

MEDIA RELEASE

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Shuswap Watershed Council launches second year of water quality grants

The Shuswap Watershed Council (SWC) is inviting applications to its Water Quality Grant Program, for the second year running.

“One of the SWC’s primary objectives is to protect and maintain the water quality in Shuswap and Mara Lakes,” explains Erin Vieira, program manager for the SWC. “In particular, we’re focussed on reducing nutrient inputs to rivers and lakes.”

Excessive amounts of nutrients, especially phosphorus, are known to contribute to algal blooms, which reduce the quality of water for drinking and recreation, and can become toxic for people, pets, and livestock.

“The goal of the grant program is to help farmers and landowners keep nutrients on the land and in the soil, being used by crops and vegetation - not washing off into nearby creeks and rivers through rain, snowmelt, or flooding,” Vieira says.

Up to \$85,000 is available in 2021. Farmers, agri-businesses, landowners and others are invited to apply for funding to go toward projects or land management practices that reduce, divert, or capture nutrients.

“After the positive outcomes achieved with the 2020 program, we’re very pleased to offer our grant program for a second year,” says Paul Demenok, Chair of the SWC. “We look forward to creating new partnerships in the Shuswap to protect our water quality while simultaneously helping farms and other land holdings reduce their phosphorus footprint.”

The call for applications comes on the heels of a short demonstration video from the SWC, describing nutrient management projects on four Salmon Valley farms in 2020 with grant funding from the Council. The video can be viewed on the SWC’s [YouTube channel](#).

See [New video describes local farms’ partnerships with Shuswap Watershed Council](#).

“The grant program is one of the ways the SWC is taking action on our research findings,” Vieira adds, referring to a three-year research project that the SWC did with UBC-Okanagan. Research results showed



that the greatest proportion of nutrients in the lakes originate from the settled valley bottoms of the Shuswap River and Salmon River, where there are farms and homes.

More information about the grant program and how to apply is available at www.shuswapwater.ca. The application period closes on April 30th.

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About: The Shuswap Watershed Council is a watershed-based partnership organization that works on water quality and safe recreation in the Shuswap.

Contact: For more information, please contact Mike Simpson or Erin Vieira c/o the Fraser Basin Council in Kamloops at 250 314-9660 and visit www.shuswapwater.ca.