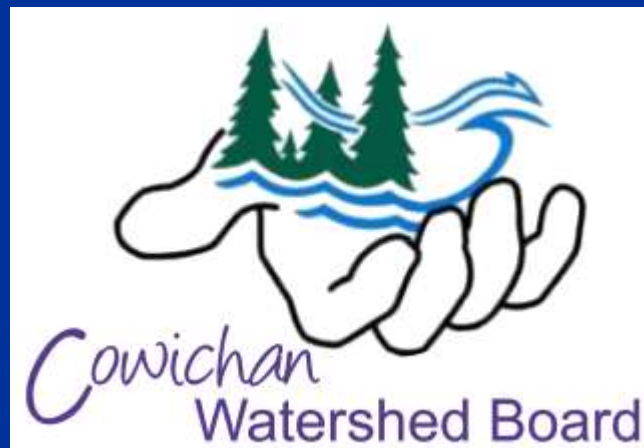


# Cowichan Watershed Board Update



February 24, 2020

# 5 Areas of Focus in February

- Cowichan Weir – BC Salmon Restoration and Innovation Fund
- Cowichan Water Management Planning
- Koksilah Water Sustainability Plan
- CWB “Target” Review
- CVRD Drinking Water & Watershed Protection Program



# BCSRIF – Cowichan Weir

- Stantech “hard engineering” contract comes in under budget – seeking to re-allocate resources – to “Natural Boundary” and Public Outreach
  - Stantech planning meetings with Leroy around contract/work details.
- Potential bidders meeting for “Natural Boundary” component
  - Leroy approaching “Surveyor General” of BC and Sr. FLNRORD staff for guidance on this component



# Koksilah Water Sustainability Plan

- ILOA between Cowichan Tribes and Province of BC signed by Minister Donaldson and Chief Seymour in Council Chambers Feb. 7
- Resources being transferred from FLNRORD to Cowichan Tribes – workplan to be completed by the end of the week
- CWB invited to participate in steering committee by Cowichan Tribes and Province of BC.
- CSAA delivering community outreach sessions in March to improve public understanding of the watershed and why it is under stress
- Tom and Alison speak to Koksilah farmers regarding watershed values Feb. 18 – (Hosted by BC Dairy Assoc)
- Next steps to coordinate project governance and oversight mechanisms and confirm initial workplan



# Cowichan In-season water Management

- Initiative to be proactive with decision making regarding water flow management in Cowichan River until new weir is completed.
- Series of “small group” meetings (Catalyst, Cowichan Tribes, DFO, FLNRORD, CWB)
- Some outcomes to date
  - New modelling commissioned (KWL) to inform decision making
  - Options around “going on control” early (prior to April 1) explored
  - Tentative agreements on how to provide necessary (not optimal) fish flows in times of drought
  - Research designs to assess impacts of less than ideal flows on salmonids (focus on chinook juveniles)



# CVRD Drinking Water/Watershed Protection Program

- CVRD Environmental Services Manager Kate Miller to provide update

Watershed Governance Dispatch  
January 2019

## Cowichan Valley Regional District Establishes New Drinking Water and Watershed Protection Service

### WHAT

As an innovative and leading example of local water protection, the Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) has secured sustainable funding through taxation to establish a Drinking Water and Watershed Protection Service to support regional programs related to drinking water and watershed protection. This service will:

- Increase the level of knowledge about drinking water sources to support the long-term sustainability of water resources.
- Support better collaboration among various water providers, users, and stewards.
- Develop watershed management plans that will characterize risks to water supply and water quality.
- Provide information for land-use planning and determining urban growth, as well as information on infrastructure and water utility needs across the region.
- Prioritize actions to address risks, such as flood protection, drought response, improving water conservation and stewardship, or emergency water supply plans.
- Provide ongoing, sustainable support for critical management and partnership groups, such as the Cowichan Watershed Board and local stewardship organizations.

### WHY

Drinking water and watershed management are consistently identified as priority issues in the region—similar to many communities across British Columbia and Canada. In the Cowichan, increasing water use and a changing climate impact watershed health. Water quality and quantity challenges exist across the region's 16 watersheds, with numerous water users operating independently and in an uncoordinated way. Establishing support for better collaboration among these various water users and providers, as well as improved cooperation among decision-makers, will catalyze a more comprehensive and integrated approach to watershed health. The service makes new and enhanced forms of collaboration possible, and allows for better sharing of resources, data, and support for freshwater sustainability.

### WHEN

**October 20, 2018:** A referendum for electorate support for the service passed with **68% approval** (12,890 to 6,667).  
**November 14, 2018:** CVRD Bylaw No. 4502 – Drinking Water and Watershed Protection Service Establishment Bylaw was officially adopted by the CVRD.

### HOW

- The Drinking Water and Watershed Protection Service Establishment Bylaw allows the CVRD to reorganize up to the greater of **\$750,000** or **\$0.045 per \$1000 of taxable value** within the service area.
- The annual budgets will be established by the CVRD Board based on the annual work plans and long-term strategy.

### LEARN MORE

CVRD Environmental Services Division website  
[cprd.bc.ca/1691/Environment](http://cprd.bc.ca/1691/Environment)

Pathways and Partnerships: A Framework for Collaboration and Reconciliation in the Cowichan Watershed (Jan 2019)  
[poliawaterproject.org/poliawaterproject/publication/pathways-partnerships](http://poliawaterproject.org/poliawaterproject/publication/pathways-partnerships)

For more information on the establishment of this service or details on other examples contact:

- Zita Bortolozzi, Sustainable Funding for Watershed Governance Initiative, [zita.m.bortolozzi@gmail.com](mailto:zita.m.bortolozzi@gmail.com)
- Laura Brandes, POLIS Water Sustainability Project, [communications@polisproject.org](mailto:communications@polisproject.org)

This type of service represents a growing trend towards freshwater protection at the local level, with similar initiatives underway in other regions of British Columbia, including the Columbia Shuswap Regional District, Island Trust, Kootenay Boundary Regional District, Regional District of Nanaimo, and the Thompson-Nicola Regional District.



The Watershed Governance Dispatch series highlights leading practices and recent developments related to the implementation of watershed governance. This series aims to help inform decision makers and practitioners, and links to the ongoing work of the POLIS Water Sustainability Project and the ongoing coalition for watershed governance outlined in "A Blueprint for Watershed Governance in British Columbia," available at [watersustainabilityproject.org](http://watersustainabilityproject.org).



Watershed Governance #4  
Sustainable Living Term Funding

# CWB Target Review

- Separate agenda item
  - Tom to provide “Target Origin story...”
  - Heather to provide update on progress of review.



# Questions?

