

Clean, safe drinking water for all BC communities is the goal.
Working together is how we'll get there.



Marian Hands
Chief Operating Officer, BCWWA



THE BC WATER & WASTE ASSOCIATION (BCWWA)

Not-for-profit organization representing over 4000 professionals in the water industry in BC and the Yukon for well over 50 years.



- Industry Engagement
- Professional Development
 - Annual Conference (Whistler – April 2024)
 - Specialty Conferences
 - Technical Training Courses
- Cross Connection Control Certification
- Committees and Communities of Practice
- Career Centre



AGENDA

- » Community Network Project
- » Community Network Walkthrough
- » Lessons Learned
- » Questions



WHAT IS THE BC SMALL WATER SYSTEMS COMMUNITY NETWORK?

- » A **FREE** online platform designed to be a safe place for **small water systems owners and their teams** to meet their peers, find resources and expertise, and stay current on relevant topics.
- » **Open to anyone** who is involved with or is interested in small water systems in British Columbia.



WHY SMALL WATER SYSTEMS?



- More than 2 connections, serving up to 500 people in a 24-hour period
- They are an **extremely diverse** community
 - Residential, recreational, commercial, industrial, mixed
 - Full-time, part-time and seasonal residents
 - Wide range of governance structures (private, society, First Nations, public, etc.)
 - Water treatment ranges from none to complex processes
- Lack of **capacity, funding, time**, and {potentially} **experience**
- Approximately **4000** small systems in British Columbia

The Community Network Project



SO... HOW DID WE GET HERE?

- In 2015, the BCWWA SWS project began in partnership with the Province of British Columbia

To improve resilience and sustainability of small water systems in the province, focusing on the decision makers



SO... HOW DID WE GET HERE?

- 2019 Auditor General's Report highlighted concerns with small water systems including:
 - Large number of boil water advisories
 - Concerns about long-term financial and infrastructure sustainability
- The BCWWA was asked to provide a scaled solution for SWS decision makers throughout BC:
 - Support the development of peer networks
 - Curate valuable resources
 - Continue providing the *Taking Care of Your Small Water System* workshop



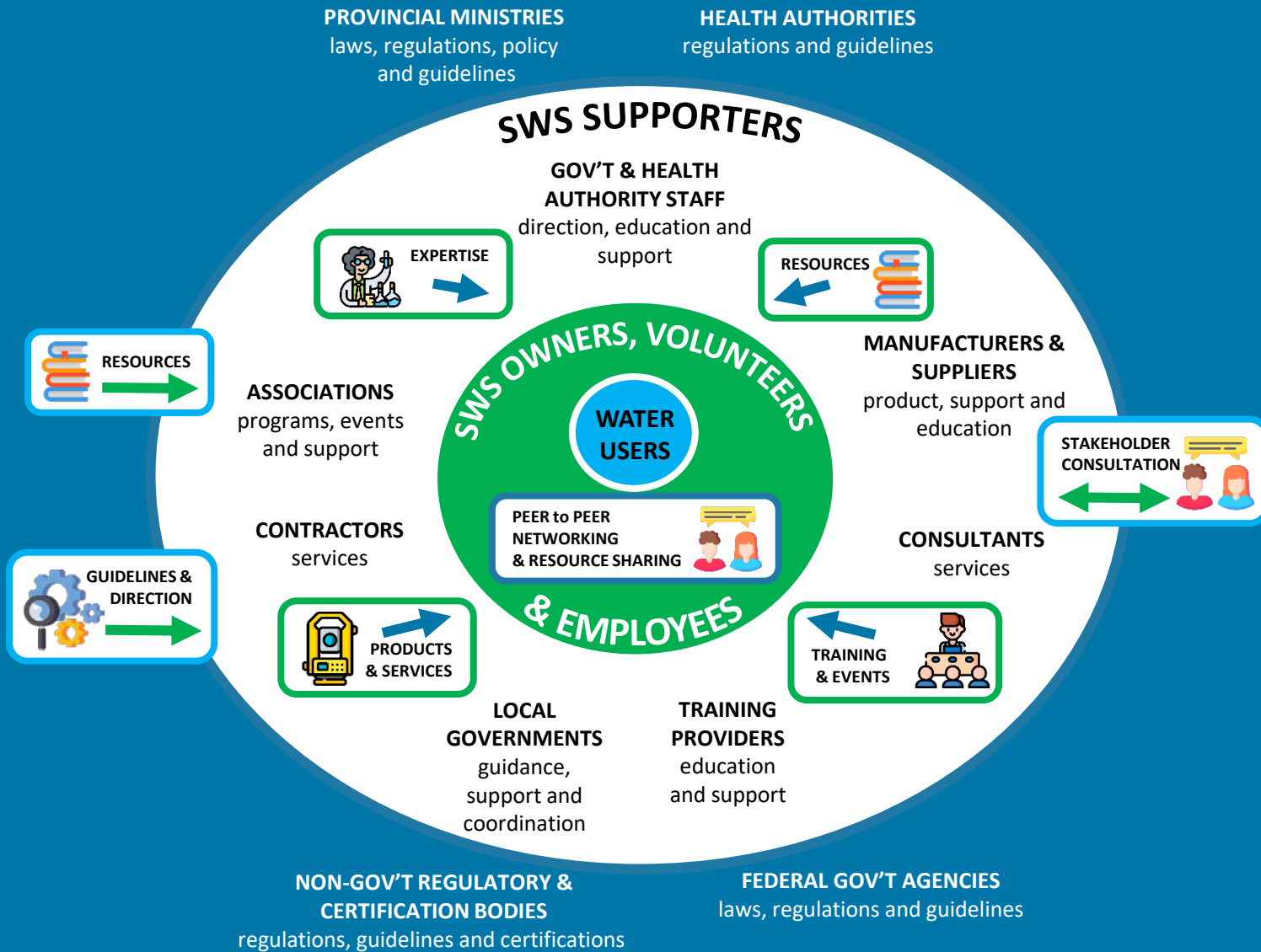
SWS 2.0 – SCALING IT UP!



PROJECT GOALS

1. All small water system owners, trustees and their teams in BC **have access to the knowledge, training, tools and resources they require to make informed decisions about the long-term management and sustainability** of their system.
2. **All stakeholders** within the small water systems community **work collaboratively to share resources, expertise and experience.**





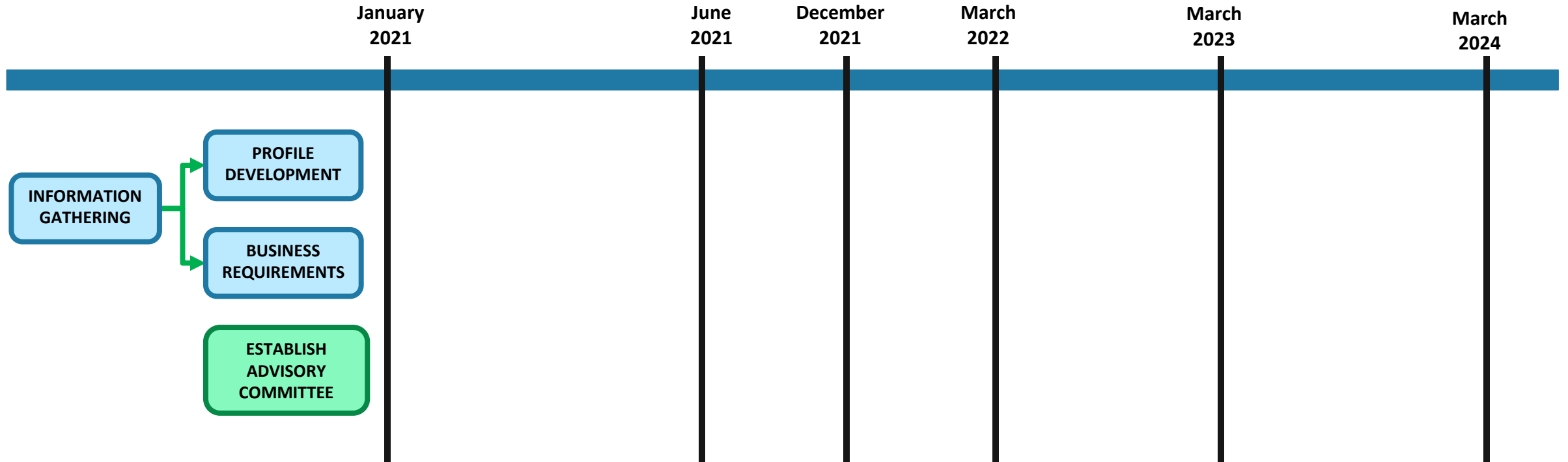
GOVERNMENT/REGULATORS

SMALL SYSTEM SUPPORTERS

SMALL SYSTEM OWNERS

WATER USERS

COMMUNITY NETWORK PROJECT PLAN

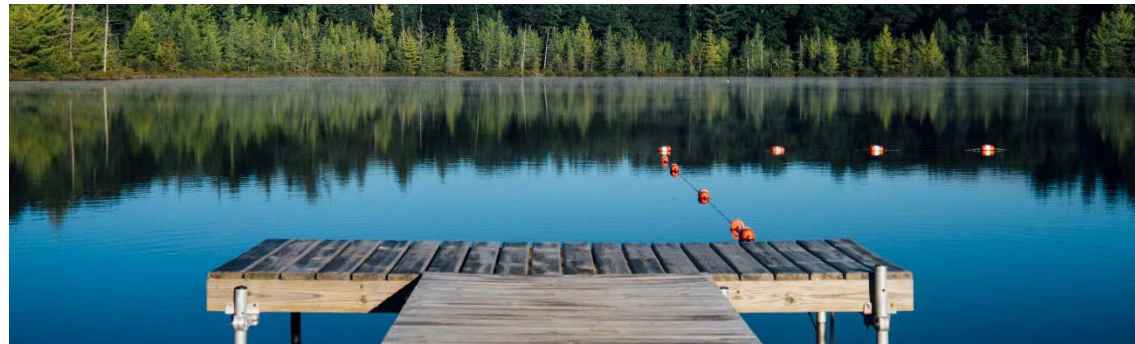


WE TALKED TO THE COMMUNITY!

- ✓ **Survey** distributed to small water system owners across the province with help from the Health Authorities
- ✓ Phone **survey** of individuals who attended *Taking Care of Your Small Water System* workshop in the past
- ✓ **Survey** distributed to small water system supporters
- ✓ **Focus groups** of small water systems owners
- ✓ **Focus groups** of small water systems supporters

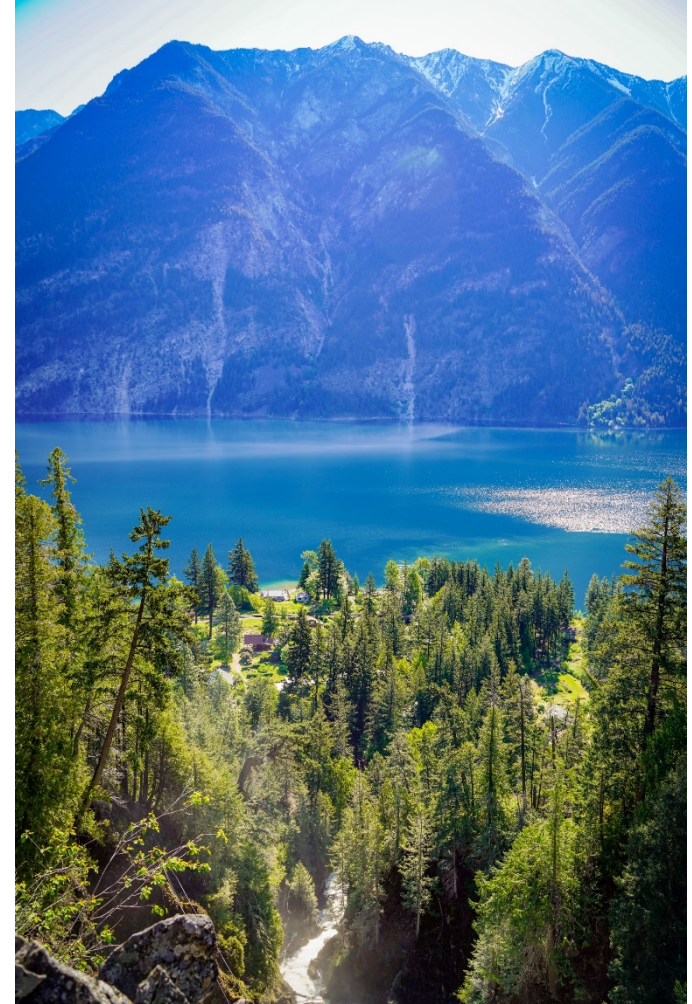
WHAT DID THE COMMUNITY TELL US?

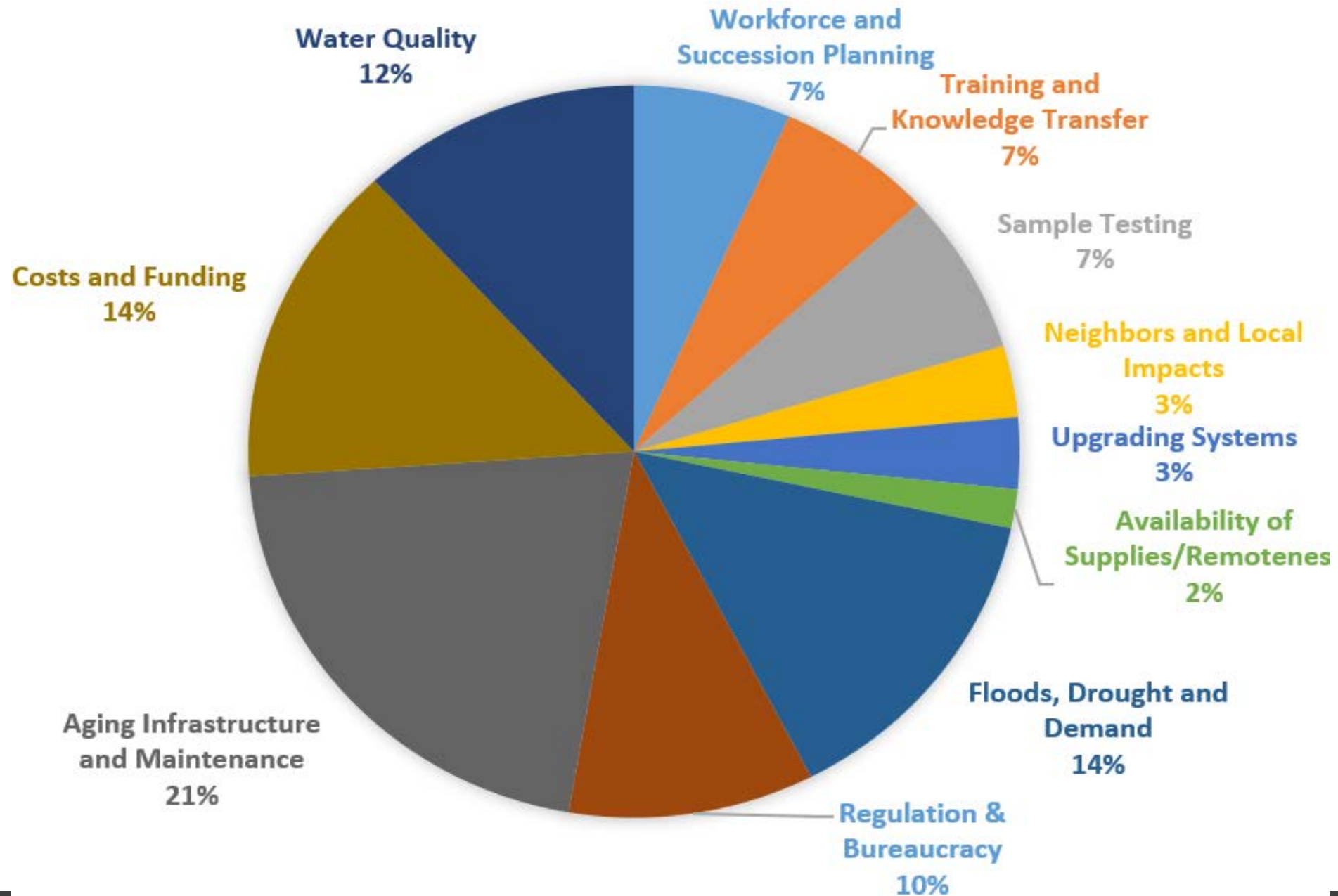
- The majority of respondents (75%) had less than 50 connections
- 58% had only 1 operator (certified or uncertified) for their system
- SWS Owners often don't know who their peers are
- SWS Owners often aren't aware of the resources around them
- SWS Owners were saw the importance of supporters but didn't want to be seen as a marketing list or to have a regulatory body “looking over their shoulder”



WHAT DID THE COMMUNITY TELL US?

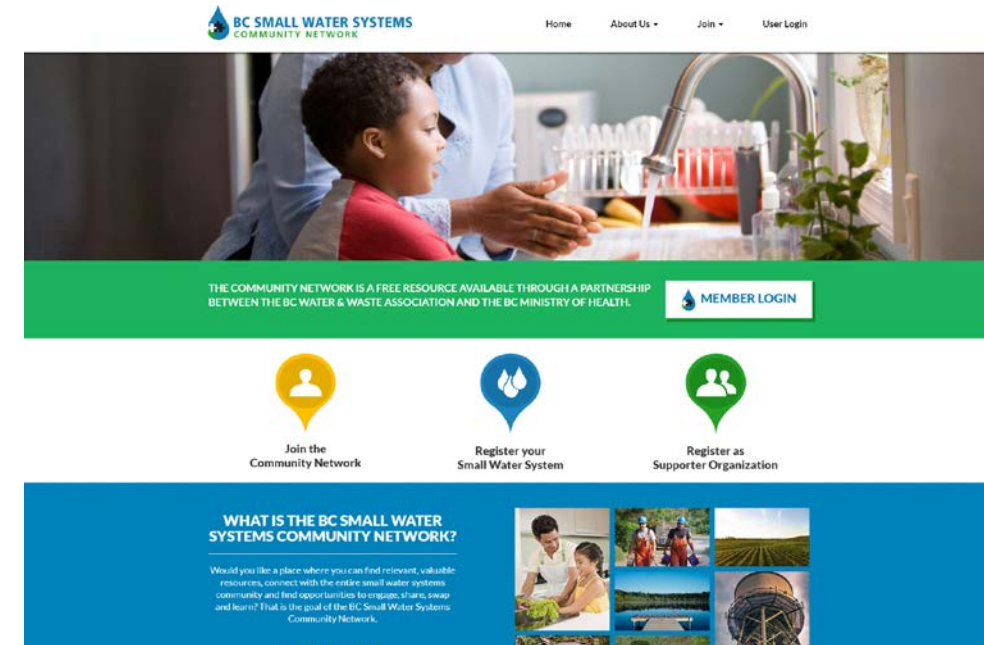
- Varying level of trust between Owners and regulatory bodies (ie: MOH, HAs)
- Turnover is an issue (trustees, volunteers, staff)
 - Who will run the system?
 - How do they get up to speed to make good decisions?
- Funding is an issue
 - Small water user base ... less money
 - Minimal access to government funding or grants
- Climate change is affecting small water systems





BC SWS COMMUNITY NETWORK PLATFORM

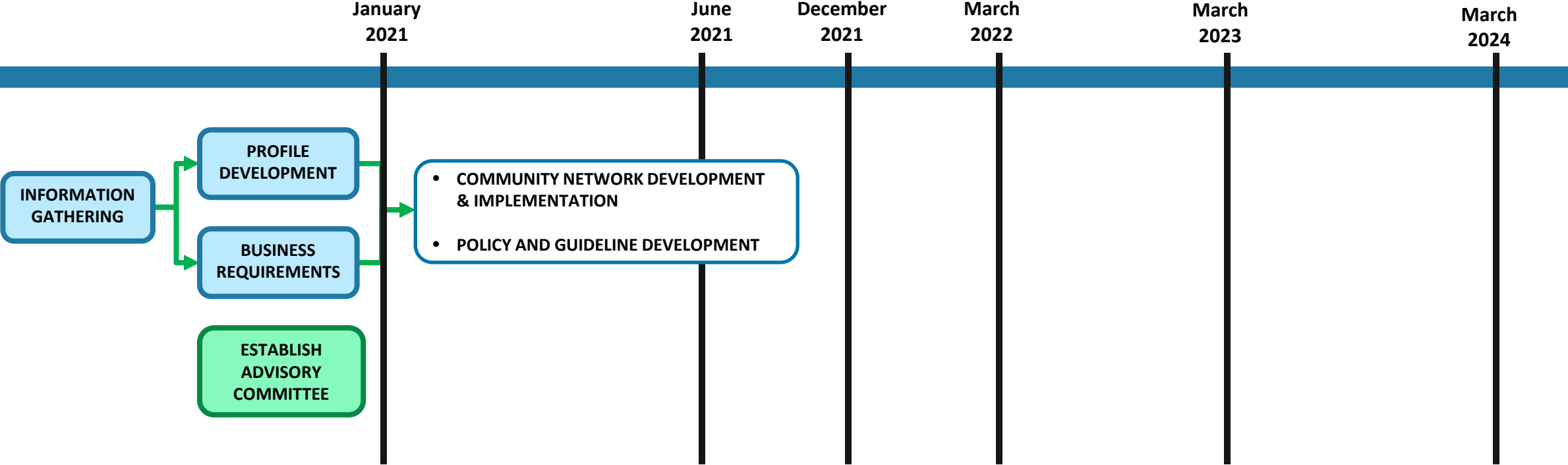
- Internet based, mobile friendly
- Available to all members of the SWS Community (anyone interested)
- Private area for peer-to-peer engagement
- Privacy levels are managed by each member
- Promotes sharing of resources, expertise and information
- Actively encourages engagement and feedback from members



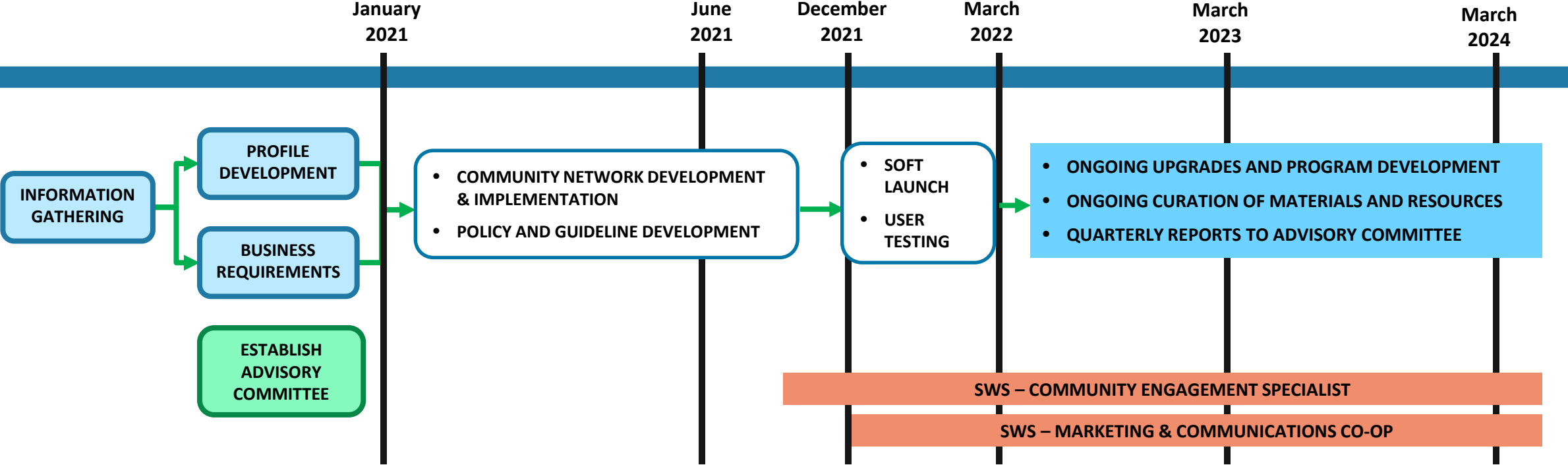
COMMUNITY NETWORK LAYOUT



COMMUNITY NETWORK PROJECT PLAN



COMMUNITY NETWORK PROJECT PLAN



Community Network Walkthrough



JOIN THE COMMUNITY NETWORK



BC SMALL WATER SYSTEMS
COMMUNITY NETWORK

Home About Us - Join - User Login



THE COMMUNITY NETWORK IS A FREE RESOURCE AVAILABLE THROUGH A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE BC WATER & WASTE ASSOCIATION AND THE BC MINISTRY OF HEALTH.

[MEMBER LOGIN](#)



WHAT IS THE BC SMALL WATER SYSTEMS COMMUNITY NETWORK?

Would you like a place where you can find relevant, valuable resources, connect with the entire small water systems community and find opportunities to engage, share, swap and learn? That is the goal of the BC Small Water Systems Community Network.

JOINING IS FREE.

[BECOME A MEMBER](#)

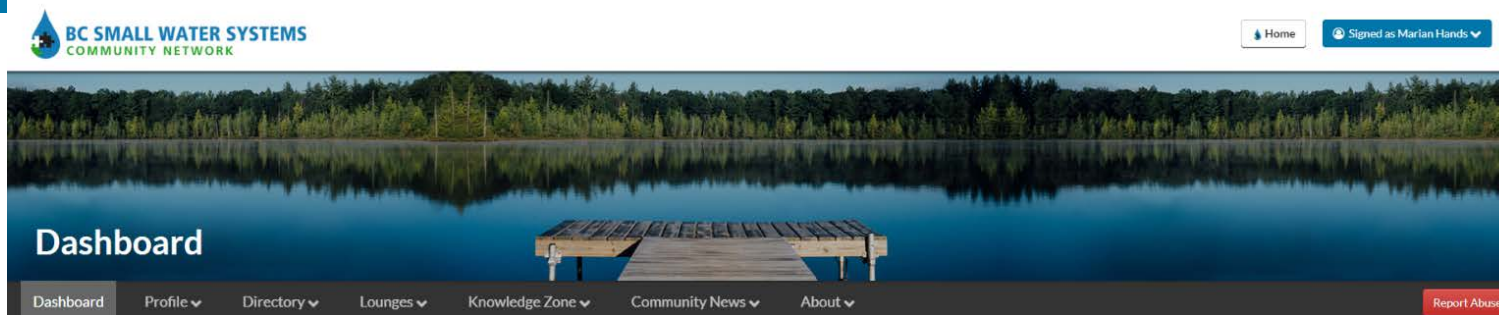


» **Join** at the top menu

OR

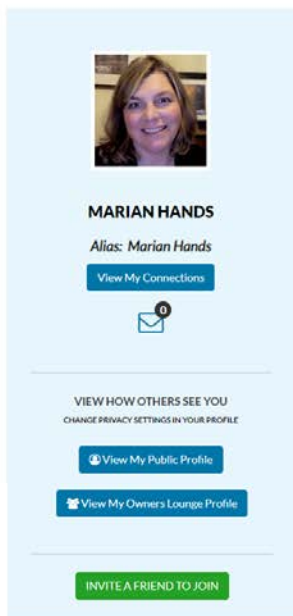
» Click the **Become a Member** button

DASHBOARD



Dashboard


Dashboard Profile Directory Lounges Knowledge Zone Community News About Report Abuse



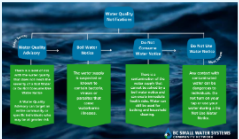
MARIAN HANDS
Alias: *Marian Hands*
View My Connections
VIEW HOW OTHERS SEE YOU
CHANGE PRIVACY SETTINGS IN YOUR PROFILE
View My Public Profile
View My Owners Lounge Profile
INVITE A FRIEND TO JOIN

NEW IN THE COMMUNITY

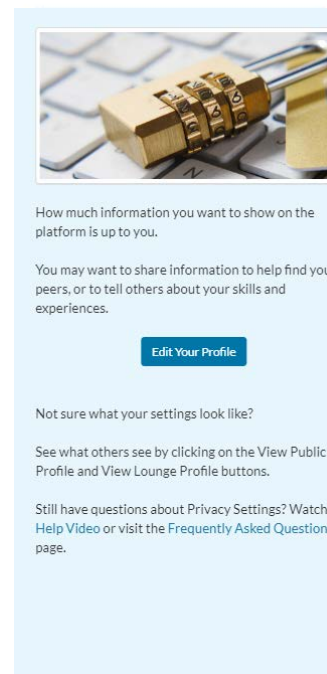

New Listings Offering Free Equipment for SWS
November 09, 2023
Prominent chlorine injector, Nalco ultra sand filter, and Pen charts
View Details



Spotlight on "Water Quality Notifications: What to Watch out for as a Small Water System"
November 07, 2023
Learn about the different types of water quality notifications and how they impact your SWS!
View Details



Weekly Featured Resource!
November 06, 2023
Small Drinking Water Systems Webinar Series - Recordings
View Details



How much information you want to show on the platform is up to you.
You may want to share information to help find your peers, or to tell others about your skills and experiences.
Edit Your Profile
Not sure what your settings look like?
See what others see by clicking on the View Public Profile and View Lounge Profile buttons.
Still have questions about Privacy Settings? Watch our Help Video or visit the Frequently Asked Questions page.

» Profile at-a-glance

- Messages
- See how others see you (public and private)
- Send email invitation to the Community Network

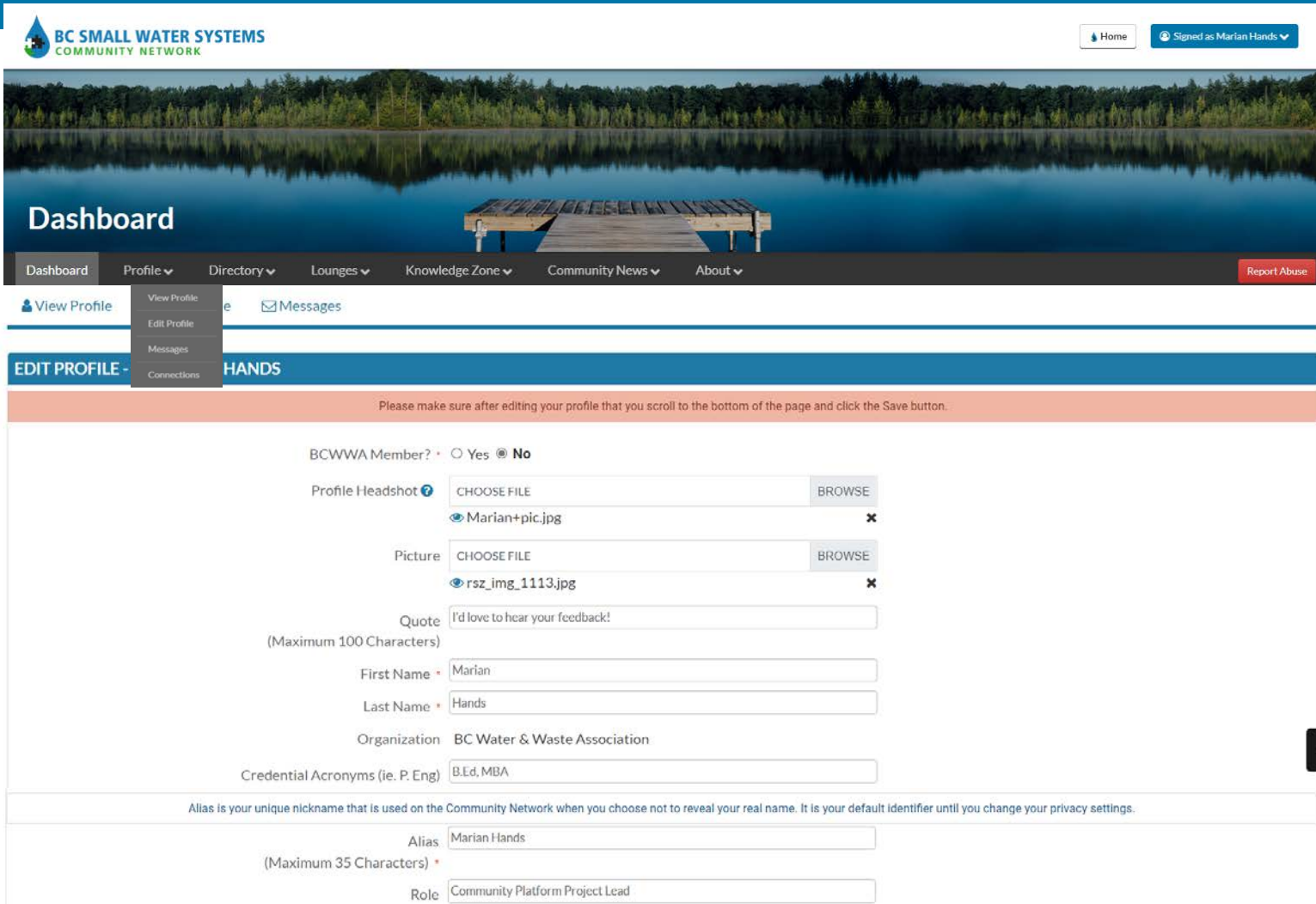
» New in the Community

- Curated items from across the network for at a glance

» Surveys, tips, announcements

- Rotating information

PROFILE



Please make sure after editing your profile that you scroll to the bottom of the page and click the Save button.

BCWWA Member? Yes No

Profile Headshot
Marian+pic.jpg

Picture
rsz_img_1113.jpg

Quote
(Maximum 100 Characters)

First Name

Last Name

Organization

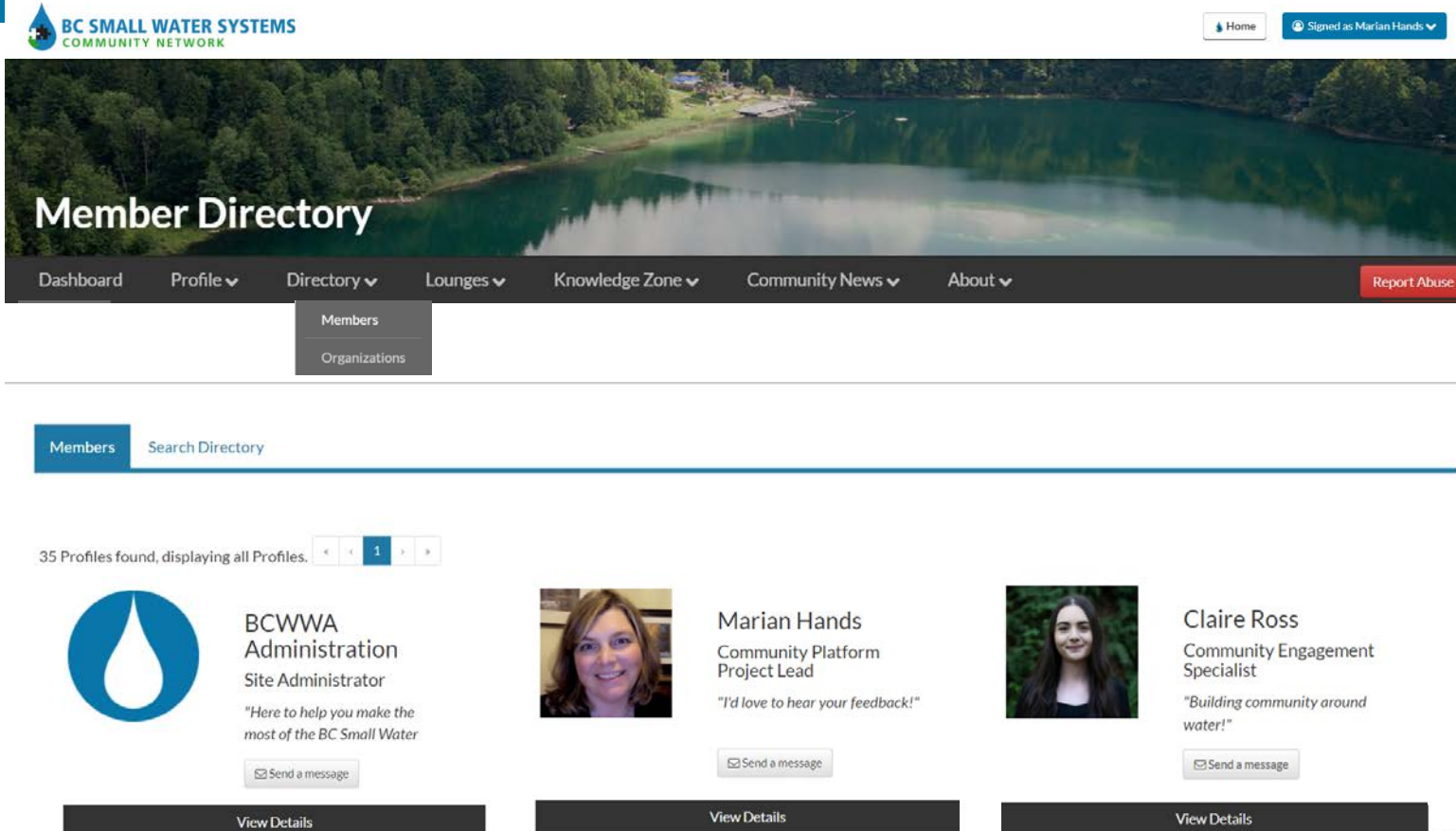
Credential Acronyms (ie. P. Eng)

Alias
(Maximum 35 Characters)

Role

- » **Edit/update** profile and privacy settings
 - Add Member Directory information
- » **View/reply** to internal messages
- » **Connect** to multiple organizations
 - Owners lounge access

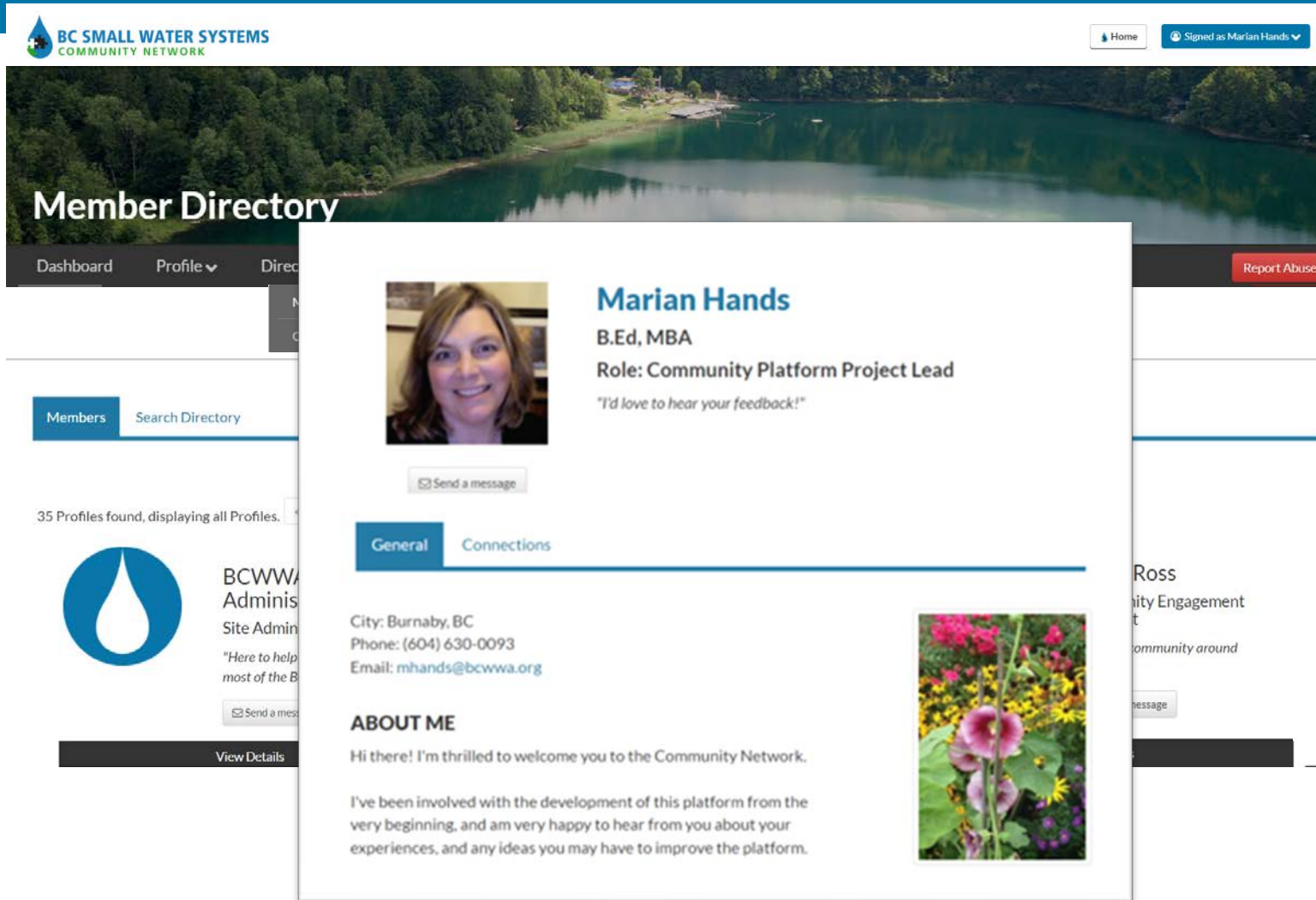
DIRECTORY



The screenshot shows the 'Member Directory' page of the BC Small Water Systems Community Network. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Home' and 'Signed as Marian Hands' buttons. Below this is a large banner image of a lake with the text 'Member Directory'. A secondary navigation bar includes 'Dashboard', 'Profile', 'Directory', 'Lounges', 'Knowledge Zone', 'Community News', and 'About', along with a 'Report Abuse' button. A dropdown menu is open under 'Directory', showing 'Members' and 'Organizations'. Below the navigation is a search bar with 'Members' and 'Search Directory' options. The main content area displays '35 Profiles found, displaying all Profiles.' and a list of three profiles: BCWWA Administration (Site Administrator), Marian Hands (Community Platform Project Lead), and Claire Ross (Community Engagement Specialist). Each profile includes a profile picture, name, title, a quote, a 'Send a message' button, and a 'View Details' button.

- » Member and Organization directories
- » Members who would like to be **searchable** appear in the Member Directory
- » **Send** an internal message

DIRECTORY – VIEW DETAILS



The screenshot shows the 'Member Directory' page on the BC Small Water Systems Community Network website. A profile for Marian Hands is highlighted in a white box. The profile includes a photo, name, education (B.Ed, MBA), role (Community Platform Project Lead), and a quote: "I'd love to hear your feedback!". Contact information is listed: City: Burnaby, BC; Phone: (604) 630-0093; Email: mhands@bcwwa.org. An 'ABOUT ME' section follows, where Marian writes: "Hi there! I'm thrilled to welcome you to the Community Network. I've been involved with the development of this platform from the very beginning, and am very happy to hear from you about your experiences, and any ideas you may have to improve the platform." To the right of the text is a photo of pink flowers. The background shows a search bar with 'Members' and 'Search Directory' buttons, and a list of 35 profiles found.

- » All **configurable** by the member
- » Private profile information for those in Owners Lounge
 - Public for everyone else
- » **Organization Details** is a great place for an organization to highlight their products, services and programs.
 - Identifies individuals connected to the Organization

OWNERS LOUNGE



Owner's Lounge

Overview

ABOUT THE OWNERS LOUNGE

The Owners Lounge is set aside specifically for owners, volunteers and employees of small water systems to privately connect with each other. This is your space, intended to give you the freedom to connect with your peers without oversight of regulators and salespeople. It is built on two key principles:

- Using the Owners Lounge implies confidentiality - conversations within the Owners Lounge
- Members within the Owners Lounge share transparency - real names and systems are used

Please remember that this area is still subject to the Community Code of Conduct. We would like to ensure that everyone feels comfortable and safe in this environment. If you are both an Authorized SWS Member and a Supporter, please ensure you respect the confidentiality and intent of this area.



WELCOME
to the
OWNERS LOUNGE!



ANNOUNCEMENTS	
11/13/2023	Deep Dive into SWS Challenges!
08/16/2023	View this prerecorded webinar from the B.C. Centre for Disease Control
03/01/2023	BC Small Water Systems Online Help Centre
11/09/2022	Save the date! We will be hosting an Emergency Response Planning themed Coffee with your Community on Tuesday, December 7th from noon until 1pm

WHAT ARE PEOPLE TALKING ABOUT?	
2023-05-12 09:34:43	Does Co-operation offer a better stewardship model?? New Topic
2023-05-13 10:32:55	The challenges facing BC's micro small water systems New Topic
2023-04-20 08:29:54	Contingency Plans New Message
2021-11-02 19:36:48	Systems

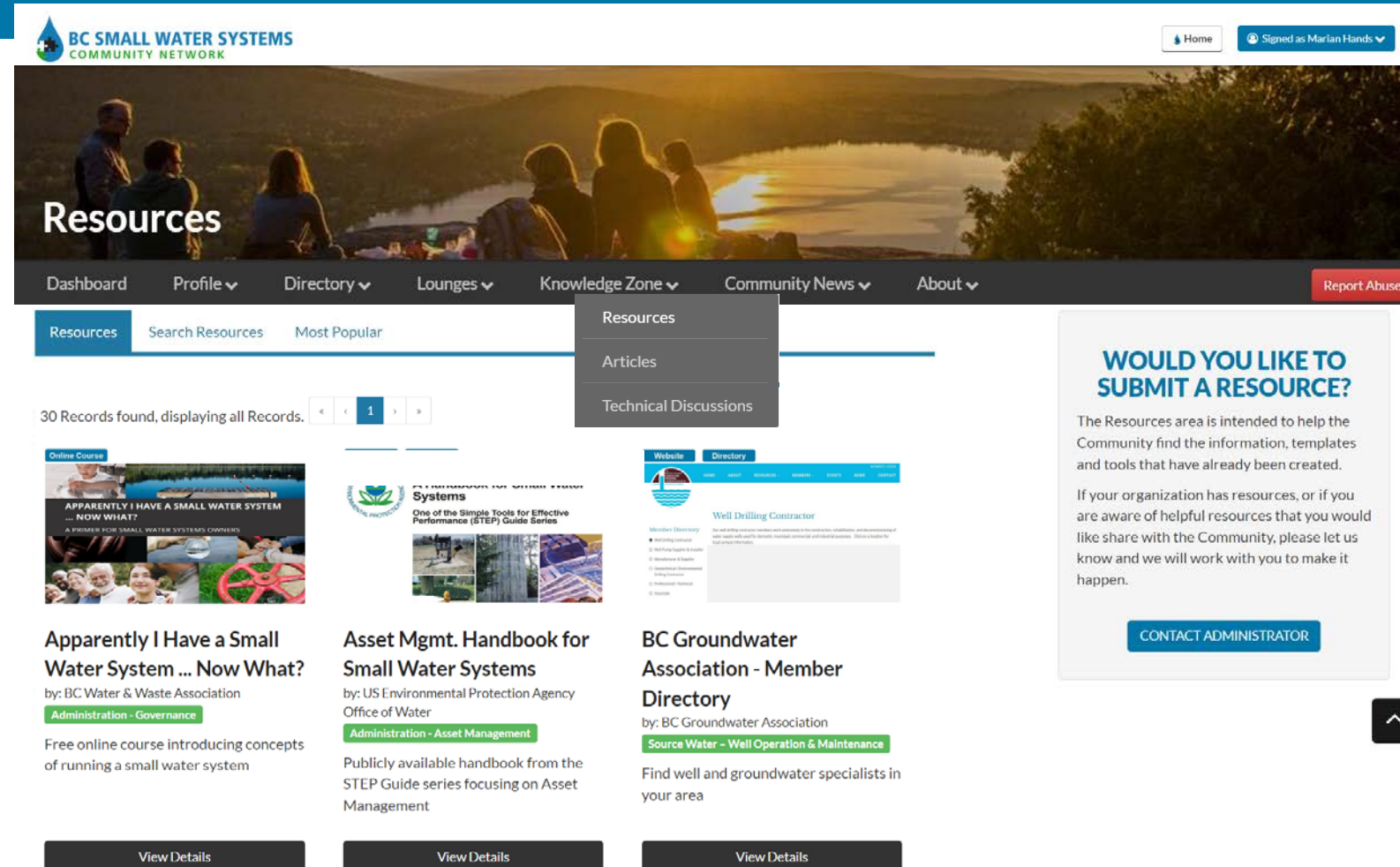
MEET YOUR COMMUNITY



- » Available only to **Authorized SWS Members**
- » Allows **private** conversations away from regulators and Supporters
- » *What are People Talking About* highlights active forums
 - Links members to discussions

KNOWLEDGE ZONE

- » Resources contain links to templates, data, directories, videos, etc.
- » Articles provide topical information and have a discussion area to talk with the author.
- » **Technical Discussions** are available to all members
 - Information and expertise sharing
 - *What are People Talking About* feature

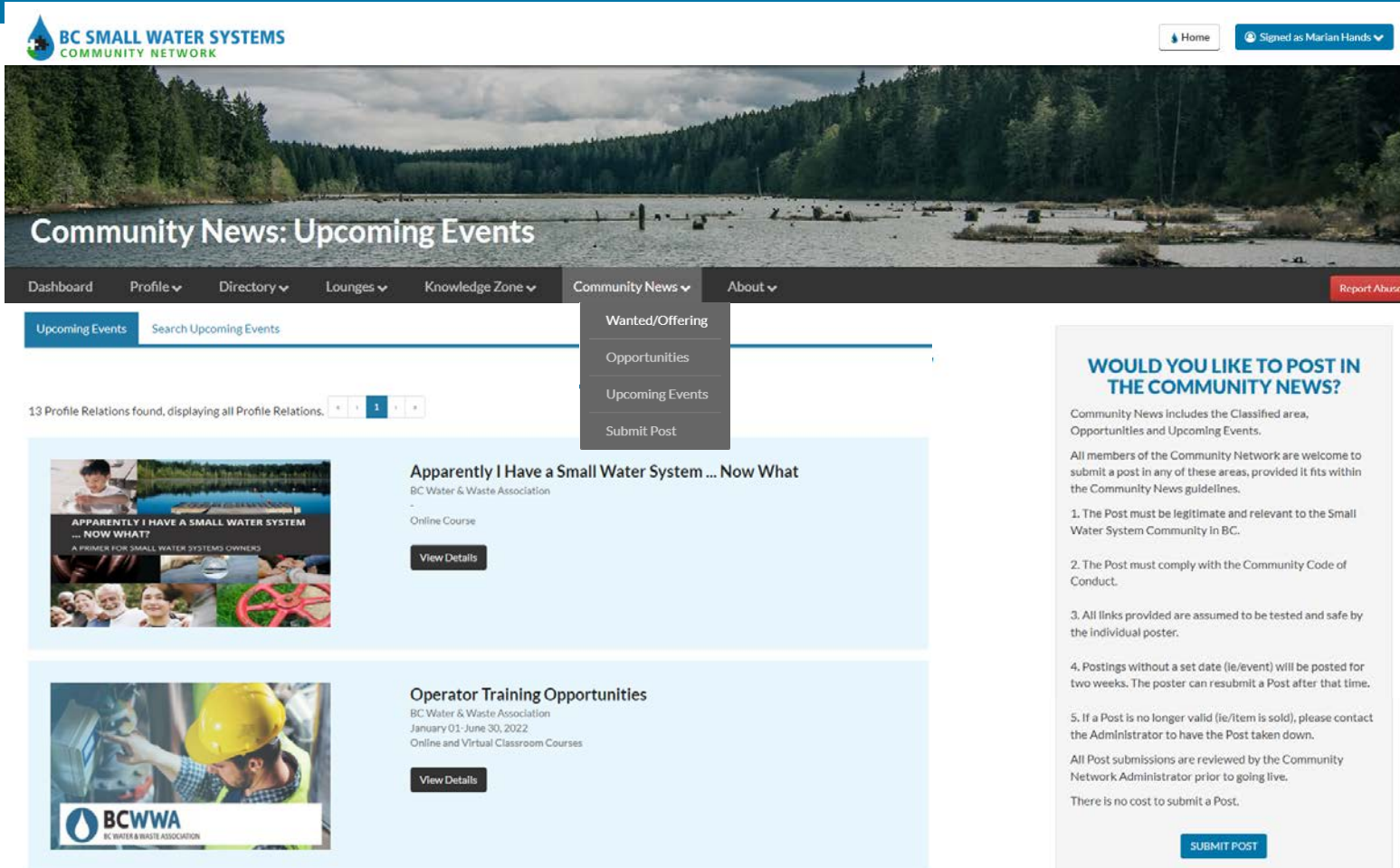


The screenshot shows the 'Resources' page of the BC Small Water Systems Community Network. The page features a navigation bar with options like 'Dashboard', 'Profile', 'Directory', 'Lounges', 'Knowledge Zone', 'Community News', and 'About'. A dropdown menu is open under 'Knowledge Zone', showing 'Resources', 'Articles', and 'Technical Discussions'. The main content area displays 30 records, with the first three visible:

- Apparently I Have a Small Water System ... Now What?**
by: BC Water & Waste Association
Administration - Governance
Free online course introducing concepts of running a small water system
- Asset Mgmt. Handbook for Small Water Systems**
by: US Environmental Protection Agency Office of Water
Administration - Asset Management
Publicly available handbook from the STEP Guide series focusing on Asset Management
- BC Groundwater Association - Member Directory**
by: BC Groundwater Association
Source Water - Well Operation & Maintenance
Find well and groundwater specialists in your area

A call-to-action box on the right asks 'WOULD YOU LIKE TO SUBMIT A RESOURCE?' and provides a 'CONTACT ADMINISTRATOR' button.

COMMUNITY NEWS



BC SMALL WATER SYSTEMS
COMMUNITY NETWORK

Home Signed as Marian Hands

Community News: Upcoming Events

Dashboard Profile Directory Lounges Knowledge Zone Community News About Report Abuse

Upcoming Events Search Upcoming Events

13 Profile Relations found, displaying all Profile Relations.

Apparently I Have a Small Water System ... Now What
BC Water & Waste Association
Online Course
[View Details](#)

Operator Training Opportunities
BC Water & Waste Association
January 01- June 30, 2022
Online and Virtual Classroom Courses
[View Details](#)

WOULD YOU LIKE TO POST IN THE COMMUNITY NEWS?
Community News includes the Classified area, Opportunities and Upcoming Events.
All members of the Community Network are welcome to submit a post in any of these areas, provided it fits within the Community News guidelines.
1. The Post must be legitimate and relevant to the Small Water System Community in BC.
2. The Post must comply with the Community Code of Conduct.
3. All links provided are assumed to be tested and safe by the individual poster.
4. Postings without a set date (ie/event) will be posted for two weeks. The poster can resubmit a Post after that time.
5. If a Post is no longer valid (ie/item is sold), please contact the Administrator to have the Post taken down.
All Post submissions are reviewed by the Community Network Administrator prior to going live.
There is no cost to submit a Post.
[SUBMIT POST](#)

- » Information is entered by any member
- **Wanted/Offering** – classified ads area
 - **Opportunities** – funding, volunteering, focus groups
 - **Upcoming Events**

Lessons Learned



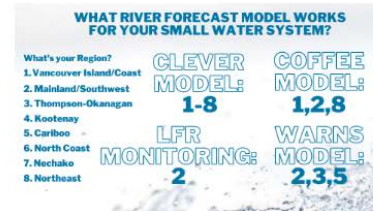
1. ENCOURAGE MEMBER INVOLVEMENT

- » Provide opportunities for members to contribute their **own content**.
- » Allow members to **control their own privacy settings** and involvement level.
- » **Push content to members** (*Weekly Digest*) to encourage them to return to the platform.
- » Provide opportunities for **members to meet other members** (*Coffee with the Community*).



2. THE COMMUNITY NETWORK CANNOT STAGNATE

- » **Invest in staff resources** to ensure a safe environment and regularly refreshed content.
- » **Curate** information, articles and notifications.
- » **Seek out supporters** who can contribute to the richness of the site.
 - Academia
 - Manufacturers/suppliers
 - Other associations
 - Government program areas
- » Information campaigns focus on **topics of value** for small water systems owners.



BC Water Forecast Models: Which Model Works Best for You?
Read the article to learn about the different forecast models in BC and the differences between them!

[Read Article](#)



Grant and Funding Opportunities for Small Water Systems!

Learn about the different funding and grant opportunities available!

[Read Article](#)



How to Select a Plastic Tank

Dean Barrett shares advice on how to choose the best plastic tank for your water system!

[Read Article](#)



British Columbia Drought Information Portal Walkthrough

Learn about the B.C. Drought Information Portal to better prepare your system and community for low-water levels!

[Read Article](#)



Some of the Challenges Facing BC's Micro Small Water Systems

Learn about one member's experience and thoughts on challenges faced by micro SWS in BC

[Read Article](#)



Drought Emergency Response and Contingency Plan Template - Island Health

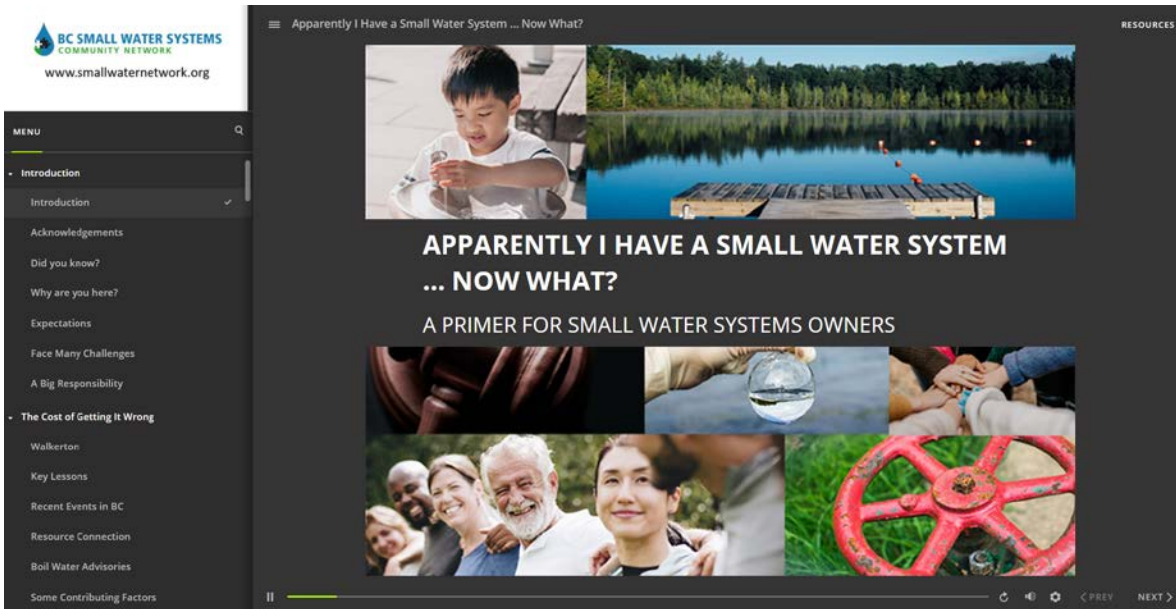
Download a template for a Drought Emergency Response and Contingency Plan

[Read Article](#)

3. SUPPORTER MEMBERS ARE GREAT CONTRIBUTORS

- » Offer opportunities to **elevate the work** of other organizations
 - Thompsons River University (TRU) SWS Centre of Excellence
 - Water Movement
 - Health Authorities
- » Highlight companies who provide **products and services** to small water systems
- » **Share expertise** through **articles**, blogs, shared **resources** and contributing to technical **discussions** and **Coffee with the Community**

3. ADVERTISING IS CRITICAL



- » Supporters are an important mechanism to communicate
 - Social media directed at supporters
 - Information cards
 - Fridge magnets
- » Social media for SWS Owners/teams
- » Provide opportunities to engage
 - Free online course *Apparently I Have a Small Water System ... Now What?*
 - Free workshop *Taking Care of Your Small Water System*



4. KEEP YOUR FINANCIAL MASTERS INFORMED

- » Project is paid for through provincial grants
- » Quarterly report explains updates and metrics
 - Advisory committee
 - Ministry of Health
 - BCWWA Board
 - Public version posted



BC Small Water Systems Community
Network

Quarterly Update

June 2023

Marian Hands, Program Lead, BCWWA
Claire Ross, Small Water Systems Community Engagement Specialist, BCWWA

5. BE OPEN TO COLLABORATION & PARTNERSHIPS

- » If this is interesting to you and see opportunities to work with us ... let's connect!
- Sharing content
 - Sharing platform across jurisdictions
 - Leveraging resources/cost sharing
 - Connecting with others

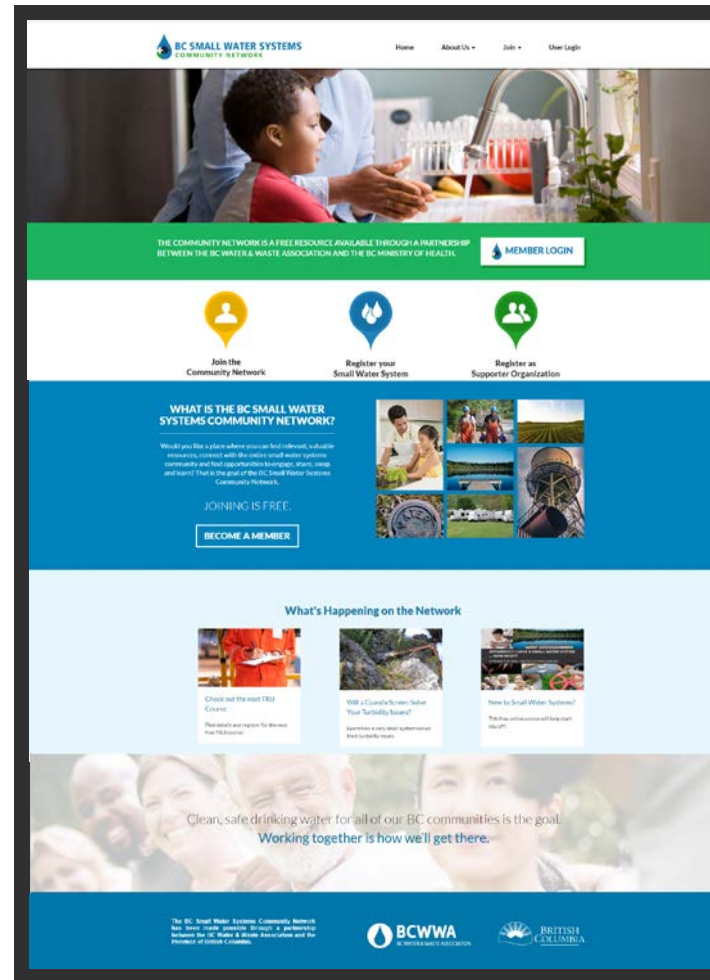


THANK YOU!

QUESTIONS?

Marian Hands

mhands@bcwwa.org



This project has been made possible through a partnership between:

- The BCWWA and
- The Province of British Columbia

