

June 20, 2023

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

RE: MASTER'S THESIS ON FLOOD MITIGATION AND THE COLLABORATION BETWEEN INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Dear Cowichan Watershed Board Members,

I would like to share my gratitude with you for supporting my research endeavours over the past two years.

Last year, I wrote to the CWB seeking input and interview participants for my thesis project exploring flood mitigation and the collaboration of First Nations and local governments in the Cowichan Valley. As a result, I met many dedicated, kind people who selflessly took the time to share their expertise with me.

Because of this research, I understand that relationality is truly the basis of all good work. The Cowichan teaching of mukw'stem'o'skihilhukw'tul, which I learned means “everything is interconnected”, describes the importance of holding fundamental awareness between ourselves and the environment, whether it is for regional collaboration, emergency planning, watershed management, or beyond.

The project is now available online on the Vancouver Island University website [here](#). My hope is that my work may serve as a resource for the Cowichan Valley, or any other community who is interested in Indigenous planning and governmental relationships, flood mitigation, and/or watershed governance.

Thank you once again for your continual work, where the Cowichan Valley continues to set the standard for how communities across a region can work together on Indigenous leadership and watershed governance work.

Please let me know if I can provide any further information.

Huy ch q'u,

Holly Yee
Master of Community Planning Graduate, Vancouver Island University

Attachment One

January 22, 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 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 in close proximity to 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 in order 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. 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 your community. My contact information is below.

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

Sincerely,

Holly Yee
Master of Community Planning Student, Vancouver Island University

Cc Tom Rutherford, Executive Director
Jill Thompson, Project Coordinator

Attachment Two

May 23, 2022

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

MASTER'S THESIS: FLOOD MITIGATION AND COLLABORATION BETWEEN INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS – REQUEST FOR PARTICIPANTS

Dear Board Members,

In January 2022, I wrote to your organization to seek input for my thesis as a Master of Community Planning Student at Vancouver Island University (VIU)—thank you for reviewing my letter during your monthly meeting. As mentioned in my previous letter, my thesis topic explores the intersectionality of flood mitigation and the collaboration of Indigenous communities and local governments, with a focus on the working the Cowichan Valley. I have now been confirmed my research topic and received ethics approval from VIU.

Currently, I am conducting interviews with planners, elected officials, and other professionals in related fields within the Cowichan Valley. I will be reaching out to the following First Nations, local governments, and organizations:

- 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

If you are interested in participating or have further questions, please contact me via the information below. I will be conducting interviews until September 20, 2022.

Thank you again for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Holly Yee
Master of Community Planning Student, Vancouver Island University

Cc Tom Rutherford, Executive Director
Jill Thompson, Project Coordinator