

## **B12 - Collaborative Planning & The Role Of Regional Districts**

**Presentation title:** Whither the Regional District? Rural communities and land use in a new relationship.

**Presenters:**

Neil Smith – Regional District Of Mount Waddington  
Greg Fletcher - Regional District Of Mount Waddington  
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**Abstract**

Regional Districts, particularly in British Columbia's rural resource regions, are facing challenging times as a recognized level of government. The progression of the 'New Relationship' with First Nations and other initiatives have laid out a rather uncertain operational context for regional local government, particularly in the areas of strategic development planning and economic development advocacy. The presentation will discuss a number of key issues: interagency referral system changes; the growing need for formalized bilateral consultation with First Nations; challenges to "Smart Growth" philosophy; the role of local government in sectoral policy discourse. Regional Districts have the capacity to apply regional perspective and experience to questions of public services, economic change and resource allocation. Should more be done to embrace or empower this capacity?

**Speaker Biography**

Neil Smith is currently Manager of Economic Development with the Regional District of Mount Waddington, with a past research specialization in regional development and local governance. He holds an MSc. in Rural and Regional Resources Planning from the University of Aberdeen.

Greg Fletcher is administrator of the Regional District of Mount Waaddington.

Jason Masai is the Regional District of Mount Waddington's Planning Assistant.