

January 20, 2022

Cowichan Watershed Board
4335 Riverside Road
Duncan, BC V9L 6M8
VIA EMAIL: info@cowichanwatershedboard.ca

Request for Input on Master's Thesis: Flood Mitigation and the Collaboration between Indigenous Communities and Local Governments

Dear Board Members,

I am a student in the Master of Community Planning program at Vancouver Island University (VIU). I am seeking input from the Cowichan Water Board on my preliminary thesis topic: researching the intersectionality of flood mitigation and the collaboration of Indigenous communities and local governments, with a focus on the working relationships within the Cowichan Valley.

My motivation for choosing this area of research is to understand how collective efforts work to protect communities across regions, such as the Cowichan Valley, from flood events. Once my thesis is completed, I would like to share it with the Board and other participating organizations so it might be a resource for your community in the future.

My personal experiences influenced the development of my thesis topic. I grew up on the traditional and unceded territories of the W̱SÁNEĆ First Nations. I am grateful to live near LÁU, WELNEW—its translation to “place of refuge” is demonstrated in the security and connection I feel at home. I want to improve flood mitigation in our region to protect the communities in which we live. As a team player at heart in both personal and professional environments, I believe nation-to-nation relationships are vital to working towards resiliency.

This thesis is a requirement for graduation from the Master's program. My schedule is to defend completed thesis in April 2023. I will be applying for ethics approval through VIU in March 2022—this is when my research topic and methodology will be finalized.

My current research methodology, subject to ethics approval, includes conducting interviews and/or distributing letters stating my research intent and my contact information. My tentative outreach list includes:

- City of Duncan
- City of Ladysmith
- Cowichan Leadership Group
- Cowichan Tribes
- Cowichan Valley Regional District
- Cowichan Water Board
- District of North Cowichan
- Ditidaht First Nation
- Halalt First Nation
- Lake Cowichan First Nation
- Lyackson First Nation
- Malahat First Nation
- Penelakut First Nation
- Stz'uminus First Nation

As stated above, please let me know if you have feedback or if you would like to incorporate other elements into my research that will be of benefit to the Cowichan Water Board and your communities. My contact information is below.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to attending future Cowichan Water Board meetings.

Sincerely,

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Cc Tom Rutherford, Executive Director
Jill Thompson, Project Coordinator