farms, ranches and orchards comprise half of all B.C.'s agricultural lands. There are eight major producing mines, as well as some of the province's - and the world's - most spectacular natural beauty and recreational opportunities.



The Fraser Basin is the economic heart of British Columbia, accounting for 80% of the gross provincial product.

## Council Membership

Council membership provides the kind of broad experience and proven expertise needed to make wise choices that sustain a desirable quality of life. The 36 directors on the Fraser Basin Council include:

- 3 representatives each from the federal and provincial governments
- 1 representative from each of the eight Regional Districts, involving more than 60 cities, towns and villages
- 1 representative from each of the eight First Nations language groups traditionally living in the Basin, involving 96 bands and First Nations
- 2 representatives from each of five geographic regions; they also represent various sectors, such as forestry, agriculture, ranching and eco-tourism
- 4 Basin-wide representatives reflecting the social, economic and environmental considerations throughout the Basin, including a neutral chair

### Pass It On

When you've finished with your copy of BasinNews, please share it with a friend or neighbour. It's one small way of using fewer resources to help more people become aware of how sustainability can make a big difference in our quality of life.

## *State-of-the-Basin Conference*

*The inaugural Fraser Basin Council State-of-the-Basin Conference will take place November 20-21. The conference is part of the Council's constitutional obligation to report to its partners and the public on progress toward sustainability in the Basin.*

Led by co-chairs **Darlene Marzari**, at-large Director and former Municipal Affairs Minister, and Director **Rose Guerin** of the Musqueam Band, the planning committee is organizing the conference according to the four directions identified in the *Charter for Sustainability*: Understanding Sustainability, Caring for Ecosystems, Strengthening Communities and Improving Decision Making.

The first conference will focus primarily on local and regional issues, says Marzari. "I think this will be a great opportunity to nurture the Council's partners, especially municipalities and First Nations, as well as local action. It can also be a showcase for helping people understand the uniqueness of the Council in bringing together all relevant parties in a particular issue and facilitating direct action."

One conference feature being considered is an awards ceremony for people and groups who have made outstanding contributions toward improving the quality of life in the Basin — a sort of Juno or Gemini for achievement in sustainability. If you have a great idea for naming the awards, please let us know, fax (604) 605-3459.

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► "Council" con't from page 1. by the Fraser River Action Plan (FRAP), which figured prominently in the 1992 launch of the Fraser Basin Management Board. The Board developed the *Charter for Sustainability*, the blueprint the Council uses to sustain the quality of life throughout the Basin.

The Charter, says Campagnolo, serves as "a filter for decision making." It helps us understand new ways of thinking to encourage activities that move towards social well being supported by a vibrant economy and sustained by a healthy environment.

Part of the Fraser Basin Council's job is to educate people about these new ideas, facilitate resolution of the conflicts that inevitably accompany change, and to keep an eye on how change can be guided and refined to sustain a good quality of life for everyone in the Basin. The complexity of the interwoven social, economic and environmental strands requires a new way of making choices. Business is a critical Council partner. Council Director **Larry Bell**, CEO of Shato Holdings and former Chair of BC Hydro, sees the Council as "a new body created to help us make the kinds of choices we need to make."

It's a tall order, says Executive Director **David Marshall**. It is also a task which, like the river, is ever changing. The true measure of the Council's success, he says, "will be the success of the people we help educate, the conflicts we help resolve and the wise decision making we help make part of everyday life in the Basin."





# *Changes in Attitude Bring Changes in Action*

*Change begins in the mind and heart  
and finds expression in action.*

**Rob Simpson** was an inmate at the Alouette River Correctional Facility when he began working at the Allco Fish Hatchery in Maple Ridge as part of an innovative program established by Council partners the Alouette River Management Society, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and the Fraser Valley Trout Hatchery and Maple Ridge Parks. The program enables inmates to work at the hatchery and supports other stream enhancement projects.

As he helped feed and clean pens for smolts, Simpson began to see connections between creating better conditions for salmon to thrive — and creating better quality of life for people.

A similar change in understanding — and follow-up actions — about helping create balance in social, economic and environmental considerations is occurring at many levels throughout the Basin. For example, the Alouette River Management Council is helping the District of Maple Ridge develop a new watercourse regulation by-law following protest over urban development that threatened salmon and trout habitat.

Changes in attitude about how best to manage for optimal social, economic and environmental quality of life are taking place in the Basin — street by street, watershed by watershed and region by region. And these changes in attitude are slowly but surely bringing changes in behaviour.

Says Council Chair Campagnolo: “Two hundred years ago, slavery was acceptable. Twenty years ago smoking in enclosed public spaces was acceptable. Today fewer people find drinking and driving acceptable. These changes are the result of profound changes in public understanding. The day is coming when it will no longer be acceptable to make decisions that do not account for social, economic and environmental health. It will take time, but it will happen.”

*Council Chair Iona Campagnolo explains how changes for better quality of life happen slowly, street by street, watershed by watershed and region by region*



*“This is the best job in the jail — it’s very important to get it done right,” he says.*

*“I explain this to new inmates to try to help them see things differently. When I get out, I’d love to get into a job that helped improve things for both wildlife and people.”*

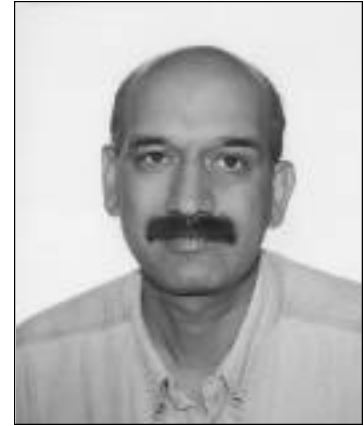
*— Rob Simpson*

# Meet Some of the Council DL

Basin News will introduce different directors in each issue.

## ***Parm Bains, Director***

**Parm Bains** of Abbotsford has more than 15 years' experience in agri-business, with a wide knowledge of crop production, processing and marketing. His family operates a 45-acre blueberry and cranberry farm. "For me, the Council is about making intelligent choices and getting beyond finger pointing. Being a director is giving me a better appreciation of how all parts of the system affect each other." Parm has held numerous positions in industry associations, including Vice-Chair of the BC Horticultural Association. He is currently managing his family's 45-acre blueberry and cranberry farm as well as operating an agri-business consulting firm.



"Being a director is giving me a better appreciation of how all parts of the system affect each other."

## ***Ben Marr, Director***

**Ben Marr** of Vancouver, recently retired as Regional Manager for the Greater Vancouver Regional District, also served as a Deputy Minister for the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks, as well as the Deputy Minister for the Ministry of Forests and Lands. He brings extensive experience in water resources management at both provincial and regional levels of government. "It seemed natural for me to come on board. I've been involved with the Fraser River since the 1960's and recognize the value of what the Council can do to coordinate people's efforts in the Basin."



"...I am seeing changes in attitude already, a recognition that it's important to protect rivers and creeks - and not just because the government says so"

## ***Marie Mervyn, Director***

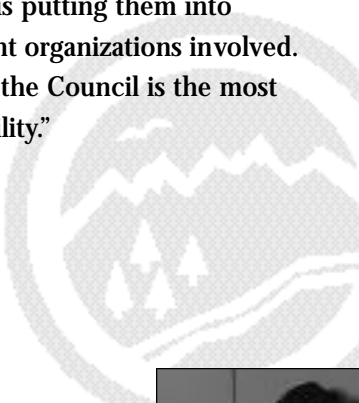
**Marie Mervyn** has been an active partner in the Alkali Lake Ranch south of Williams Lake since 1977. Marie and her husband Doug won the BC Cattlemen's Association Environmental Stewardship Award in 1996. Before the ranch she helped found Big White Ski Development in Kelowna in 1963. "I don't know how far we have to go before we can say we have sustainability, but I am seeing changes in attitude already, a recognition that it's important to protect rivers and creeks — and not just because the government says so."





***Chris Andersen, Director***

**Chris Andersen** is the General Manager, Forestry, for the Wood Products Group of Canadian Forest Products Ltd. in Prince George. Over the years Chris has worked in a variety of woodlands positions, and has acquired experience in project management as well. He sees the value of the principles stated in the *Charter for Sustainability*; the challenge is putting them into practice with so many different organizations involved. "We'll find out in the doing if the Council is the most effective vehicle for sustainability."



***Roy Mussell, Vice-Chair***

**Roy Mussell** of Chilliwack is Chief of Skwah First Nation, Chair of the Chilliwack Tribe and Manager of Sto:Lo Nation's Human Resources Development Department. Roy was recently selected to represent all First Nations and Inuit people in BC at national level negotiations with Human Resources Canada. He has long been active in environmental issues and community planning. "I think I can assist in making better decisions that will make a real difference to the river — which is a real indicator of our health."



***Dorothy Argent***

**Dorothy Argent** of Salmon Arm is a consultant who facilitates vocational training and planning. A long time community activist, she is past chair of the Salmon River Watershed Roundtable. "I feel the Council has the potential to be the ideal ground for coming together. Not top down or bottom up, but shared decision making. We need mutual cooperation, the professional help of agencies and the landowners, the people on the ground, to make things work."

*"We need mutual cooperation, the professional help of agencies and the landowners, the people on the ground, to make things work,"*

## Partners, Programs, Projects and Progress

- **Pacific Salmon Treaty** In a mid-winter meeting in Ottawa, Council Chair Iona Campagnolo and Executive Director David Marshall discussed BC stakeholders' continuing interest in the Pacific Salmon Treaty negotiations with Ministers of External Affairs and Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Lloyd Axworthy and David Anderson respectively. They conveyed the Council's keen interest in and availability for helping ensure the treaty negotiation process remains on track.

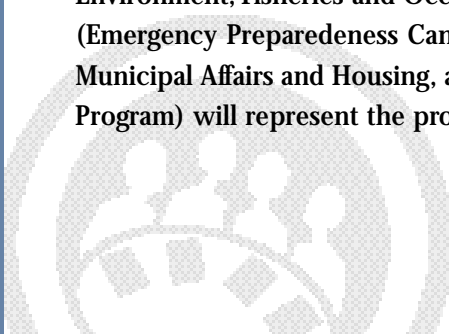
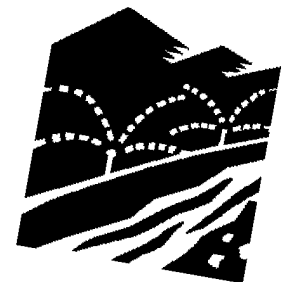


The Fraser River is being considered for Canadian Heritage River status

- **Current Trends along the Lower Fraser** This newly released bulletin from Environment Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada details practical actions citizens can take to improve the environmental quality and fish habitat in their local watersheds. The bulletin is based on information gained in four years of scientific studies through the Fraser River Action Plan.
- **Canadian Heritage Rivers** The Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks, with Council's help, is working to secure Canadian Heritage River status for the Fraser. Heritage status under the voluntary Canadian Heritage Rivers System program encourages government and non-government stakeholders to cooperate on and commit to protecting the heritage values of rivers and does not include land use restrictions. **Coordinator Malcolm Smith.**

- **Chase Creek** This project remains the highest priority regionally for Forest Renewal BC (FRBC). The recent change in emphasis by FRBC on the provincial level may result in drastic reductions in the funding of restoration projects. Difficulties with landowner consent in the lower reaches have been resolved. This was an essential condition for the Fraser Basin Council and other public funders to improve the situation. **Coordinator Phil Hallinan.**

- **Flood Hazard Management** The Regional Districts of Thompson Nicola, Squamish Lillooet and Fraser Valley have each appointed representatives to the newly struck multi-stakeholder Flood Hazard Management Steering Committee. The Departments of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Environment, Fisheries and Oceans and National Defence (Emergency Preparedness Canada), the Ministries of Environment, Lands and Parks, Municipal Affairs and Housing, and the Attorney General (Provincial Emergency Program) will represent the provincial government on the Committee.



- **Five-Year Action Plan** More than 30 actions involving Council partners have been identified for the first Five-Year Action Plan. Each action is linked to one or more of the goals detailed in the *Charter for Sustainability*. Proposed actions under the Plan are under review, with confirmation expected by late spring 1998.

**Coordinator Malcolm Smith.**

- **The Alouette River Management Society** Society members and inmates of the Stave Lake Correctional Centre have anchored several large tree trunk stumps in the river to create rearing habitat for young salmon. The three-year-old Alouette River Management Council, of which the Society is a member, has struck a steering committee to determine terms of reference for its future operations.

**Coordinator Greg Mallette.**

- **Communication and Consultation** In June 1997, the Council released a discussion paper in connection with the provincial government's approach to consultation with First Nations. *The Provincial Referrals Process: First Nations and Provincial Perspectives on the Process as a Mechanism for Identifying and Avoiding Infringement of Aboriginal Rights*. Based on interviews with First Nations and provincial agency staff, the paper identifies options for improved communication.

**Copies are available through Coordinator Malcolm Smith.**



- **The Watershed Alliance of Chilliwack** The Alliance has completed the Community Watershed Snapshots in the Ryder and Elk Watersheds. The Alliance also received a \$40,000 grant from the Urban Habitat Salmon program and VanCity Savings to complete its next phase of stewardship and planning. The Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks is training the group to complete a water quality and quantity monitoring program on Elk Creek. **Coordinator Brad Whittaker.**

- **Nutrient Management** The Fraser Basin Council is using a multi-stakeholder process to prepare a draft plan about nutrient management.

**Coordinator Brad Whittaker**

- **The Salmon River Watershed Management Partnership (Langley)** The Partnership has finalized a draft water and land use plan for the Salmon River. The Partnership will circulate the plan for comment and further input in the spring of 1998.

**Coordinator Greg Mallette**



*The decisions made today will determine if the Fraser Basin will continue to enjoy one of the most fruitful salmon-producing river systems in the world.*

- **Georgia Basin Ecosystem Initiative** Environment Canada and a number of partners are planning a five-year, science-based ecosystem initiative for the Lower Fraser and Georgia Basin Regions beginning implementation in April, 1998. Inter-agency design teams will develop results-oriented action plans dealing with issues such as urban air quality, point and non-point contamination of shellfish growing areas and surface and groundwater, toxic chemicals, and habitat loss.

**Bruce Kay at Environment Canada; (604) 713-9528.**

- **Coquitlam River Watershed Society** This new grassroots organization will act as an umbrella group for non-government organizations concerned about the Coquitlam Watershed. Urban development, gravel extraction and water diversion for generating electricity and providing drinking water are key issues. **Coordinator Greg Mallette.**

- **Sustainable Transportation** The Fraser Basin Council is developing two discussion papers that explore sustainability challenges with regard to transportation in the Basin. One paper is on barriers to looking at transportation-related sustainability issues, the other is on sustainability challenges associated with commercial transportation in the Basin. **Drafts of the documents are available through Coordinator Malcolm Smith.**



## Talk to Us

*A healthy salmon producing river depends on a free one-way flow of water rich in nourishment. A healthy organization depends on a free two-way flow of information rich in fact, observation, opinion, questions and answers. We ask you to help keep us informed with what's happening in your part of the Basin.*

name/group \_\_\_\_\_

address \_\_\_\_\_

tel \_\_\_\_\_

fax \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

*What social, economic, environmental or institutional problems are there? What successes have you achieved in creating solutions? What kind of resources does your area or your organization need to take a solution to the next step?*

*The Council is here to help. Just call, write, fax or e-mail us. Thanks.*



### Fraser Basin Council

Suite 1257 - 409 Granville Street Vancouver, BC Canada V6C 1T2

Tel: (604) 605-3450 Fax: (604) 605-3459

email: [info@fraserbasin.bc.ca](mailto:info@fraserbasin.bc.ca)

# *Principles for Sustainability*

*The Council governs itself according to the following principles:*

***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, environmental and institutional 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 and informed 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 fair and just manner.

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

## *The Sustainability Fund*

*While the Council's current funding comes from federal, provincial and local governments, it seeks to become financially self-sustaining. The Council expects to be granted charitable status in 1998, which will allow it to issue tax receipts for donations of funds, bequests, legacies, property or other in-kind gifts.*

*Council Director, Larry Bell is part of the team setting up the fund. He sees it as a vital part of the Council's future, an endowment that will help the Council augment its operating budget. "Working toward sustainability is a long and not inexpensive process. I think the Fund will play a significant role in supporting the Council's ability to help make sure we make the right decisions in the Basin."*

## *Council Funders*

*Present funding for the Fraser Basin Council comes in nearly equal measures from the federal, provincial and local governments.*

***Federal Departments:***  
*Environment, Fisheries and Oceans, Transport, and Indian and Northern Affairs*

***Provincial Ministries:***  
*Environment, Lands and Parks; Municipal Affairs and Housing*

***Local Governments:***  
*8 Regional Districts, representing more than 60 cities, towns and villages throughout the Basin*

*Private sector funding is being actively sought as part of the Council's long-term goal for balanced, self-sustaining funding.*

# Basin news

Sustainability is like  
an uncharted river.

No one is certain  
where it will lead —  
and there is constant  
debate about the best  
way to navigate it.

This newsletter is a way  
to follow the course of  
sustainability as it takes  
shape in the Fraser  
Basin. Unlike a river, the  
Council expects the  
newsletter will not be  
a one-way flow of  
information. BasinNews  
welcomes your feedback,  
success stories,  
observations, and  
recommendations.

Send your contributions  
to: Editor, BasinNews,  
Fraser Basin Council,  
Suite 1257,  
409 Granville Street,  
Vancouver, BC  
V6C 1T2;  
Fax: (604) 605-3459;  
e-mail:  
info@fraserbasin.bc.ca



## Fraser Basin Council Directors

Iona Campagnolo  
Roy Mussell  
Chris Andersen

*Chair, Fraser Basin Council*  
*Vice-Chair, Chief, Skwah First Nation, Sto:lo Nation*  
*General Manager, Canadian Forest Products Ltd.,*  
*Prince George*

Susan Anderson Behn

*Director, Treaty Negotiations, Resource Management*  
*& Environment, BC Federation of Labour, Yale*  
*Past Chair, Salmon River Watershed Round Table, Salmon Arm*  
*College of New Caledonia, Prince George*  
*Farm Business Owner, Abbotsford*  
*President & CEO, Shato Holdings Ltd., Vancouver*  
*Special Advisor, Office of the Premier & Cabinet Office*  
*Regional Director, Oceans Pacific Region,*  
*Fisheries & Oceans Canada*

Dorothy Argent  
John Backhouse  
Parm Bains  
Larry Bell  
Dennis Brown  
Dick Carson

*Chair, Tsilhqot'in National Government, Williams Lake*  
*Director, Columbia Shuswap Regional District, Sorrento*  
*Regional Director General, Transport Canada*  
*Director, Thompson-Nicola Regional District, Savona*  
*Mayor, City of Abbotsford, Abbotsford*  
*Band Council Member, Musqueam Indian Band*  
*Chair, Regional District of Fraser-Fort George, Prince George*  
*Director, Squamish-Lillooet Regional District, Whistler*  
*Director, Thompson Institute, Kamloops*  
*Tribal Chairman, Shuswap Nation Tribal Council, Kamloops*  
*Former Regional Manager, GVRD, Vancouver*  
*Former Minister of Municipal Affairs, Vancouver*  
*Rancher, Alkali Lake Ranch, Alkali Lake*  
*Director, Cariboo Regional District, Quesnel*  
*Assistant Deputy Minister, Environmental Regional*  
*Operations, Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks*  
*Director, Greater Vancouver Regional District, Vancouver*  
*Chair, Regional District of Bulkley Nechako, Burns Lake*  
*Chair, Nicola Tribal Association, Merritt*  
*Health Consultant, Kamloops*  
*President, Union of BC Indian Chiefs, Lillooet*  
*Vice Tribal Chief, Carrier Sekani Tribal Council*  
*Fraser River Coalition, Vancouver*  
*Deputy Minister, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing*  
*Director, Env. Conservation Branch, Environment Canada*

Ervin Charleyboy  
Roy Decker  
Mark Duncan  
Bob Ellis  
George Ferguson  
Rose Guerin  
Bob Headrick  
Brent Leigh  
Ruth Madsen  
Arthur Manuel  
Ben Marr  
Darlene Marzari  
Marie Mervyn  
Andy Motherwell  
Jon O'Riordan

Corisande Percival-Smith  
Frank Read  
George Saddleman  
Robert Smillie M.D.  
Saul Terry  
Leonard Thomas  
Wendy Turner  
Suzanne Veit  
Brian Wilson

### Fraser Basin Council Staff

David Marshall  
Joan Chess  
Phil Hallinan  
Judy Kirk  
Greg Mallette

*Executive Director*  
*Regional Coordinator, Upper Fraser*  
*Regional Coordinator, Thompson*  
*Communications Consultant*  
*Regional Coordinator, Greater Vancouver, Squamish,*  
*and Pemberton*  
*Project Coordinator*  
*Administrative Assistant*  
*Executive Assistant*  
*Regional Coordinator, Cariboo-Chilcotin*  
*Regional Coordinator, Fraser Valley*

Malcolm Smith  
Deena Tokaryk  
Doreen Wright  
Gail Wallin  
Brad Whittaker

*Legal Counsel*

Lidstone, Young  
and Anderson