



Jill Thompson <jill@cowichanwatershedboard.ca>

Watershed Security Projects - Updates

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17 July 2020 at 1

To: Watersheds BC Info <info@watershedsbc.ca>

Bcc: jill@cowichanwatershedboard.ca

Dear watershed project leads,

Thank you again for the information you provided about your shovel-worthy projects that will help secure our watersheds now and for the future. You're getting this email because you indicated that you are willing to participate in additional actions related to this initiative.

We wanted to follow up on what we have learned, what we have been working on, and new opportunities for additional action to advance the work to ensure investing in BC's watershed security is a core focus of the government's stimulus funding.

[Watersheds BC](#) is a member of the [BC Watershed Security Coalition](#). This coalition came together during the COVID-19 crisis to work with the Province to create solutions that recognize healthy watersheds are fundamental to our health, security, prosperity and reconciliation efforts. The 145 projects Watersheds BC compiled, including yours, have formed the basis for the ask to the government, demonstrating the importance of the watershed work you are doing and the employment opportunities that can contribute to COVID-19 economic recovery efforts.

What We Have Learned

Through meetings and conversations, members of the Watershed Security Coalition have learned that the Province has allocated \$1.5 Billion to economic recovery spending as part of its immediate COVID-19 response measures. They are in the process of determining the priorities for this spending now that BC has moved into Phase 3 of its re-start plan. We know that the Province is looking to invest in projects and opportunities that generate work for sectors most hard-hit by COVID-19, particula

sectors that employ women, youth, and Indigenous peoples.

As this process evolves, we may reach out again looking for additional project details.

What We Have Been Working On

On June 16, 2020 the Watershed Security Coalition core members met with the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Selina Robinson. During this meeting, there were two key asks:

1. Invest \$27 million of immediate recovery spending in watershed projects and
2. Following this immediate recovery spending, make a longer-term investment in watershed prosperity by investing \$200 million in a “Watershed Security Fund” and seek 2-to-1 matching dollars from the Federal government.

Minister Robinson’s staff have since invited the Watershed Security Coalition to present at a joint meeting of Ministers in the upcoming weeks. We will keep you informed on the results of those meetings.

Opportunities for Additional Actions

1. In our last email update, we asked those interested to write a letter of support for the Watershed Security Coalition and send it to Premier Horgan. Thank you to those who have done this. For those who have not, if you are able, July is a great time to send a letter to the Premier and cc key ministers (identified in the template letter) before decisions on recovery spending are made. We have attached a template letter to this email which you can also access as a Google doc [here](#).
2. Local Op-eds and Letters to the Editor are a great way to inform local communities and elected officials about the value and importance of investing in the watershed projects you submitted through our survey. Coree Tull from the Canadian Freshwater Alliance (Watershed Security Coalition member) may follow up with you about opportunities to write an op-ed on your project for your local paper.

Here are two op-eds published on the need for investing in BC’s watershed

security.

[Building BC back better with jobs that support healthy watersheds, clean water and wild salmon](#)

[Why we must invest in water security](#)

3. The Watershed Security Coalition would like to showcase some of the shovel-worthy projects on their website to demonstrate the opportunities in BC to build our province back better by investing in our watersheds. Keep an eye out for an email from one of the members of the Coalition regarding the next steps.

Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any comments or questions or ideas about how we can advance this work together! Thank you for your work to secure our watersheds for today and the future.



Alex Etchell

Program Lead, Watersheds BC

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WSC letter of support Template.docx

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