

**2024-2026**

**IMPACT**

**PLAN**

**COWICHAN**

**WATERSHED**

**BOARD**



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## About this Plan

The Cowichan Watershed Board (CWB) Impact Plan provides an overview of how the Cowichan Watershed Board (CWB) will continue to lead, support, and maintain momentum on key areas of impact:

1. **Just Add Water:** Working towards solutions to low flows in the Xwulqw'selu (Koksilah) and Quw'utsun (Cowichan) Rivers.
2. **Achieving our Targets:** Facilitating collaboration and action on the Cowichan Watershed Board Targets for Healthy Watersheds.
3. **Building Partnerships:** Supporting co-leadership of local and Indigenous governance, cross jurisdictional collaboration, and public engagement for watershed health.
4. **Watershed Knowledge and Understanding:** Sharing watershed information, filling knowledge gaps, and engaging our community in the work of our watershed.

A financial plan to support these priorities for the health of the watershed and its residents is supported by a 3-year financial forecast informed by historical, current, and anticipated funding arrangements that includes both core contribution funding from our Partners, and project funding.

Annual business planning takes place in the fourth quarter of each fiscal year, with engagement on the priorities with the Board and an associated budget reviewed by the Cowichan Watershed Society. Feedback is always welcome. Please write to [info@cowichanwatershedboard.ca](mailto:info@cowichanwatershedboard.ca).

Huy tseep q'u for your interest in collaborative local leadership for watershed health.

### Recognition of Cowichan Tribes' Statement on Inherent Rights

Quw'utsun mustmuhw, ni' 'o' ni' tthusht'esulhkws 'itst 'u tun'atumuhw, 'i 'o' hwunst'e. Nilh 'o' thu-'it syuw'entst, tun ni' 'u kwthuhwun'amustimuhw 'iwutl'uts' 'i 'u tun'atumuhwtst. Ni' yuxtse'tumtthu Quw'utsun 'u tthu-itumuhw, qa', kw'at'l'kwatthuni' spupin' 'u tthutumuhw, ttho' mukw' stem ni' hakwni' 'u tthustl'ulnuptst. Kwuthushtun-ni' 'iwststni' yuxtse'tum 'u ttho' mukw' stem ni' ha'kwkwsstthuthi'skwshuli-s. O' nilhtthu Quw'utsun mustumuhw, nilemuxutunstum 'u tthuni' snuwuntewut 'u tthushtunaalhtun, tst. Uwutumtem-us 'i' ni' tsttmem't 'aanlhkwskwun-etewut, hwayumtun'as'aalhstl'ulnup. Quw'utsun Mustimuhw, ha'kwushtst kw' stutul'na'mutsxetsul's kw' shtuhimstthustl'ulnuptst. Mukw' stem 'o' shilukw'tul 'i' nilhni' shkw'akw'umstthusulsuli'tst.

Cowichan Peoples have existing inherent rights. Cowichan as the original Peoples of this territory within which the Cowichan Watershed is included continue the right and responsibility to make informed decisions to manage and organize based on our history and continued connections. As told through time by our ancestors; the lands, waters, seas, minerals, air and all elements interconnected within the territories provided for and can provide a good sustainable life for Cowichan Peoples. Cowichan has never given away this right and continues to govern and make decisions to support the well-being and sustainability of our Peoples and territories.

Source: Cowichan Watershed Board Governance Manual, 2018

# Cowichan Watershed CWB Priorities

The Cowichan Watershed Board (CWB) reviews its Priorities for Watershed Health on an annual basis, anchored by the intention of ensuring sustainable fish populations, clean water, and adequate summer flows; protecting and preserving riparian and estuarine habitats; conserving water and engaging community. The Board also has organizational priorities related to maintaining good collaborative governance, partnerships, and financial stability. This year, we intend to plan for a 15th anniversary celebration, and more in-depth planning for the years ahead.

The following objectives and activities are actioned by staff and project leads with guidance and direction of the Board.

## Just Add Water! (Sustainable Flows)



Electric pumps were needed for 36 consecutive days in 2023 to keep the Cowichan River flowing. Photo: Catalyst

### ***Replace the Cowichan Lake Weir; Secure Conservation Water License.***

Devastatingly highlighted by the fish kill in July 2023, and 36 days of using pumps to run the Cowichan River on 'life support', replacing the Cowichan weir continues to be an essential element of protecting salmon viability for the long term in a Canadian Heritage River.

#### **Objectives 2024-2026**

A conservation water license is awarded.

Weir reconstruction begins, adding 70 centimeters of height to improve water storage capacity.

A collaborative management agreement has been established (e.g. Joint Works Agreement) to manage critical water flow infrastructure and in-season decision making.

#### **Activities**

- 💧 Support Cowichan Tribes and the CVRD to raise capital funds.
- 💧 Hire a Weir Replacement Project Manager.
- 💧 Support development of Joint Works Agreement and provincial responsibilities.
- 💧 Secure a conservation water license.
- 💧 Support public engagement and communicate the need for this project.
- 💧 Participate in Technical & Process Advisory Committees (working groups).

For more information please visit: <https://cowichanlakeweir.ca/about-water-supply/>

## ***Xwulqw'selu (Koksilah) Watershed Planning (XWP)***

This work will include the first-ever legally enforceable Water Sustainability Plan under the BC Water Sustainability Act, establishing a model for the implementation of the Act that uses a whole-of-watershed, Indigenous co-governance framework.

### **Objectives 2024-2026**

The Xwulqw'selu Watershed Plan (and WSP) are created and legally recognized through the joint authority of Cowichan Tribes and the Province.

Established model for WSP implementation that uses a whole-of-watershed, Indigenous co-governance framework.

### **Activities**

- 💧 Provide advisory and communications support to the XWP process. Provide administrative support to Cowichan Tribes in their role as Responsible Person for the XWP.
- 💧 Participate in linked initiatives that support the XWP, or broader watershed goals, such as working groups, and ongoing science studies (e.g. Xwulqw'selu Connections, Cowichan Stewardship Roundtable, Koksilah Working Group, etc.)
- 💧 Participate in collaborative in-season drought management and communications as needed through the Koksilah Low Flow Working Group while the XWP is being developed.

For more information please visit: <https://www.koksilahwater.ca/watershed>



Xwulqw'selu Watershed Planning Team June 2023. Photo: CWB

# Achieving Our Watershed Targets

The Cowichan Watershed Board established [7 Targets](#) for watershed health in 2011. These watershed targets are supported by Target Working Groups composed of organizations representing all levels of Government, industry, academia, and the stewardship community.

## Objectives 2024-2026

Coordinate target working groups to a) share information and b) collaborate towards processes and projects to meet the CWB Watershed Targets.

Begin to define a Whole of the Watershed Target, Indicators, and Working Group, to address broad watershed issues not captured by the other targets, and integrating Quw'utsun teachings.

## Activities

- 🔹 Finalize the review and update of our Targets & Indicators, ensuring all are inclusive of Quw'utsun perspectives.
- 🔹 Support Working Groups to create action plans supported by the CWB.
- 🔹 Support the contribution to a compendium, map or accessible database of watershed and ecosystem science/knowledge to support action on the Targets.
- 🔹 Convene discussions focussed on creating a “Whole of Watershed” target. Develop recommendations for how that target could be achieved, and with measurable indicators to track progress.

## Flows

See Priority Area 1 - Replace Cowichan River Weir and establish a Koksilah Watershed Plan.

## Fish Sustainability

Fish Kill Workshop Series: Work closely with our partners toward increasing understanding, cooperation and successful intervention to prevent salmonid “fish-kill” events in the Cowichan River resulting from the impacts of climate change. Collaborate with responsible authority holders, working group members, and others to develop appropriate precautions, monitoring, and communications during low flow conditions in the Cowichan River.

## Riparian Health

Design a pilot project to support development of a process for assessing riparian health.

## Watershed Connections

TBD - collaborations on watershed education and engagement projects. Also see Watershed Knowledge and Understanding section below.

## Wise Water Use

With a focus on the Xwulqw'selu watershed, work through the Low Flow Working Group to support recommended water conservation measures with partners.

### ***Estuarine Health***

TBD - includes supporting the Nature Trust / Ducks Unlimited Estuary Restoration Project, and other restoration projects being undertaken by the Working Group member organizations.

### ***Water Quality***

Complete MOE recommended 5-year Attainment Sampling in the upper watershed in partnership with Cowichan Lake and River Stewards.



Cowichan Watershed Board Members July 2023. Back row, L-R: Dr. Shannon Waters, Linda Higgins, Mayor Michelle Staples, Director Alison Nicholson, David Slade, Councilor Kristine Sandhu, Councilor Stuart Pagaduan. Front row, L-R: Dr. David Froese, Chief Lydia Hwitsum, Chair Aaron Stone, Tim Kulchyski. [David Anderson, Darin George not shown.]

# Building Partnerships

## Objectives 2024-2026

Relationships and functional decision-making capacity of, and between, the CWB Partners for the benefit of the watershed are strong.

The Cowichan Watershed CWB is recognized by its foundational Partners (Cowichan Tribes and CVRD), water policy leaders and senior governments as a successful model for supporting local watershed governance that incorporates Indigenous co-leadership and authority in the watershed.

The CWB's Governance Manual is updated by consensus, and adopted by both Cowichan Tribes Chief and Council and CVRD Council as the foundation of their partnership.

Watershed authority holders have a trusted and respectful space where they come together and work together for the benefit of the Cowichan Watershed.

### *Nutsamat kws yaay'us tth qa'*

We come together as a whole to work together to be stronger as partners for the watershed.

## Activities

- 💧 Facilitate meetings, provide briefings, create and disseminate messaging, and actively support the communications and meeting needs of the Co-Chairs with each other, external stakeholders, and other levels of government.
- 💧 Where possible, incorporate the use of the Hul'qumi'num' language into CWB Meetings, programs, and communication and engagement materials.
- 💧 Convene regular monthly CWB and Society Meetings and meetings between the Co-Chairs.
- 💧 Create and steward opportunities for relationship building and educational opportunities between Partners.
- 💧 Coordinate bi-annual inter-staff meetings with Cowichan Tribes Lulumexun / CVRD Environment managers. Consult on annual plans.
- 💧 Seek invitation of the Elders Lunch manager for CWB staff to attend approximately once monthly with 1-2 Board members.



# Watershed Knowledge and Understanding

## **Core Communications**

An important role of the CWB is to build public understanding of, and connection with, the watershed, as well as fostering links and partnerships between the many organizations actively working to restore its health and resilience. This is done through CWB meetings and the working groups, an e-news list, websites and social media, articles in the local newspaper, public education projects. See the [website](#) or [Facebook page](#).

## **Objectives 2024-2026**

The CWB is helping CVRD and Cowichan Tribes achieve watershed communications and community education goals.

CWB is seen as a trusted source of excellent information and perspectives regarding the health of the Cowichan Watershed. Media seek out CWB for perspective on their stories.

Website content is up to date and reflects the priority work and perspectives of the CWB and is user friendly. Content is easy to search, and an excellent resource for anyone interested in the Cowichan Watershed.

CWB phone, email and mail are monitored and responded to in a timely and professional manner.

Updated CWB graphics and logo better reflect our Indigenous partnership.

Our social media pages are engaging, educational and accurate.

CWB Working Groups are well supported with communications tools.

## **Activities**

- 💧 Maintain communications services for the CWB including responding to emails, writing, editing, report preparation, and official correspondence.
- 💧 Maintain an image library.
- 💧 Respond quickly to all media inquiries to arrange interviews with the Co-Chairs, their designate, or alternatively, with a knowledgeable and engaging local spokesperson.
- 💧 Update and improve website, including adding Projects pages and pages for different parts of the watershed (Koksilah, Somenos, Lake, estuary), and Heritage River section with links to partners.
- 💧 Update CWB logo/branding.
- 💧 Use social media to build understanding of the need for change, confidence in the proposed solutions, and an open door for respectful dialogue.

## Community Involvement Projects

The Watershed Board supports and creates activities to build connections between people, organizations, cultures, knowledge, and the watershed. Efforts are made to deepen appreciation for the reciprocal relationships we all have with watersheds, and to learn where attention is needed through open and respectful dialogue. The Board also understands that a little fun can go a long way to achieving these goals.



The Speakers Series features engaging speakers sharing their knowledge and expertise on topics relevant to the well-being and sustainability of the Cowichan watershed within Quw'utsun territory. It has been running since 2014! The series is hosted with the support of [VIU Cowichan](#), the [Real Estate Foundation of BC](#), and our generous guest speakers.

### Objectives 2024-2026

CWB's priority projects, including the ongoing transition to Indigenous collaborative governance, are supported with clear and engaging communications.

There is a broad understanding of the need for change and confidence in the proposed solutions.

The culture of caring, and a respect for using sound science and knowledge to support decisions is sustained.

Open community dialogue is facilitated, including embracing local knowledge, energy and dedication through face-to-face community activities and events.

### Activities

💧 Engage local people in our key priorities, specifically the Weir Replacement and Xwulqw'selu Watershed Planning. Learn from and integrate local

knowledge and experience in our work.

- 💧 Host a Speaker Series; engaging, entertaining speakers on topics of interest to the public, by people with strong expertise on the topic, and relevant to the Cowichan watershed, organized in collaboration with Working Groups and CWB members to highlight their priorities.
- 💧 Create safe spaces for open community dialogue through face-to-face community activities such as our new "Talk to Us" Tent where we listen to community questions, interests, confusion, etc.
- 💧 Support communications to share the results of CWB technical projects.
- 💧 Animate the Big Dancing Fish - Sth'aqwi; celebrate people working to protect salmon. Develop a brochure and website updates to communicate the new CWB Targets when confirmed.
- 💧 Host Annual Lower River Cleanup
- 💧 Continue the "Why Fish Need Water" video series.
- 💧 Participate in Cowichan Stewardship Roundtable meetings, and where helpful, directly with member organizations.

## ***Watershed Knowledge, Information, and Data (WIKD)***

Easy and equitable access to Knowledge of the watershed is an important part of empowering good watershed governance.

### **Objectives 2024-2026**

Decision-makers and stewardship organizations have good and equal access to all available watershed related data and knowledge.

Updated water quality sampling data is easily accessible for the Cowichan and Koksilah Watersheds.

Science and knowledge of the watershed, including scientific data and Indigenous ways of knowing is empowering watershed stewardship and sustainability.

### **Activities**

- 💧 Continue discussions with First Nations, other governments, and stewardship entities to discuss barriers to data access and potential solutions.
- 💧 Participate in the creation of data sharing plans or protocols that allow for the greatest possible transparency of information resources to support better decision making and watershed knowledge.
- 💧 Complete and share the results of the 5 in 30 Water Quality Attainment sampling of Upper Cowichan River and Lake, in partnership with Cowichan Lake and River Stewards and BC Ministry of Environment.
- 💧 Support interns to make all CWB's Water Quality data more accessible via links and maps on the website.

## **Organizational Resilience**

The organizational health and stability of the Cowichan Watershed Board provides the foundation for the important work we do.

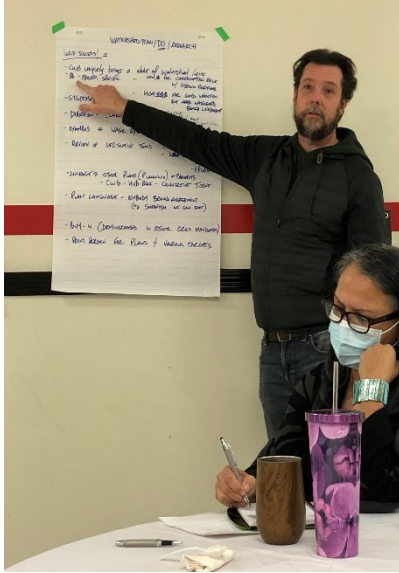
### ***Governance and Administration***

#### **Objectives 2024-2026**

The CWB has a strong financial base to allow us to be resilient and responsive to the needs of the watershed. We ensure responsible fiscal oversight through the work of the co-governed Cowichan Watershed Society.

CWB activities and way of working align with both the Annual Impact Plan and the CWB Governance Manual.

### **Activities**



CWB Advisor Oliver Brandes,  
POLIS Centre for Ecological

>\$100,000 to a) manage cash flow; b) withstand unforeseen circumstances and c) improve our ability to respond quickly to situations.

- 💧 Finalize the review of the CWB Governance Manual to incorporate CWB supported recommendations from Setting the Course, and other updates.
- 💧 Expand core staffing to include a full-time Executive Director and a full time Community Liaison supported through consistent core and project funding.
- 💧 Expand Project Staff capacity through internships, and additional project grants.
- 💧 Consistent budget tracking and timely reporting on grants and funding commitments.
- 💧 Support every Board member to participate in an element of CWB work (e.g. Speaker Night, River Cleanup, Society, Elders Lunch, etc.)
- 💧 Invest in our communications and website (see above).
- 💧 Maintain an efficient in-the-cloud office filing structure for both base operations and all project work.
- 💧 Grow the Society's contingency savings fund to

## Financial Plan

The financial administration for the CWB is provided by the **Cowichan Watershed Society (Society)**, a registered BC non-profit society (#S0061620). The Society manages two budgets; the **Core Operating Budget** and a **Projects Budget** as detailed below. Detailed budgets are provided in Appendix A. Over the next three years, the Society will seek to increase its annual operations budget to support organizational resilience, increased staff capacity, and to address cost of living increases.

### Operating Budget

The operating budget is based on several sources:

- a) annual core funding from the CWB's founding partners, Cowichan Tribes, and Cowichan Valley Regional District. The partners have contributed to core CWB functions at \$20,000 and \$50,000 respectively since 2011, with the CVRD committing to increase its annual contribution to \$77,000 starting in 2024. These funds are critical to sustaining the Cowichan Watershed Board. Annual costs include core staffing, meeting expenses, book-keeping support, community engagement and partner communications, insurance, etc.
- b) The Province has initiated a Watershed Security Fund, with local watershed governance defined as a funding priority. Indications are that the CWB may soon be able to bolster its capacity to make progress on priority objectives with the Province's support.

- c) The operating budget also includes revenue generated through grant admin-fees from project grants and contracts (10-15%) to support increased administration related to projects and initiatives.
- d) The Society maintains a contingency savings fund to account for cash flow shortfalls between grants or contribution payments.

## **Project Budgets**

The Society supports the CWB priorities by obtaining Project Grants and Project Contracts to advance specific objectives as outlined in the Business Plan. Project budgets are typically 1–3-year budgets, which change annually to reflect priorities at that time and as additional funding resources (grants or contracts) allow.

Current Project Grants supporting the work of the CWB include:

- a three-year grant from the Real Estate Foundation of BC (REFBC) to support the Shift to Indigenous Co-Governance;
- BC Ministry of Environment (MOE) to support Water Quality Attainment in the Cowichan and Koksilah Watershed;
- Pacific Salmon Foundation to support youth internships.

Funding is also anticipated from the Pacific Salmon Foundation to support the “Fish-Kill” Workshop Series and resulting action plan as referenced above.

The Society also provides services under contract on occasion. Currently Cowichan Tribes has contracted the Society to provide significant administrative, advisory and communications for the Koksilah Watershed Planning process over the next 3 years.

# APPENDIX A: BUDGET 2024-2026

## CORE OPERATING BUDGET

Core Budget Projection <i>(Red Font indicates not confirmed)</i>	2024	2025	2026
<b>REVENUE</b>			
CVRD Annual Contribution	\$77,000.00	\$77,000.00	\$77,000.00
Cowichan Tribes Annual Contribution	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00
Sponsorships / Other Income	\$2,500.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
GST Return	\$6,500.00	\$6,500.00	\$6,500.00
Grant-funded Admin	\$62,650.00	\$70,000.00	\$70,000.00
Interest Income	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00
BC Watershed Sustainability Fund	\$0.00	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00
<b>Total Core Revenue</b>	<b>\$170,150.00</b>	<b>\$278,000.00</b>	<b>\$278,000.00</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
<b>Professional Fees</b>			
Accounting and Legal	\$7,500.00	\$7,500.00	\$7,500.00
Executive Director	\$75,000.00	\$75,000.00	\$75,000.00
Communications Director	\$31,875.00	\$31,875.00	\$31,875.00
Targets & Working Group Director	\$10,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00
Strategic Priorities Director	\$0.00	\$25,000.00	\$25,000.00
Other Contract Support (ie. Admin or youth mentorship))	\$5,000.00	\$70,000.00	\$70,000.00
Summer Student Intern	\$2,100.00	\$2,100.00	\$2,100.00
Professional Development	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
<b>Total Professional Fees</b>	<b>\$134,475.00</b>	<b>\$229,475.00</b>	<b>\$229,475.00</b>
<b>General Administration Expenses</b>			
Advertising, Marketing, & Communications	\$2,500.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
Banking and Licensing Fees	\$250.00	\$250.00	\$250.00
CWB Phone Service	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00
Email/Websites/Software	\$2,500.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00

Gas/Mileage/Travel	\$3,000.00	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00
Insurance/WorkSafe/Training	\$3,500.00	\$3,500.00	\$3,500.00
Meeting Expenses	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00
Printing and Office Supplies	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00
Office & Material Storage Fees / Rental Space	\$4,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00
Contingency 5% of GR	\$8,507.50	\$13,900.00	\$13,900.00
<b>Total General Administration Expenses</b>	<b>\$30,257.50</b>	<b>\$39,650.00</b>	<b>\$39,650.00</b>
<b>Core Programs Expenses</b>			
River Cleanup Marketing and Supplies	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
Honouraria/Volunteer Appreciation	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
<b>Total Core Program Expenses</b>	<b>\$4,000.00</b>	<b>\$4,000.00</b>	<b>\$4,000.00</b>
<b>Total Core Expenses</b>	<b>\$168,732.50</b>	<b>\$273,125.00</b>	<b>\$273,125.00</b>
<b>BALANCE</b>	<b>\$1,417.50</b>	<b>\$4,875.00</b>	<b>\$4,875.00</b>

## PROJECTS BUDGET

<b>PROJECT REVENUE</b> <i>(Red Font indicates not confirmed)</i>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>
<b>Restricted Funds - Contracts</b>			
Cowichan Tribes KoksWSP	\$1,090,200.00	\$1,090,200.00	\$1,090,200.00
<b>Total Revenue - Contracts</b>	<b>\$1,090,200.00</b>	<b>\$1,090,200.00</b>	<b>\$1,090,200.00</b>
<b>Restricted Funds - Grants to CWB</b>			
PSF - Education/Internships	\$12,000.00	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00
PSF - WQ Sampling	\$2,500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
PSF - Fish Kill Response	\$167,670.00	\$78,890.00	\$78,890.00
REFBC - Flows, Weir Gov, Comms, Data	\$54,000.00	\$70,000.00	\$70,000.00
BC MoE - WQ Sampling Contract - Phase II	\$20,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
BC MoE - WQ Sampling Contract - Phase II	\$18,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Other Funders	\$0.00	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00
<b>Total Revenue - Grants</b>	<b>\$274,170.00</b>	<b>\$251,390.00</b>	<b>\$251,390.00</b>
<b>PROJECT EXPENSES</b>			

<b>Restricted Funds - Contracts</b>			
Cowichan Tribes KoksWSP	\$1,090,200.00	\$1,090,200.00	\$1,090,200.00
<b>Total Expenses - Contracts</b>	<b>\$1,090,200.00</b>	<b>\$1,090,200.00</b>	<b>\$1,090,200.00</b>
<b>Restricted Funds - Grants to CWB</b>			
PSF - Education/Internships	\$12,000.00	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00
PSF - WQ Sampling	\$2,500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
PSF - Fish Kill Response	\$167,670.00	\$78,890.00	\$78,890.00
REFBC - Flows, Weir Gov, Comms, Data	\$54,000.00	\$70,000.00	\$70,000.00
BC MoE - WQ Sampling Contract - Phase II	\$20,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
BC MoE - WQ Sampling Contract - Phase II	\$18,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Other Funders	\$0.00	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00
<b>Total Expenses - Grants</b>	<b>\$274,170.00</b>	<b>\$251,390.00</b>	<b>\$251,390.00</b>
<b>BALANCE</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>

#### BUDGET NOTES

1. Core Budget includes a General Administrative Expense of up to 5% of General Revenues to maintain a contingency savings fund.
2. PST and GST estimates are included in Expense calculations. The estimated GST refund (which can vary depending on funding sources) is included as Revenue.
3. Project Budget may include amounts from funding awarded in 2023 as well as new and projected funding for 2024-2026.
4. Project Budget includes a contract with Cowichan Tribes to support the Koksilah Watershed Planning project.
5. This budget is subject to change throughout the year as needed under the direction of the Cowichan Watershed Society.



# APPENDIX B: About the Cowichan Watershed Board

The Cowichan Watershed Board is a local governance entity established in 2010 as a partnership between Cowichan Tribes and the Cowichan Valley Regional District to advance whole-of-watershed health for the Cowichan and Koksilah River Watershed.

The CWB's work includes engaging Indigenous and non-Indigenous water leaders, communities, and governments to develop and implement new tools, programs and approaches for watershed governance, decision making, management; and to inform legal and regulatory reforms in the Cowichan-Koksilah watershed.

For more information about the CWB and its members, visit [cowichanwatershedCWB.ca/CWB-members](http://cowichanwatershedCWB.ca/CWB-members)



Co-Chair Chief Hwitsum and Staff Tom Rutherford honour decades of watershed work by CVRD

## PRINCIPLES AND GOVERNANCE

The CWB [Governance Manual](#) has been updated for 2024 to guide the work of the CWB. It includes the following Principles [Section 2.3]:

- Partnership: The Board is built on a collaborative partnership among Cowichan Tribes and the CVRD (the partners) and seeks to engage and bridge the interests of governments, regulatory agencies, local water stakeholders and citizens.
- Representation: \*The Board Members are appointed by Cowichan Tribes Chief and Council and Cowichan Valley Regional District. The members selected are, to the greatest extent possible, local community leaders and/or known water management champions-related experts.
- Watershed Emphasis: The CWB's priorities and activities are guided by a vision for the watershed as a whole that is based on ecological sustainability and "whole of watershed" thinking.
- Transparency: To the greatest extent possible, the actions and decisions of the CWB will be transparent and open.
- Nutsamat kws yaay'us tu qa':. We come together as a whole to work together to be stronger as partners for the watershed. This is an ancient Cowichan Tribes principle. Orientation in the application of the principle will be provided by the Co-Chairs. ("Nutsamat")

## **CWB MEMBERSHIP AND CO-CHAIRS**

The CWB is co-chaired by the elected Chief of Cowichan Tribes and the Chair of Cowichan Valley Regional District. Two additional elected leaders are appointed from each council by the respective co-Chairs, and four additional members are jointly appointed by both. Two seats each are also reserved for nominees of the Provincial and Federal Governments. Appointments are renewed as needed. [Click here to meet the CWB!](#)

## **MONTHLY BOARD MEETINGS**

Meetings of the entire CWB take place on the last Monday of every month. They are open to the public and routinely attended by members of CWB Working Groups, representatives of partner organizations, and political leaders. Standing agenda items include an update from staff, public comment, correspondence, and announcements; followed by presentations related to the priorities of the CWB and/or its [Targets for Watershed Health](#). Decisions are made using a consensus model outlined in the Governance Manual. CWB meeting materials and presentation files are posted publicly at [cowichanwatershedboard.ca/meetings](http://cowichanwatershedboard.ca/meetings)

## **TARGET WORKING GROUPS AND TECHNICAL COMMITTEES**

Building on the work of the [2007 Cowichan Water Management Plan \(Plan\)](#) the CWB Technical Advisory Committee established a set of inclusive and motivating watershed targets to guide implementation of the Plan. The targets are now being pursued by four collaborative Target Working Groups, coordinated by a Targets Coordinator and co-chaired by the CWB with partner organizations focused on that area.

The Working Groups are comprised of organisations representing all levels of Government, industry, academia, and the stewardship community. More information is [here](#).

Other technical committees, working groups and ad-hoc collaborations are convened as needed.

## **COWICHAN WATERSHED SOCIETY**

Fiscal and administrative support for the CWB is provided by the Cowichan Watershed Society (Society), a registered BC non-profit society (#S0061620). The Society is comprised of a subset of the sitting Cowichan Watershed Board members.

## APPENDIX C: Human Resources

CWB personnel (staff) are contracted through the Society and work remotely as independent part-time contractors to support the business of the Cowichan Watershed Board. Advisors to the Board contribute their advisory services as volunteers and receive no remuneration.

### **Staff Team**

#### **Danni Paydli – Executive Director**



Danni (Danielle) Paydli is passionate about human rights, equity and recognizing the interconnectedness of our place in nature. She thrives on building relationships, developing innovative programming and creating linkages that help build strong, resilient, equitable and caring communities. As such, Danni was drawn to the Cowichan Watershed Board's collaborative governance model as a step toward decolonizing our collective ways of making decisions, broadening our understanding of the values we rely on to make those decisions, and improving how we work together as a community toward a different future. As a graduate of the University of Saskatchewan, Danielle has

a rich background in advocacy and community development issues that range from access to, and health of, freshwater to supportive programming for youth with disabilities. Her career has also included carving pathways for new immigrants and refugees to Canada, preparing students and faculty for international and intercultural experiences, and working in the field of HIV/AIDS and gender equality in Malawi.

#### **Tom Rutherford – Director of Strategic Watershed Initiatives**



Tom worked with Fisheries and Oceans Canada for 35 years. He brings a strong technical background in salmon habitat inventory and restoration, stock assessment, stock enhancement and public outreach/citizen science.

Tom has experience planning and implementing technical processes and partnerships with First Nations, providing scientific direction and guidance for program delivery activities, supervision of staff, and successful development of strategies to meet Sr. Government resource management objectives. Tom served as the Watershed CWB's "top dog" (small pack) since 2016 and has now stepped back to enjoy more hiking time, but still serves as the CWB's Strategic Priorities Director, working to support our Partners in their ongoing efforts to ensure enough water for salmon by a) replacing the Cowichan Lake weir, and b) creating a whole of watershed solution to low flows in the Koksilah River, through a Water Sustainability Plan and other tools.

### **Heather Pritchard – Targets Director**



Heather is a Registered Professional Forester with 30 years' experience in natural resource management. She brings expertise in applying ecosystem-based management principles in forest and land management with focus on protecting community and domestic water sources and fish habitat. Heather has been supporting the Cowichan Watershed CWB's 4 Technical Working Groups since 2019 to review, refine and revive the CWB's 7 Targets for Watershed Health, and measurable progress indicators for each. Watch the Targets section of the website for the new Targets soon!

### **Jill Thompson – Community Liaison**



Jill comes from Eastern Maritime roots, and grew up in the Grand River watershed, Six Nations Territory. She arrived in Clayoquot Sound in 1996 and has worked to protect Vancouver Island ecosystems ever since. Jill holds a Bachelor of Environmental Studies and a Bachelor of Arts and has 30 years' experience in environmental education and non-profit program leadership, fundraising, community engagement, and somewhat begrudgingly; non-profit administration. Jill is an experienced community builder who seeks out people who feel intrigued, motivated, and nourished by working together for a bright future, while having a bit of fun. She found the Watershed CWB teeming with them!

### ***Advisor to the Board***

#### **Oliver Brandes -- Advisor**



Oliver M. Brandes is an economist and lawyer by training and a trans-disciplinarian by design. He serves as Co-Director of the POLIS Project on Ecological Governance, based at the University of Victoria's Centre for Global Studies, where he leads the POLIS Water Sustainability Project. His work focuses on water sustainability, sound resource management, public policy development, and ecologically based legal and institutional reforms. Oliver serves as the Associate Director of Strategic Partnerships and Public Policy at the University of Victoria's Centre for Global Studies. He is an Adjunct Professor at the Faculty of Law and School of Public Administration and is a fellow of the Environmental Law Centre. In 2012, he co-developed B.C.'s first water law course at the University of Victoria's Faculty of Law. Oliver is a founding member and co-chair of the national Forum for Leadership on Water (FLOW). Oliver provides advisory support to both staff and the Board on matters related to governance, strategic planning, regulatory and policy issues.