

Council Meeting
June 4th 2025 • 10:45 AM – 1:30 PM
City Hall – Room 100
500 2nd Avenue NE, Salmon Arm BC

Draft Record of Decisions and Action Items as at June 5th, 2025
This record is subject to change at the next Council meeting

Present

Rhona Martin, Chair – Community representative
Stephen Karpuk, Vice Chair – Thompson-Nicola Regional District, City of Kamloops
David Lepsoe – Thompson-Nicola Regional District, Village of Chase
Cliff Arnouse – Secwepemc Nation, Adams Lake Indian Band
Diane Sutherland – BC Ministry of Environment & Parks (*by Zoom*)
Emma Holmes – BC Ministry of Agriculture & Food
Erik Kok – Community representative
Kimm Magill-Hofmann – Community representative
Phil Owen – Agriculture sector representative
Megan Ludwig – science and research advisor (*by Zoom*)
Daniel Selbie – science and research advisor (*by Zoom, to 1:00 pm*)

Erin Vieira and Alex de Chantal – Fraser Basin Council

Observers

Ian Rogalski

Regrets

Brian Schreiner
Robyn Laubman
Jeff Nitychoruk
Pam Beech

- Call to Order** Chair Rhona Martin called the meeting to order at 10:45 AM and acknowledged the meeting taking place on the traditional, unceded territory of the Secwepemc Peoples.
- Release of in camera meeting motion** The following motion was carried in an *in camera* meeting of the Shuswap Watershed Council on June 4th, 2025, 10:30 – 10:45 am:
- Moved/seconded** by Stephen Karpuk/Kimm Magill-Hofmann that:
- Emma Holmes be appointed to the SWC as the representative from the BC Ministry of Agriculture & Food for a term ending March 31st 2028.
- CARRIED**
- Adoption of meeting agenda** **Moved/seconded** by Stephen Karpuk/Phil Owen that:
- The June 4th 2025 SWC meeting agenda be adopted.
- CARRIED**
- Adoption of meeting summary** **Moved/seconded** by Stephen Karpuk/Kimm Magill-Hofmann that:
- The March 5th 2025 SWC draft meeting summary be approved.
- CARRIED**
- Correspondence** **Moved/seconded** by Erik Kok/Stephen Karpuk that:
- The correspondence be received for information.
- CARRIED**
- Discussion:
- Vice Chair Karpuk commented that he met with Nathan Cullen at the Union of BC Municipalities Convention last year about invasive mussels and other watershed issues, comments and concerns were well received.
- Old business** **Moved/seconded** by Phil Owen/Emma Holmes that:
- The draft summary for the Water Monitoring Group meeting held on March 13th 2025 be received for information.
- CARRIED**
- Report from Chair** Chair Martin reported that she and Program Manager Erin Vieira met with MLA Peter Milobar and MLA Ward Stamer to discuss the Shuswap Watershed Council's work. Both MLAs are already well aware of the Council, and

appreciative of the work. The Chair remarked she would like to meet with the Vernon and Shuswap MLAs.

**Report from
Program Managers:
year-end financial
report**

Program Manager Erin Vieira provided a year-end financial report for the year, April 1st 2024 – March 31st 2025

REVENUE

Source	Amount (\$)
2023-24 operational surplus (from March 31 st , 2024)	25,113
2023-24 funds carried forward to 2024-25 projects	59,961 ¹
<i>Contribution Agreement partners</i>	
Thompson-Nicola Regional District	53,600
Adams Lake Indian Band	1300
Columbia Shuswap Regional District	0
City of Salmon Arm	0
<i>Grant funding</i>	
Canada Water Agency	153,765
<i>Reserve funds</i>	
SWC Operating Reserve balance from March 31 st 2024	174,987
Total Revenue	468,726

EXPENSES

Program	Budget (\$)	Expenses (\$)	Variance (\$)
Water Quality Monitoring Program	111,784	109,753	2031
Water Quality Protection Program	205,634	143,856	61,777 ²
Zebra & Quagga Mussel Prevention Program	34,857	35,349	-492
Safe Recreation Program	13,193	12,039	1154
Communications & Advocacy	19,488	23,351	-3863
Administration	64,631	60,319	4312
Surplus	19,140	0	19,140
Total Expenses	468,726	384,667	84,058

Notes:

¹. The Water Quality Protection Program usually ends the year with a surplus due to funds that have been approved for spending but not carried out until the following year. \$59,961 were carried forward from March 31st 2024, dedicated to projects that were completed in 2024-25. See also note #2.

². Of the \$61,777 surplus in the Water Quality Protection Program as of March 31st 2025, \$34,646 is allocated to projects that will be completed in 2025-26.

**Report from
Program Managers:
operations update**

Program Manager Erin Vieira (Fraser Basin Council, 'FBC') provided an update on work completed since the last Council meeting:

- The financial year-end was March 31st. Staff have ensured all invoices are paid and have reconciled year-end financial reports with the FBC finance department.
- Staff have submitted a report to Canada Water Agency (CWA) for the grant funds received in 2024-25. Eligible project expenses came to \$153,765 and went toward many projects and programs including water monitoring, wetland strategy phase 3, a water budget for the Salmon River completed in partnership with Splatstine Secwepemc and the Province of BC, and administration. The SWC is very grateful to the CWA for this critical support of its work in 2024-25.
- The 2024 Water Quality Grant Program provided funding to six water protection projects on five farms in the Shuswap watershed. All projects are complete, project reports have been submitted by proponents, and all grants are paid out.
- The 2025 Water Quality Grant Program is underway. \$34,646 is being awarded to four Shuswap-area farms and one non-profit stewardship organization. Staff did site visits in April to meet the proponents and have signed Contribution Agreements with each of them.
- The Shuswap Water Monitoring Group met on March 13th, facilitated by staff. It was well attended by staff from many organizations involved in water quality monitoring in the Shuswap watershed. The main purpose of the meeting was to review all organizations' water monitoring plans for 2025.
- Program Manager Erin Vieira and SWC Chair Rhona Martin met with MLA Peter Milobar (Kamloops – Centre) and MLA Ward Stamer (Kamloops – North Thompson) on March 20th to provide an overview of the SWC's work and discuss pressing watershed issues
- Staff delivered educational campaigns about aquatic invasive species throughout the month of May, which is designated as Invasive Species Action Month in Canada
- Staff distributed two media releases this spring: one to announce Invasive Species Action Month, and the other to announce the water quality grant program funding
- Staff sent an informative 'spring newsletter' out to approximately 250 subscribers as a new way to expand the reach of SWC communiques
- Staff are working on the 2024-25 Annual Highlights Report; it will be ready in early June
- Staff delivered no-cost educational campaigns (via social media) during Safe Boating Awareness Week, a national campaign in mid-May to promote water safety
- Staff recently received notice from the BC Watershed Security Fund (WSF) – to whom the FBC submitted a funding application, on behalf of the SWC, last winter for \$400,000 over two years – was, unfortunately, unsuccessful. The WSF administrators said the fund was extremely over-

allocated; while \$7M is available, it received funding requests from across BC in the amount of \$41M

- Staff submitted a new funding application to the Canada Water Agency for 2025-26; it's not yet known when an announcement will be made
- As a result of funding announcements, staff have revised the budget and work plan for 2025-26
- Staff have continued to recruit new members to the SWC membership, as outlined in the Terms of Reference.

Discussion:

Vice Chair Karpuk commented on the use of the SWC's operating reserve last year to fund program operations, and asked if there is a plan to start saving again. Program Manager Erin Vieira answered that yes, in the current year work plan and budget there is a planned \$15,000 surplus.

There was a question about inviting the City of Salmon Arm to re-join the SWC membership and provide a financial contribution. It was suggested that staff request to attend a City Council meeting as a delegation. Vice Chair Karpuk is willing to participate with staff in this. It was also suggested that staff seek participation from a representative of the Salmon Arm Agricultural Advisory Committee to participate in the SWC Water Protection Advisory Committee in order to provide input on the SWC Water Quality Grant Program. Chair Martin suggested a delegation also go to the District of Sicamous with a request for funding.

Erik Kok asked if staff have tracked the amount of fencing that the SWC Water Quality Grant Program has funded. He also asked if water quality grant recipients are required to put up a sign on their property announcing funding from the Shuswap Watershed Council. Program Manager Erin Vieira said that no, signs aren't a requirement for grant recipients. Phil Owen remarked that as a grant recipient this year, he would be willing to put up a sign and asked for a template.

Megan Ludwig commented that the Provincial Farmland Advantage Program, funded by the Investment Agriculture Foundation, provides funding for riparian and livestock exclusion fencing.

There was a discussion on the impact of large wildfires on watersheds, and that re-forestation in burned areas, especially riparian areas, needs to be accelerated and not just left to natural re-establishment of plants. There were a few action items and next steps suggested, including sending a letter to government specifically about Tsutswecw Park, asking about Provincial policies and plans for re-forestation, and inviting representatives from Provincial and Federal governments (DFO) to a discussion at a future SWC meeting.

Action items:

- Staff to send delegation requests to City of Salmon Arm and District of Sicamous.
- Staff to invite a representative from the Salmon Arm Agricultural Advisory Committee to participate in the SWC Water Protection Advisory Committee.
- Staff to tally amount of fencing paid for by the SWC Water Quality Grant Program, to-date.
- Staff to develop Water Quality Grant signage template for grant recipients, and send to Phil Owen for installation on his farm.
- Megan Ludwig to provide a contact at Farmland Advantage for staff to follow up with and learn more about their program.
- Staff to draft a letter to BC Parks, Provincial government ministries, and DFO about re-forestation post-wildfire and invite them to a roundtable discussion at a future meeting of the SWC; Erik Kok has photos he can share; Tk'wemi'ple7 Cliff Arnouse is willing to co-sign the letter on behalf of Adams Lake Indian Band.

Guest presentation:
Margot Webster,
Royal Roads
University

Erin Vieira introduced Margot Webster, a Master's candidate from Royal Roads University who received a financial contribution (\$5509) from the SWC for her research on floating treatment wetlands on the Salmon River. Ms. Webster thanked the SWC for contributing and making the research possible. She remarked that her research got lots of interest from residents and the media. She explained that natural wetlands act as 'filters' in the ecosystem as they cycle nutrients, add biodiversity, store water, and provide many more ecosystem benefits. The purpose of her research was to use the nutrient-rich waters of the Salmon River as an experimental site for measuring the impact of 'floating treatment wetlands' (FTWs) on water quality. FTWs are constructed to mimic a natural wetland. Their efficacy isn't well understood in natural ecosystems. She built and deployed several FTWs in the Salmon River in June 2024, populated with small wetland plants; by the end of the summer the plants and their roots had grown significantly.

Ms. Webster's research involved analyzing water samples and plant tissue samples. Her results showed that the FTWs were taking nutrients (ammonia, orthophosphate, nitrate) out of the water. The results were strongest in July. Her results also showed that cattail was the most effective plant in the FTWs. She explained that July may show the strongest uptake in nutrients due to the water conditions at the time (more nutrients available) and the higher growth rates by plants at that time. Her data have been uploaded into the Provincial EMS database which is publicly accessible.

Ms. Webster concluded with some recommendations for future research on floating treatment wetlands and there was a brief Q&A session.

Chair Martin thanked Ms. Webster for the research and her presentation, and requested that her full Masters Thesis, when complete, be shared with the SWC for information.

**New business:
Updated work plan
and budget for
2025/26**

Staff introduced the work plan and budget for 2025-26, explaining that this year the SWC faces an unprecedented challenge of low levels of confirmed funding. Staff are awaiting an announcement from Canada Water Agency about a grant application for this year. Staff presented the work plan and budget for the year, recommending that the following items be prioritized for funding: Water Quality Grant Program; two SWC committees (2 mtgs per year); aquatic invasive species (AIS) prevention; communications, outreach and advocacy; administration and Council meetings; fund development.

Discussion:

Erik Kok commented that it's a great work plan and suggested maintaining four SWC meetings per year (not three). He supports eliminating the Water Quality Report from the work plan for this year to cut costs and would support reducing the Safe Recreation program.

Vice Chair Karpuk also suggested maintaining four SWC meetings per year. He suggested staff prioritize making presentations to funders, such as the TNRD and others. He would be happy to support these presentations/delegations.

Kimm Magill-Hofmann asked about the possibility to expand the SWC mandate to water quantity as a way to access more funds. Program Manager Erin Vieira suggested that it would be an excellent conversation to have during strategic planning, which is something the SWC needs to start later this year. Program Manager Alex de Chantal suggested the SWC balance its objectives to meet its own needs while also meeting criteria for funding.

Tk'wemi'ple7 Cliff Arnouse said he is willing to have conversations with the Shuswap Nation Tribal Council and Assembly of First Nations. Erik further suggested that correspondence and advocacy from First Nations to potential new funders for the SWC highlighting the importance of water and the need for funding would be an impactful measure.

Chair Martin further commented that grant-in-aid applications to the Columbia Shuswap Regional District should be prioritized. Funding from CSRD could go toward Zebra/Quagga Mussel prevention, water monitoring, program operations and more.

Moved/seconded by Phil Owen/Erik Kok that:

The work plan and budget be approved as presented, subject to staff confirming the administration line item.

CARRIED

Action item:

- Staff to submit a delegation request to the TNRD.

**New business:
Strategic Planning
Process for 2026**

Staff explained that the SWC's current Strategic Plan is in effect for April 1st 2021 – March 31st 2026. It was written in 2020 by staff and adopted by the SWC. A new strategic planning process should begin soon, ideally to have a completed plan by April 2026. Staff had the following questions for SWC to consider how to begin a new strategic planning process:

Who should lead the development of a new strategic plan?

- In-house with SWC members supported by staff, or
- In-house by a committee of SWC members supported by staff, or
- Hire a consultant to provide some guidance to the SWC or a committee. If so, the SWC will need to allocate some budget to this.

How and when should the planning process unfold?

- As part of the agendas for the next 2-3 SWC meetings, or
- Schedule extra meeting(s) for strategic planning.

Discussion:

Erik Kok suggested that staff can lead the development of the plan with SWC members, without hiring a consultant, and that an extra meeting will be needed.

Vice Chair Karpuk agreed, and urged SWC members to prepare by reading the current Strategic Plan and giving thought to what new opportunities or changes should be reflected in the new plan. He stressed that the SWC needs to be able to measure its outcomes.

Kimm Magill-Hofmann suggested that the entire SWC participate in the process.

Chair Martin agreed that all SWC members should participate if they are able to, and that she is open to hiring a consultant to provide some guidance and keep the process on track. Program Manager Erin Vieira clarified that a small contract with a consultant to provide support in a meeting or two would be valuable. Chair Martin further commented that SWC members could review the strategic plans of other similar organizations, such as the Nechako Watershed Roundtable, for inspiration.

Phil Owen remarked that funding is available for non-profit strategic planning. Chair Martin clarified that staff should look into ETSI-BC.

Vice Chair Karpuk suggested that staff let the Columbia Shuswap Regional District and the City of Salmon Arm know that the SWC is embarking on strategic planning, and invite them to part of the process.

Program Manager Alex de Chantal summarized next steps: Staff will schedule a Strategic Plan review and brainstorming session as part of the next SWC agenda and invite someone from the CSRD and City of Salmon Arm to participate, and prepare for a strategic planning workshop to be facilitated by a consultant, as an extra meeting, later in the fall.

Action item:

- Staff to look into the Economic Trust of the Southern Interior (ETSI-BC) as a potential funder for non-profit strategic planning.
- Staff will add Strategic Plan review and brainstorming session to the next SWC agenda and ensure that the CSRD and the City of Salmon Arm are invited to participate
- Staff to begin seeking a date for a strategic planning workshop in the fall with a consultant (October/November).

**Roundtable
Updates**

None

Adjourn

Moved/seconded by Phil Owen/Erik Kok that:

The June 4th 2025 meeting of the Shuswap Watershed Council be adjourned.

CARRIED

Meeting adjourned at 1:40 PM.