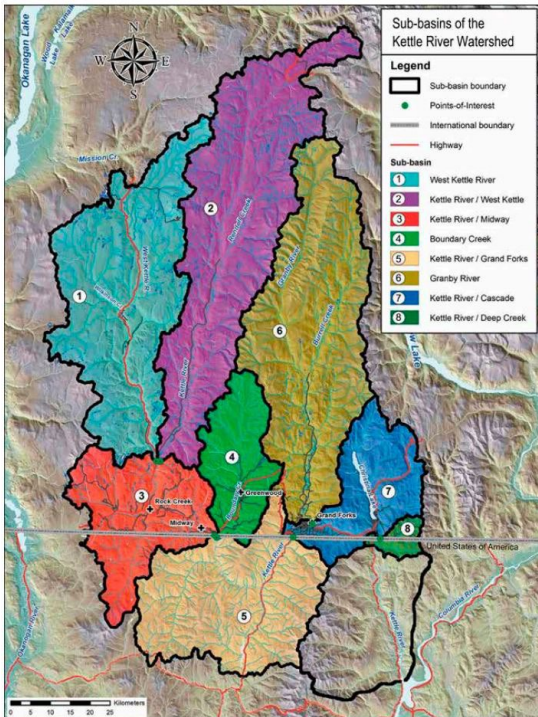


Boundary Integrated Watershed Service celebrating 5 years

February 22, 2024

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As the Boundary Integrated Watershed Service (BIWS) marks its fifth year, it is a good time to look back on the progress made in addressing the 59 Action Items laid out in the Kettle River Watershed Management Plan. Crafted with extensive input from the community and stakeholders, the Plan centres around the management and preservation of our water resources and the health of our watershed. A heartfelt thank you to our community for your active involvement and efforts on this journey of supporting our local watersheds and water resources.



The condition of our sub-watersheds is key to the overall health of the Kettle River system, which is, in turn, a part of the larger Columbia River watershed. Understanding that actions in one part of a watershed can have far-reaching impacts, the importance of maintaining healthy water systems cannot be overstated. The Plan emphasizes the need for a collective effort - working, learning, listening, and sharing together to coexist with and support these natural assets. Our actions shape the environment, and in turn, the environment shapes us.

Natural hazards and climate-related disasters (atmospheric rivers, floods, droughts) are becoming more frequent in BC, a trend expected to intensify with global climate change. As we work towards adapting to these challenges, BIWS leans on science, traditional knowledge, and community learnings. Adaptive management and learning from others on what could work and how to do better.

BIWS undertakes various tasks including grant writing, contract management, supporting the Kettle River Watershed Advisory Council (KRWAC), attending public events, liaising with governments and organizations, and updating www.kettleriver.ca. The BIWS has brought nearly \$1,000,000 in grants to the Boundary region with an additional \$800,000 pending. Funding that supports initiatives such as natural

hazard risk assessments and mapping; drought plans; Indigenous community involvement, and public outreach. The BIWS grant, contributing \$20,000/year to local projects, underscores the commitment to building resilient watersheds.

Public engagement remains a priority, with the KRWAC providing vital sector viewpoints for our elected officials. This collaborative effort brings together 18 representatives from 9 sectors, government staff, community organizations, elected officials and members of the public; as we realize that for lasting change, acquiring knowledge and support from diverse sectors throughout our region is essential. BIWS is committed to community engagement, actively participating in markets, fairs, school events, and local organizations. Collaborating with various levels of government, the BIWS has supported crucial initiatives like the soon-to-be-installed Boundary Creek hydrometric station; real-time water temperature monitoring; drought debrief conversations; and working to keep the Boundary region watersheds top of mind as projects are proposed.



Success in watershed stewardship depends on everyone's contribution. Every little bit helps, and every little bit counts. As we keep practicing WaterSmart ways, prioritize FireSmart measures, sharing and collaborating, we collectively work towards improving the health and resilience of our communities.