

MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate release

Shuswap Watershed Council awarding grants for water quality protection

The Shuswap Watershed Council (SWC) is awarding grant funding for projects that protect and improve water quality in the Shuswap watershed.

The SWC's Water Quality Grant Program provides funding to assist farms, landowners and stewardship groups with projects that protect and improve water quality, with an emphasis on mitigating the risks associated with nutrient-loading from land to surface waters.

"Protecting water quality is one of the main objectives for the Shuswap Watershed Council," states Rhona Martin, Chair of the SWC. "The Shuswap has a rich agricultural heritage, and agriculture is a significant part of the economy here and contributes greatly to local food security. We want to support farms as they adopt new and improved practices that protect our water quality."

"We are targeting phosphorus with our grant program," explains Erin Vieira, program manager for the SWC. "Phosphorus is an important factor of water quality and soil health. It's needed for agriculture, but when excessive amounts of it flow from the landscape into water it can trigger an algal bloom in the lake. Our goal with the grant program is to help farms and other land stewards keep nutrients on the land and in the soil, not running off or leaching into nearby watercourses."

One of 2025 grant recipients, Trinity Dairies located along the Shuswap River near Enderby, is using grant funds to upgrade technology and nutrient management practices on-farm. These upgrades will increase the accuracy and efficiency of applying nutrients to cropland thereby reducing the risk of excessive amounts of nutrients leaching into the Shuswap River.

The other grant recipients for 2025 are Westwold View Farms, which is also implementing some technology upgrades on farm; Owendale Farms (Lumby) where grant funds will be used to improve on-farm composting and the production of organic soil amendments; the Invasive Species of Council of BC, which is working on streambank restoration on Bessette and Duteau Creeks; and a hobby farm in Scotch Creek owned/operated by Michele Roane and Kurtis Bischoff who will use grant funds to build livestock exclusion fencing along a creek on farm and to install off-stream watering for livestock.



The total value of grants being awarded by the SWC in 2025 is \$34,646 to the five recipients named above. The SWC grant funds will leverage other cash and in-kind contributions for a combined investment of \$79,495 into watershed protection and restoration. Since the Water Quality Grant Program began in 2020, the SWC has awarded 23 grants worth a total of \$267,774. The next round of intakes for the grant program will open in November.

“We are proud to support these innovative projects on farms to improve agricultural practices, build soil health, reduce the risk of nutrient run-off into the watershed and protect water quality,” Vieira says. “It is inspiring to see our grant recipients working to protect the environment now and for the future.”

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

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