

# ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS REPORT

Photo Credit: Darren Robinson Photography

APRIL  
2018  
—  
MARCH  
2019

## Who We Are

### About the Shuswap Watershed Council

The SWC was established in 2014 as a watershed-based partnership of several organizations to enhance water quality and safe recreation in the Shuswap. There are 17 members that represent three regional districts, two municipalities, the Secwepemc Nation, two provincial government agencies, and Shuswap communities. The SWC is a collaborative, non-regulatory group. It works alongside organizations that have regulatory roles in managing the Shuswap watershed, complimenting their work and carefully avoiding duplication.

### Staff

The Fraser Basin Council, a provincial non-government organization, provides staff services to the Shuswap Watershed Council.

### Our Vision

Enhanced water quality that supports human and ecosystem health and the local economy in the Shuswap watershed.

## What We Do

### Our Objectives

The SWC's primary objective is to maintain and enhance water quality in the Shuswap watershed by working with water quality monitors and advocating for good practices to prevent water quality degradation. Its other objectives are to coordinate and report on water quality in the Shuswap; to inform residents and visitors about water quality, and to encourage and promote safe boating and water-based recreation.

### The Work

The SWC's work is guided by its five-year plan.

2018 was the third year of program operations for the SWC. In this Annual Report you'll find the highlights of the SWC's work on water quality monitoring and protection, invasive mussel prevention, safe recreation, and a summary of expenditures.

shuswapwater.ca



## Message from the Chair

### Paul Demenok

Columbia Shuswap Regional District Area C—South Shuswap

The primary goal for the Shuswap Watershed Council is to ensure that the waters that make up this beautiful watershed remain pristine and free from contamination. We know that this is a key concern for residents of the Shuswap. Our approach to achieving this is to partner with all relevant agencies to obtain current information and advice and to utilize good science as the key driver in our decision-making.

This Annual Report provides you with a good overview of our activities and priorities in 2018. I feel honoured to be part of this Council, and would like to thank the Fraser Basin Council and all members of the SWC and Water Protection Advisory Committee for their dedication and contributions to the Shuswap watershed.



## Water Quality Program

The Shuswap Watershed Council serves as a convenor and facilitator for the **Shuswap Water Quality Monitoring Group**, which is made up of several organizations in the watershed that are responsible for monitoring. Regular meetings of the Monitoring Group enable dialogue, information sharing, and planning to ensure that the entire watershed—large lakes, small lakes, and rivers—is monitored.

This device is called a sonde. It has several probes on it for measuring temperature, dissolved oxygen, pH, and turbidity of water.

17

different organizations involved in water quality monitoring

900<sup>+</sup>

estimated water samples collected and analyzed in 2018



The SWC commenced the **third and final year of a research project with UBC–Okanagan** to better understand where and how nutrients are getting into the Shuswap River and Salmon River, and ultimately into Mara and Shuswap Lakes. **Since 2016, the SWC has invested \$135,000 in this research.**

The SWC also approved a second phase of research to be carried out in 2019. Researchers from UBC–O will analyze sediment to learn how nutrient-loading in the watershed has changed over time.

Nutrients have long been of interest in the Shuswap because of their importance to lake health and productivity, but also their ability to trigger an algae bloom. The SWC is committed to this research project because the results will help answer the following questions:



*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 getting into the rivers?*

Having answers to these questions will help the SWC determine its role as a non-regulatory organization in protecting water quality from excessive nutrients.

In 2018, the SWC set aside a dedicated fund for monitoring algae, if the need to do so arose. **Good news:** there were no significant algae blooms in 2018 and the funds weren't spent.

The SWC partnered with the Gardom Lake Stewardship Society on a wetland restoration near Gardom Lake, and provided a \$10,000 grant toward this. Wetlands are exceptional at improving water quality because they slow down a watercourse, and capture nutrients and sediment. They also provide valuable habitat for birds, amphibians and reptiles. As a result of this wetland, water flowing into Gardom Lake is cleaner.

The newly built wetland near Gardom Lake, still frozen at the time of preparing this report. In Spring 2019, the areas around the wetland will be mulched and seeded. Photo credit: Liz Winter, Gardom Lake Stewardship Society





CSISS staff deploy a plankton net into Shuswap Lake near Sicamous. The net would capture tiny mussel larvae, if they were present at this monitoring site.



## Invasive Zebra and Quagga Mussel Prevention

The SWC implemented a new program for Zebra and Quagga Mussel prevention in 2018. The SWC contributed over **\$25,000 cash and resources toward monitoring, education and outreach** for invasive mussels in the Shuswap; it also worked with the Columbia Shuswap Invasive Species Society (CSISS) to monitor the Shuswap watershed throughout boating season. The SWC also promoted **watercraft inspection** and **Clean-Drain-Dry** through news articles and print media, social media, and signage.

28

28 sites on  
14 waterbodies were  
monitored for Zebra  
and Quagga Mussels

Media messaging reached

**55,000** & **27,000**

SUBSCRIBERS

SOCIAL MEDIA USERS

**The Shuswap—  
and all of British  
Columbia—remains  
invasive mussel-free.  
The SWC is helping  
to keep it that way!**

## Safe Recreation

The SWC is committed to helping keep the Shuswap safe for boaters and recreationists through raising awareness for unsafe practices, and **promoting safe practices** such as lifejacket use, cold water safety, drowning prevention, and sober boating. The SWC promoted “7 top tips” through a combination of articles, social media, signage, and advertising. The SWC is also pleased to work with the **Royal Canadian Marine Search & Rescue** to promote free lifejacket loans for children at several locations throughout the Shuswap.

The SWC’s 7 top tips were distributed throughout the Shuswap, through various media

The SWC’s safety  
messaging reached

**100,000**  
RESIDENTS  
AND VISITORS

through weekend  
media campaigns.



## Communications and Advocacy



The SWC is open and transparent about its program operations, expenditures, achievements and decisions. Some of its key communiqués include:

- SWC Meeting Highlights Reports
- Completion and distribution of the second annual water quality report, the **2017 Shuswap Water Quality Summary**
- Maintaining an **up-to-date website** and an active presence on **social media**
- Making all meeting summaries and financial reports available online
- Writing educational articles for the **SWC Blog**

The SWC focused its advocacy work in 2018 on Zebra and Quagga Mussels. The SWC corresponded with the provincial and federal governments regarding its concern for the risk of an invasion, and called for additional measures to protect BC from such an invasion.

## Interim Program Review

The SWC completed an interim review in 2018. The review was prescribed in the SWC's five-year plan, and was conducted by a committee of six people: four SWC members, one representing each of the funders, and two other members-at-large. The committee considered the SWC's program performance and achievements, financial management, and staff services; these were assessed against the SWC's objectives and performance indicators.

The results of the review were positive, and the committee recommended that the SWC stay the course and continue with its work on water quality and safe recreation.



## Administration and Governance

Four Council meetings were held throughout the year to approve projects and work plans, receive operational updates from staff, hear informative presentations from other groups, and discuss arising issues. These meetings were open to the public.

### 2018–19 Budget and Operational Expenses (April 1, 2018–March 31, 2019)

The SWC's work is supported by contributions from the following governments:

Contributor	Amount (\$)
2017–18 surplus (carried forward from March 31st, 2018)	136,978
Columbia Shuswap Regional District (Areas C, D, E, F and the District of Sicamous)	160,000
Thompson-Nicola Regional District	53,600
City of Salmon Arm	40,000
Adams Lake Indian Band	1,300
<b>Revenue for 2018–19</b>	<b>391,878</b>

### Operational Expenses

Program	Budgeted (\$)	Expenses (\$)	Variance (\$)
Water Quality Program: Monitoring Initiative	66,400	36,831	29,569
Water Quality Program: Protection Initiative	76,300	58,528	17,772
Zebra & Quagga Mussel Prevention	26,850	27,750	-900
Safe Recreation	12,200	11,849	351
Communications and Advocacy	37,850	33,754	4,096
Administration and Governance	40,750	36,271	4,479
Operating Reserve*	131,528	0	131,528
<b>Summary of operational expenses</b>	<b>391,878</b>	<b>204,982</b>	<b>186,896</b>

\*The SWC has established a dedicated \$20,000 water quality contingency fund that can be drawn from in case of arising water quality issues that require additional, unplanned monitoring or response. The Fund has not been drawn from to-date, and is held within the Operating Reserve.



## SWC Members

as at March 31st, 2019

**Paul Demenok—Chair**

CSRD Area 'C'

**Jay Simpson—Vice Chair**

CSRD Area 'F'

**Rene Talbot**

CSRD Area 'D'

**Rhona Martin**

CSRD Area 'E'

**Tim Lavery**

City of Salmon Arm

**Rod Crowe**

TNRD, City of Chase

**Ken Christian**

TNRD, City of Kamloops

**Colleen Anderson**

District of Sicamous

**Dave Nordquist**

Secwepemc Nation,  
Adams Lake Indian Band

**Steven Teed**

Secwepemc Nation,  
Adams Lake Indian Band

**Rick Fairbairn**

RDNO, Area 'D'

**Denis Delisle**

RDNO, Area 'F'

**Dennis Einarson**

BC Ministry of Environment  
& Climate Change Strategy

**Laura Code**

BC Ministry of Agriculture

**Lorne Hunter**

Community Representative

**Ray Nadeau**

Community Representative

**Randy Wood**

Community Representative



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