

An aerial photograph of a lush green coastline. A road follows the curve of the shore, leading to a small white lighthouse perched on a rocky outcrop. The water is a deep blue-green, and the sky is a soft, hazy blue. The overall scene is serene and natural.

UBCM 2023

BALANCING ~~A~~CT

**Natural Asset Management:
Building on Momentum**



Ministry of
Finance

Memorandum of Understanding on Local Government Financial Resiliency



Ministry of
Municipal Affairs

Update from the Province-UBCM Working Group on Local Government Finance (LGFWG)

Brian Bedford, Co-Chair LGFWG, Ministry of Municipal Affairs

September 21 , 2023



Ensuring Local Government Financial Resiliency

Today's Recovery Tomorrow's New Economy



Establish a Partnership with the Province

- An effective partnership is critical to finding sustainable solutions

New Economy

- Transitioning from tangible to non-tangible assets
- Impacts to the property tax system

Addresses Cost Drivers

- Attainable Housing
- Community Safety
- Climate Change

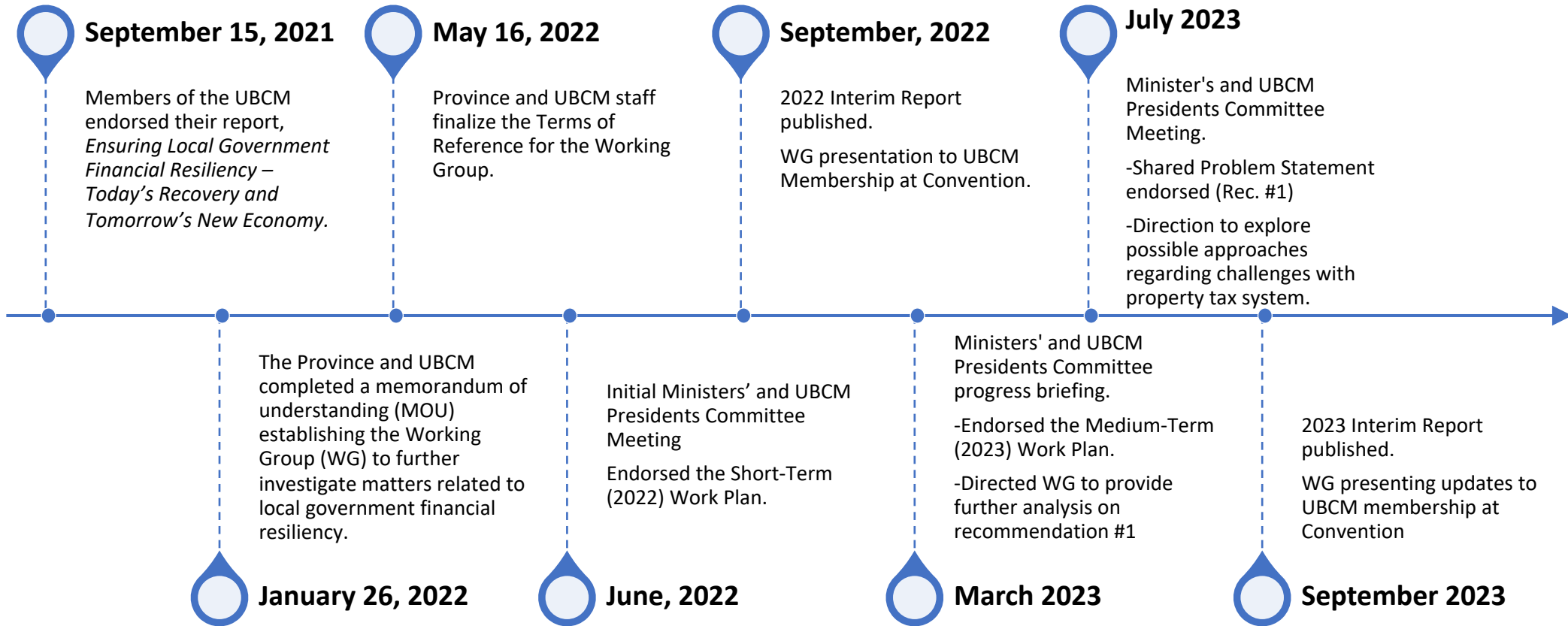


20 Recommendations

UBCM 2023

BALANCING ACT

Progress to Date



RECOMMENDATION

3

The Province continue to advocate with the federal government in the continuation of federal/provincial infrastructure cost-share agreements at the current or greater level and ensure:

- the renewal of the Canada Community-Building Fund (formally the Gas Tax fund) with the federal government in 2024; and*
- by working with the federal government, and input from TransLink and BC Transit communities, a federal/provincial agreement in the federal Permanent Transit Fund is implemented for BC by 2026 as confirmed in the 2021 federal budget.*

RECOMMENDATION

4

BC local governments, with the support of the Province and UBCM, continue to develop and implement asset management best practices in order to deliver services, and manage infrastructure, in a sustainable, cost-effective way.

UBCM 2023

BALANCING ~~A~~CT



Natural Asset Management: Building on Momentum



Thursday, September 21
UBCM CONVENTION 2023

Welcome & Agenda

FACILITATOR

Emanuel Machado, CAO, Town of Gibsons

PANEL

Roy Brooke, Executive Director, Natural Assets Initiative

Michelle Lewis, Natural Asset Technician, Town of Gibsons

Kim Fowler, RPP Manager, Long Range Planning, Sustainability and Energy at Regional District of Nanaimo

Ian Moore, Lawyer, Arbutus Law Group LLP

AGENDA

- Introductions
- What is natural asset management? A national perspective
- Case studies: Gibsons, RDN
- Legal primer for natural asset management by local governments
- Where can we go from here?
- Discussion, Q&A

Learning Outcomes

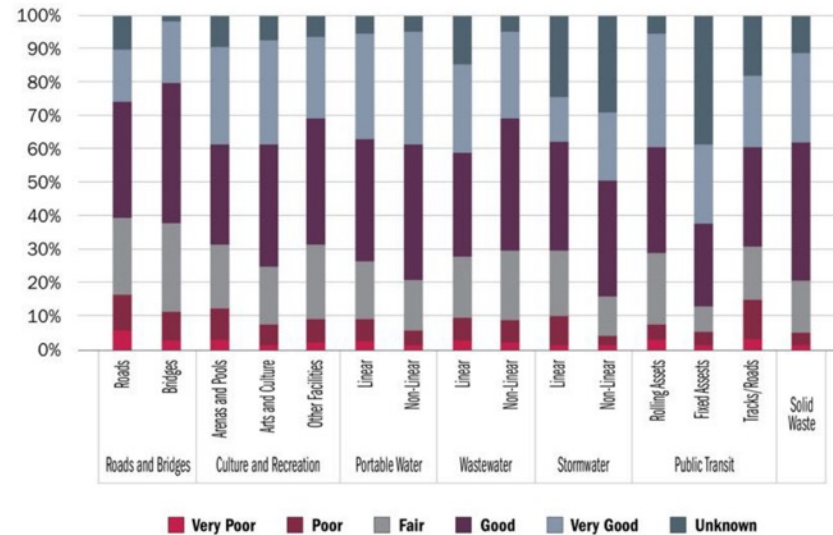
- Become familiar with the practice of natural asset management (NAM) and its financial, social and service-related benefits
- Understand nature's critical role in supporting future needs of BC, and where we are today
- Recognize and act on current opportunities to establish NAM in our policies, budgets, and professions



Natural Asset Management (NAM)

Nature...

- ✓ is central to any resilient infrastructure system
- ✓ delivers infrastructure & non-infra services
- ✓ is often over-used & under recognized
- ✓ can be managed



Federation of Canadian Municipalities: 1/3 of infrastructure in very poor to fair condition

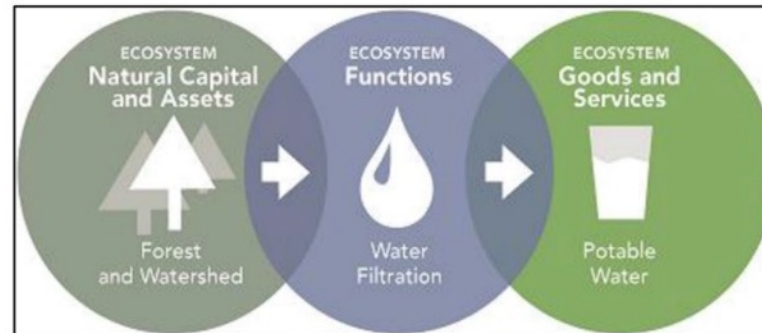


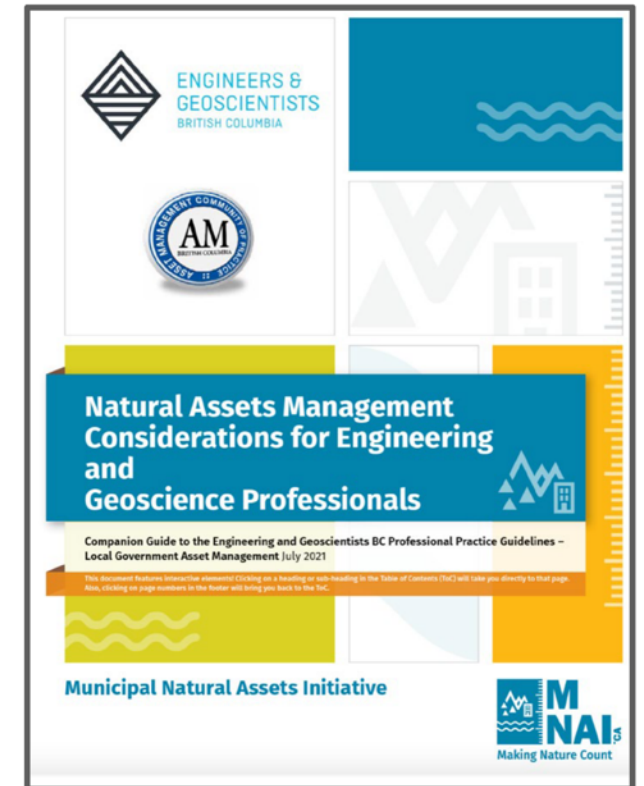
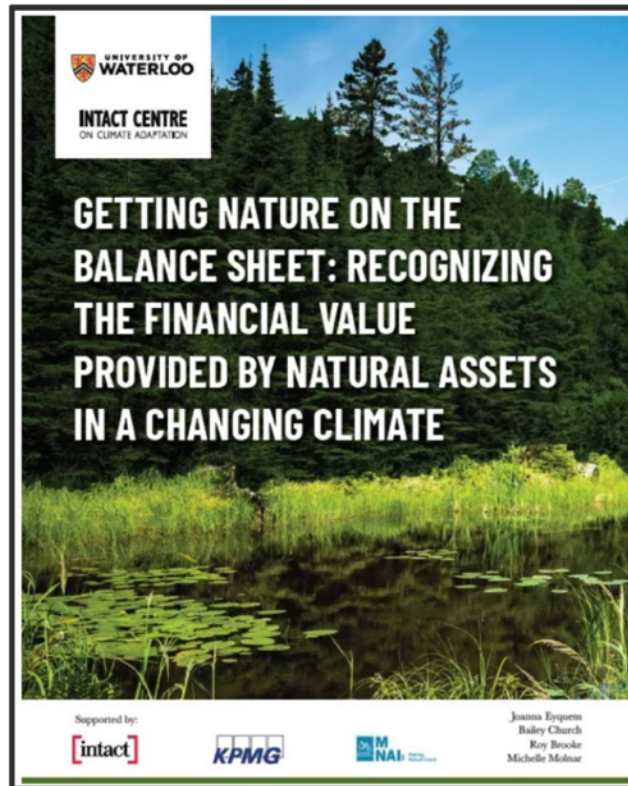
Figure 1: Natural Capital creates Ecosystem Goods and Services
(image source: Earth Economics <http://www.earthconomics.org/science-economics/>)



NAM in Canada



Building Best Practices



Recognizing natural assets in public accounting standards



CSA W218 - 1st National Standard for natural asset inventories

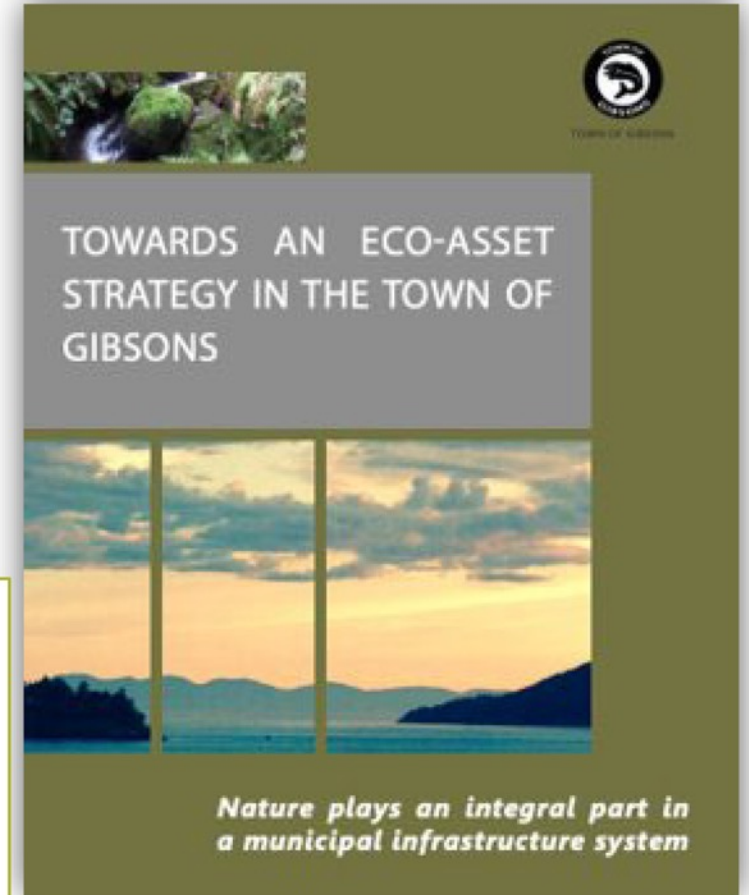


Strengthening professional guidance & practice

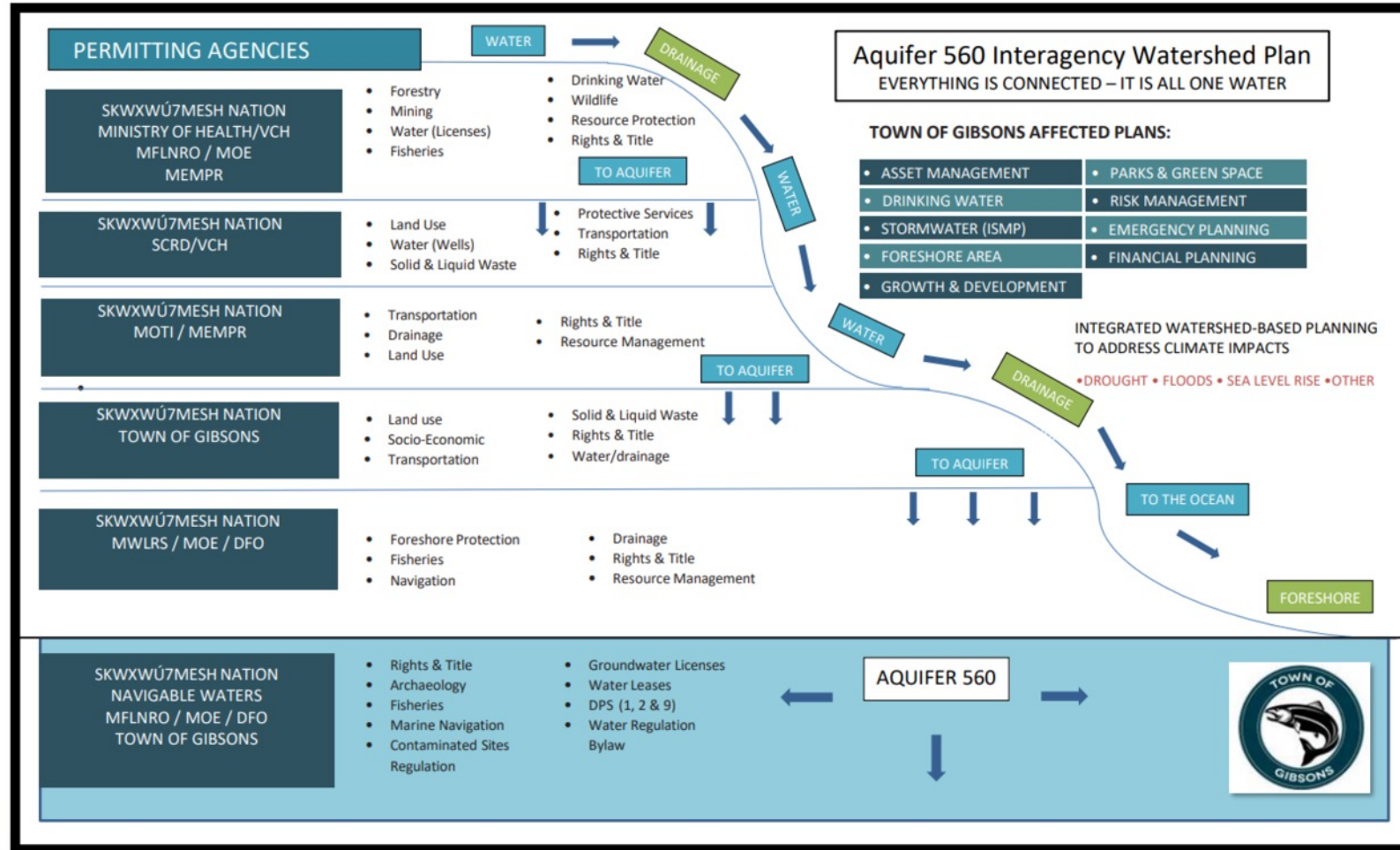
Town of Gibsons



Gibsons' Journey into Natural Asset Management

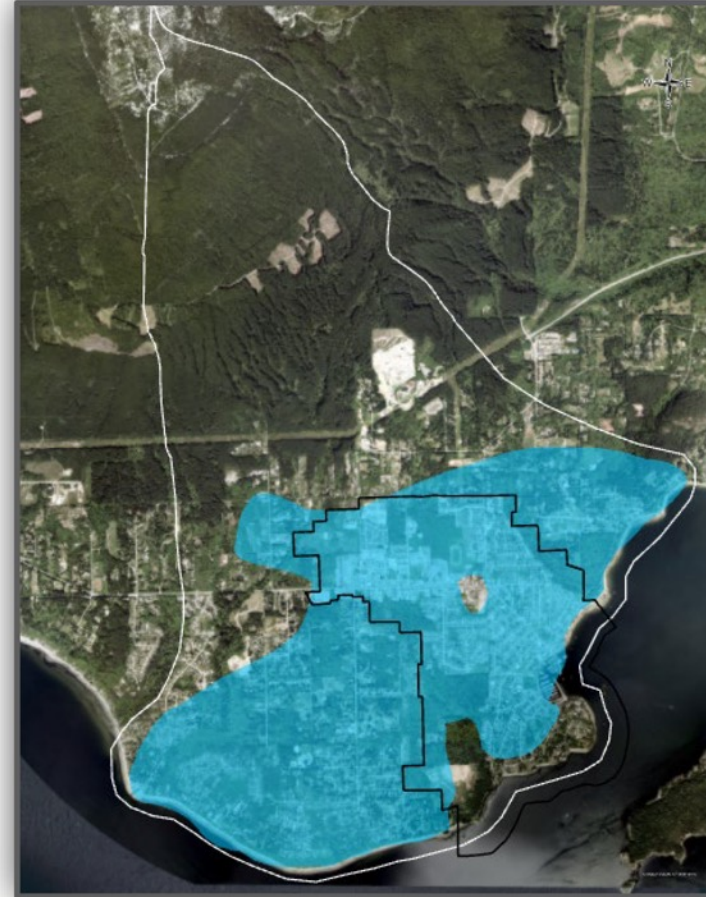


Watershed Scale Approach



Town of Gibsons

Key Lessons Learned



Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN)

- 172,414 people
- 6% growth between 2016-2021
- 4 municipalities
- 7 Electoral Areas
- 3 First Nations



Regional District of Nanaimo

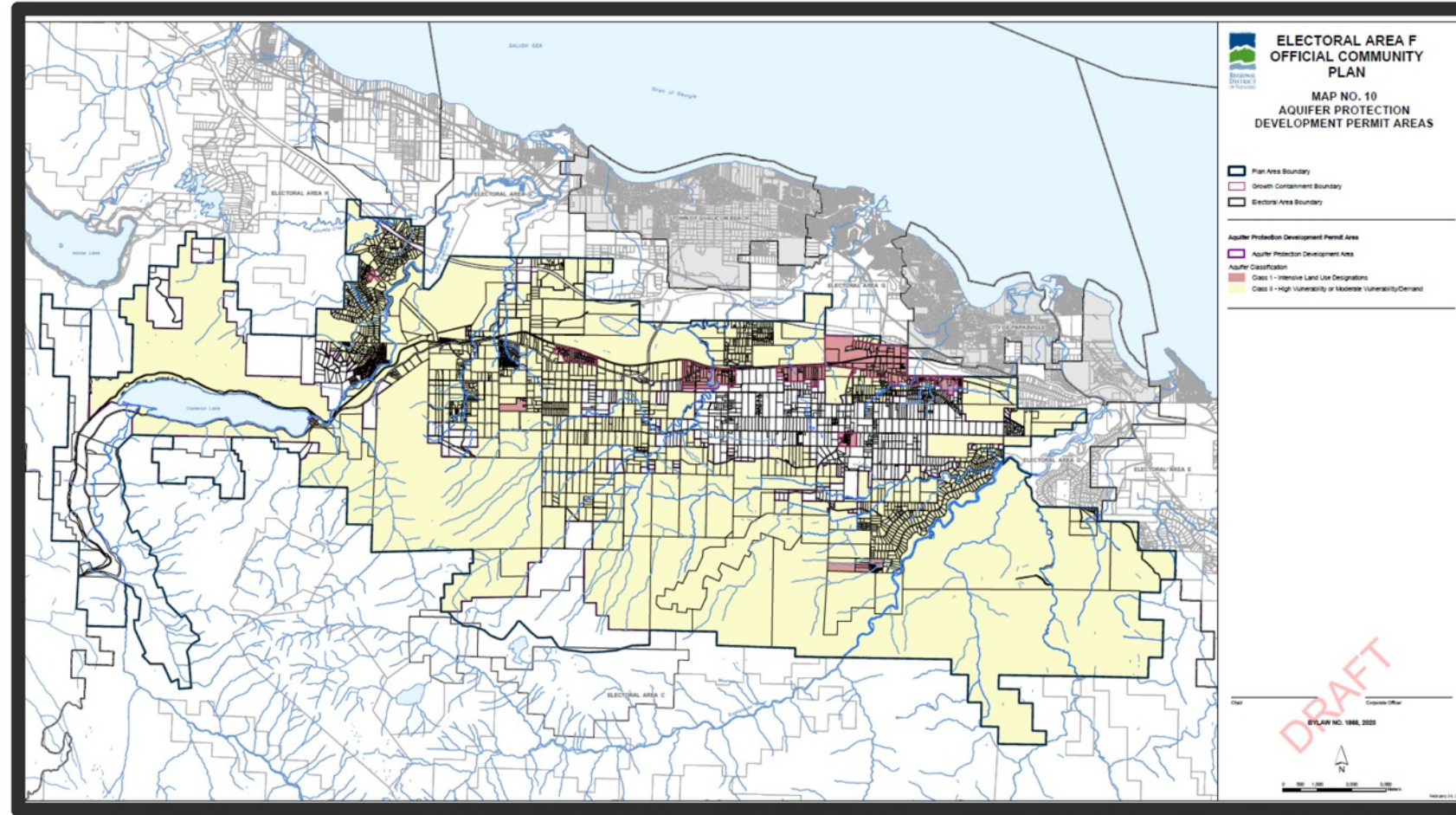
Natural Asset Management Projects

- **Natural Asset Inventory, Condition & Risk Assessment + Roadmap**
- **New Development Permit Areas for environmental protection – aquifer, ESAs & marine coastal**
- **Sea level rise and climate adaptation program**
- **Overall Board policy to address climate action, risk and level of service**



Regional District of Nanaimo

Aquifer Demand and Risk Map - DPA



Natural Asset Management Legal Primer



What the legal primer is, and what it is *not*

- Intended audience: local elected officials and senior decision-makers
- Basis for conversation around where additional legal information or advice may be needed, or where clarity from provinces/territories or courts may be helpful
- National in scope, with specific discussion of four sample provinces where helpful (BC, AB, ON, NB)

Natural Asset Management Legal Primer

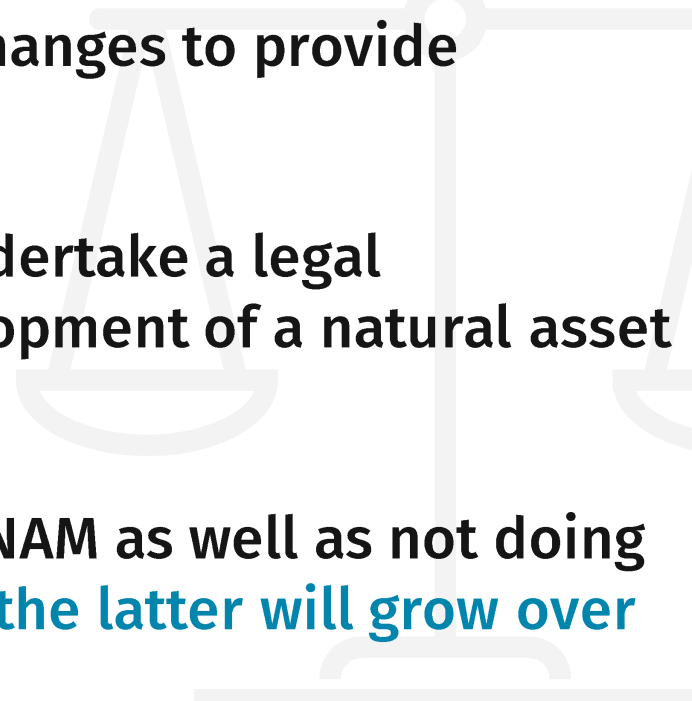
Four key objectives:

1. Identify possible sources of legal authority for undertaking natural asset management and related limitations about which local governments should be aware
2. Survey of legal and policy tools available for local governments
3. Describe legal risks facing local governments that engage in natural asset management and protection, and those that do not
4. Highlight legal developments that could change the legal landscape for natural asset management by local governments



Natural Asset Management Legal Primer

Key Takeaways

- Local governments generally have the legal authority to undertake NAM. PSAB restrictions pose a challenge, but not an insurmountable one. Local governments may wish to advocate for legislative changes to provide clear(er) guidance (and associated funding) though.
 - Plenty of tools available. Local governments can undertake a legal assessment of legal/policy options alongside development of a natural asset inventory.
 - There are legal risks associated with implementing NAM as well as not doing so. **The trajectory of the law suggests risks of doing the latter will grow over time.**
- 

Where can we go from here?

- **Signals from the Province and markets indicate support & a need for NAM, which any community can begin to integrate into existing asset management processes.**
- **By developing norms & standards, services we already receive from nature can be reflected in the green economy.**
- **BC communities are leading uptake of natural asset management, despite existing policy and governance barriers – and NAM provides them with a case to seek funding, collaboration and resource sharing to balance budgets with community needs**



**NAI
Resource
List**

Discussion | Q&A





Prompts for panelists

- What was your primary motivation for pursuing NAM?
- How has the political landscape changed since your first initiative?
- How do you best balance progress in NAM and current community needs?
- What other opportunities (funding, collaboration) can be achieved through NAM?

Prompts for the audience

- What challenges or risks is your region facing? Climate, service delivery, budget limitations....
- Are there natural assets you have and may be overlooking? Are there any you're currently managing?
 - Climate adaptation strategies are becoming more common, or even required at local & provincial levels; where can NAM help define your approach?



Thank You

- **Emanuel Machado**, Gibsons, emachado@gibsons.ca
- **Roy Brooke**, NAI, rbrooke@naturalassetsinitiative.ca
- **Michelle Lewis**, Gibsons, MLewis@gibsons.ca
- **Kim Fowler**, RDN, KFowler@rdn.bc.ca
- **Ian Moore**, ian@ianmoore.ca



Natural Asset Management Council Brochure

NATURAL ASSET MANAGEMENT FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS: RELIABLE, SUSTAINABLE, COST-EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY



Makin

HOW TO START?

Canadian local governments are responsible for providing sustainable, reliable and cost-effective service delivery by using modern, structured asset management processes. Incorporating natural assets into their asset management processes is therefore an extension of the work they already do. Every community can develop and implement approaches adapted to their unique, local conditions. This is something that can start today.

...IF YOU ONLY HAVE 3 HOURS	...IF YOU HAVE 3 WEEKS	...IF YOU HAVE 3 MONTHS
Organize a facilitated staff or council meeting to discuss: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What natural assets you rely on and for what services.• What you know about those natural assets ... and what you don't.• What risks the natural assets face.• What webinars or trainings are available.	Find resources and current opportunities to work with MNAI here: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore open projects or workshops to start your progress in natural asset management.• Build awareness of your own natural assets with decision makers across departments.• What webinars or trainings are available.	Start an inventory of your natural assets: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A natural asset inventory determines the type of natural assets a local government relies upon, their condition, and the risks they face. It is an essential first step in the full natural asset management project, which the completed inventory will inform.

Contact info.MNAI@gmail.com for more details.

WHAT ARE NATURAL ASSETS?

Natural assets can include forests, streams, meadows, wetlands, coastal dunes, eelgrass beds, and much more.

WHY NATURAL ASSET MANAGEMENT?

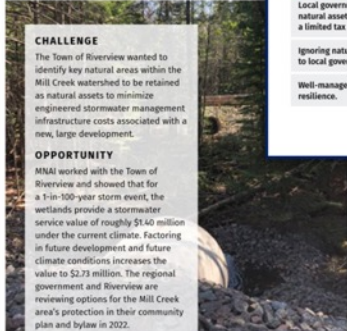
THE BUSINESS CASE	POPULAR APPEAL
Local governments are under-resourced. Healthy natural assets help deliver sustainable services on a limited tax base.	People want to see practical, tangible action to address the climate crisis.
Ignoring natural assets can escalate risks and costs to local governments.	People want a healthy economy and a healthy environment.
Well-managed natural assets can increase climate resilience.	Natural assets enhance the sustainable livability and beauty of our communities.

EXAMPLE

TOWN OF RIVERVIEW IN SOUTH-EASTERN NEW BRUNSWICK

CHALLENGE
The Town of Riverview wanted to identify key natural areas within the Mill Creek watershed to be retained as natural assets to minimize engineered stormwater management infrastructure costs associated with a new, large development.

OPPORTUNITY
MNAI worked with the Town of Riverview and showed that for a 1-in-100-year storm event, the wetlands provide a stormwater service value of roughly \$140 million under the current climate. Factoring in future development and future climate conditions increases the value to \$2.73 million. The regional government and Riverview are reviewing options for the Mill Creek area's protection in their community plan and bylaw in 2022.



Salal Sexual Violence Support Centre

In appreciation of our speakers today and with thanks for your contribution, UBCM has made a donation to the Salal Sexual Violence Support Centre. The Salal Support Centre was founded 40 years ago, and is the largest sexual assault centre in British Columbia. They provide free-of-charge support services to survivors of sexualized violence