

# Cowichan Water Board

January 5, 2012

## Target Discussion

- Clean Water
- Healthy Estuary



# The Next 20 minutes...

- Review of Clean Water/Estuary targets
- Review of Preliminary action Plans
- Discussion of relationship between the targets
- Updated action plan – progress to date
- Issues/Needs



# Water Quality Target

- *We want clean water in our watershed*
- **TARGET:** TSS levels (turbidity) in the Cowichan Watershed should meet accepted water quality guidelines
- Turbidity good surrogate indicator of all water quality parameters
- Supports CBWMP: Ecosystem health Goal, water quality objectives
- Standards have been established
- Federal/Provincial monitoring program in place
- Projects planned and implemented to address issues



# Estuary Health Target

- ***We want to be able to eat shellfish from Cowichan Bay***
- **TARGET-** Shellfish from designated areas of Cowichan Bay will be harvested for human consumption by 2020
- Complex situation with several concerns
  - Bacterial infection (fecal coliform)
  - Viral infection
  - Heavy Metals
- A “stretch target”
- Precautionary approach necessary
- Considerable resources required
- Major changes to status quo needed
  - Sewage management
  - Agricultural practices
  - Monitoring program
- Incremental changes necessary to meet this goal beneficial to watershed health in themselves
- Addresses public awareness and ecosystem health targets, public health objectives.



# Water Quality Target

- *We want clean water in our watershed*
- **TARGET:** TSS levels (turbidity) in the Cowichan Watershed should meet accepted water quality guidelines
- **ACTIONS**
- Review and improve current sampling regime
- Collect and correlate data to ID issues
- Establishing source monitoring program
- Explore installation of continuous metering system
- Broadway run remediation



# Estuary Health Target

- ***We want to be able to eat shellfish from Cowichan Bay***
- **TARGET-** Shellfish from designated areas of Cowichan Bay will be harvested for human consumption by 2020
- **ACTIONS**
  - Establish Technical Working Group
  - Design a sampling program
  - Conduct Initial sampling
  - Storm water monitoring program
  - Liquid Waste Management Plan review



# Water Quality & Estuarine Health

- Water Quality and health of Cowichan Estuary closely related
- Decision made to support one working group to address both issues in an integrated fashion
- A more efficient and effective model for getting things done on the ground and implementing change



# Updated Action Plan – Progress to Date...

- We Have a champion
- We have a Technical Working Group
  - Cowichan Tribes
  - CVRD
  - City of Duncan
  - Living Rivers/BCCF
  - Min of Env.
  - Min of Agriculture
  - DFO
  - Timber West
  - Island Timberlands
- We are looking at an “Area Based Plan” approach to develop a monitoring and assessment program
  - Protect** existing water quality
  - Prevent** future damage
  - Remediate** areas already damaged





# Progress to Date (cont.)

- Freshwater and Marine Sampling components
- Summer low flow and Fall flush sampling
- Lab costs approx. 50K (25K freshwater and 25K Marine)
- Does not include costs of taking samples – looking for partner buy in
- Sampling program will provide information necessary to make informed decisions
- Larger planning/regulatory processes (Liquid Waste Management Plan)



# Issues/Needs

- Need to strengthen and expand partnership at technical working group level (eg. stewardship community)
- 50K for lab costs
- Support from partners for implementation of sampling regime (MOE to lead)
- Public outreach/education component to this work essential
- CWB needs to be influential in promoting change
- LWMP, Stormwater initiatives, Agricultural and land use practice

