

Regional Factoids

- Groundwater moves at a very slow speed. On Vancouver Island a typical speed is one kilometer every 10 years, or 0.3m/day. It can take 30 to a few hundred years for the water to travel through an aquifer to our glass of water. To put this in perspective, groundwater traveling the eight kilometers from Coombs to the foreshore at French Creek, will take 50-100 years in a sandy aquifer. For every 10 metres of heavier soil, we should add 100 years to that time.
- The amount recommended for basic levels of drinking, cooking and cleaning is 50-80 litres/day. The average Canadian consumes 343 litres per day (L/day). The average person in the RDN uses 459 L/day, in Nanaimo 600 L/day, in Qualicum Beach slightly more than 600 L/day and in Parksville 529 L/day.
- It is generally understood that if impermeable area exceeds 8-10%, there is not enough water flowing along underground to provide a baseflow in streams. At this rate, greater than 80% of fish populations will be lost. These fish are an indicator of overall health of the rivers and streams.
- Approximately 9.5% of the RDN is impervious.
- In the Netherlands they have monitoring wells every 2 square kilometers. In the Regional District of Nanaimo, they are one every 100 square kilometers.
- Victoria recently announced a \$60-million purchase of 8,791 hectares from Timber West which will add to the already existing 10,000 ha area around Sooke Lake. Nils Jensen, Chair of the Regional Water Supply Commission thought this was the best gift the residents could give themselves as it will “ensure we have a safe and secure water supply well past 2050.” (Times Colonist, Dec. 22-07)
- Protecting the watershed means we have to preserve the biodiversity and natural systems that keep it all going, so that we can ensure a continued healthy water supply.

- Currently in this region, there is no coordinated approach to caring for our watersheds.
- In this mid-island region we have many watersheds – about 50 in the Regional District of Nanaimo. Some have watershed plans in place, some are underway. Many have no plan.
- The Englishman River Watershed Recovery Plan is one example of how implementation of a “watershed-based, locally organized” plan has taken what was once BC’s most endangered river, and begun the healing process. Partners from provincial, federal and regional governments, private industry and biologists are working with a local NGO to create and implement a watershed plan
- Other watershed plans in the area include one for the French Creek watershed now being implemented by a local community group. A similar process was initiated on the Little Qualicum River and awaits Regional District support.