

Shuswap Watershed Council

MEDIA RELEASE

1 December 2015
For Immediate Release

Shuswap Watershed Council set to implement programs

With the Columbia Shuswap Regional District's recent approval of a new service to support the Shuswap Watershed Council (SWC), there are now three organizations providing long-term funding to the SWC thereby enabling it to begin implementing its programs.

At their most recent meeting on November 25th, the SWC authorized its program managers, housed within the non-profit Fraser Basin Council, to update the five-year program that was approved in May 2015 and begin implementing its programs for water quality and recreation safety education in January 2016.

"The Shuswap Watershed Council has the unique mandate of bringing together different agencies across four orders of government to build relationships, share information and discuss issues. Without the SWC, this coordination and sharing would not occur and we would not have the opportunity eliminate waste and duplication," says Paul Demenok, Shuswap Watershed Council Chair and CSRD Area 'C' Director. "In effect, the SWC is an important advocate for all residents of the Shuswap who are interested in seeing our watershed's water quality maintained or improved."

"The Shuswap Watershed Council is an action group, not a regulatory body," says Erin Vieira, the SWC's program manager. "It has a water quality program with two initiatives. One of the initiatives relates to water quality monitoring: coordinating monitoring across the watershed, supplementing agencies' monitoring programs where necessary to ensure the whole watershed is monitored; and reporting on water quality results, among other activities. There is also a water protection initiative that is focussed on better understanding phosphorus pollution in the watershed and undertaking actions to reduce it."

The five-year program is posted online at www.shuswapwater.ca. The document describes all of the SWC's activities, including its water quality program, its recreation safety education program, communications and administration. The cost and timeline for each of those activities is included in the plan. The average annual cost for the programs will be about \$200,000; this will leverage other cash and in-kind contributions.

The SWC is a collaborative group of 16 members representing local governments, first nations, provincial agencies, and the public-at-large. The financial contribution from the CSRD is in addition to financial commitments by the City of Salmon Arm and the Thompson-Nicola Regional District.

-30-

Contact: For more information, please contact Erin Vieira or Mike Simpson at the Fraser Basin Council in Kamloops at 250 314-9660.