

Collaborative efforts to protect wetlands and estuaries

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A Wetland Working Group (WWG) was formed in the fall of 2002 and includes members from Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (ENGOS) as well as provincial, federal, and municipal governments. The vision of the WWG is as follows: A province where the functions and values of wetlands and the larger watersheds of which they are a part are appreciated, conserved, and restored for present and future generations. The WWG is in the process of completing a Wetland Strategy document that describes how best to fulfill this vision. The strategy includes background information on the status and importance of wetlands and estuaries in BC, and describes proposed principles and action items to protect them. Of the 12 action items developed for the strategy, the WWG has prioritized and is actively working on the following four:

- conducting an inventory and risk assessment of remaining wetlands and estuaries in BC;
- working with other organizations in coordinating wetland education and stewardship programs;
- writing and undertaking a review process for a Best Management Practices (BMP) document for inclusion in the provincial BMP program; and
- conducting consultations with government and other interested parties on the proposed principles found in the strategy.

The WWG presentation will focus on the Wetland Strategy including the 12 action items, describe what they are, and then report on the progress made on the four prioritized items.