



Reference: 27887

VIA EMAIL: c/o jill@cowichanwatershedboard.ca

June 20, 2022

Tom Rutherford, Executive Director
Cowichan Watershed Board
4335 Riverside Road
Duncan, British Columbia
V9L 6M8

Dear Tom Rutherford:

Thank you for your letter of June 2, 2022, sent to the Honourable Josie Osborne, Minister of Land, Water and Resource Stewardship regarding the Cowichan Watershed Board's support for a Watershed Security Fund. I appreciate your insights, thoughtful input, and recommendations on how such funding can support collaborative watershed management. As Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Land, Water and Resource Stewardship, I am pleased to respond.

As you may know, government is currently soliciting public, stakeholder, and Indigenous perspectives on a Watershed Security Strategy and Watershed Security Fund. The first phase of engagement with the public closed on March 18, 2022, while engagement with Indigenous communities and organizations remains ongoing. In the coming months, input received during engagement will be used by government to develop a draft Strategy in collaboration with First Nations.

This further engagement on a draft Strategy is expected to follow later in 2022. The nature of the eventual Watershed Security Fund will likely be influenced by the funding and resourcing that is necessary for the Strategy to be successful.

Again, thank you for writing and sharing your perspectives on the proposed Watershed Security Fund.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lori Halls". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lori Halls
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Land, Water and Resource Stewardship

pc: Honourable Josie Osborne, Minister of Land, Water and Resource Stewardship
Honourable George Heyman, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy
Honourable Katrine Conroy, Minister of Forests
Honourable Murray Rankin, Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation