British Columbia's Flood Management Policy Window

Can We Take Advantage?

Ms. Tamsin Lyle, P.Eng Dr. Dave McLean, P.Eng Northwest Hydraulic Consultants, Vancouver

> 4th International Symposium on Flood Defence Toronto, Ontario, May 6-8th, 2008

The Fraser River, British Columba



Flooding at Chilliwack in 1894



Freshet Hydrographs



What's at Risk



- 50% of Lower Mainland population (>1 million people)
- \$13 billion of building investment (1994 estimate)
- Significant sensitive habitat areas







Quiet devolution of power



Control without responsibility

Current Practice Structural Adjustments



nhc

Current Policy Focus "Serial Engineering"



Paradigm Shift Non-Structural Alternatives

Flow Control Benefits

Wetland Restoration	No Development (Open Space)	Flood-Friendly Uses •Recreation •Agriculture •Flood-Proofed buildings	Status Quo
------------------------	--------------------------------	--	------------



A New Profile for the River



Distance Along River from Ocean (km)

Why the Change? Flooding in 1894



nhc

Why the Change? Dike Confinement and A History Lesson



The New Profile What Does it Mean?



nhc

Spring 2007 Snow, snow, snow



Freshet 2007 Media Reaction



2007 Freshet 10-Year Return Period Event



Date

A Policy Window Opens _____ nhc

Knowledge Coincides with Event





Opportunity



Immediate Reaction

mhc











Long-term funding, Short-term planning





Fearful

Now what?



- Need to take advantage of window while it remains open
- Need to move away from reactive structural focus
- Need to move towards longterm, large scale planning

Fraser Freshet 2007 Flood Watch



Contact Information Tamsin Lyle tlyle@nhc-van.com

nnc