

ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS REPORT

April 2016 – March 2017

2016 was the inaugural year of program implementation for the Shuswap Watershed Council (SWC). Here are the highlights of what was achieved for water quality monitoring, water quality protection, and safe recreation.

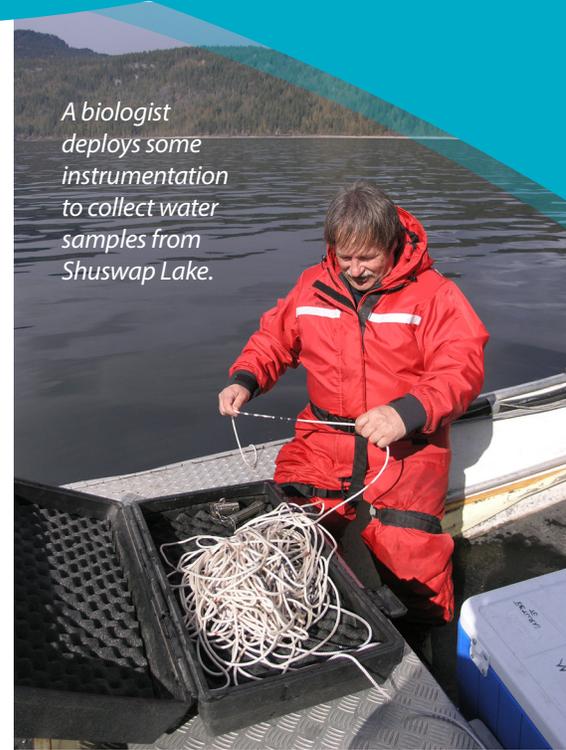


PEOPLE WORKING TOGETHER

WATER QUALITY PROGRAM

Water Monitoring Initiative

- Re-convened and expanded the Shuswap Water Quality Monitoring Group – a legacy of the Shuswap Lake Integrated Planning Process – to ensure collaborative, complete water quality monitoring across the watershed
- Tracked the activities and commitments to monitoring by other organizations
 - At least 17 different groups are involved in water quality monitoring
 - More than 500 water samples were collected and analysed



A biologist deploys some instrumentation to collect water samples from Shuswap Lake.

Water quality monitoring results are published in a separate report from the SWC. You can find it on our website.

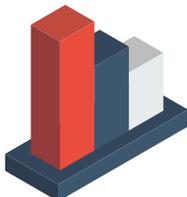
- Provided \$13,500 in support of an expanded monitoring program in the Salmon River. This was the first year of a three-year project with the BC Ministry of Environment to more intensely monitor the water quality of the Salmon River, which is vitally important to salmon and resident fish, agriculture and domestic uses, and has been the focus of many stewardship and restoration efforts.
- Developed a new monitoring project for nonylphenols, a substance of emerging concern that has not been monitored in the Shuswap. This project will be implemented in 2017.

WATER MONITORING



Nonylphenols are a group of compounds that are commonly found in industrial and consumer products such as plastics, rubber, detergents, cosmetics and shampoos, household cleaners, and latex paints. Treatment processes don't remove nonylphenols from waste water, which means that nonylphenols – along with many other substances – eventually end up in lakes and rivers. At certain concentrations, they are toxic to aquatic life.

WATER QUALITY DATA



- Developed a public user guide that explains how to access water quality data from the provincial "Environmental Management System" database – look for it on our website.

The Water Protection Advisory Committee makes recommendations to the SWC on projects related to water quality restoration, education, and partnership opportunities

Nutrients have long been of interest in the Shuswap because of their importance to lake health and productivity, and their ability to trigger an algae bloom. This is the first project of its kind in the watershed. The following research questions will be answered by the end of the three-year project:

- *Are there excess nutrients in the rivers that are not from the natural environment?*
- *If so, where are they coming from and how are they being transported into the rivers?*

Having answers to these questions will inform better nutrient management to protect our water quality.

WATER QUALITY PROGRAM

Water Protection Initiative

- Established a Water Protection Advisory Committee to support the work of the SWC



RESEARCH

- Entered into a research partnership with UBC – Okanagan and implemented the first year of a three-year \$150,000 research project to determine the sources of nutrients in the Shuswap and Salmon Rivers
 - 240 surface water samples were collected from 20 sites and tested for phosphorus and nitrogen levels
 - The monitoring also includes the collection and analysis of groundwater samples

- Provided \$10,000 to Splatsin Development Corporation for restoration work they are leading on Alderson Creek, a tributary to the Shuswap River. The creek had been altered by past land use practices, and a 2 km reach was cleaned and re-configured, and restored with new vegetation and livestock exclusion fencing.

WATER QUALITY RESTORATION



EDUCATION



- Provided financial support to North Okanagan Dairy Extension Advisory Committee for a presentation to their membership on nutrient management



These photos show a cattle exclusion fence being built at Alderson Creek. Projects like these are often the result of several organizations working together. The SWC was pleased to work with Splatsin First Nation, private land-owners, and BC Cattlemen's Association on this project.



SAFE RECREATION

SAFE BOATING EDUCATION AND EQUIPMENT

- Established a partnership with Royal Canadian Marine Search and Rescue (Station 106 Shuswap) to ensure complimentary and consistent safe boating education in the watershed
- Provided \$1200 to RCM-SAR for a *Kids Don't Float* lifejacket loaner station at the Salmon Arm Downtown Wharf. This has been a very successful initiative led by RCM-SAR, and the SWC is glad to be one of several community sponsors helping to bring this project to fruition.
- Purchased and distributed water safety whistles to boaters and paddlers
- Delivered safety campaigns throughout May – September 2016 focusing on lifejacket use, boating preparedness, cold water safety, and sober boating
- Created and distributed *6 tips for having fun and staying safe in the Shuswap* rack card



A lifejacket loaner station was built at the Salmon Arm downtown wharf in Fall 2016, with financial support from the Shuswap Watershed Council and Knights of Columbus. This is one of several stations that RCM-SAR has built around the Shuswap.

COMMUNICATIONS AND ADVOCACY

- Created and distributed two new informative communiqués:
 - Water Protection brochure
 - *What is the Shuswap Watershed Council?* flyer
- Distributed SWC Meeting Highlights Reports to media
- Prepared the 2016 Shuswap Water Quality Report
- Attended and presented at the biennial *Watersheds 2016* conference
- Attended and presented at the North Okanagan Dairy Extension Advisory Committee's annual dairy industry seminar
- Kept an up-to-date website with meeting agendas and summaries, financial reports, and educational articles
- Corresponded with the Premier and Minister of Environment regarding measures to prevent an accidental introduction of aquatic invasive mussels
- Maintained an active presence on Facebook and Twitter
- Shared information and increased awareness of watershed issues and good stewardship within the Shuswap and beyond



The Shuswap watershed remains mussel-free. The SWC is helping to keep it that way!

ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNANCE

- Finalized the *Terms of Reference* for the Shuswap Watershed Council, which sets out the roles, responsibilities, expectations and decision-making for Council members
- Established criteria to include community representatives in the Council membership, and welcomed three representatives in May 2016
- Held four Council meetings, once per quarter

2016-17 budget and expenses

The SWC's work is carried out thanks to contributions from the following local governments:

Contributor	Amount (\$)
Columbia Shuswap Regional District (Areas C, D, E, F and the District of Sicamous)	\$ 108,900
Thompson-Nicola Regional District	\$ 53,600
City of Salmon Arm	\$ 40,000
2016 surplus (carried forward from March 31, 2016)	\$ 56,240
Revenue for 2016-17	\$ 258,740

The SWC has managed the funds in a responsible and transparent manner. The program expenses for the year (April 1st, 2016 – March 31st, 2017) are as follows:

Activity	Budgeted (\$)	Expenses (\$)	Variance (\$)
Water Quality Program: Monitoring Initiative	57,800	37,716	20,084
Water Quality Program: Protection Initiative	72,500	75,691	- 3191
Water Quality Contingency Fund	20,000	0	20,000
Recreation Safety Education Program	9500	12,760	- 3260
Communications and Advocacy	27,500	15,587	11,913
Administration and Governance	29,000	35,672	- 6672
Operating Reserve	42,440	0	42,440
Summary of expenses for 2016-17	258,740	177,426	81,314

The SWC believes it's important to maintain a water quality contingency fund that can be drawn from in case of arising water quality issues that require additional, unforeseen monitoring.

SWC MEMBERS:

Paul Demenok – Chair
CSRD Area C

Larry Morgan – Vice Chair
CSRD Area F

Rene Talbot
CSRD Area D

Rhona Martin
CSRD Area E

Nancy Cooper
City of Salmon Arm

Ken Christian
TNRD, City of Kamloops

Rick Berrigan
TNRD, Village of Chase

Todd Kylo
District of Sicamous

Greg Witzky
*Secwepemc Nation,
Adams Lake Indian Band*

Dave Nordquist
*Secwepemc Nation,
Adams Lake Indian Band*

Herman Halvorson
RDNO Area F

Tundra Baird
RDNO, City of Enderby

Dennis Einarson
BC Ministry of Environment

Laura Code
BC Ministry of Agriculture

Lorne Hunter
Community representative

Ray Nadeau
Community representative

Randy Wood
Community representative