

MEDIA RELEASE

18 July 2022 - For Immediate Release

Shuswap Watershed Council releases 2021 water quality summary report

The Shuswap Watershed Council (SWC) has just released a summary report about recent water quality monitoring throughout the watershed.

“I’m pleased to announce that our sixth annual water quality summary report is available,” says Jay Simpson, SWC Chair and CSRD Director for Area F - North Shuswap. “These reports are produced for residents and visitors to the Shuswap so that they can learn about our watershed which is so important to our lifestyle and economy.”

The report covers water quality in the large lakes and at swimming beaches. It also explains water quality concerns in the region such as algal blooms and the threat that aquatic invasive species pose to the Shuswap.

“Once again the beach monitoring program overseen by Interior Health and First Nations Health Authority had really good results,” explains Erin Vieira, SWC program manager. “Out of 193 water quality samples collected from ten beaches in 2021, 190 had acceptable results.”

The SWC’s report explains that generally, water quality is quite good in the Shuswap but there are some concerns – primarily, related to the amount of nutrients such as phosphorus and nitrogen flowing into the lakes. The large rivers (Salmon, Shuswap and Eagle Rivers) are the largest sources of nutrients to the lakes. Smaller proportions of nutrients come from point-source discharges and from private on-site wastewater (septic) systems around the lakes. The report offers several tips for residents to manage their impact on the watershed.

The report also draws attention to another year of monitoring the Shuswap watershed for invasive Zebra and Quagga Mussels, a program carried out by the Columbia Shuswap Invasive Species Society with financial support from the SWC. The Shuswap continues to be free of invasive mussels, and the report offers several recommendations to prevent the spread of them to BC.

“The threat of invasive mussels continues,” Vieira adds. “Watercraft owners must always clean, drain, and dry their watercraft when they move it out of a lake or river. If you’re going paddling at Gardom Lake today, and to Canoe Beach tomorrow, you need to clean, drain, and dry in between. Additionally, anyone



visiting or returning to BC from outside of the province with a watercraft needs to stop at watercraft inspection stations along their travel route.”

The report can be found on the SWC’s website, www.shuswapwater.ca. Print copies of the report will soon be available from municipal, First Nations, and regional government administrative offices and at library branches across the Shuswap.

-30-

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.