

MEDIA RELEASE

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Shuswap Watershed Council launches fourth intake to Water Quality Grant Program

The Shuswap Watershed Council (SWC) is inviting another round of applications to its Water Quality Grant Program, beginning December 1st.

“One of our objectives as a watershed council 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.”

When excessive amounts of nutrients, especially phosphorus, wash or seep off the landscape into creeks and rivers, they contribute to algal blooms which reduce the quality of water for drinking and recreation, and may become toxic to people, pets and livestock.

The purpose of the grant program is to provide financial assistance for projects and new management practices in the Shuswap watershed that improve nutrient retention on the land and in the soil so that less phosphorus flows into Shuswap and Mara Lakes.

Up to \$55,000 is available in the current intake. Farmers, agri-businesses, hobby farmers, landowners, and stewardship groups within the Shuswap watershed are invited to apply for funding to go toward projects or new agriculture and land management practices that reduce, capture, or divert nutrients away from surface waters. Applicants are required to contribute at least 50% of the total project cost in cash and/or in-kind contributions. Funding will be distributed to successful applicants in early 2023.

Vieira says that farms situated along the Salmon River or Shuswap River – which flow into Shuswap Lake and Mara Lake, respectively – will be prioritized for funding, considering other aspects of funding proposals. However, Vieira says that anyone with a farm or property in the Shuswap watershed is eligible to apply for a grant.

To-date, the SWC has provided 9 grants to Shuswap-area farms and stewardship groups for projects that improve nutrient retention and management including riparian restoration, riverbank stabilization, wetland development, livestock fencing, flood protection, manure and effluent storage, cover crop trials, and field drainage improvement. Prospective applicants to the grant program can learn more from a short video the SWC produced in 2020, available on their YouTube channel ([youtube.com/@shuswapwater](https://www.youtube.com/@shuswapwater)).



The SWC recently published a [Phosphorus Action Plan for the Shuswap watershed](#) as another initiative to encourage and inform residents about how to reduce their ‘phosphorus footprint’, thereby helping to protect water quality.

See [Homeowners, industry encouraged to take action to protect water quality in the Shuswap](#).

More information about the grant program and an application package is available at www.shuswapwater.ca. The application period is open from December 1st 2022 – January 31st 2023.

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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 Erin Vieira or Alex de Chantal c/o the Fraser Basin Council in Kamloops at 250 314-9660 and visit www.shuswapwater.ca.