

Staff Report - October 2024

This is a monthly snapshot of staff's completed and current activities, and future plans as it relates to our approved [Impact Plan](#). We ask Board members to please review the table before the Board meeting. There will be time for questions to staff. Also please note decisions required (right column).

| Area of Work | Activities (What?) | Comments / Analysis (So What?) | Outcome or Next Steps (Now What?) | Board Support Needed |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|---|--|
| Just Add Water (addressing low flows) | <p>Weir Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sept 26th: held an all partners communications workshop led by Lockery Communications; resulted in a draft Communications Plan for 2025 that is being presented to the Technical Working Group for comment/input. Oct 29th: Government to Government meeting planned. Work continues on Licensing, permitting and compensation issues needing resolution prior to constructing the weir. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Great comms input from partners; template developed; CWB staff are interested in exploring what is implementable in-house. CWB was asked to serve in secretariat role for the weir G2G table, which continues to move forward on important conversations on Rights and Title, licensing, compensation and operations and maintenance. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff will report on next steps for communications, project management and other relevant items in the November staff report.. | |
| | <p>Xwulqw'selu Watershed Planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CWB staff team exploring how we could expand our support in this Planning Process. Can we help more with implementation and movement on short and long term actions within the Watershed Plan? Community Advisory Table and Cowichan Tribes Advisory table both met this month. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CWB will start to expand its support within areas already identified (i.e. events) Also exploring leading different possible pieces of work (i.e. different workstreams). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation by XWP ED and others at the November Board Meeting Further reporting on CWB role in November CWB will support the planning of an Open House (est. January) | <p>Attending the November Board Meeting, ready to further discuss the XWP.</p> |

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| Achieving our Targets | <p>Fish Sustainability and Flows - [See above - Weir and XWP are both major strategies for this target.]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The October 21 Speaker Night featured Ken Ashley sharing his perspectives on the 2023 fish kill. • Work is underway to set up a December wrap up meeting on 2024 monitoring and response work for avoiding a subsequent fish kill. Report writing on 2024 strategies is underway. • Somenos Lake fish kill workshop is occurring on Nov. 27th. Invitations are out. Agenda is established. • Data collection is completed to map cold water refugia for fish and identify legal tools to ensure their protection. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work underway is to document the valuable lessons learned in 2024 that are transferable to future years and other communities/ watersheds. The most valuable work is that work that is shared. | <p>Fall continues to be busy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2024 process (monitoring and response planning) • Effectiveness and protection of cold water refugia • Workshop planning | |
| | <p>Riparian Health target -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A GIS-based pilot project to assess riparian health along Kelvin Creek is underway. A GIS technician has been secured and Cowichan Tribes is assisting in transcribing Lidar data. | <p>This information will be used to prioritize restoration projects to support recovery of fish habitat, water quality, water flows, and other landscape-level projects.</p> | <p>Preliminary GIS work will be started as data becomes available.</p> | |

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| | <p>Water Quality target -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MOE water quality attainment sampling is underway following the onset of fall rains. Staff are coordinating sampling work. | <p>This work will help inform the board, staff and our partners on water quality trends and help us identify and act on new projects to improve water quality.</p> | <p>Staff are beginning to explore the best way the CWB could participate in water quality monitoring such that we help get the best information possible to improve water quality. Data from 2022 (Koksilah/ Cowichan Bay) and 2024 sampling will be analyzed and reported on over the winter.</p> | |
| | <p>Watershed Connections working group -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuing to support partner organizations that do work to connect both adults and children to the watershed. (Quw'utsun Sta'lo' Skweyul, WildWings, Project 84,000, etc.) Resumed Speaker Series in partnership with VIU-Cowichan. Estuary Nature Center - facilitating partnerships/support. | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-hosting November 18 Speaker Night with Estuary Nature Center to promote their programs. Exploring online calendar to support watershed events and volunteering and our partners. Fall WC WG meeting planned. | |
| | <p>Water Wise Target - see supporting Koksilah Low Flow Working Group below under Partnerships.</p> | | | |
| | <p>Estuary Health Target</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Water Quality target. | | <p>November/December Speaker Nights.</p> | <p>Attend Speaker Nights to learn about our estuary.</p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promoting estuary research and education (Speaker Night, CENC-CT partnership.) | | | |
| Building Partnerships | Luncheon on November 25th (final CWB meeting of 2024) | Share a meal together to end off a great year full of change, renewal and fish in the river! | | Attend luncheon following the November 25th meeting. |
| | Staff continue to attend Koksilah Low Flow Working Group; Cowichan Stewardship Roundtable; Xwulqw'selu Connections; and other watershed-based meetings on behalf of the Board. | Important to be 'in the know' about what is happening within the watershed, support partners and share about the work of the CWB. | Continue to attend and report back as needed. | |
| Watershed Knowledge and Understanding | Organizing workshop RE Somenos Lake Fish Kill with Somenos Marsh Wildlife Society - November 27th. | Somenos Marsh is an important part of the Cowichan Watershed so stepping in/up to support our partners (SMWS). | | |
| | Watershed data (WIKD) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work has started to identify next steps in the Watershed Information, Knowledge and Data project | Staff have determined that developing a digital data sharing platform for the area is outside the scope of our work and a better role for the CWB is to develop a Launchpad for people to learn about available data and where it can be accessed - rather than holding the data ourselves. | Develop a Riparian Restoration Project map following methods used to create the water quality map product described in September and demonstrated at the October board meeting. Funding is in place for this work. | |

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| Administrative and Other | Fundraising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public announcement of additional funds not yet able but our capacity continues to grow with successful funding applications. Planning/Communications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prep 2025 Impact Plan; revamp/clean up website; revisit logo discussion. | We will utilize funds to increase our staff capacity, growing thoughtfully and in line with our priorities. We could revamp our website to better reflect our purpose and our work together. | Prepare for 2025 Impact Plan with staffing/capacity needs filled (we are growing!). | Board members please review bios for website and provide updates and/or photos to Jill if you have not yet done so. |