



The Somenos Marsh Wildlife Society

Our work in Somenos Creek

Introduced by: Mena Williams, SMWS board member

Presented by:

Paul Fletcher, Executive Director & Paul Gowland, President


Who are we?

- **The Somenos Marsh Wildlife Society**
- **located in the Cowichan Valley on the unceded traditional territory of the Quw'utsun People**
- **We are focused on the natural health of the S'amunu/Somenos Watershed**
- **There are lots of issues in this watershed!**
- **Today I will focus on work we are doing to control the invasive aquatic weed called Parrots Feather**



Legend

Boundaries and Place Names
North Cowichan Boundary

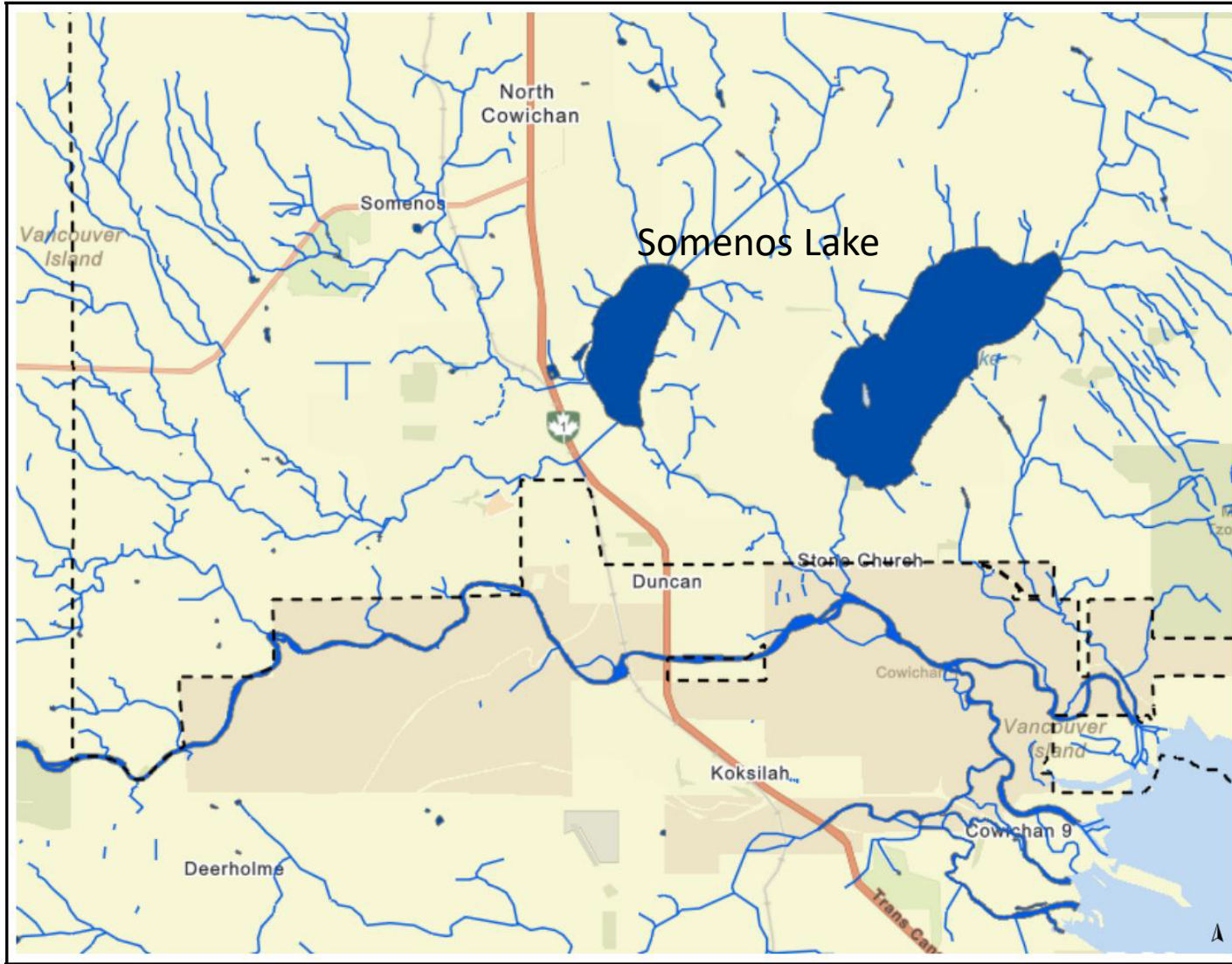
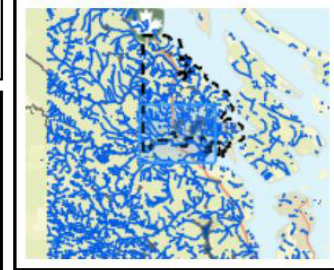


Notes



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THIS MAP IS NOT TO BE USED FOR NAVIGATION



Legend

Boundaries and Place Names
North Cowichan Boundary

Water Bodies
Lakes and Ponds

Minor Streams

Major Streams

Major Rivers



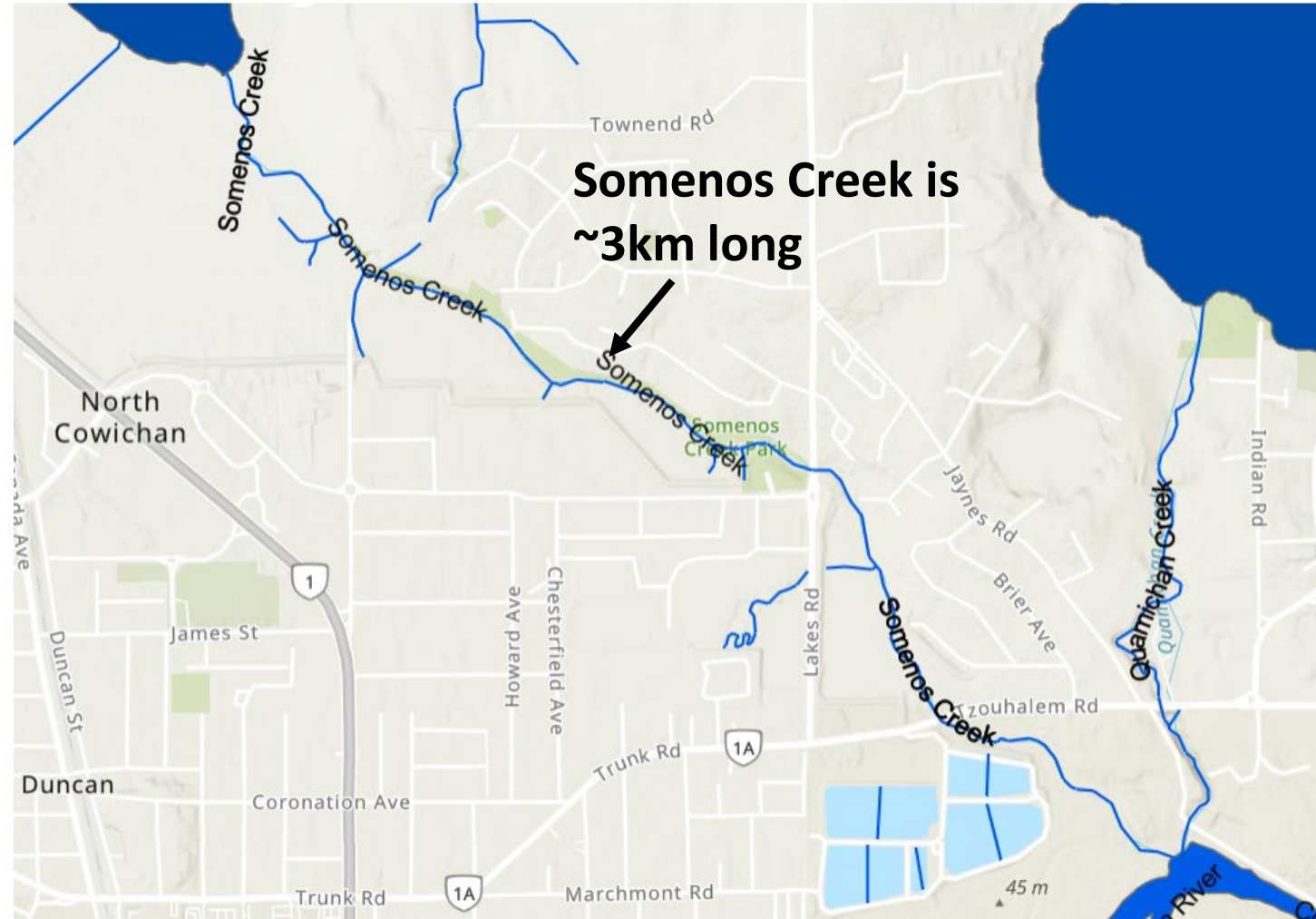
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Notes

Somenos Lake and Somenos Creek

- Somenos Lake drains into the Cowichan River via Somenos Creek
- Somenos Creek is the passageway for salmon that come to spawn in the Somenos watershed
- But this creek is covered with invasive and native aquatic weeds due to nutrient rich water



Salmon in the watershed

- Coho salmon access the Somenos system to spawn in late November through early January
- Chum salmon used to spawn here
- The numbers of spawning fish used to be much higher than today
- Somenos Creek is the way out to the sea for smolts in the spring!





Parrots Feather in Somenos Creek

- Parrots Feather is used as an ornamental pond plant
- It was probably accidentally introduced into Somenos Creek and has spread rapidly!
- Parrots Feather shares the creek with native aquatic weeds
- These weeds and high levels of algae are a problem for salmon

The problem with Parrots Feather and other aquatic weeds . . .

- Excessive aquatic weed growth is bad for water quality
- Somenos Creek is impassable for salmon or trout from June to November due to low dissolved oxygen levels
- Aquatic weeds like Parrots Feather suppress oxygen levels. In the fall these weeds die back and decompose, holding back migrating salmon.

Our Society is evaluating ways of controlling Parrots Feather and other aquatic weeds

- To improve salmon migration in the fall
- We trim the growing edge of the aquatic weeds
- Then we remove the trimmed pieces from the creek



The SMWS would like to partner with CT to control aquatic weeds in Somenos Creek

- Excessive aquatic weed growth is bad for water quality and salmon
- Our Society believes that aquatic weed growth can be reduced
- Salmon are resilient! We have found Coho fry and adults in many parts of the watershed where water quality remains good for salmon & trout.