



POSSIBLE ACTION STEPS

FOR COMMUNITIES SEEKING TO PROTECT THEIR DRINKING WATER WATERSHEDS

July 29, 2022

Building on the research of the Watershed Governance Initiative Scoping Study (2020), the experience of RDCK staff, subject experts and community members, the Watershed Governance Initiative team has compiled a list of possible action steps for communities seeking to protect their drinking water watersheds.

1. **Identify a community lead and begin documenting** everything
2. **Establish monitoring** of water quality and quantity to create a baseline of data and upload to the [Water Data Hub](#)
3. **Review watershed data** on [WGI WebMap](#)
4. **Build relationships** with community groups in the area, First Nations in the region, provincial and local elected officials and staff, Living Lakes Canada, and industry members
5. **[Request an investigation under the Drinking Water Protection Act \(DWPA\)](#)** - Section 29 of the DWPA provides a mechanism for someone to request that a Drinking Water Officer (DWO) investigate potential threats to their drinking water. The Act defines a threat as “a condition or thing or circumstance that may lead to a condition or thing that may result in drinking water provided by a domestic water system not being potable”
6. Work with RDCK staff to [create a story map](#)
7. **Articulate community values** through a planning exercise such as:
 - a. Natural Asset Management Planning
 - b. Nature Based Planning
 - c. Cumulative Impact Study
8. Consider pursuing [Water Objectives under the Water Sustainability Act \(WSA\)](#) - From meetings with the Provincial staff, RDCK staff understand that WSA objectives are something to pursue once all other efforts have been considered. Even then, Water Objectives will require considerable effort on the part of the community and/or local government to establish. If established, they can be legally binding across many other sectors. Objectives are best set prior to activity in a watershed as they define future conduct, they cannot address existing or historical conflict. For more information, Polis has published a [Water Objectives Innovation Brief](#).

For more information

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