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## **WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN UNDERWAY FOR THE KETTLE RIVER**

Grand Forks, BC – Residents of the Kettle River Watershed will soon have the opportunity to shape the future of the Kettle River, according to Grace McGregor, Chairperson of the Kettle River Stakeholder Advisory Group.

The Kettle River Watershed Management Plan, led by the Regional District of Kootenay Boundary, aims to have a broad level of public involvement to help guide future decisions by the RDKB, the Province of BC, and other organizations and individuals. The public will have many opportunities to participate over the next two years, including information sessions, surveys, workshops and community mapping events.

The Stakeholder Advisory Group includes 30 representatives of communities, organizations and businesses from across the region. The Advisory Group will draw on the best available scientific information as well as public input to help them understand water issues and develop sound recommendations.

“The Kettle River Watershed means all the land, forests, farms, wetlands and streams that drain into the Kettle River,” says Graham Watt, Project Coordinator. “We chose the theme ‘The Kettle River Starts Here’ because the watershed isn’t something that comes from somewhere else and goes somewhere else – it starts right here with my backyard, our decisions. This is our chance to define how we protect and enhance clean, reliable water and healthy ecosystems while planning for the future of our communities.”

“Local governments have considerable influence over water issues through their various responsibilities, including flood control, wastewater treatment, drainage management, and land use,” according to Mark Andison, RDKB Director of Planning and Development. “We also aim for the plan to guide senior government resource managers – the plan will provide a powerful instrument for lobbying the provincial and federal governments on water management issues by demonstrating that the region’s stated positions are well researched, documented, and represent the views of the region as a whole.”

The public is invited to a presentation of the “State of the Kettle River Watershed” by Summit Environmental at 7:00 p.m. June 18 at the Midway Community Centre (692 7th Ave, Midway). More information will be available throughout the planning process at <http://kettleriver.ca> and at the Grand Forks RDKB office (2140 Central Ave).

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