

## British Columbia - Washington Environmental Cooperation Council (ECC)



Transboundary Environmental Cooperation

## Purpose of the Environmental Cooperation Council (ECC)

To ensure British Columbia and Washington State promote and co-ordinate mutual efforts to ensure the protection, preservation and enhancement of our shared environment for the benefit of current and future generations.

## History of the ECC

- The ECC was established by the **Environmental Cooperation Agreement**- entered into by the Governor of Washington State and Premier of British Columbia on May 7, 1992.
- The agreement was stimulated by a desire to find cooperative means to address transboundary environmental irritants between two close neighbours.

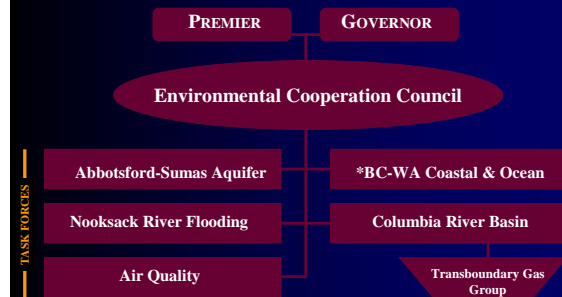
## ECC Members



## The Role of the ECC

- The Environmental Cooperation Agreement and the ECC provide a framework and forum for the functioning and reporting of the various Task Forces dealing with Transboundary issues.
- In 1996, the British Columbia and Washington environmental agencies signed an MOU to provide an administrative framework for cooperative initiatives.

## Organizational Structure



## International Task Forces

Several critical cross border environmental issues require joint attention by British Columbia and Washington State. These are dealt with through International Task Forces under the ECC:

- Abbotsford-Sumas Aquifer
- Flooding of the Nooksack River
- Air Quality in the Lower Fraser Valley/Pacific Northwest Airshed
- \*Shared Waters of the Georgia Strait and Puget Sound (including the outer coast)
- Air and Water Quality Issues in the Columbia River Basin

## Ongoing Initiatives

- Georgia Basin Puget Sound Ecosystem Indicators Report
- Nooksack River flood modeling.
- Sumas Abbotsford Aquifer management .
- Georgia Basin/Puget Sound International Airshed Planning

## New Initiative: MoU on Pacific Coast Collaboration to Protect Our Shared Climate and Ocean

- June/07 Agreement between British Columbia and Washington that:
  - further strengthens collaboration between the two jurisdictions;
  - sets out joint actions on climate change and Pacific Ocean conservation;
  - including the establishment of a Washington-British Columbia Coastal and Ocean Task Force to coordinate and act on coastal and oceans issues.

## New Initiative: BC/ WA Coastal & Ocean Task Force

- The Coastal and Ocean Task Force enhances collaboration between B.C. and Washington on coastal and oceans issues in Puget Sound, the Georgia Basin, and the outer coasts of B.C. and Washington State.
- B.C. and Washington will share information and collaborate on activities that protect and restore coastal and marine habitats; encourage the development of ecosystem management approaches for ocean and coastal resources; and foster sustainable coastal communities and development.

## ECC Website:

<http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/spd/ecc/index.html>

Regular updates



## ECC Strengths

- The ECC framework facilitates mutual understanding, information sharing, coordination and cooperation.
- Task Forces have proven to be:
  - a good mechanism for engaging stakeholders in seeking solutions to transboundary environmental issues; and
  - a forum for defusing difficult transboundary issues.
- The ECC has been recognized as a good model for regional transboundary cooperation because it generates local solutions to local issues.

## ECC Challenges

- ECC membership does not always include representation from all relevant agencies directly involved in a transboundary issue.
- Resources
- The ECC is a forum for sharing information and coordinating actions. It does not always live up to public expectations that it should be a vehicle for decision making.

## Future Directions

- Continue to broaden the scope of environmental issues considered by the ECC.
- Some Task Forces need to revitalize, redefine goals, set new directions.

*OUR SHARED  
ENVIRONMENT*

*OUR SHARED  
FUTURE*

