



Water Resources Western Canada News

New Research Examines Water Sustainability Plans in B.C.

By **Simran Chattha** - October 24, 2019  156  0



A new [Innovation Brief](#) from the University of Victoria's POLIS Water Sustainability Project and Environmental Law Centre investigates how Water Sustainability Plans, enabled by British Columbia's new Water Sustainability Act, can help address the water challenges ahead in the province.

"Water Sustainability Plans are a powerful new legal tool with a lot of potential and flexibility to address local needs and priorities across the province," said Deborah Curran, executive director of the Environmental Law Centre. "They haven't yet been implemented anywhere in British Columbia (B.C.), which creates an opportunity for us to really explore how they could be used to their fullest extent."

Understanding how Water Sustainability Plans can begin meeting the needs of communities and healthy functioning watersheds will be critical to building necessary watershed resilience and ensuring B.C.'s freshwater future.

The Innovation Brief provides a comprehensive understanding of how they can operate to enhance adaptive water management, improve water sustainability, and build new innovative governance relationships. It includes a discussion on Water Sustainability Plans as a step towards reconciliation and the larger goal of Indigenous self-determination, a clear explanation of the necessary technical components of Water Sustainability Plans, and their legal impact.

"Our goal with this brief is to support meaningful conversations concerning the essential content needed in Water Sustainability Plans," said Oliver M. Brandes, director at the POLIS Water Sustainability Project. "We understand that a lot of creativity and resources are still needed to develop and fully implement these plans. We encourage communities and all levels of government to use the Innovation Brief as a starting point for engaging in robust local processes to advance more sustainable approaches to water management and governance."

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