



PERSPECTIVE

“It is safe to say that everyone was in search of meaningful employment where a strengthened relationship to the land and a work environment that improves their health were welcomed.”

- Upper Fraser Fisheries Conservation Alliance

HEALTHY WATERSHEDS INITIATIVE

A FOUNDATION FOR SUCCESS AND SECURITY FOR THE FUTURE

In 2021, the provincial government provided \$27 million in economic recovery funding for 60+ watershed projects in communities throughout BC. The Real Estate Foundation of BC, in partnership with Watersheds BC, administered this funding through the Healthy Watersheds Initiative with critical guidance from an Indigenous Leaders Advisory Circle’s (ILAC).

In just 18 months, HWI projects achieved tangible outcomes for communities across BC including:

- ➔ INCREASED CULTURAL AWARENESS AND MEANINGFUL ACTION ON UNDRIP
- ➔ CLEANER DRINKING WATER
- ➔ IMPROVED FLOOD CONTROL AND WATER STORAGE
- ➔ HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES
- ➔ THRIVING FISH AND WILDLIFE
- ➔ THOUSANDS OF NEW JOBS, TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES, AND ECONOMIC BENEFITS

STRONG CO-BENEFITS

In addition to direct job creation, HWI project teams reported strong spin off benefits for local contractors, service providers and businesses. Local economies were bolstered. Climate resilience was strengthened. UNDRIP was advanced.

HWI DATA HIGHLIGHTS

3800+
VOLUNTEER
POSITIONS
CREATED

1270+
JOBS
CREATED

207
PROJECT
PARTNERS
ENGAGED

90%
OF PROJECTS SUPPORTED INDIGENOUS RIGHTS

80%
OF PROJECTS INCORPORATED INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE

We are thankful to HWI project teams, our Indigenous Leaders Advisory Circle, the BC government and community partners for working with us to respect and restore the fresh water on which we all depend.

Visit: www.healthywatersheds.ca | Twitter: @HealthyWatersBC | Instagram: @HealthyWatersBC



**HEALTHY
WATERSHEDS
INITIATIVE**



PERSPECTIVE

“The importance of this project to restoring estuarine function and wildlife habitat cannot be overstated. The benefits expand to also include resiliency against sea level rise, global climate change and reconciliation”

- Squamish River Watershed Society

100%
OF PROJECTS ADDRESSED CLIMATE CHANGE

100%
OF PROJECTS ADDRESSED ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIONS

80%
OF PROJECTS ADDRESSED AT RISK OR CULTURALLY SIGNIFICANT SPECIES, WITH A STRONG FOCUS ON SALMON

2905
SITES FOR RESEARCH AND MONITORING

1400
SITES FOR LAND AND WATER MANAGEMENT

424
SITES FOR CONSERVATION AND DESIGNATION PLANNING

HWI PROJECTS

- Rebuilt the **natural infrastructure** of our watersheds at a fraction of the cost of recovery efforts after extreme climate events
- Drew on **Indigenous knowledge alongside western science** to support innovative restoration, monitoring, and management techniques.
- Recognized & resourced **Indigenous water stewardship and advanced commitments to UNDRIP** through Indigenous leadership, knowledge and meaningful partnerships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities
- Supported **intergeneration learning**, and invested in **employment readiness, training, intergenerational learning and the growth** of BC’s watershed workforce, focusing on **youth, women and Indigenous people**
- Helped in the **protection of drinking water sources** through restoration and management of water filtering wetlands
- Supported **food security** and sustainable food production and **cross sector industry benefits** for forestry, fisheries and tourism
- Helped ensure **rivers continue to flow, wetlands are restored, and salmon and other species can survive and thrive**

CRITICAL CLIMATE ACTIONS

As climate change accelerates – resulting in record droughts, wildfires, and flood disasters – the actions taken through HWI to conserve and renew watersheds are essential.

“Engaging in habitat restoration amidst this climate crisis has re-focused our practice towards drought management and whole system health.” – Gitksan Watershed Authorities

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