

**AGENDA PACKAGE FOR:**

**Council Meeting**  
**Wednesday September 13<sup>th</sup> 2023 • 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM**  
**Zoom Meeting (NO meeting held in person)**

Join the meeting via Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82982582777?pwd=dXpMeTRiQm04RlZES2JPSW5NZjdWZz09>

Meeting ID: 228 831 6554 • Passcode: 2qSW6m

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3. Report from Program Managers: i. Financial report for the first quarter (April 1 <sup>st</sup> – June 30 <sup>th</sup> 2023)	p. 14
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1.	June 14 <sup>th</sup> meeting summary for approval	10:10

**Council Meeting**  
**June 14<sup>th</sup> 2023 • 9:30 – 11:55 AM**  
**Columbia Shuswap Regional District Boardroom**  
**555 Harbourfront Drive NE, Salmon Arm**

Draft Record of Decisions and Action Items  
This record is subject to change at the next Council meeting

**Meeting objectives**

1. Receive update from program managers
2. Receive update and have roundtable discussion on upcoming CSRD assent process
3. Discuss watershed advocacy issues for SWC members to raise at the UBCM Convention in September

**Present**

Jay Simpson, Chair – Columbia Shuswap Regional District, Area F  
Natalya Melnychuk, Vice Chair – Columbia Shuswap Regional District, Area G  
Marty Gibbons – Columbia Shuswap Regional District, Area C (*by Zoom*)  
Rhona Martin – Columbia Shuswap Regional District, Area E  
Debbie Cannon – City of Salmon Arm  
Pam Beech – District of Sicamous (*from 9:47 am*)  
Reid Hamer-Jackson – Thompson-Nicola Regional District, City of Kamloops (*from 9:42 am*)  
David Lepsoe – Thompson-Nicola Regional District, Village of Chase  
Robyn Laubman – Splatsin te Secwepemc  
Allysa Hopkins – Regional District of North Okanagan, Area F  
Carly Foster – BC Ministry of Environment & Climate Change Strategy (*alternate for Kym Keogh*)  
Erik Kok – Community representative  
Kimm Magill-Hofmann – Community representative  
Dennis Einarson – Senior Scientific Advisor

Erin Vieira and Alex de Chantal – Fraser Basin Council

**Observers**

Barbra Fairclough	Linda Franklin
Liz Freyman	Ian Rogalski
Rob Solinger	Kevin Skrepnek

**Regrets**

Dean Trumbley  
Howard Nordquist  
Jim Johnson  
Lindsay Benbow  
Kelly Chiatto  
Phil Owen

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**Call to Order**

Chair Jay Simpson called the meeting to order at 9:41 AM. The chair acknowledged the traditional and unceded territory of the Secwepemc and Syilx Peoples.

*Mayor Hamer-Jackson entered the meeting at 9:42 AM*

**Adoption of meeting agenda**

**Moved/seconded** by Director Hopkins/Vice Chair Melnychuk that:

The June 14<sup>th</sup> 2023 Shuswap Watershed Council meeting agenda be adopted.

Discussion:

Director Gibbons requested that an item be added to the agenda regarding administration and management costs.

Chair Simpson added the new item to the agenda under New Business.

**CARRIED**

**Adoption of meeting summary**

**Moved/seconded** by Director Hopkins/Mayor Hamer-Jackson that:

The March 8<sup>th</sup> 2023 Shuswap Watershed Council meeting summary be adopted.

**CARRIED**

*Councillor Beech entered the meeting at 9:47 AM*

**Correspondence**

**Moved/seconded** by Director Martin/Director Hopkins that:

The following correspondence be received for information:

- i. Letter from Salmon Arm resident (*re-dacted*) to George Heyman, Provincial Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy dated March 20<sup>th</sup> 2023 (letter was copied to SWC Chair Jay Simpson).
- ii. Letter from Anna Warwick-Sears, Executive Director of Okanagan Basin Water Board to Provincial Ministers Nathan Cullen and George Heyman re: Report on Potential Economic Impact of Zebra and Quagga Mussels in BC dated June 8<sup>th</sup> 2023 (letter was copied to SWC Chair Jay Simpson).

**CARRIED**

**Old business**

None

**Report from Chair**

Chair Simpson reported that he made a presentation to the Water Supply Association of BC in late March. In mid-April the Chair hosted a town hall meeting in Celista, and Ms. Erin Vieira attended to give a presentation on the SWC's work. Chair Simpson commented that there was a lot of interest, and a

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lengthy Q&A after the presentation. The Chair and Ms. Vieira also made a presentation to the Fraser Basin Council Board of Directors in June.

The Chair also noted that the Columbia Shuswap Regional District will have a referendum later in 2023 to determine if there is support for a permanent service and taxation to support the SWC.

**Report from  
Program Managers:**

Ms. Erin Vieira presented a year-end financial report for the period April 1<sup>st</sup> 2022 – March 31<sup>st</sup> 2023:

**Year-end financial  
report for 2022-23**

<b>REVENUE - Source</b>	<b>(\$)</b>
Surplus (from March 31 <sup>st</sup> 2022)	81,804
Return of SWC grant funding	8200
<i>Per Contribution Agreement:</i>	
CSRD Areas C, D, E, F, G and District of Sicamous	160,000
TNRD	53,600
City of Salmon Arm	40,000
Adams Lake Indian Band	1300
<i>Grant funding:</i>	
Transport Canada Boating Safety Contribution Program	22,900
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>367,804</b>

<b>EXPENSES – By Program (per 2022-23 work plan)</b>	<b>Budget (\$)</b>	<b>Expense (\$)</b>	<b>Variance (\$)</b>
Water Quality Monitoring	28,850	23,644	5206
Water Quality Protection & Improvement	158,930	86,895	*72,035
Zebra & Quagga Mussel Prevention	35,875	33,988	1887
Safe Recreation	27,600	24,839	2761
Communications, Engagement, & Advocacy	55,100	42,990	12,110
Management & Administration	43,750	37,090	6660
<b>Sub-total Program Operations Expenses</b>	<b>350,105</b>	<b>249,445</b>	<b>100,660</b>
2023 contribution to Operating Reserve	17,699	0	17,699
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>367,804</b>	<b>249,445</b>	<b>118,359</b>

<b>Operating Reserve</b>	<b>(\$)</b>
Balance at April 1 <sup>st</sup> 2022 (carried forward from March 31 <sup>st</sup> )	132,667
2022-23 contribution	17,699
<b>Balance as at March 31<sup>st</sup> 2023</b>	<b>150,366</b>

\* Of the \$72,035 surplus in the Water Quality Protection & Improvement program budget, \$53,004 is allocated and carried forward for projects that will be completed in 2023-24.

**Report from  
Program Managers:**

Ms. Erin Vieira presented the revised budget for 2023-24. She highlighted that the program budgets have not changed since the presentation and budget

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**Revised budget for 2023-24**

approval on March 8<sup>th</sup>; the only change is to the year-end surplus (March 31<sup>st</sup> 2023). Ms. Vieira also explained that each program budget is presented in more detail to show external expenses and program management expenses (i.e., staffing).

<b>REVENUE - Source</b>	<b>(\$)</b>
2022-23 operational surplus	47,656
2023-23 funds allocated and carried forward to 2023-24 projects	53,004
<i>Per Contribution Agreement:</i>	
CSRD Areas C, D, E, F, G and District of Sicamous	160,000
TNRD	53,600
City of Salmon Arm	40,000
Adams Lake Indian Band	1300
<i>Grant funding:</i>	
Transport Canada Boating Safety Contribution Program	24,025
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>379,585</b>

<b>EXPENSES – By Program (per 2023-24 work plan)</b>	<b>Breakdown of expenses (\$)</b>		<b>Sub-total (\$)</b>
	<b>Ext. expenses</b>	<b>Program mgmt.</b>	
Water Quality Monitoring	24,900	15,200	40,100
Water Quality Protection & Improvement	131,464	18,600	150,064
Zebra & Quagga Mussel Prevention	33,300	6600	39,900
Safe Recreation	20,000	10,000	30,000
Communications, Engagement, & Advocacy	10,400	24,100	34,500
Council Meetings & Administration	2600	37,500	40,100
<b>Sub-total expenses for 2023-24</b>	<b>222,664</b>	<b>112,000</b>	<b>334,664</b>
2023-24 contribution to Operating Reserve	44,921	0	44,921
<b>Total expenses for 2023-24</b>	<b>267,585</b>	<b>112,000</b>	<b>379,585</b>

**Report from Program Managers:**

**Program operations update since last Council meeting**

Ms. Erin Vieira and Mr. Alex de Chantal, SWC program managers, presented an update on program operations since the last Council meeting held in March:

- Staff have completed site visits with water quality grant recipients for 2023 and Contribution Agreements have been signed with each
- The Zebra & Quagga Mussel Prevention Program launched in May in concert with the provincially-designated “Invasive Species Action Month”. Educational campaigns promoting watercraft inspection and Clean-Drain-Dry practices were in newspapers, on local radio and on social media. The campaigns will continue throughout summer months.
- Early detection monitoring for ZQM is underway at 13 sites in the Shuswap watershed – this is a partnership with the Columbia Shuswap Invasive Species Society (CISIS)
- Staff relayed that the Province of BC recently released a report, “Potential Economic Impact of Zebra & Quagga Mussels in BC”, which

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estimates an annual cost range of \$64 – 129 million to deal with the impacts of ZQM

- Staff announced that the SWC’s application to Transport Canada for \$24,025 federal grant funding for the Safe Recreation Program was successful. This is the fourth year the SWC has received grant funding from Transport Canada.
- The SWC’s Safe Recreation Program launched on May long weekend in concert with the national “Lifejacket Day” campaign. Campaigns promoting water safety through a variety of media will continue through summer and fall.
- The ad hoc SWC Wetland Strategy committee met in early April to identify funding opportunities to support the development of a wetland strategy for the Shuswap watershed, and to direct staff on first steps. Staff have applied to the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation for \$25,000 to support this work.
- SWC Chair Jay Simpson and staff met with staff from Interior Health and local government staff to discuss respective algal bloom responsibilities.
- The SWC Annual Report for 2022-23 was published on May 12<sup>th</sup>; it is available online, has been circulated widely via email, print copies mailed to local government and First Nations offices, and promoted on social media
- Communications priorities for the year in addition to the publication of the Annual Report include maintaining the SWC website and social media, preparation of media releases about SWC decisions and announcements, topical campaigns related to invasive species and water safety, and holding community meetings to present information and facilitate Q&A.

Discussion:

Some SWC members commented on the importance of the ZQM campaigns, promoting watercraft inspection and clean-drain-dry practices. The new report from the Province of BC that estimates a cost range up to \$129 million/annually underscores the importance of keeping ZQM out of BC.

Some SWC members asked clarifying questions regarding the roles and responsibilities of Interior Health and local government beach owner/operators in the event of an algal bloom. Director Martin and Councillor Cannon commented on this shift in responsibilities and expressed concern over growing responsibilities being transferred to local governments, who do not have a health mandate.

Director Gibbons cautioned SWC members against directing staff to run a “yes” campaign during the CSRD referendum. Mayor Lepsoe inquired why only the CSRD is holding a referendum; staff replied that financial contributions from the TNRD, City of Salmon Arm, and Adams Lake Indian Band do not have a sunset

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clause whereas the contribution from the CSRD to the SWC expires in December 2023, therefore the CSRD requires voter assent to continue to the service.

Action item:

Chair Jay Simpson to meet with BC Hydro representatives at the September UBCM meeting regarding opportunities for BC Hydro to promote ZQM prevention.

**New business:**

Director Gibbons inquired about the breakdown of program costs as presented by staff. Ms. Erin Vieira clarified that external costs include water quality grants, contributions to CSISS for monitoring, advertising, graphic design, printing etc. whereas program management costs are paid to the Fraser Basin Council (FBC); invoices are issued quarterly and approved by the Chair, as stipulated in the SWC's Terms of Reference. Ms. Vieira further clarified that all expenses are part of the budgeting and work planning process each year.

**Late addition: SWC administration and management costs**

**Moved** by Director Gibbons that:

Quarterly invoices from the Fraser Basin Council Society be presented to the entire SWC for the purpose of transparency,

And that:

The SWC Annual Report for 2022-23 be amended to show the breakdown of costs incurred externally and by program management.

The motions were not seconded.

Discussion:

Mr. Erik Kok, Councillor Cannon, and Ms. Robyn Laubman commented that they are satisfied with the financial reporting from the FBC and the Annual Report for 2022-23 as-is.

**New business:**

Chair Simpson explained that SWC staff have consulted with CSRD Chief Administrative Officer John McLean about the upcoming referendum within the CSRD. The Chair remarked about the importance of clear, consistent communications coming from the SWC about the SWC's work, whereas the CSRD will communicate to residents about the referendum process. He reminded SWC members that media inquiries should be directed to the Chair, Vice Chair and staff.

**CSRD assent process for the Shuswap Watershed Council service**

Vice Chair Melnychuk suggested that the SWC and CSRD issue a joint press release on the matter.

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Action item:

Staff will follow up with the Chair, Vice Chair and CSRD staff to prepare a joint media release as discussed.

**New business:**

**Request from White Lake Residents' Association**

Mr. Alex de Chantal introduced the request from White Lake Residents' Association (WLRA) for funding for water quality testing at White Lake. The request is for \$4200 from the SWC to continue their water monitoring program at White Lake this year. Mr. de Chantal clarified that this request was unsolicited and is not in the current budget, but if the SWC were to support the request the amount could be covered by the projected year-end contribution to the Operating Reserve.

Director Gibbons commented that the WLRA has received grant-in-aid funding in the past. He encouraged SWC members to look at the breakdown of the funding request and expressed concern that some items are not appropriate for reimbursement from grant funding (e.g., mileage).

Mayor Lepsoe commented on the precedent of granting unsolicited requests and inquired why this group didn't apply through the grant program. Mayor Hamer-Jackson echoed Mayor Lepsoe's concerns about precedent. Mr. de Chantal replied that water quality monitoring is not the focus of the SWC Grant Program.

Councillor Cannon commented that she isn't concerned about precedent and is in favour of the SWC providing support to community groups for water quality monitoring.

Mr. Erik Kok expressed concern about awarding money that doesn't go through a vetting process, such as how the SWC Grant Program is administered. Ms. Robyn Laubman also expressed her support for better process of awarding funding. Mayor Lepsoe suggested that in future, groups requesting funding from the SWC appear in person at a meeting.

**Moved/seconded** by Director Martin/Councillor Cannon that:

The SWC grant the funding request for \$4200 to the White Lake Residents' Association for their water quality monitoring program in 2023.

**CARRIED (two opposed)**

Action item:

Staff will follow up with the WLRA and issue the payment contingent upon receiving a final report from the WLRA, and requesting a presentation from them at the next SWC meeting in September.



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**New business:**

A brief roundtable discussion took place with a few ideas brought forth that local government elected officials can raise at the Union of BC Municipalities Convention in September:

**Roundtable discussion to identify watershed advocacy priorities to raise at UBCM**

- Meeting with BC Hydro regarding Zebra and Quagga Mussels
- Concerns about some agricultural practices contributing to nutrient-loading to Shuswap Lake linked to algal blooms
- Concerns about algal bloom response shifting away from Interior Health to local governments.

**Moved/seconded** by Councillor Cannon/Vice Chair Melnychuk that:

The SWC write another letter co-signed with local government partners (CSRD, City of Salmon Arm, District of Sicamous, Village of Chase, TNRD, City of Kamloops) to Interior Health regarding new algal bloom recommendations and responsibilities.

**CARRIED**

Action item:

Staff will follow up with Chair and partners to write a letter to Interior Health as described above.

**Roundtable updates** Omitted from agenda

**Adjourn**

**Moved/seconded** by Director Hopkins/Kimm Magill-Hofmann that:

The June 14<sup>th</sup> 2023 meeting of the Shuswap Watershed Council be adjourned.

**CARRIED**

Meeting adjourned at 11:55 am.

**CERTIFIED CORRECT:**

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Chair

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2.	Correspondence	10:15



**Okanagan Basin**  
WATER BOARD

1450 KLO Road, Kelowna, BC V1W 3Z4  
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Honourable Nathan Cullen  
Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship  
[WLRs.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:WLRs.Minister@gov.bc.ca)

August 16, 2023

Honourable George Heyman  
Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy  
[ENV.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:ENV.Minister@gov.bc.ca)

Honourable Josie Osborne  
Minister of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation  
[EMLI.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:EMLI.Minister@gov.bc.ca)

MLA Kelly Greene  
Parliamentary Secretary for Fisheries and Aquaculture  
[Kelly.Greene.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Kelly.Greene.MLA@leg.bc.ca)

MLA Fin Donnelly  
Parliamentary Secretary for Watershed Restoration  
[Fin.Donnelly.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Fin.Donnelly.MLA@leg.bc.ca)

**Re: Calls to Action to protect B.C. waters from Invasive Mussels**

Dear Ministers,

Our most recent letter of June 8, 2023 expressed concern about the economic and environmental impacts of invasive zebra and quagga mussels on the Okanagan. In that letter, we committed to providing calls for action once we had completed our research. While B.C. Provincial staff and Conservation Officers continue to do very good work through the Invasive Mussel Defence Program (IMDP) with the limited resources they have, serious gaps remain. Rather than reinforcing the program, the budget has been severely cut in recent years, representing a significant risk to much of the province, including the Okanagan.

An analysis of the IMDP shows that between 2019 and 2022, staffing and inspection stations have been cut in half, leading to a 61% reduction in the number of watercraft inspected. B.C. is also the only jurisdiction remaining in western Canada without “pull-the-plug” legislation for draining boats. These cuts are especially troubling, given the province’s own economic analysis that shows an annual cost of a mussel infestation in B.C. would range from \$64 to \$129 million annually. This cost estimate does not include impacts to aquatic ecosystems and fish populations. The economic analysis also shows that every major population centre and agricultural region in the province is at risk of a moderate-to-high infestation based on water chemistry, affecting drinking water infrastructure, industrial facilities, hydro generation, recreation and food production as well as ecosystems.

We appreciate the time you have taken to provide responses to our previous calls to action, and the actions that have been taken by your ministries to date (including B.C. Hydro and other power providers). We provide

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the following Calls to Action, asking for you to demonstrate your ongoing and firm commitment to protect the waters of B.C. from these devastating invasive mussels.

**Calls to Action**

- 1. Commit funding to the IMDP of no less than \$4 million per year (all sources), indexed to inflation for at least 10 years.**

The 2019 budget for the IMDP, the year the program conducted the most inspections, was \$3.5 million, equivalent to \$4.04 million today. This is the minimum level of funding the program should receive. In 2022, the IMDP ran only six inspection stations, with a reduced staff of 32 inspectors, (down from 12 stations and 64 staff in 2019). For 2023, the plan was for 49 inspectors, and six stations with two roving stations. OBWB staff have noted that while there is a plan for inspection station hours, these have not always been met and stations have been closed when they were supposed to be open.

In addition, to date, the IMDP has been partly funded through partnerships with BC Hydro, Columbia Basin Trust, Columbia Power Corporation and Fortis BC. The new economic analysis shows that 60% of hydro generation facilities (accounting for 80% of hydro generating capacity in the province) are at risk from invasive mussels. The projected costs to hydro power facilities is \$17.1 – \$23.3 million per year; the single largest impact for a given sector. Further, in the Upper Peace region, the location of the new Site C dam is at very high risk for invasive mussels, creating vulnerability and unforeseen costs for that project. These funding partnerships must continue, with long-term commitments for stable and reliable funding, especially from Crown Corporations.

- 2. Enhance support to recruit and retain B.C. Conservation Officers, Auxiliary Conservation Officers, and other staff as needed to 2019 levels (64 inspectors) to ensure sufficient staffing for the IMDP.**

Following major economic and workforce changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we understand that temporary, seasonal jobs are more difficult to fill, particularly for positions requiring specialized training and personnel in positions of public trust. We ask that you work together with other appropriate ministries and agencies to recruit and retain seasonal staff for the IMDP. This may require increasing pay levels to attract qualified candidates. Also, it is very important to meet the housing needs of staff who are sometimes deployed to remote locations during the height of tourist and fire-fighting seasons, when competition for accommodations is highest.

- 3. Commit to introducing “pull-the-plug” legislation to be in effect prior to the 2024 boating season.**

Since July 2019, the OBWB has called on the province for “pull the plug” legislation, requiring all watercraft owners to remove their drain plug prior to transporting vessels on public roads, ensuring that vessels have been cleaned, drained and dried before launching in B.C. waters. In the four years since then, all other Western Canadian provinces have put this legislation in place, with B.C. as the only exception. A “Pull the Plug” law is the minimum legislative bar, given that B.C. has been consistently reluctant to require all watercraft entering B.C. to report for an inspection prior to launching in provincial waters.

- 4. Update the provincial Early Detection, Rapid Response plan (EDRR), including a round of consultation with partner organizations prior to finalization.**

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The current EDRR was published in 2015, prior to the establishment of the IMDP. Since then, the province has gathered significant information on watercraft travel patterns, at-risk lakes, and economic factors. B.C. has also had to respond to mussel-infested moss balls, and several near misses with contaminated vessels. While the federal government has now approved the use of potash as a rapid response tool for invasive mussels; potash has proven ineffective in large water bodies like Okanagan Lake, and would not be acceptable in this primary drinking water source for Okanagan communities. The new EDRR should incorporate all lessons learned and look to longer-term options for ongoing regional containment, quarantine, and control methods.

5. Lead a planning process with regional partners to create long-term response, containment, and control plans in regions at high risk of introduction and vulnerable to infestation, including the Okanagan, Shuswap, and Kootenay Regions.

With new information on watercraft travel patterns and water chemistry, we know which regions are at most risk of introduction due to the high number of watercraft travelling there, and which water bodies are at greatest risk due to water chemistry and temperature. With this information, along with lessons learned from other jurisdictions, it is possible to create plans which could reduce the time for containment of a lake from days to hours and reduce the time for attempted eradication from weeks to days. This planning process could also help to identify regional gaps in prevention, prepare infrastructure, solicit public engagement and feedback, and identify resources for long-term control.

#### Ministerial Mandates

It will take a cross-government effort to protect B.C. from invasive mussels. We are pleased that the IMDP is now under the jurisdiction of the B.C. Minister of Water, Land, and Resource Stewardship. Given the potential impacts of invasive mussels on watersheds and fisheries, we have included the Parliamentary Secretary of Fisheries and Aquaculture, and the Parliamentary Secretary of Watershed Restoration in this request for action.

We understand that the IMDP has been removed from the portfolio of the B.C. Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy. However, given the expected impacts of these mussels on the province's environment and ecosystems, and their impacts on water quality, we expect this ministry to continue to be involved in the planning, prevention, and (if necessary) mitigation of harm from invasive mussels in B.C.

This is the first time we have directed our invasive mussel Calls to Action to the Minister of Energy, Mines, and Low Carbon Innovation. Given the increasing importance of invasive mussel prevention for B.C. Hydro and other power producers, we expect this ministry to become increasingly involved with the planning, prevention, mitigation, and funding of the IMDP.

#### The OBWB's Commitment

The OBWB is committed to being an active partner with B.C. on invasive mussel prevention. Most recently, we have been preparing a guide for local governments, water purveyors, and other industrial users to conduct vulnerability assessments on in-water infrastructure. Currently in draft form, *Preparing for Invasive Mussels: Vulnerability Assessment Guide for Raw Water Infrastructure* is undergoing technical review from partners and agencies across the Pacific Northwest, including B.C. ministry staff. Once final, the OBWB will make the guide available throughout B.C., and to neighbouring jurisdictions. This guide was funded solely by the OBWB with in-kind contributions from reviewers. The OBWB also continues to provide public education and outreach through its Don't Move A Mussel: Clean, Drain, Dry campaign ([www.DontMoveAMussel.ca](http://www.DontMoveAMussel.ca)),



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with contributions valued at over \$1 million to date, and has provided more than \$400,000 in funding to the Okanagan and Similkameen Invasive Species Society to conduct direct boater outreach.

We would be happy to continue to provide in-kind support, through reviewing the updated EDRR, and working with the province on a regional response, containment, and control plan for the Okanagan, as well as facilitating contact with Okanagan College and UBC Okanagan to recruit students for seasonal inspector positions. We look forward to seeing your rapid response to these Calls to Action, and especially to a renewed IMDP with long-term, sufficient funding and support. The alternative, should zebra and/or quagga mussels become established in the Okanagan, is too costly to our environment, our economy, and our way of life.

Yours truly,

**Anna Warwick Sears, Ph.D. — Executive Director**  
Okanagan Basin Water Board  
1450 KLO Road, Kelowna, B.C. V1W 3Z4  
E-mail: anna.warwick.sears@obwb.ca  
Office: 250.469.6251

**CC:**

- Okanagan MLAs: Harwinder Sandhu, Norm Letnick, Renee Merrifield, Ben Stewart, Dan Ashton, Roly Russell
- Okanagan Nation Alliance, Chiefs Executive Council
- Okanagan Local Government Chairs and Mayors
- Okanagan MPs: Mel Arnold, Tracy Gray, Dan Albas, Richard Cannings
- Pacific NorthWest Economic Region: Matt Morrison, Chief Executive Officer
- Invasive Species Council of B.C.: Gail Wallin, Executive Director
- Okanagan Chambers of Commerce
- Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association
- Union of BC Municipalities
- Shuswap Watershed Council
- Okanagan and Similkameen Invasive Species Society

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3	Report from Program Managers	10:30

**Program Managers' report: financial update for the first quarter (April 1<sup>st</sup> – June 30<sup>th</sup> 2023)**

**Prepared by: Erin Vieira, Program Manager**

Table 1. Revenue sources (revenue hasn't changed from what was presented at the June SWC meeting)

<b>Revenue sources</b>	<b>(\$)</b>
2022-23 operational surplus	47,656
2023-23 funds allocated and carried forward to 2023-24 projects	53,004
<i>Per Contribution Agreement:</i>	
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Adams Lake Indian Band	1300
<i>Grant funding:</i>	
Transport Canada Boating Safety Contribution Program	24,025
Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation (confirmed)	0
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>379,585</b>

*Budget and actual expenses shown on next page ...*

Item No.	Agenda item	Time
3	Report from Program Managers	10:30

Table 2. Budget and actual expenses to-date (First quarter (Q1) April 1<sup>st</sup> – June 30<sup>th</sup> 2023)

Program	Annual budget (\$)			Q1 actual expenses (\$)		
	External expenses	Program mgmt. (labour)	Sub-total	External expenses	Program mgmt. (labour)	Sub-total
Water Quality Monitoring Program						
Shuswap Water Monitoring Group	0	7200	7200	0	600	600
Water monitoring expenses	*21,900	2200	*24,100	13,125	0	13,125
Annual Water Quality Report	7200	5800	13,000	3836.25	920	4756.25
Water Quality Protection Program						
Water Protection Advisory Committee	0	4200	4200	0	106.67	106.67
Water Quality Grant Program	108,464	9800	118,264	26,590.93	2880.00	29,470.93
Wetland Strategy	20,000	4000	24,000	0	3413.33	3413.33
Climate change impact study (with TRU)	3000	600	3600	3000.00	280.00	3280.00
Zebra & Quagga Mussel Prevention Program						
Education and outreach campaigns	33,300	6600	39,900	30,306.86	2840.00	33,146.86
Safe Recreation Program						
Safety campaigns	20,000	10,000	30,000	6558.12	1240.00	7798.12
Communications, Public Engagement, & Advocacy						
Communications collateral	3250	6100	9350	2183.81	2400.00	4583.81
Public and media engagement	*7150	*13,800	20,950	1291.76	3800.00	5091.76
Advocacy	0	4200	4200	0	0	0
Administration						
Council meetings, work planning, staff liaise with Chair and Vice Chair	2600	20,800	23,400	578.88	5946.67	6525.55
Financial management and fund development	0	16,700	16,700	0	4586.67	4586.67
Sub-total expenses	<b>223,864</b>	<b>115,000</b>	<b>338,864</b>	<b>87,471.59</b>	<b>29,013.33</b>	<b>116,484.92</b>
Contribution to Operating Reserve			*40,721			
Total budget for 2023-24			<b>379,585</b>			

\* denotes change to item from budget presented at June SWC meeting:

The Water monitoring expenses budget has increased by \$4200 as a result of funding awarded to White Lake Residents' Association;

The Public and media engagement budget had \$5000 re-allocated to external expenses and program management

Item No.	Agenda item	Time
4	New business: Water Quality Grant Program	11:05

## Memo to Shuswap Watershed Council members for the September 13<sup>th</sup> meeting

Prepared by: Alex de Chantal, Program Manager

### Background

The Shuswap Watershed Council's Water Quality Grant Program was first launched in early 2020. The purpose of the grant program is to provide financial assistance to farms and other large land holdings for projects that improve nutrient management, and to ultimately reduce the amount of nutrients that wash off or leach out of soils into nearby creeks, rivers and lakes within the Shuswap watershed. With guidance from the SWC Water Protection Advisory Committee (WPAC), the SWC supports various land-based projects to protect and improve water quality in the Shuswap watershed. By retaining nutrients in soils, and preventing their movement to nearby watercourses, a win-win situation is created for farms and for water quality. The grant program is administered through a process of applications, review, and approvals.

Prospective applicants are provided with a full grant program package, including eligibility criteria and application templates. Applications are received in December and January, screened by staff in early February and then evaluated by the WPAC so that recommendations can be made to the SWC. The WPAC itself has no decision-making powers and the final decision to fund applicants rests with the SWC at the March meeting.

Eligible projects must leverage at least 50% of funds and/or in-kind contributions from other (non-SWCO sources). There are other eligibility criteria explained in the grant program package.

For more information about the SWC's Water Quality Grant Program, please see the following:

- [Map of the Shuswap watershed](#)
- [Video on YouTube](#) describing the water quality grant recipients' projects (2020)
- Research summary report, [Understanding Nutrients and Water Quality in the Shuswap River and Salmon River](#).

### Program Review

Staff review the water quality grant program on an annual basis to make updates to the application process.

1. Currently, applications are evaluated and scored subjectively by the SWC Water Protection Advisory Committee (WPAC) based on the following scoring criteria:

- Technical merit of what is proposed and likelihood to achieve outcomes **(25%)**
- Location and proximity of the project to a water body (creek, river, or lake) **(25%)**
- Scale and scope of project **(20%)**
- Leveraging of other funds or in-kind donation of labour, equipment, or material beyond the minimum of 50% **(10%)**
- New applicants, not previous recipients **(10%)**
- Clarity and completeness of proposal **(10%)**

Based on feedback from the WPAC and staff review, the following changes are recommended:

- Technical merit of what is proposed and likelihood to achieve outcomes **(30%)**
- Location and proximity of the project to a water body (creek, river, or lake) **(20%)**



Item No.	Agenda item	Time
4	New business: Water Quality Grant Program	11:05

- Scale and scope of project **(30%)**
- Leveraging of other funds or in-kind donation of labour, equipment, or material beyond the minimum of 50% **(10%)**
- ~~New applicants, not previous recipients~~ **(0%)**
- Clarity and completeness of proposal **(10%)**

In the continuous pursuit of enhancing the effectiveness, impact, and accountability of the SWC Water Quality Grant Program, it is recommended that the SWC strategically adjust the scoring criteria to allocate increased weight to technical merit and the scale/scope of proposed projects. This adjustment aligns with the SWC's commitment to supporting robust, well-executed initiatives that deliver meaningful and sustainable improvements to water quality within the watershed.

The current scoring system, which leans toward favouring new applicants, inadvertently creates an imbalance by offering undue advantages to a specific group. By shifting to a more neutral evaluation framework, the SWC will extend equal opportunity to all applicants, regardless of their prior involvement with the program. Repeated applicants have shown dedication and a sustained commitment to the SWC's water quality initiatives. Their contributions are equally valuable to the program's success and should not be overlooked or diminished due to an uneven scoring structure.

2. The Water Quality Grant Program budget is currently approved for \$55,000 (in the 2023-24 fiscal year). Increasing the funding amount allocated to the grant program would be a strategic move that could have several benefits. To provide rationalization for an increase, especially considering inflation and the program being oversubscribed in the previous year, consider the following points:

- Inflation has led to an escalation in project costs, adversely affecting the feasibility and scope of water quality improvement initiatives. By increasing the grant program budget, the SWC can mitigate the impact of inflation and provide applicants with the necessary resources to execute their projects successfully.
- The program's oversubscription in the previous year underlines the demands for the Water Quality Grant Program. To meet this demand and enhance the community's capacity to address nutrient management and water quality challenges, an increase in funding is recommended.
- With more funding allocated to the grant program budget, the program can support projects of greater scope and impact. This will enable the SWC to address multiple dimensions of water quality improvement, resulting in more comprehensive and lasting outcomes for the watershed.
- Increased funding allocated to the grant program aligns with the SWC's commitment to the sustainable growth of the watershed. Investing now in water quality initiatives will yield lasting benefits, including improved environmental health, reduced future restoration costs, and a legacy of responsible stewardship.
- Increased funding allocated to the grant program aligns seamlessly with the SWC's strategic objectives of promoting a healthy and resilient watershed. By providing the program with the necessary resources, it demonstrates its commitment to achieving long-term water quality goals.

Considering these rationales, it is recommended that the Shuswap Watershed Council considers increasing the funding allocated to the Water Quality Grant Program by 10 – 20% (for an annual grant program budget of ~ \$60,000 - \$66,000). Doing so will empower the community to take meaningful strides towards preserving and enhancing the water quality in the Shuswap watershed.

Item No.	Agenda item	Time
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3. The Shuswap Watershed Council has a legacy of promoting environmental stewardship and water quality improvement within the community. To build upon this legacy and elevate the effectiveness of the grant program, the implementation of an online application form will be undertaken this fall:

- By introducing an online application process, applicants can streamline their submission process, reducing the time and effort required for manual compilation and mailing of paper documents. This efficiency benefits both applicants and the SWC, enabling faster review processes and timely decision-making.
- Online forms allow for standardized data entry and validation, minimizing the risk of errors that can occur with manual transcription. This heightened accuracy ensures that the SWC receives comprehensive and precise information from applicants, facilitating a more effective evaluation process.
- The availability of an online application form can attract tech-savvy applicants who are accustomed to digital interfaces. This resonates with a younger demographic and encourages a diverse range of participants to contribute their ideas and solutions.
- Incorporating an online form is an organic progression that aligns with the changing preferences and behaviours of the digital age. It demonstrates our agility in adapting to evolving trends while maintaining our commitment to our mission.

Incorporating an online application form for the Shuswap Watershed Council Water Quality Grant Program represents a transformative step that optimizes engagement, efficiency, and accessibility.

#### **Next steps**

Staff will make the necessary updates to the grant program, as directed by the SWC members. Staff will convene a meeting of the Water Protection Advisory Committee in November, per the usual bi-annual meeting committee meeting schedule, to review the updated grant program. The grant program will open for applications on December 1<sup>st</sup>, closing on January 31<sup>st</sup> 2024.

#### **Recommended MOTIONS:**

**MOTION** to approve the revised Water Quality Grant Program scoring criteria, as recommended by staff and the Water Protection Advisory Committee

**MOTION** to increase the Water Quality Grant Program budget by \_\_\_.