

**MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS
INFORMATION NOTE**

Date: December 10, 2013

File: 280-20

CLIFF/tracking #: 203075

PREPARED FOR: Northeast Strategy Committee

ISSUE: Oil and Gas industry involvement in the development of an enhanced water monitoring system for Northeast BC

BACKGROUND:

Northeast BC is experiencing tremendous growth and change. With this growth comes the responsibility to effectively manage the region's natural resources. This includes, first and foremost, water. The Northeast Water Strategy outlines a proactive, long-term approach for the sustainable use and management of water resources. Under this strategy, BC government is leading the development of an enhanced water monitoring system (WMS) for Northeast BC to improve the quality and accessibility of information available to support responsible use and management of water resources.

The specific objectives of the WMS include:

- Develop a credible and defensible information base that supports a sound science-based understanding of the condition and trends of water resources in Northeast B.C.;
- Ensure transparency and broad public access to this information base;
- Ensure an adequately resourced, well-governed and self-sustaining system;
- Ensure efficient and cost-effective use of resources; and
- Support strong partnerships and collaboration among government, First Nations, communities, industry, and academia.

The WMS will consist of:

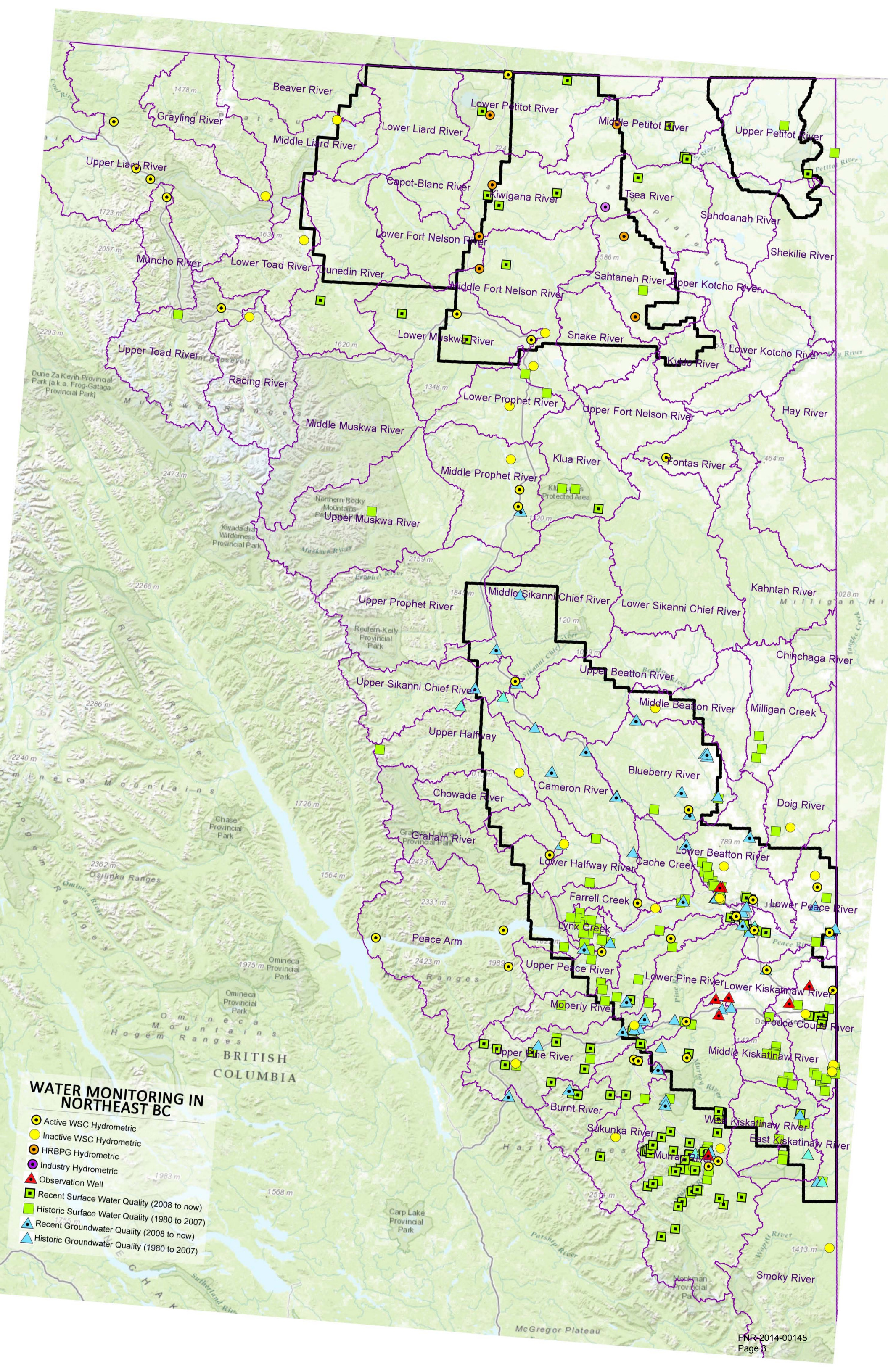
- A process for identifying and prioritizing monitoring gaps for surface water and groundwater (both quality and quantity) in Northeast B.C.;
- A framework for data collection and management linked to a publicly accessible website (OGC's water web portal);
- A governance and funding model to enhance monitoring and manage and provide access to data; and
- A dynamic set of priorities and an implementation plan to address them.

The WMS will provide information on the status and trends in the condition of water resources, at the level of the OGC-defined watershed units¹ (69 units for Northeast BC – see attachment 1). It will be designed to gather the data needed to develop an understanding at this scale of the cumulative effects on Northeast BC's water resources of development across multiple sectors. It is expected that the WMS will be developed iteratively and phased in over time.

¹ For groundwater, an alternative unit of analysis is under consideration.

Page 2 redacted for the following reason:

s.17, s.13



**WATER MONITORING IN
NORTHEAST BC**

- Active WSC Hydrometric
- Inactive WSC Hydrometric
- HRBPG Hydrometric
- Industry Hydrometric
- ▲ Observation Well
- Recent Surface Water Quality (2008 to now)
- Historic Surface Water Quality (1980 to 2007)
- ▲ Recent Groundwater Quality (2008 to now)
- ▲ Historic Groundwater Quality (1980 to 2007)

Pages 4 through 12 redacted for the following reasons:

s.13

s.13, s.17