

Quotes and questions

- Water is *the* strategic resource of the 21st century. (At a Watershed, Polis Project, University of Victoria 2005)
- Most Canadians believe that we have 20 percent of the world's freshwater. These figures may refer to the volume of water in all of the world's lakes. Water sitting in a lake however, is not a renewable supply. The supply consists of water that falls from the sky and runs off in rivers, or goes underground, refilling aquifers. (Polis Project, University of Victoria 2005)
- The water in lakes and underground aquifers is actually limited. This is the "capital" in our "bank account" of stored water. If we draw down that bank account, eventually we go broke. So how do we maintain that capital? We live off the interest. In this region this becomes difficult as we are not sure about the capital that we have. We don't know how much groundwater we have. We also don't know where it flows. We don't know how many people we can supply water to, or for how long. (Deakin, Michele, Parksville-Qualicum News, October, 2007)
- Dr. Wendling, a groundwater specialist familiar with this region pointed out earlier this year that we need to "better define our aquifers, increase our monitoring and understand the river-aquifer interactions, and do more modeling to give us more data. Most of all", he said, "we need to use the Precautionary Principle and look at our water supply first, and land-use decisions next." (Wendling, Dr. Gilles, January 2007, Parksville presentation)

- Currently in this region, there is no coordinated approach to caring for our watersheds. As a result, we have many issues needing to be dealt with throughout our area. For example, development in some areas has changed the direction and/or amount of the flow of water. There are also many different users withdrawing water on a first-come first serve basis. The users upstream often get the water first, but many of our residents get their water further downstream. When we reach the carrying capacity of our water sources, who will have water and who will not?
- Adopting a (water ethic) would represent a historical/philosophical shift away from the strictly utilitarian, divide-and-conquer approach to water management and toward an integrated, holistic approach that views people and water as related parts of a greater whole. (Sandra Postel, *At a Watershed*, Polis Project, University of Victoria 2005)
- A major challenge exists to convince Canadians that their water use is a problem. (Jean Charest, *What the Experts Think*, Polis Project, University of Victoria 2003)
- (They) are not enforcing environmental laws when they could and should. This failure to act is of deep concern. (Parliament's Standing Committee on Environment 1998).
- The World Health Organization has put out a document looking at the role of ecosystems in human health and have said that we must protect the biodiversity that gives us the 15 basic ecosystem services that we require to live – we don't have a choice. They point out that ecosystems are the planet's life support systems and that many of us in urban environments take for granted the ecosystem services to health- we assume that our good health is a result of good consumer choices and behaviours, with access to good health care services – but as the WHO points out this ignores the role of the natural environment and the array of ecosystems that allow people to enjoy good health, social organization, economic activity, a built environment and life itself. (page 12 of *Ecosystems and Human Well- Being: Health Synthesis*, WHO, 2005 part of Millennium Ecosystem Assessment by UN)