

Shuswap Watershed Council Terms of Reference

1. Introduction

The Shuswap Watershed Council (SWC) was established in 2014 as a watershed-based partnership to enhance water quality and safe recreation in the Shuswap. The SWC is a collaborative, non-regulatory group. It works alongside organizations that have regulatory roles in managing the Shuswap watershed, complementing their work and carefully avoiding duplication.

During 2014 – 2015, the SWC developed new programs and work was done to ratify the governance and funding model. In 2016, the SWC began implementing programs for water and safe recreation, according to a five-year plan for 2016 - 2021. As of April 1st 2021, the SWC is implementing its [Strategic Plan for 2021 - 2026](#).

This Terms of Reference sets the governance framework for the Shuswap Watershed Council.

2. Shuswap Watershed Council Purpose

The SWC provides direction to the creation and implementation of its programs for water quality, safe recreation, invasive species prevention, public engagement and communications, and advocacy, as set out in [the Strategic Plan for 2021 - 2026](#).

3. Shuswap Watershed Council Role

The roles of the SWC are to:

- Increase collaboration of all relevant interests in the Shuswap watershed
- Provide direction and oversight for the implementation of its programs
- Monitor risks and quality of program implementation, and provide course corrections as needed
- Approve budgets and annual reports
- Receive scientific and technical input, and approve plans and budgets (as appropriate) from the Water Quality Monitoring Group and the Water Protection Advisory Committee for implementing the water quality program.

All SWC members sign and abide by a guiding [Principles Document](#).

4. Shuswap Watershed Council Membership

The SWC is comprised of up to 22 members:

Columbia Shuswap Regional District	4 members (Areas C, D, E, F)
Thompson-Nicola Regional District	2 members
City of Salmon Arm	1 member
District of Sicamous	1 member
Secwepemc Nation	4 members
North Okanagan Regional District	2 members

BC Ministry of Environment & Climate Change Strategy	1 member
BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food, & Fisheries	1 member
BC Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations & Rural Development	1 member
Community Representatives (public)	up to 4 members
Senior Scientific Advisor	1 member

4.1 Recommendations and Appointments

Recommendations to the SWC are made as follows, and appointed by the CSRD Chair¹:

- Members from regional and municipal governments must be elected officials
- Representatives from the CSRD are those directors representing Areas C, D, E and F
- Representatives from the Secwepemc Nation are recommended by Pespesellkwe
- Other than the CSRD, representatives from regional and municipal governments are recommended to the SWC at the discretion of their respective Council or Board
- Representatives from provincial agencies are recommended to the SWC by their respective agency
- Community representatives are recommended to the SWC through a process of evaluating Expressions of Interest.

4.2 Community representatives

Community representatives must:

- Be prepared to commit time and energy to participate on the SWC without remuneration
 - Travel expenses will be compensated at a rate of \$0.50/km (See Article 10)
- Be committed to examining issues and ideas objectively

The participation of a community representative on the SWC includes:

- Attendance at quarterly meetings, held within the Shuswap area or held virtually with remote participation (see Article 11)
- Serving for a three-year term
- Receiving and responding to communications by e-mail.

It is desirable for a community representative on the SWC to show that he or she:

- Has a demonstrated track record of commitment to the community, and/or
- Has experience working in a collaborative setting, and/or
- Resides in the Shuswap watershed.

4.3 Terms

Members' terms are as follows:

- Representatives from regional, First Nation, and municipal governments serve one-year terms, and may be recommended for subsequent terms at the discretion of their respective Council or Board

¹ This conforms with CSRD Bylaw 5705 that establishes the Shuswap Watershed Council Service (refer to Bylaw Article 7 for more information)

- Representatives from provincial agencies and the community serve 3-year terms
 - Representatives from provincial agencies and Community Representatives may be re-appointed for subsequent terms
- The term for the Senior Scientific Advisor is on-going (no expiry).

4.4 Chair and Vice Chair

The SWC will elect a Chair and Vice Chair from among its members for one-year terms (see Article 6)

5. Decision Making

The SWC makes decisions by consensus whenever possible.

5.1 Voting rights

When a vote is required, rights are granted on the following basis:

- All rights (i.e., financial and non-financial decisions) are granted to elected officials (or their alternates) and other representatives of organizations that make a financial contribution (see Article 10)
- Voting on non-financial issues is granted to representatives from the Secwepemc Nation, North Okanagan Regional District, and Community Representatives
- Representatives of provincial agencies and the Senior Scientific Advisor do not have voting rights.

5.2 Financial and Non-financial decisions

Financial decisions are made by vote in a SWC meeting as follows:

- Quorum for financial decisions is 75% of SWC membership with financial voting rights
- Financial decisions are made by two-thirds majority of those present with financial voting rights.

When a vote is required, non-financial decisions are made as follows:

- Quorum for non-financial decisions is 50% of SWC membership with voting rights
- Non-financial decisions are made by simple majority of those with voting rights.

Approval of minor expenses can be done in between SWC meetings as follows:

- The Chair and Vice Chair can approve additional workplan expenses brought forward by staff, up to a maximum of \$1000 quarterly, so long as the item(s) are aligned with the Strategic Plan. Staff are required to report these additional approved expenses to the SWC.

5.3 Casting votes

Each member with voting rights is assigned one vote. Participation in meetings, including voting, may take place via tele-conference.

5.4 Alternates

The SWC will honour alternates set up by the members' organizations, which includes elected members of the SWC representing regional districts, municipalities, and the Secwepemc Nation. Alternates are selected by the respective organization. Community representatives, representatives of provincial agencies, and the Senior Scientific Advisor do not have alternates.

6. Chair and Vice Chair

The SWC will elect a Chair and Vice Chair from among its members for one-year terms.

6.1 Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Following the terms for non-financial decisions (per Article 5.2), the election of a chair and vice chair will take place as follows:

- Elections will take place at the first meeting of the calendar year, presided over by the program managers
- Chair and Vice Chair appointments are for one year
- Nominees for the positions of Chair and Vice Chair must be present at the meeting, or nominations may be submitted to the Program Manager in advance of the SWC meeting at which elections take place. The latter requires a letter of nomination from the nominator and a letter of acceptance from the nominee.
- Elections will take place by secret ballot, unless election is made by acclamation
 - If the meeting is being held virtually with remote participation, elections may take place by submitting votes via confidential emails or messages
- Election of Chair and Vice Chair is a non-financial decision, therefore simple majority is required for election and quorum is 50%.

6.2 Chair and Vice Chair Roles and Responsibilities

Further to the purpose and role of the SWC described in Article 3, the roles of the Chair are:

- Be an ambassador for the SWC and its programs
- Ensure Council members are aware of their roles and responsibilities
- Bring issues and correspondence before the SWC for discussion
- Be a spokesperson
- Chair SWC meetings
- Liaise with program managers on the following, but not limited to:
 - Setting meeting agendas
 - Key program deliverables and achievements
 - Controversial issues
- Collaborate with program managers on communications materials
- Approve invoices from the program managers.

The roles of the Vice Chair are:

- Support the Chair in the activities described above
- Act as Chair in the Chair's absence.

7. Liaise with Water Quality Monitoring Group and Water Protection Advisory Committee

The SWC will be supported by the Water Quality Monitoring Group and the Water Protection Advisory Committee, each of which have their own committee Terms of Reference. From time to time, the SWC may refer information or requests to the Monitoring Group or Advisory Committee for discussion and recommendations.

Summaries from the Monitoring Group and Advisory Committee meetings will be included in SWC agenda packages, to be received for information.

8. Comments in Public or the Media

Council members should refer all questions and inquiries from the media to the Chair, Vice Chair or program managers. When speaking publically, Council members must convey the interest of the SWC.

9. Term

The term for this document is April 1st 2021 - March 31st 2026. The Terms of Reference are subject to revision.

10. Funding and Compensation

The Contribution Agreement sets out the financial contributions from the funders².

Community representatives and the Senior Scientific Advisor will receive compensation for travel expenses incurred for attending SWC meetings at a rate consistent with BC Government travel and reimbursement rates.

All other SWC members or their respective organizations will fund their expenses related to their participation.

11. Shuswap Watershed Council Administration

- The SWC will meet quarterly
- Meeting dates will be convenient to the majority of the members
- Meeting dates will be set for a calendar year, early in that year
- Meetings will be open to the public and advertised in a manner consistent with CSRD Bylaw 5648, Regional District Board and Committee Procedures Bylaw
- Meetings may take place virtually, with remote participation (e.g., Zoom Meeting)
- The program managers will be responsible for:
 - Preparing meeting agendas, with the Chair and Vice Chair, and distributing meeting materials
 - Recording decisions and action items, and preparing meeting summaries
 - Making arrangements for meeting venues and refreshments.

² See [Shuswap Watershed Council Contribution Agreement 2021 - 2023 SIGNED.pdf](#)