

TOP 10

Achievements of 2019



- 1 Weir funding:** Working in partnership, CVRD, Cowichan Tribes, Catalyst, and the CWB secured a funding contribution from the Federal and Provincial governments of over \$4million to conduct engineering and impact studies into replacing the weir at Cowichan Lake. The CWB played an important role in building the political support to make this an attractive project, and the largest contribution announced to date in the BC Salmon Restoration and Innovation Fund.
- 2 Fish Protection from Koksilah Low Flows:** From August to September, the BC Government implemented section 88 of the Water Sustainability Act (WSA), issuing a Fish Protection Order to curtail forage crop irrigation to protect Koksilah fish from critically low flows. The measure impacted farmers, and is not sustainable in the long term, but was deemed necessary this summer until better solutions can be implemented. CWB played a role in bringing the low flow levels to the attention of the BC Government, and in supporting transparent, science-based, whole of watershed approaches.
- 3 Co-governed Water Sustainability Plan initiated for Koksilah:** CWB actively supported Cowichan Tribes and the Province to develop a collaborative plan for scoping a long-term, whole of watershed solution to the Koksilah water supply problems under the WSA.
- 4 Weir Ready!** CWB partnered with the Cowichan Lake and River Stewardship Society to improve awareness and address sources of confusion regarding the proposed replacement of the weir, particularly for lakeshore property owners at Cowichan Lake. Our new WeirReady.ca website and associated public engagement activities and materials helped build understanding and support for the weir replacement during the first year that Cowichan River flows needed to be maintained using electric pumps.
- 5 Nicola Nations Peer Learning Exchanges:** CWB provided organizational support for two events that brought elected chiefs from the Nicola Nations and Cowichan Tribes together with government and academic advisors to explore questions and share approaches to indigenous watershed governance. Two day workshops were hosted in both Cowichan and Nicola Nation territories.
- 6 BC Watershed Security Fund:** The CWB Co-Chairs have worked to support this provincial initiative to secure annual BC budget allotments to fund indigenous co-lead entities like the Watershed Board for their role in water management and protection.
- 7 Local Government officially seeks CWB expertise on decision:** The Cowichan Watershed Board received our first 'referral' from a local government seeking our guidance and opinion on potential water and watershed impacts of a land use decision under consideration.
- 8 Target Review** – The Cowichan Watershed Board has initiated a review of its 7 inspirational targets. These were endorsed by the board in 2011 as mechanisms for implementing the Cowichan Basin Water Management Plan and led to the formation of “Target Working Groups” to coordinate community watershed sustainability efforts. This review will result in ensuring the relevance and effectiveness of our targets moving forward.
- 9 Completed 5 year Water Conservation Challenge** (see report)
- 10 Improved Reporting:** Following up on requests arising from the 2017-2018 Watershed co-Governance Conversation workshops, CWB developed new annual reporting practices. This Five Year Business Plan and an Annual Report are now published and presented to the CVRD and Cowichan Tribes councils every March to enhance the understanding and engagement of the councils in the work of the CWB.