

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Between

**Cowichan Watershed Board
[CWB]**

and

**Oliver Brandes, Co-Director of the Polis Institute for Ecological Governance
[Advisor]**

This MOU is based upon the draft Board Advisor Role, to be established in the Cowichan Watershed Board Governance Manual in 2023.

Summary Needs of the CWB

After over 12 years of local effort and increasing levels of partnership and support from the provincial and federal governments and independent funders, the Cowichan watershed has arrived at a tipping point. The governance model we had successfully developed over our first decade with Cowichan Tribes and the Cowichan Valley Regional District is evolving beyond being an advocate for restoring indigenous authority over water in their territories, to creating and demonstrating a new way to govern water in BC through the core principle of **Nutsamat kwsyaay'ustthqa': We come together as a whole to work together to be stronger as partners for the watershed.**

In both the Cowichan and Koksilah watersheds, Cowichan Tribes First Nation is now chairing or co-chairing processes that could result in co-lead solutions to protect salmon, local economies, and culture from serious climate change and other threats to freshwater ecosystems within their territory within the next few years. The provincial government is also exploring how to advance and resource watershed security governance and water sustainability.

Important work is required to advance provincial efforts for law reform and implementation of the Water Sustainability Act, and to tell the story of the Cowichan Watershed Board as an example of a progressive approach to watershed governance on unceded territories.

Role as Advisor

As an Advisor to the Cowichan Watershed Board, Oliver Brandes will provide the Board and Staff with the following:

1. Expert analysis and insights regarding watershed governance, watershed security, water law, and provincial and federal policy water, watershed and resource policy and programs-insights and input on ongoing Board organizational strategic development and implementation of targets.

2. Support in developing partnerships (including funders) and strategic relationships in the region and beyond.
3. Act as a resource for Staff in delivery and development of projects and programs.
4. Support CWB's role in the regional governance initiatives.
5. Contribute to (and provide) communications, presentations, and knowledge sharing around the history, evolution and impact of the CWB with interested outside parties, and share any outcomes or insights from those interactions or working sessions with the Board and Staff.

Commitments of the Advisor

As an Advisor to the Cowichan Watershed Board, Oliver Brandes commits to:

1. Regularly attend Board Meetings, and review Board materials in advance to maintain relationships with the Board and Staff, and to keep informed of the activities and discussions of the Board.
2. Obtain Board and Staff approval, input and/or direction prior to communicating or distributing information about, or on behalf of the CWB.
3. Adhering to the 5 Principles as outlined in the Governance Manual.

Partnership: The Board is built on a collaborative partnership among Cowichan Tribes and the CVRD (the partners) and seeks to engage and bridge the interests of governments, regulatory agencies, local water stakeholders and citizens.

Representation: The Board members are appointed to serve the best interests of Cowichan Basin citizens and the region as a whole in a manner that is consistent with federal and provincial interests that support sound watershed management. Members selected are, to the greatest extent possible, local community leaders and/or known water management champions-related experts.

Watershed Emphasis: The CWB's priorities and activities are guided by a vision for the watershed as a whole that is based on ecological sustainability and "whole of watershed" thinking.

Transparency: To the greatest extent possible, the actions and decisions of the CWB will be transparent and open.

Nutsamatkwsyaay'ustthqa': We come together as a whole to work together to be stronger as partners for the watershed. This is an ancient Cowichan Tribes principle. Orientation in the application of the principle will be provided by the Co-Chairs. ("Nutsamat")

Biography of the Advisor

Oliver M. Brandes is an economist and lawyer by training and a trans-disciplinarian by design. He serves as Co-Director of the POLIS Project on Ecological Governance, based at the University of Victoria's Centre for Global Studies, where he leads the POLIS Water Sustainability Project. His work focuses on water sustainability, sound resource management, public policy development, and ecologically based legal and institutional reforms.

Oliver serves as the Associate Director of Strategic Partnerships and Public Policy at the University of Victoria's Centre for Global Studies. He is an Adjunct Professor at the Faculty of Law and School of Public Administration and is a fellow of the Environmental Law Centre. In 2012, he co-developed B.C.'s first

water law course at the University of Victoria's Faculty of Law. Oliver is a founding member of the national Forum for Leadership on Water (FLOW), which he currently co-chairs, and is an advisor to numerous national, provincial, and local water organizations, governments, and funders.

Compensation and Timeline

The in-kind contribution by the Advisor to the Cowichan Watershed board to the above noted roles is estimated at \$10,000.00 per year.

This MOU is valid for five years from the time of signature and may be amended at any time with signatures by the Advisor and the CWB Co-Chairs.

Signature _____ Advisor Full Name, Title: Oliver Brandes, Co-Director Polis Institute Date _____
Signature _____ CWB Co-Chair Full Name, Title: Chief Lydia Hwytsum, Cowichan Tribes Date _____
Signature _____ CWB Co-Chair Full Name, Title: Chair, Aaron Stone, CVRD Date _____