



Cowichan Valley Regional District | 2015

Update to Cowichan Watershed Board

History of Support

- The CVRD has a long history of support to the Cowichan Watershed Management Plan
- One of the primary supporting partners in the development of the Cowichan Water Management Plan
 - Staff time
 - Financial support
 - Project management
- Many of the actions identified in the plan that have the CVRD as the lead have been completed or have had substantial progress made.
 - *A number of the actions which identify the CVRD are in fact under the control of the province.*



Core Funding

- Key CVRD support included:
 - Establishment of the Board
 - Contracted services for the coordinator for its establishment.
 - Continuation of CVRD defined objectives
- CVRD has set aside funding to support the Watershed Board as well as covering staff time.
 - Separate line item in the Regional Environmental Initiatives (131) Budget which has grown to \$50,000 annually.
 - As other funding for the CWB has decreased this funding has to a large extent provided core funding to the CWB.

Gas Tax Applications

- The CVRD further supported the Cowichan Watershed Board's financial needs by putting forward two Gas Tax applications
 - Watershed Management Plan
 - Long term increase to water storage.
- The CVRD has limited access to Gas Tax funding programs so this demonstrates the level of support to the CWB objectives.



Formal Agreement

- 2014 - CVRD Board needed to develop a clearer separation from their role in budget approval for the CVRD budget and their standing as chairs and participants in a receiving organization.
- Formal agreement established between the CVRD and the Watershed Society in which the Society manages and is responsible for the funding from the CVRD.



CVRD and CWB

Formal Agreement

1. Established a arm's length relationship
2. Removed the CVRD's responsibility to monitor and track programs and expenses over which it had no direct control
3. Clarified that the CWB coordinator was no longer an agent or employee of the CVRD
4. Dealt with a challenging CVRD auditing issue more effectively

Benefit to CWB

- The benefit to the Cowichan Watershed and Societies is that the income now comes in as a single item under your management. This reduces your administrative and reporting requirements.

Return of Funding

- The Acting CAO also directed that the Gas Tax program still in process at the time come back under that control of the CVRD through a defined contract with Vis a Vis.
- Direction was modified to have two select components of the Gas Tax program in process stay with the Watershed Society for completion and the residual of the funding return to the CVRD for their use in completion of the overall program objectives.

CWB Projects

- The Watershed Board was approved through contract to complete the following two projects at a value of just under \$20,000 :
 - Continue communications (social marketing) plan to promote conservation/H2O literacy). Focusing on achievement of domestic use target.
 - Ongoing series of popular articles for web sites and local newspapers including contests to assess watershed knowledge. Annual survey to test general knowledge of watershed administered through partner.



2014 Activities

- In 2014 the CVRD Board approved the request of the Watershed Board to take the lead in drought response which included substantial non billed staff time as well as costs associated with:
 - Drought communications program focus
 - Technical studies regarding alternative storage availability options
 - Technical studies relative to the rapidly evolving river conditions (temperature, flow, fish salvage)
- Provincial funding relative to the snow pillow identified that the funding would likely not cover the projected expenses so some funds set aside for contingency.
- Focused funding would be necessary to undertake additional supporting studies in 2015 relative to long term storage needs.

2015 Budget

- 2015 opening balance of \$118,434, earmarked for:
 - Targeted technical and communications work related to the evolving drought situation
 - Likely infrastructure and licence application to upgrade the weir.
- Funding used to date has been used to support the New Normal communications strategy and implementation:
 - Completion of the Cowichan watershed Board projects (\$5,000)
 - Completion of the Cowichan Watershed water quality analysis (\$15,000)
 - Kerr Wood Liedel hydrology review and summary (\$6,000)
 - Taiji Communications (\$22,000)
 - Public communications and signage (\$2,200)
 - CVRD Website interface (\$5,000)
 - Snow Pillow overage costs (\$8,000)

Remaining Funds

- This currently leaves a residual of \$53,000 which will be used to support additional items relative to the primary objective of long term water supply and management.