

Council Meeting
March 8th 2023 • 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM
Columbia Shuswap Regional District Boardroom
555 Harbourfront Drive NE, Salmon Arm

Record of Decisions and Action Items
Approved June 14th 2023

Meeting objectives

1. Elect Chair and Vice Chair for 2023
2. Receive update from program managers
3. Approve Water Quality Grant Program applications for 2023-24
4. Approve SWC work plan and budget for 2023-24
5. Receive guest presentation on Shuswap Lake Water Quality Objectives

Present

Jay Simpson, Chair – Columbia Shuswap Regional District, Area F
Natalya Melnychuk, Vice Chair – Columbia Shuswap Regional District, Area G *(to 2:00 pm)*
Marty Gibbons – Columbia Shuswap Regional District, Area C
Dean Trumbley – Columbia Shuswap Regional District, Area D
Rhona Martin – Columbia Shuswap Regional District, Area E
Debbie Cannon – City of Salmon Arm
Pam Beech – District of Sicamous *(to 12:30 pm)*
Reid Hamer-Jackson – Thompson-Nicola Regional District, City of Kamloops
David Lepsoe – Thompson-Nicola Regional District, Village of Chase
Howard Nordquist – Secwepemc Nation, Adams Lake Indian Band *(via Zoom – to 12:30 pm)*
Robyn Laubman – Splatsin te Secwepemc
Jim Johnson – Regional District of North Okanagan, Area E *(via Zoom - to 2:00 pm)*
Allysa Hopkins – Regional District of North Okanagan, Area F *(to 2:00 pm)*
Carly Foster – BC Ministry of Environment & Climate Change Strategy
Lindsay Benbow – BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Fisheries
Kelly Chiatto – BC Ministry of Forests *(via Zoom)*
Erik Kok – Community representative
Phil Owen – Community representative
Dennis Einarson – Senior Scientific Advisor *(via Zoom – to 12:30 pm)*

Erin Vieira and Alex de Chantal – Fraser Basin Council

Observers and guests

Linda Franklin	Greg Tamblyn
Rob Solinger	Heather Thompson
E. Moore	Lita Gomez
Barb Fairclough	Kym Keogh

Regrets

Kimm Magill-Hofmann

- Call to Order** Alex de Chantal called the meeting to order at 10:05 AM. He acknowledged the meeting taking place on the traditional unceded territory of the Secwepemc Peoples.
- Election of Chair and Vice Chair for 2023** Alex de Chantal presided over the elections of Chair and Vice Chair.
- ELECTION** of Chair for 2023 is Jay Simpson by acclamation.
- ELECTION** of Vice Chair for 2023 is Natalya Melnychuk by acclamation.
- Chair Simpson thanked the Council for the nomination and commented that he looks forward to working with Vice Chair Melnychuk.
- Adoption of meeting agenda** **Moved/seconded** by Vice Chair Melnychuk/Director Hopkins that:
- The March 8th 2023 Shuswap Watershed Council agenda be adopted.
- CARRIED**
- Adoption of meeting summary** **Moved/seconded** by Director Trumbley/Councillor Cannon that:
- The December 14th 2022 Shuswap Watershed Council meeting summary be adopted.
- CARRIED**
- Correspondence** **Moved/seconded** by Director Martin/Director Hopkins that:
- The following items of correspondence be received for information:
- i. Letter from Jim Standen, Assistant Deputy Minister, BC Parks, Recreation Sites and Trails Division, dated January 5th 2023 in response to Chair Jay Simpson's letter of October 11th 2022 regarding need for wastewater pump-out facilities for watercraft on Shuswap Lake.
 - ii. Letter jointly signed by Chair Jay Simpson, Salmon Arm Mayor Alan Harrison, CSRD Board Chair Kevin Flynn, and Sicamous Mayor Colleen Anderson to Ms. Courtney Zimmerman, Interior Health, regarding the 2022 algal bloom in Salmon Arm Bay, dated January 17th 2023.
 - iii. Letter from Lori Halls, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship, dated February 15th 2023 in response to Chair Jay Simpson's letter of November 15th 2022 regarding Zebra & Quagga Mussel prevention.
 - iv. Letter from Minister George Heyman, Ministry of Environment & Climate Change Strategy, dated March 2nd 2023 in response to Chair Jay Simpson's letter of October 12th 2022.

Discussion:

Director Martin remarked that the reply correspondence from Provincial government was disheartening and that the SWC deserves stronger responses from government.

Chair Simpson commented that the SWC is looking forward to a reply from Interior Health (re: the joint letter sent on January 17th 2023), and that he hopes a meeting with Interior Health can take place before summer to further discuss the SWC's concerns with algal bloom response.

Mr. Erik Kok and Director Gibbons both commented that they would like further explanation of the "risk-based approach to enforcement of the Agricultural Environmental Management Code", as referenced in the letter from the Minister of Environment. Mr. Phil Owen commented that the Code and the regulations contained within are being phased in over a period of years.

CARRIED

Moved/seconded by Erik Kok/Councillor Cannon that:

The SWC request information about compliance and enforcement activities to-date in the Shuswap watershed by the BC Ministry of Environment & Climate Change Strategy, and again a year from now to understand the change.

CARRIED

Action item:

Staff will follow up with the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy to get more information on: a.) the risk-based approach to enforcement, and b.) compliance and enforcement reports.

Old business

Moved/seconded by Director Hopkins/Councillor Cannon that:

The following items be received for information:

- i. 2022 Annual Report from the Royal Canadian Marine Search & Rescue Station 106 Shuswap and the Shuswap Lifeboat Society
- ii. Draft summary of the Shuswap Water Protection Advisory Committee meeting held February 9th 2023
- iii. Draft summary of the Shuswap Water Monitoring Group meeting held February 15th 2023.

CARRIED

Report from Chair

Chair Simpson remarked that the SWC needs to do what it can to address algal blooms and the threat of invasive mussels. The SWC will continue to correspond with Interior Health and regulators to make these issues a priority. He also

commented that the Columbia Shuswap Regional District needs to complete an assent process to continue its support of the Shuswap Watershed Council. Chair Simpson remarked that SWC staff are preparing for additional communications and outreach this year. The Chair is also attending a meeting of the Water Supply Association of BC later in March to speak about the SWC.

Discussion:

Several directors suggested how to garner a stronger response from the Provincial government to correspondence from the SWC. Director Martin, Vice Chair Melnychuk and Councillor Cannon suggested that the concerns be discussed at upcoming meetings of the Southern Interior Local Government Association (SILGA) and the Union of BC Municipalities Convention (UBCM).

**Report from
Program Managers**

Erin Vieira provided a program operations update since the last SWC meeting held in December:

- The Water Quality Grant program was open for applications December 1st 2022 – January 31st 2023 with a budget of \$63,200; staff received nine applications by the deadline.
- The Water Protection Advisory Committee met on February 9th to review the grant applications and make recommendations for funding
- The Water Monitoring Group met on February 15th to discuss the upcoming field season and water monitoring plans
- Staff presented the Phosphorus Action Plan at a webinar on February 16th with approximately 90 people in attendance
- Staff coordinated the preparation of a jointly signed letter to Interior Health in January regarding concerns about algal bloom testing and response
- Staff developed a draft work plan and budget for 2023-24 and facilitated a workshop with Chair Jay Simpson and Director Natalya Melnychuk in February to refine the budget in preparation for presentation at the March SWC meeting.

Ms. Vieira presented a financial update for the third quarter (April 1st – December 31st 2022):

(tables on next page)

Revenue for 2022-23 (April 1st 2022 – March 31st 2023):

Source	(\$)
Surplus (from March 31 st 2022)	81,804
Operating Reserve	132,667
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
Total revenue	500,471

Expenses – April 1st – December 31st 2022:

Program (per 2022-23 work plan)	Budget (\$)	Expense (\$)
Water Quality Monitoring	28,850	21,150
Water Quality Protection & Improvement	*158,930	46,186
Zebra & Quagga Mussel Prevention	35,875	32,828
Safe Recreation	27,600	23,814
Communications, Engagement, & Advocacy	55,100	36,268
Management & Administration	43,750	22,291
Sub-total Program Operations Expenses	350,105	182,538
Operating Reserve	150,366	0
Total expenses	500,471	182,538

* denotes change to line item

**New business:
Water Quality
Grant Program**

Moved/seconded by Director Martin/Vice Chair Melnychuk that:

The water quality grant applications be approved as recommended by staff and the Water Protection Advisory Committee.

Discussion:

Alex de Chantal presented an overview of the Water Quality Grant Program purpose, objectives, and eligibility criteria. He explained how the SWC Water Quality Protection Advisory Committee reviewed the applications according to a set of defined evaluation criteria. Next, Mr. de Chantal provided a brief overview of each of the grant applications and highlighted whether the advisory committee recommended each funding request or not. In summary, the advisory committee is recommending \$53,004 be granted to five grant applicants.

Councillor Cannon asked some clarifying questions and commented on the importance of improving water quality through the delivery of the grant funding.

Director Martin commented that she supports the recommendation.

Director Trumbley commented that he would like to see the scoring matrix for the proposals as part of the recommendation package in future meetings.

Vice Chair Melnychuk asked about the two proposals that did not meet the grant program criteria, and if there's a feedback mechanism to improve upon future applications. Mr. de Chantal confirmed that staff are able to provide feedback to applicants.

Mr. Phil Owen asked some clarifying questions. He suggested that the grant program be expanded beyond the current focus on phosphorus sourced from agricultural and urban areas in the Salmon and Shuswap River drainages.

CARRIED

Action item:

Staff will follow up with grant applicants accordingly, schedule site visits and prepare Contribution Agreements with grant recipients.

New Business: Work Plan and Budget for 2023-24

Erin Vieira presented the draft budget for 2023-24 and key work plan items.

Discussion:

Director Gibbons requested that the presentation of the budget be amended to demonstrate project management and administration expenses separate from external expenses.

Councillor Cannon suggested that the SWC do water quality testing to better inform algal response and understanding of nutrient-loading in the lake. Erin Vieira replied that the SWC does not have a field program and cautioned against taking on responsibility for water monitoring. Director Martin and Director Gibbons commented that it isn't SWC's responsibility to collect water samples.

Mr. Phil Owen suggested the SWC research the effects of forest fires on water quality to understand how they might be contributing to water quality concerns and algal blooms. Vice Chair Melnychuk commented that the SWC heard a presentation from Dr. Francois Robinne of the Canadian Forest Service on this subject at a SWC meeting in March 2022. Director Trumbley commented that forest fires are a natural occurrence on the landscape and generally they are known not to contribute significantly to nutrient-loading and algal blooms. Mr. Erik Kok agreed with Director Trumbley's comment.

Councillor Cannon asked if any work is being done on invasive Asian clams. Erin Vieira acknowledged that the clams have been found in a few locations in Shuswap Lake, and that the SWC's educational campaigns about aquatic invasive species are intended to help stop their spread around the watershed and into

other watersheds. Management and/or eradication of invasive species is the responsibility of the BC Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship.

Mr. Phil Owen suggested a recently announced Provincial funding commitment for watershed security fund could pay for the wetland strategy referenced in the work plan.

Director Gibbons asked if staff would share the presentation slide deck with SWC members and post it on the SWC website.

Moved/seconded by Director Martin/Vice Chair Melnychuk that:

The draft work plan and budget be approved.

CARRIED

The key work plan deliverables and outcomes are summarized:

- Administer the Water Quality Grant Program (\$53,004 approved March 8th administered in 2023-24, and \$55,000 new budget for 2023-24)
- Begin developing a Wetland Strategy for the Shuswap watershed
- Administer the Zebra & Quagga Mussel Prevention Program (educational campaigns and early detection monitoring partnership with Columbia Shuswap Invasive Species Society)
- Promote safe boating through educational campaigns (target 400,000 impressions) and provision of safety equipment
- Communicate and engage with the public about the SWC's activities (e.g., Annual Highlights Report, media releases as needed, website and social media)
- Educate and inform the public about water quality (e.g., Annual Water Quality Summary Report)
- Advocate for the Shuswap watershed – emphasis on better measures from senior government to stop the spread of invasive mussels and more water quality monitoring and action on nutrient-loading and algal blooms
- Hold four SWC meetings per year
- Track and report expenses.

The budget for 2023-24 is summarized:

(tables on next page)

Revenue for 2023-24 (April 1st 2023 – March 31st 2024):

Source	(\$)
Water Quality Grant Fund (carried forward from 2022-23)	63,200
Projected operational surplus from March 31 st 2023	34,000
Operating Reserve	150,366
<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 (not confirmed)	24,025
Total revenue	526,491

Expenses for 2023-24 (April 1st 2023 – March 31st 2024):

Program	Expense (\$)
Water Quality Monitoring	40,100
Water Quality Protection & Improvement	150,064
Zebra & Quagga Mussel Prevention	39,900
Safe Recreation	30,000
Communications & Advocacy	34,500
Council Meetings & Administration	40,100
Sub-total Program Operations Expenses	334,664
Operating Reserve	191,827
Total expenses	526,491

Action items:

Staff will re-circulate information from Dr. Francois Robinne's presentation in March 2022 about forest fires in watersheds.

Staff will circulate the presentation slide deck to SWC members and post it on the SWC website alongside the draft meeting summary.

**New business:
Wetland Strategy
for the Shuswap
watershed**

Alex de Chantal introduced the proposed development of a Wetland Strategy for the Shuswap as an item identified in the SWC's Strategic Plan for 2021 – 2026. He reviewed some of the many benefits of wetlands in a watershed, and the benefits of having a Wetland Strategy. He briefly reviewed the components of other organizations' wetland strategies in BC. He explained that staff are looking for direction from the SWC as to the scope of such a strategy for the Shuswap.

Mr. de Chantal presented the following recommendations to develop a Wetland Strategy for the Shuswap:

- Phase 1 (2023-24) – Develop Wetland Strategy
Hire a consultant for data (inventory and assessment), prioritization, and mapping. Identify partnerships and align with regional conservation and

management goals. Develop a set of policies that outline how the SWC (and partners) will protect and restore wetlands.

\$24,000.

- Phase 2 (2024 onward) – wetland project implementation
Seek to collaborate with partners to leverage the Wetland Strategy and seek grant funding to support project implementation, such as wetland restorations.
Fund development opportunity.

Discussion:

Director Trumbley remarked that the budget to develop a strategy should be much higher and he expressed support for conducting an inventory of wetlands as part of developing the strategy. He remarked that Ducks Unlimited has a Canadian Wetland Inventory System already established.

Ms. Robyn Laubman also expressed support for inventorying wetlands. She suggested existing LiDAR collection projects may provide the desired information. She further suggested that the Wetland Strategy include a component of education and public engagement to increase the understanding of wetlands' collective importance.

Director Martin commented that the SWC needs to clarify the purpose of the Wetland Strategy – such as to protect and maintain wetlands, and/or to restore wetlands.

Mr. Erik Kok suggested that the SWC start by focusing on a particular geographical area of the watershed such as the Salmon River drainage.

Director Trumbley commented that the Strategy should include a component of wetland restoration because it will help improve water quality and watershed health. He re-iterated that the Strategy will be a useful tool for securing grant funding for restoration projects.

*Councillor Pam Beech, Councillor Howard Nordquist and Dennis Einarson
left the meeting at 12:30 pm*

The conversation was put on hold to allow for the guest presentations to begin at their scheduled time. The SWC came back to this conversation at 2:00 pm.

Councillor Cannon suggested this item be deferred until the next SWC meeting. Director Trumbley agreed that the item should be deferred, and suggested that an ad hoc committee form to work with staff and bring a recommendation to the next SWC meeting.

Moved/seconded by Director Martin/Mayor Hamer-Jackson that:

The committee be formed as discussed.

CARRIED

Guest presentation: Heather Thompson, Water Quality Specialist with BC Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship presented an overview of the recently completed Water Quality Objectives policy report for Shuswap Lake. Water Quality Objectives (WQOs) have been defined for eight parameters based on monitoring data collected from four sites on Shuswap Lake over the past 20 years.

Ms. Thompson described the WQOs for the following: dissolved oxygen, Secchi depth (a measure of water clarity), total phosphorus, total nitrogen, nitrogen:phosphorus ratio, Chlorophyll *a* (a measure of phytoplankton and lake primary productivity), total organic carbon, and *E. coli*. She explained that the WQOs are set at levels that protect the environment and are achievable. She clarified that some objectives are set at different levels in Salmon Arm Bay than in other area of the lake, and that this difference is due to the fact that Salmon Arm Bay is the more impacted area of the lake especially with regard to nutrient-loading.

Vice Chair Melnychuk, Director Hopkins, and Director Johnson left the meeting at 2:00 pm

Kym Keogh, Section Head with the Monitoring, Assessment and Stewardship team, BC Ministry of Environment & Climate Change Strategy, presented a brief summary of studies to understand nutrient-loading in Shuswap Lake. She acknowledged that most of this work has been done by the Ministry and the Shuswap Watershed Council. Next, she presented a set of data from 2022 and illustrated it against the newly set WQOs. Next, she explained that the SWC's letter to Environment Minister George Heyman was reviewed by many provincial staff in order to write a reply letter that included some strong commitments.

Ms. Keogh described some of the Ministry's plans for continued work in the Shuswap watershed including continued water quality monitoring; focused compliance work in the Salmon River watershed 2023; continued work with SWC on nutrient management; investigating sources of nutrients in the Salmon Arm; reviewing permits and effluent discharges; examine runoff sources in Salmon River watershed through bacterial source-tracking or eDNA (methodologies to determine animal sources of contamination, e.g. livestock vs. humans vs. geese, etc.); and study nutrient movement in the water and soils of the upper Salmon River watershed above Westwold aquifer. Ms. Keogh emphasized that these plans will be solidified in the coming months and worked on over the next several years.

Ms. Keogh explained that the *Agricultural Environmental Management Code* came into force in 2019 and is being implemented in phases. To-date, enforcement of the Code has been focused in the Fraser Valley. Inspection reports are available online

(<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/research-monitoring-reporting/reporting/env-compliance-inspection-report>).

Adjourn

Moved/seconded by Director Martin/Councillor Cannon that:

The March 8th Shuswap Watershed Council meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 2:30 pm.

CERTIFIED CORRECT:



Chair