



HEALTHY WATERSHEDS INITIATIVE

Our Water Our Future: How Investments in Healthy Watersheds Support Healthy, Resilient, and Prosperous Communities

Project Outcomes

The Healthy Watersheds Initiative (HWI) supported 61 community driven watershed security projects through \$27 million in BC Government COVID Economic Recovery funding between 2021-2022.

HWI projects supported economic recovery, created jobs and built skills, restored watersheds and ecosystem health, supported climate resilience, and advanced progress on UNDRIP implementation.

Based on project reporting from 61 HWI projects, data highlights on some key outcomes are described below.

\$24.7 M in Grants administered.

61 Community driven Watershed Security Projects supported.

1517 Jobs created or supported with HWI funding.

14 Projects were managed by an Indigenous-led organization.

364 Project partners.

83 Indigenous-Led Partners.

3937 Volunteer Positions created.

3225 sites for Research & Monitoring.

1578 sites for Land & Water Management.

PERSPECTIVE

"The ultimate value of Okanagan salmon stock restoration to the Okanagan region as a source of food, tourism, recreation, and vital ecological services is yet to be determined, but is likely to be valued at >\$10 million per year."

(Okanagan Basin Water Board, Collaborative Source Water Protection in the Okanagan)



468 sites for Conservation and Designation Planning.

229 sites for Species Management.

100% of projects addressed Environmental Actions.

100% of projects support climate change adaptation.

90% of projects supported Indigenous Rights.

80% of projects Incorporated indigenous Knowledge.

80% of projects addressed at risk or culturally significant species – with a strong focus on salmon.



Beyond the Work: Connected Benefits that Support Communities

Our Story

“This grant provided an opportunity for B.C. Wildlife Federation to work with partners who have known the value of protecting watersheds for a long time. Unfortunately, it is difficult to access much needed funds to maintain and to monitor some of these most important ecosystems of British Columbia. We know this work is critical in many ways in improving the way we do restoration, as well as improving the way that we protect and conserve wetlands and watersheds”

Neil Fletcher, Project Lead, B.C. Wildlife Federation



Photo by Cheyenne Berghenegouwen

B.C. Wildlife Federation

Wetlands Workforce Project |

\$5,055,000 Grant



Photo by B.C. Wildlife Federation

B.C. Wildlife Federation deployed work-pods across the province in collaboration with conservation organizations and First Nations to improve riparian area habitat; monitor the effectiveness of wetland restoration sites; advance collaborative restoration projects with First Nations and communities; provide employment opportunities targeting women, young adults, and First Nations; and support Province-wide monitoring initiatives that will improve wetland management.

Job & Training Outcomes

205

Employment and
Contract Positions

102,055

Person Hours Supported
by Funding

159

First Nations Individuals
Participated in Economic
Opportunities

- 252 Wetlands Received Work
- \$115,000 Dedicated to Training Sessions and Opportunities
- \$374,000 was allocated to site supplies, including materials, safety equipment and computers
- \$194,000 was spent on truck rentals, gas, and accommodations

Additional Resources |

About the project: <https://wetlandsworkforce.ca/>
<https://bcwf.bc.ca/wetlands-program/>

Wetlands Workforce Final Report:

<https://wetlandsworkforce.ca/2022/02/18/final-report/>

This project was supported through the Healthy Watersheds Initiative, which is delivered by the Real Estate Foundation of BC and Watersheds BC, with financial support from the Province of British Columbia as part of its \$10-billion COVID-19 response.



Supporting Local: Investing in Watershed Projects a Benefit to Landowners, Ranchers, and Farmers

Our Story

“Over the last 20 years we've been doing quite a bit of work along the creek and valley bottoms and so [the project] is exciting for the future, for our kids, our grandkids... The wish would be that we continue to be able to farm and harvest along the valley bottoms. I think we need to continually grow with the river, learn from our mistakes, but also learn and try new things. It's a long-term process.”
Marvin Strimbold, Landowner, Bulkley-Morice Water Sustainability Initiative



Photo by Cheyenne Bergenhenegouwen

“It is huge for us, for crops and cattle, maintaining water levels helps our crops and cattle for watering and for wildlife (migratory birds), habitat for wetlands, everything is all part of it.”
Roger Groot, Rancher, Bulkley-Morice Water Sustainability Initiative

Northwest Research & Monitoring Ltd. Bulkley-Morice Water Sustainability Initiative | \$570,000 Grant



Photo by Northwest Research & Monitoring Ltd.

The Bulkley-Morice Water Sustainability Initiative project is aimed at riparian restoration work through streamside planting and implementation of low-tech streambank stabilization solutions for the Upper Bulkley River watershed which is experiencing high land-use and climate change impacts resulting in a decline in watershed health.

Job & Community Outcomes

28	5	6145
Employment and Contract Positions	Individuals previously in Agricultural Field received work	Person Hours Supported by Funding

- 8 Sites received riparian restoration works. The sites ranged in size from 400 m2 to 1400 m2
- Contracted small amounts of work to the landowners, which created goodwill towards the project in the community.
- 20 landowners representing 6km of riverbank contacted and assessed for future work.

Additional Resources |

About the project: <https://www.bulkleymoricewater.com/>

Low-tech Approaches to Watershed Management:
<https://healthywatersheds.ca/project-stories/low-tech-approaches-to-watershed-management-bulkley-morice-water-sustainability-initiative/>

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Indigenous youth employment, training, and community engagement: Building hope, understanding, and cultural connections for the future

Our Story

“We’re really trying to hold spaces for young people to learn and doing that on the land has been a very valuable experience. We are not doing this in a classroom, we get to come to these places. Feel the energy of the water. Feel the energy of the territories and have conversations.”

Taylor Wale, Project Lead, Gitksan Watershed Authorities



Photo by Cheyenne Bergenhenegouwen

“Through this work I have learned the value of the land, the great qualities of a leader from Taylor, how to be proud of where I am from and stand up for what is right. I have learned a lot of great things.”

Youth Field Technician, Gitksan Watershed Authorities

The Gitksan Watershed Authorities McCully Creek Restoration Project | \$77,000 Grant



Photo by Gitksan Watershed Authorities

The Gitksan Watershed Authorities are restoring McCully Creek by channelizing a braided lower reach of the creek into one channel with sufficient water depth and flow for salmon passage and habitat use. The goal is to restore access, connectivity, and quality of critical salmon habitat while engaging and training Gitksan community members.

Job & Training Outcomes

8

Positions
Held by Youth

11

Positions Held
by Indigenous Persons

1244

Person Hours
Supported by Funding

- New positions were created for youth. Some returned as seasonal staff
- Some team members are now pursuing their education in related fields at Nicola Valley Institute of Technology

Training supported through this project included, but not limited to:

- Stream, wetland, and riparian restoration techniques
- Water quality and quantity monitoring
- Traditional plants and medicine in restoration work
- Indigenous laws, governance, and legal orders

Additional Resources |

- **About the project:** <http://gitksanwatershed.com/programs/mccully-creek-restoration-initiative/?portfolioCats=16>
- **Empowering Indigenous Youth on the Land and Water:** <https://healthywatersheds.ca/project-stories/empowering-indigenous-youth-on-the-land-and-water/>

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