

COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH UPDATE APRIL 2020




Jill Thompson



1. COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVES

- a) Build public and political support for replacing the weir at Lake Cowichan, consistent with the Cowichan Water Use Planning final report and the guidance of the BC Salmon Restoration and Innovation Fund Steering Committee (Cowichan Tribes, CVRD, Catalyst and CWB). Build public and political understanding of the urgency for the weir replacement initiative due to increasing severity and frequency of drought, and the impacts on our salmon driven ecosystem, culture, and economy.
- b) Build understanding around Koksilah low water flow issues and support for a whole of watershed shared stewardship approach to protecting environmentally safe flows.
- c) Support community partners in their public engagement efforts relating to achieving the seven targets via the Target Working Groups.
- d) Build confidence and trust in CWB leadership. Continue to be known as a leading source of information, knowledge and expertise regarding the Cowichan watershed. Communicate more frequently with the full CVRD and Cowichan Tribes councils and committees, and with other local organizations. Represent the partners and working group members well in meetings with Senior Government, academia, and through media and speaking engagements across the country.
- e) Promote a culture of wise water use. Engage residents in embracing a proud and positive culture of conservation. Use fun encouraging outreach methods to help people notice and take action on water waste at home, work and play.
- f) Foster watershed understanding and connections. Undertake specific projects and communications to improve public knowledge about and care for the Cowichan and Koksilah watersheds.

2. PLANNED COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITIES

Activity	Description	Resources
Develop Key Messages	Convene a communications planning meeting for interested CWB members to identify target audiences and key messages for 2020 based on the approved Plan.	- Staff and CWB member time.
Periodic articles, E-Newsletter, radio interviews	Minimum 10 published articles about the CWB priorities, including professional journals, Cowichan Tribes newsletter, and local news. Pursue more opportunities for radio interviews with Co-Chairs, ED Circulate ENewsletters and emails to distribute agendas and event notices monthly as needed.	-Media spokespeople (co-Chairs, E.D., Board members on some topics) -Staff time -Good media relations. -Mailchimp account. (free)
Maintain accurate, updated websites	Continue to improve the new website. Clean up misfiled documents so they are searchable; tag documents to Targets; add labels and captions to photos so they can appear as a gallery; redo Speaker Series page and tie new events to Calendar blog. Post news articles and media releases to CWB and Weir Ready websites as they arise. Update other pages as needed. Update meetings page of CWB website with all agendas, minutes, and meeting materials.	- Staff time. - Occasional IT/design support
Social Media	Share news from CWB and our partners on Facebook. Promote all events on Facebook. Link Facebook feed to website. Explore other options to reach youth and media better.	-Photos, text. -Staff time
River Clean-up	Lead the organization of Lower River Clean Up with Cowichan Tribes Support the promotion of Upper River Cleanup with CLRSS.	-Food, supplies, insurance -Venue – Cowichan Tribes -Media/ advertising. -Staff time -Volunteers, trucks, photographers
Speakers Series	Free monthly public lecture in partnership with VIU Cowichan. Criteria: Engaging/entertaining speakers on topics of interest to the public, by people with strong expertise on the topic, and relevant to the Cowichan watershed.	-VIU lecture hall -Staff time -Quality guest speakers -Gifts for speakers
Public Outreach	Support respectful, engaging, educational outreach to residents most affected by changes in the watersheds to ensure they have good information and to promote the key priorities identified by the CWB (e.g. lakeshore residents; Koksilah water license holders) Build a salmon mascot to share with other partners to attract attention; serve as a positive reminder about why we do this.	-Staff time / contractors/ volunteers - Costumes and hand-outs - Maps / graphics
Educational Tools and Videos	Produce "Fish Talks with Tom" video vignette series explaining how different fish need  ent habitats at different times of year. Build a watershed model that helps people understand the weir / lake / river connection.	- Video editing - Cowichan watershed model. - Staff time
Increase support for Working Groups.	Use the new website to improve public awareness and understanding of the Targets and the work of the Working Groups. Dedicate adequate staff/contractor time to this need.	-Staff time
Thanking / Recognition	Use newspaper ads, thank you cards, social media, and email to acknowledge and celebrate engagement in watershed priorities. Maintain a culture of respectful and positive partnerships for shared goals.	
Ad Hoc Public Inquiries	Respond to all public / partner inquiries or requests for information (phone, email, Facebook) within 1 week. Direct relevant correspondence to monthly Board meetings for consideration or circulate to Co-Chairs and/ or Board members by email.	-Staff time

MAINTAIN ACCURATE, UPDATED WEBSITES

The screenshot shows the Cowichan Watershed Board website. A large yellow arrow points from the 'Home' section to the 'WEIR READY' banner. Another yellow arrow points from the 'WEIR READY' banner to the 'LATEST NEWS' section. A third yellow arrow points from the 'LATEST NEWS' section to the footer area.

Home

Partnerships are so important. They build trust and understanding, which can open closed doors." – Chief William Seymour, Cowichan Tribes, CWB Co-Chair (2018)

"Relationship-building takes time and shows commitment, something I hope we can all commit to, as we create a community together." – Victoria Joo Velasco, Cowichan Valley Regional District

The Cowichan Watershed Board is a partnership between Cowichan Tribes First Nation, and the Cowichan Valley Regional District. It exists to provide leadership for sustainable water management and to protect and enhance environmental quality and the quality of life in the Cowichan and Kootenai watersheds and adjoining areas.

It does this by partnering with government agencies and community organizations in the pursuit of seven "targets" for watershed health. The targets are aspirational goals derived from the Cowichan Basin Water Management Plan (the Plan).

The Board is co-chaired by the Chief of Cowichan Tribes First Nation, and the Chair of the Cowichan Valley Regional District, with 10-12 other members appointed jointly by those partners, and including nominees from the Federal and Provincial Governments.

The Board normally meets on the last Monday of every month from 10:00am-11:00am in the Cowichan Valley Regional District boardroom, and meetings are open to the public. Click here for meeting agendas.

In 2015, the Board set its top priority as addressing the growing need for increased water storage in Cowichan Lake to mitigate the summer "drought" during longer, drier summer months now common in our changing climate. Working closely with Cowichan Lake and River Stewardship Society, the Board has been working to improve public understanding of the issues, the consensus to start planning for a new weir, and the consequences of doing nothing. For more information, visit our website dedicated to this issue – Weir Ready!

SEARCH WEBSITE

SEARCH

CLICK HERE FOR INFORMATION ABOUT THE WEIR AT LAKE COWICHAN

WEIR READY

WWW.WEIRREADY.CA

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK

Sign up

WARMERLAND: CLIMATE CHANGE AND COWICHAN SALMON

LATEST NEWS

Celebrating Song 'Tis – Little Drop of Water

Partnership supports management of Kootenai Watershed

Drought-stricken Kootenai River on Vancouver Island to get monitoring via

Cowichan Watershed Board member, Dr. Shannon Waters, discusses Drought Impact on Human Health in a "ClimateReady" Discussion Video

CWB WEBSITE

- Home
- About Us
- Contact
- Cowichan Basin Water Management
- Plan
- Documents & Presentations
- Privacy
- Terms

TARGETS

- Water Quality
- Secure the Health
- Improve Connectivity
- Water Use
- Watershed IQ
- Water Supply
- Riparian Area Protection

COWICHAN WATERSHED

- Introduction
- Cowichan Lake
- Quantitative Science Lakes
- Cowichan Salinity
- The Weir

Cowichan Watershed Board

Cowichan Watershed Board
4300 Riverdale Road
Cowichan, BC V9L 6V6

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The Cowichan Watershed Board (CWB) gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the above organizations.

MAINTAIN ACCURATE, UPDATED WEBSITES

WEIR READY

HOME WHY THIS MATTERS COMMUNITY RESPONSE WE CAN FIX THIS

Community Response

Many people are working hard to help mitigate the impacts of the low flows until the weir can be replaced. Here are some examples:



Volunteers at Lake Cowichan are salvaging fry.



Cowichan Tribes members forego their fishing rights to conserve salmon



Catalyst has installed pumps in the lake to mitigate against the river running dry.

Why Weir Ready:

Read the perspectives of five Cowichan Valley residents about why they support replacing the weir, published in the Cowichan Valley Citizen, summer 2019 (click photo to open article).



Dr. Shannon Waters, Cowichan Valley Medical Health Officer



James Buchan, steam plant field operator, Catalyst Crofton



Diana Gunderson, lakeshore resident, Cowichan Lake



Rick Bryan, whitewater paddler



Chris Morley, biologist, Lake Cowichan

WEIR READY

HOME WHY THIS MATTERS COMMUNITY RESPONSE WE CAN FIX THIS NEWS BLOG RESOURCES

Home

What's a Weir?

In the 1950s, a 97 cm high weir was built at Cowichan Lake to store enough water so that Cowichan River flows could be sustained throughout the dry season. It is a cement structure, spanning the lake at the head of the river, and includes a boat lock and several 'spill gates'. The weir is owned and operated by Catalyst Paper under license from the BC Government.

This weir has served an important function economically and ecologically. Unlike a dam, the Cowichan Lake weir controls seasonal water level fluctuations but does not exceed natural "high water" levels, so that the natural shorelines and riparian habitats are intact. Learn more [here](#).



The weir is a cement structure, spanning Cowichan Lake at the head of the river. It includes a boat lock (at far right, above) and several 'spill gates' (left of the island).

What's the Problem?

This weir is no longer adequate to meet the demands of our longer drier summers due to [climate change](#). In five of the last six summers, the river has fallen below ecologically acceptable flows and this trend is predicted to worsen. Scientists recently concluded that:

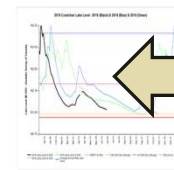
"The Cowichan River is one of the most productive rivers on the eastern side of Vancouver Island and without action it will look radically different by the 2050s. Salmon stocks that utilize the river to spawn and rear during the summer and early fall period will be decimated. Chinook, Coho and Steelhead are particularly vulnerable." Source: Cowichan Water Use Plan (2018) www.cowichanwup.ca

Cowichan Valley Regional District published [Climate Projections for the Cowichan Valley Regional District](#) in 2017. The report provides detailed projections of wetter winters, hotter, drier summers, and an increase in extreme weather events for the 2020s and 2030s. For the Cowichan



Cowichan Tribes biologist Tim Kulchyski inspects dry lower Cowichan River bed (North Arm). Photo by P.Jefferson 2016.

COWICHAN LAKE WATER LEVELS



Click Chart to View:

Graph by Catalyst Crofton based on Water Survey of Canada data.

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK



Weir Ready updated their cover photo.

3 months ago

Weir Ready's cover photo



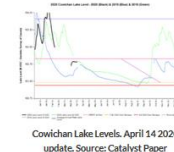
SEARCH WEBSITE

Search this website

Weekly Lake and River Update from Catalyst Paper

APRIL 16, 2020 BY EDITOR

LEAVE A COMMENT



Cowichan Lake Levels, April 14 2020 update. Source: Catalyst Paper

Every week during the 'control' season when the weir spill gates and boat locks are in use (closed or partly closed), Catalyst Paper Mill's Environment Manager, Brian Houle, provides an update by email to anyone interested. Re-posted with permission.

From: Houle, Brian (Crofton) <Brian.Houle@catalystpaper.com>

Date: Tue, Apr 14, 2020, 4:26 p.m.

Subject: Weekly Lake and River update

To: Houle, Brian (Crofton) <Brian.Houle@catalystpaper.com>

Greetings to everyone,

Conditions in the watershed remained mostly dry since the last wet spell that partly refilled the lake.

Flow from the lake is being controlled to 25 cms and this high spring flow is a fisheries guided flow target.

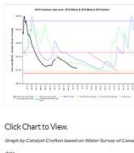
I have been asked many times why the flow is so high and the simple answer is, the fish need these higher flows in the spring.

The high flows are needed by the young fish that are emerging from the gravel as the eggs hatch in the spring.

[Read more...]

FILED UNDER: NEWS, WATER LEVELS

COWICHAN LAKE WATER LEVELS



Click Chart to View:

Graph by Catalyst Crofton based on Water Survey of Canada data.

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3 months ago

Weir Ready's cover photo



SEARCH WEBSITE

SOCIAL MEDIA

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@CowichanWatershedBoard

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- Reviews
- Photos
- About
- Community
- Events
- Create a Page

This is what your Page looks like to a visitor. Switch back to your view to manage this Page.

Liked Following Share

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Write a post...

Photo/Video Tag Friends Check in

Posts

Cowichan Watershed Board
April 21 at 10:49 AM

Got kids to educate? Here's some "watery world" ideas from Christy, DFO Educator and homeschooling parent!

Hello Educators AND Parents! Please read on if you are looking for some fabulous online programs to help your kids learn more about the watery world during this time of homeschooling...and feel free to share!

I hope that some of these resources might be of interest to your kids and I invite you to share any resources you are already using I can share them with others...

Continue Reading

5.0 5 out of 5 · Based on the opinion of 1 person

ABOUT COWICHAN WATERSHED BOARD

Our Story

The Cowichan Watershed Board exists to provide leadership for sustainable water management and to provide...

See More

Community See All

Invite your friends to like this Page

763 people like this

842 people follow this

Kate Marsh and 84 other friends like this or have checked in

Cowichan Watershed Board

- Page
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- Insights
- More
- Edit Page

Event Budget Spent Reach Responses

Past Events

<p>Speaker Series - The Koksilah - Learning our Landscape. VIU Cowichan Thu Feb 27, 7:00pm</p>	Not boosted	2.2K	74
<p>Speaker Series - "We Need to Talk." Vancouver Island University Thu Jan 23, 7:00pm</p>	Not boosted	3.3K	150
<p>Watch Out Suckers! Vancouver Island University Cowichan Campus Lecture Theatre Nov 28, 2019, 7:00 PM</p>	Not boosted	889	23
<p>Speaker Series - Wild Fins! With Dr. Dave Preikshot VIU Cowichan Campus 2011 University Way, Oct 24, 2019, 7:00 PM</p>	Not boosted	573	32
<p>Lower Cowichan River Cleanup 2019 Meet at Cowichan Tribes "Little Big House" (end of River Road, behind Si'em Lelum Gymnasium, Duncan) Aug 25, 2019, 10:00 AM</p>	Not boosted	14.9K	513
<p>Water Conservation in the Koksilah Watershed The Hub at Cowichan Station Jul 17, 2019, 6:00 PM</p>	Not boosted	3.1K	121
<p>Join us in Duncan Parade! Cowichan Hosers Duncan, BC Jul 13, 2019, 9:30 AM</p>	Not boosted	990	36
<p>Speakers Night - The Warmer Land VIU Cowichan Campus, 2011 University Way, Room 140 (Lecture Hall) Apr 25, 2019, 7:00 PM</p>	Not boosted	No data	34

Show More

EDUCATIONAL TOOLS AND VIDEOS



...VIDEOS



Chief William Seymour
Cowichan Tribes First Nation
Co-Chair Cowichan Watershed Board



Sonia Furstenau
Member of the Legislative Assembly of B.C.,
Cowichan Valley



Brian Houle
Environmental Manager, Catalyst Crofton



Lydia Whitsum
Past-Chief Cowichan Tribes First Nation
Past-Co-Chair Cowichan Watershed Board



Tim Kulchyski
Biologist, Cowichan Water Board
and Cowichan Tribes



Brian Carruthers
Chief Administrative Officer,
Cowichan Valley Regional District



Special Thanks to:
Tzinquaw Dancers
Cowichan Stewardship Roundtable -
Quw'utsun River Celebration Committee



Alistair McGregor
Member of Parliament,
Cowichan-Malahat-Langford

...VIDEOS

Why do Fish
Need Water?

The why,
where, and
when of water
needs for fish
in all seasons
in the
Cowichan
watershed.



ARTICLES, E-NEWS, RADIO



**Cowichan
Watershed
BOARD**



Weir Ready!

**"Team Cowichan" in the BC
Legislature**

On April 8th, a positive meeting took place between the Watershed Board and Honourable BC Ministers [Doug LaRocque \(FLNRORD\)](#) and [George Heyman \(ECCS\)](#), along with many of their senior staff. The meeting was about working together to secure a new climate-appropriate weir for the Cowichan River. It was arranged by Cowichan Valley MLA [Sonia Furstenau](#), attended by MLA [Doug Routley](#), with MP [Alistair MacGregor](#) on the phone.

All levels of government are working together to secure funding for the next step, which will be feasibility, engineering and design studies to rebuild the weir at



Next CWB Board Meeting

Monday April 29
9:30-11:45 am

In the VRD Boardroom
175 Ingram Street
N Duncan

All welcome.
Public seating.



NEW REPORT

**Summary report of
the five year
Cowichan Water**



Speaker Night - The Warmer Land?

Marking Earth Week, the Cowichan Watershed Board is pleased to welcome a variety of speakers to share their Cowichan valley perspectives and expertise on the biggest challenge of our time.

Speakers include

- Sierra Robinson, a Cowichan area youth representing Earth Guardians, will tell us why local youth are rising up and organizing school strikes across the globe and here at home.

- Tim Kulchyski, a Cowichan Tribes natural resource specialist, will talk to us about the climate change impacts for local indigenous people and cultures

- Jeff Moore will give us the

The background is a light yellow gradient. It is decorated with numerous water droplets of various sizes, some with highlights and shadows, giving them a 3D appearance. The droplets are scattered across the slide, with a higher concentration in the top-left and bottom-right corners.

RIVER CLEAN-UP SPEAKERS SERIES PUBLIC OUTREACH

.... TO BE DETERMINED

KEY MESSAGES (DRAFT)

- WEIR - SEE WEIRREADY.CA – ARTICULATE THE PROBLEM; HIGHLIGHT GROWING CONSENSUS ON SOLUTION; CLARIFY CURRENT WORK AND PROCESS; BE AVAILABLE FOR Q&A AND OPEN DIALOGUE WITH RESIDENTS.
- KOKSILAH – OUTREACH WORKING GROUP WILL LEAD WITH COWICHAN TRIBES AND PROVINCE; GENERALLY – ARTICULATE PROBLEM; CLARIFY CURRENT PROCESSES; ENCOURAGE WORKING TOGETHER; SUPPORTING THOSE HARDEST HIT (IRRIGATORS); SHORT AND LONG TERM SOLUTIONS.
- IMPROVE PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF SEASONAL FISH /AQUATIC ECOSYSTEM NEEDS (VIDEOS, MASCOT).
- WATERSHED SUSTAINABILITY FUND – PROVINCE NEEDS TO SUPPORT INDIGENOUS CO-GOVERNANCE FINANCIALLY.