



Water Quality Grant Program

Program Guide for 2024-25 intake

Intake period: December 1st 2024 – January 31st 2025

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1.0 Program overview

To help maintain and protect water quality for the future, the Shuswap Watershed Council (SWC) is providing financial support to agriculturalists, landowners and stewards for projects and new management practices that improve nutrient retention on the land and in the soil – preventing nutrients from washing off or seeping into nearby creeks and rivers through rain, snowmelt, or flooding – so that less phosphorus (P) ends up in Shuswap and Mara Lakes.

P is a key nutrient in land-based and aquatic ecosystems. Many forms of life need P to grow and reproduce. However, excessive amounts of P in an aquatic ecosystem can reduce water clarity, create odours, contribute to the formation of algal blooms, and reduce the quality of water for drinking and recreation.

In order to manage P and protect water quality from excessive amounts of it, it's essential to know where it is coming from and how P is getting into rivers and lakes. Research by the University of British Columbia – Okanagan has determined that the highest concentrations of P in the Shuswap River and Salmon River come from the settled valley bottoms where there is urban and agricultural development. Phosphorus is entering the rivers via seasonal streams, ditches, groundwater, and surface run-off. Please see the publication, *Nutrients and Water Quality in the Shuswap River and Salmon River*, available [here](#), to learn more.

Primary grant program objective: to provide financial support for projects and new management practices in the Shuswap watershed that improve nutrient retention on the land and in the soil so that less phosphorus flows into Shuswap and Mara Lakes.

1.1 Available funds

Up to \$45,000 is available in 2025, subject to SWC approval, through this granting program. The number of grants awarded and the amount of each grant awarded will be dependent on the merit of the applications received. The SWC will fund a maximum of 50% of applicants' project costs, the remainder must come from other sources which can be cash and/or in-kind contributions (see standard rates for in-kind contributions in Appendix 2 and see a list of other potential funding sources in Appendix 3).

2.0 Eligibility criteria

2.1 Eligible applicants

Eligible applicants include the following:

- Farms
- Hobby and small-lot farms
- Agri-businesses
- Golf courses
- Wineries/Cideries
- Tree farms/nurseries
- Landowners
- First Nations governments
- Indigenous organizations
- Non-profit organizations.

Ineligible applicants include the following:

- Local governments
- Provincial and federal government agencies
- Consultants and non-farm corporations.

2.2 Eligible projects

Eligible projects must:

- Be located in the Shuswap Watershed. If you are unsure whether your property is in the Shuswap Watershed, you can use this [New Mapping Tool](#) to find out.
 - Priority may be given to projects located in the *incremental flow sub-watersheds* (i.e., settled valley bottoms – see maps in Appendix 1)
- Demonstrate improvements to:
 - environmental water quality by reducing or mitigating the flow of P-rich run-off or effluent from land to surface waters in the Shuswap watershed, OR
 - to agricultural soil health, thereby improving soil capacity to store and cycle water and nutrients.
- Ideally be completed within one year of grant award (March 31st, 2026), but no longer than 18 months from the time of the award (September 30th, 2026)
- Leverage at least 50% of the project cost from other cash and/or in-kind contributions (see Appendix 2 for standardized rates for in-kind contributions and Appendix 3 for a list of other potential funding sources).

2.3 Eligible activities

Eligible activities include (but aren't limited to):

- Wetland restoration or creation
- Riparian area improvements, including planting, bank stabilization and fencing¹
- Agricultural practices that build soil health and mitigate nutrient loss from soil to water. This includes transitioning to regenerative agricultural practices such as cover cropping, relay cropping, no-till, rotational grazing, etc.
- Controlling run-off or seepage of nutrient-rich effluent
- Off-stream waterers for livestock
- Other innovative projects proposed by an applicant that meet the objective of the program.

Ineligible activities include:

- Water quality monitoring or research as a stand-alone project
- Planning as a stand-alone project
- Education and outreach
- Building bridges, culverts, or road crossing structures
- Any activities contrary to relevant legislation and regulations
- Any activities that are ordered by compliance and enforcement action.

2.4 Eligible expenses

Eligible expenses include:

- Labour (hired or contract)
- Materials and supplies
- Capital purchases (some restrictions may apply)
- Equipment rental
- Professional fees such as an [Agrologist](#), [Environmental Farm Plan Advisor](#), or [Biologist](#).

Ineligible expenses include:

- Applicant's labour, equipment, and/or supplies
- Hospitality costs including food and beverage
- Travel
- Training and professional development.

3.0 Alignment with other initiatives in BC

The Shuswap Watershed Council Water Quality Grant Program provides financial support for projects and new management practices in the Shuswap watershed that improve nutrient retention on the land and in the soil so that less phosphorus flows into Shuswap and Mara Lakes. This emphasis on improving nutrient management on farms is in line with the [Environmental Farm Plan Program](#) and the [Provincial Code of Practice for Agricultural Environmental Management](#).

¹ Any projects that involve work in or around water may require a permit or authorization from government. See Section 4.

4.0 Recommendations to applicants

Applicants are encouraged to consider the following when preparing their application:

- If your proposal includes doing work in or around water (lakes, creeks, wetlands, etc.), applicants are responsible for getting the required permits and/or authorizations from the Provincial and/or Federal government. Applicants should contact [Front Counter BC](#) to determine what permits or authorizations are required and the agency's timelines for issuing permits and authorizations.
- If your proposal includes ground disturbance (e.g., excavation), applicants are encouraged to engage with First Nations to determine if archaeological work is needed
- If your proposal is not located on land that you own or have rights to, a letter of support from First Nations may be required
- Applicants may want to consider engaging with a qualified registered professional such as an [Agrologist](#), [Environmental Farm Plan Advisor](#), or [Biologist](#)
- Applicants may want to connect with someone familiar with other funding programs and implementing projects to help coordinate their application. This could be someone in a livestock or agricultural industry association, or someone with experience in ecosystem restoration.
- Priority may be given to projects proposed in the incremental flow sub-watersheds (IFSW) of the Salmon River or Shuswap River watersheds (see maps in Appendix 1)
- Other sources of funding may include applicant's own cash or other grant funding secured by the applicant (e.g., Environmental Farm Plan, etc. See list of potential funding sources in Appendix 3.)
- Applications can be made anonymous by program staff to the fullest extent possible during the evaluation process if requested by the applicant. However, applicants should keep in mind that submitting a map of their project is required and that this may compromise anonymity, and that if a grant is awarded the grant recipient's name and project details will be published.
- Consider submitting a group application with neighbouring properties. This will increase the project scale and scope, which is part of the evaluation criteria.
- Water quality monitoring before and after project implementation is encouraged but not required.

5.0 How to submit a grant application

Potential applicants are encouraged to contact SWC program managers to discuss their project concept, no later than January 16th, 2025.

Complete the application form online [https://www.fraserbasin.bc.ca/Water_Quality_Grants.html]. Include a map of your proposed project area and any letters of support with your online application. If you prefer, you may send an e-mail to staff with your map and letters of support.

5.1 Staff contact information

Erin Vieira
Shuswap Watershed Council Program Manager
c/o Fraser Basin Council
200A-1383 McGill Road
Kamloops, BC V2C 6K7
evieira@fraserbasin.ca
250 314-9660

5.2 Deadline for applications

Completed applications must be received by 4PM Pacific Standard Time on January 31st, 2025.

6.0 Evaluation process

Applications will be evaluated and scored objectively by the SWC based on the following:

- Technical merit of what is proposed and likelihood to achieve outcomes (30%)
- Scale and scope of project (30%)
- Location and proximity of the project to a water body (creek, river, or lake) (20%)
- Leveraging of other funds or in-kind donation of labour, equipment, or material beyond the minimum of 50% (10%)
- Clarity and completeness of proposal (10%).

Proposals will be evaluated by the review committee in February 2025 and subsequently approved or turned down by the Shuswap Watershed Council in March 2025. Successful applicants will be contacted shortly thereafter.

Applicants may present to the review committee during the evaluation process to provide additional information about their application and answer questions.

7.0 Disclaimer

The SWC reserves the right to refuse any or all applications received. SWC reserves the right in its sole discretion at any time, and from time to time and for whatever reason, to by addendum, modify, amend, cancel, or otherwise change this granting program at any time. This granting program should not be construed as an agreement to purchase goods or services. SWC is not bound to award funds to any proponent. SWC will not be obligated in any manner to any potential proponent whatsoever until an agreement has been entered into.

8.0 Terms and payments of grants

The following are the terms and payments of the grants:

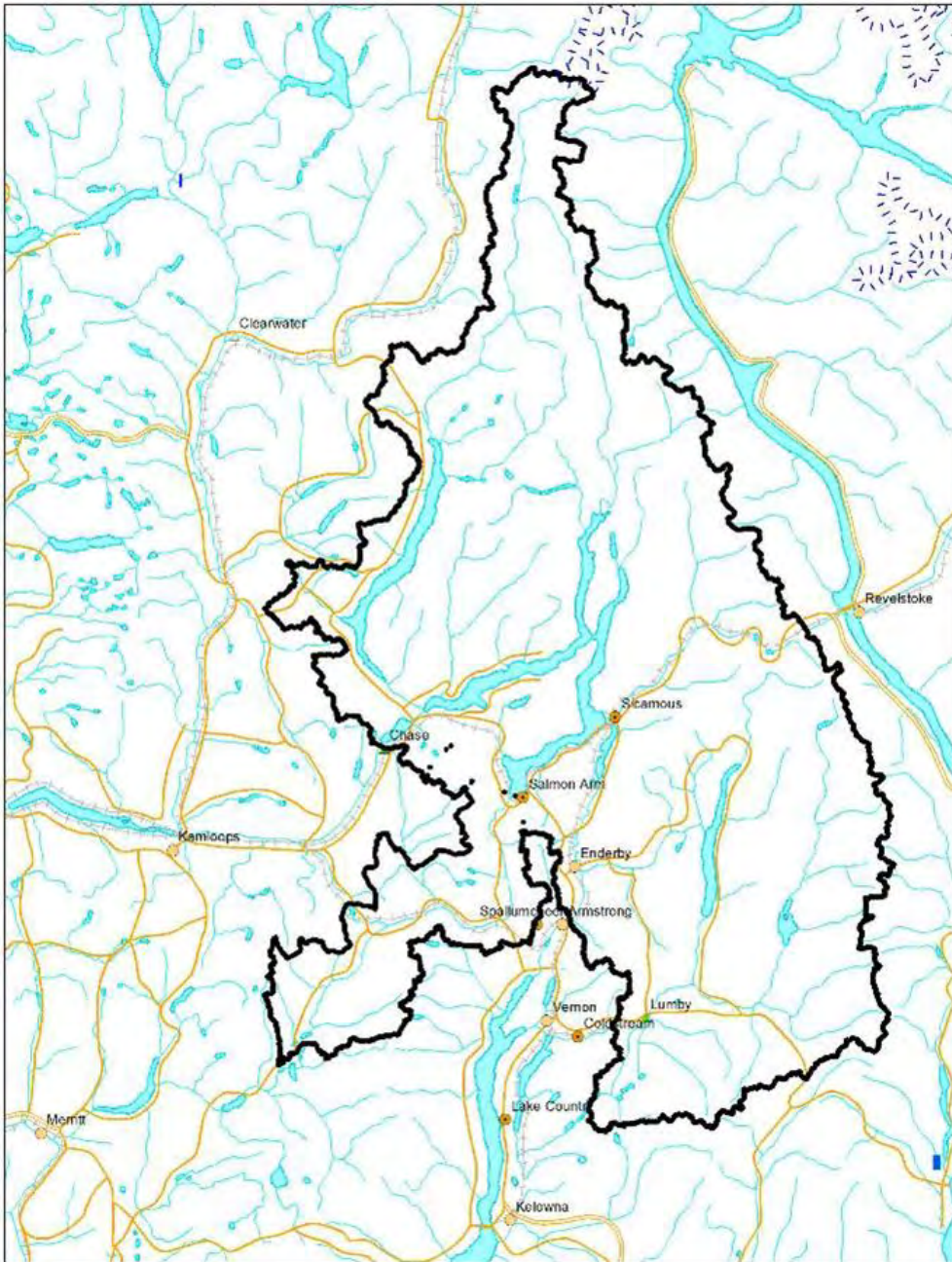
- Upon successful award of a grant, a contribution agreement shall be signed by SWC and the grant recipient
- Up to 50% of the funds may be advanced upon signing of the grant agreement based on demonstrated need. The remainder of the funds will be disbursed upon completion of the project, submission of a final report by the recipient including an expense claim with receipts for eligible expenses (see Appendix 5 for templates), and approval of the final report by program staff.
- A mid-year progress report by the grant recipient (a brief update via email is acceptable)
- The SWC shall be acknowledged in any publications, announcements or signage about the project done by the proponent
- The SWC will be permitted to publish information about grant recipients including name, project details, and photos.
- Grant recipients agree to work with SWC to host an educational field tour or short video demonstration.
- Grant recipients must comply with all applicable laws and seek the necessary permits and/or authorizations necessary to undertake the project.

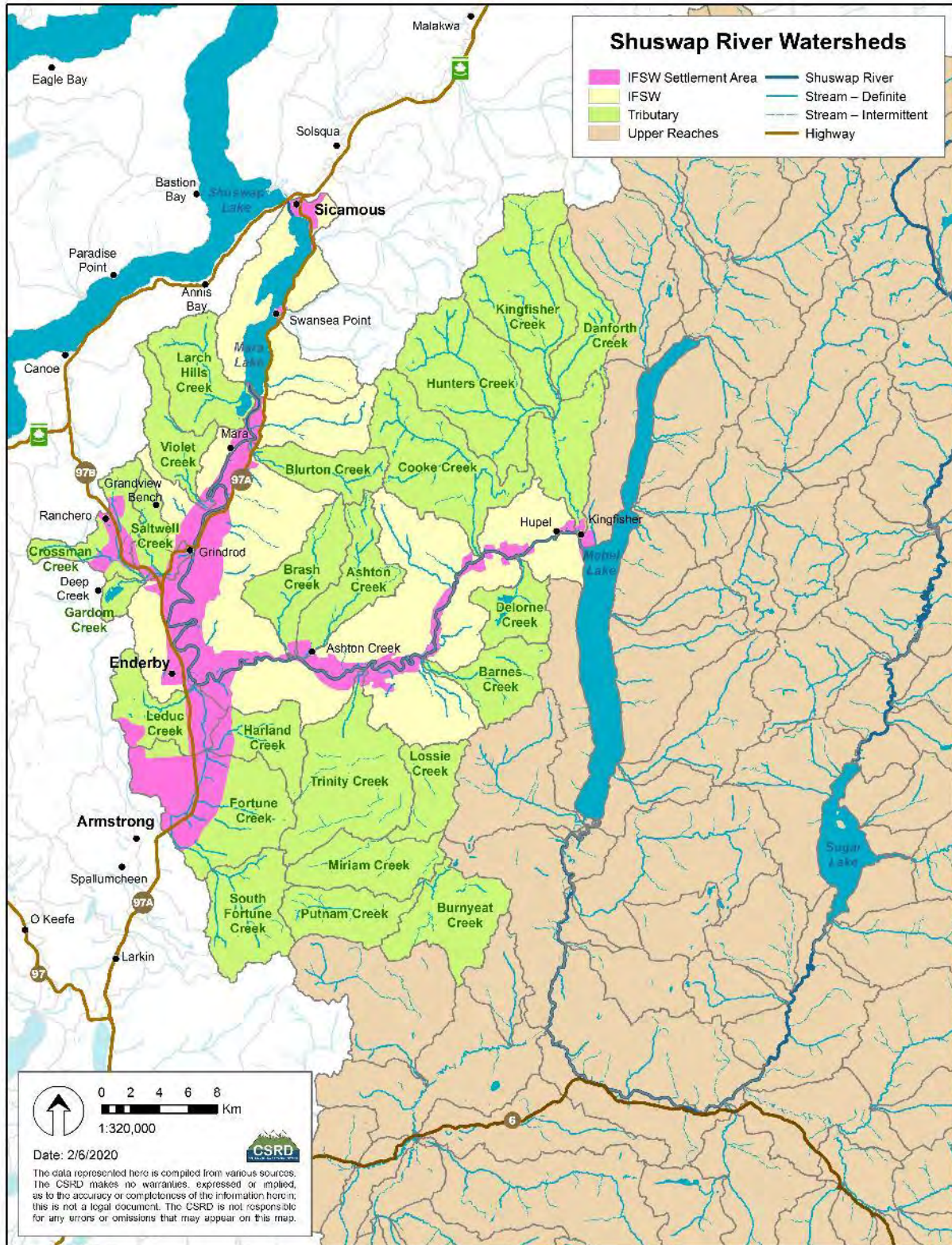
9.0 About the Shuswap Watershed Council

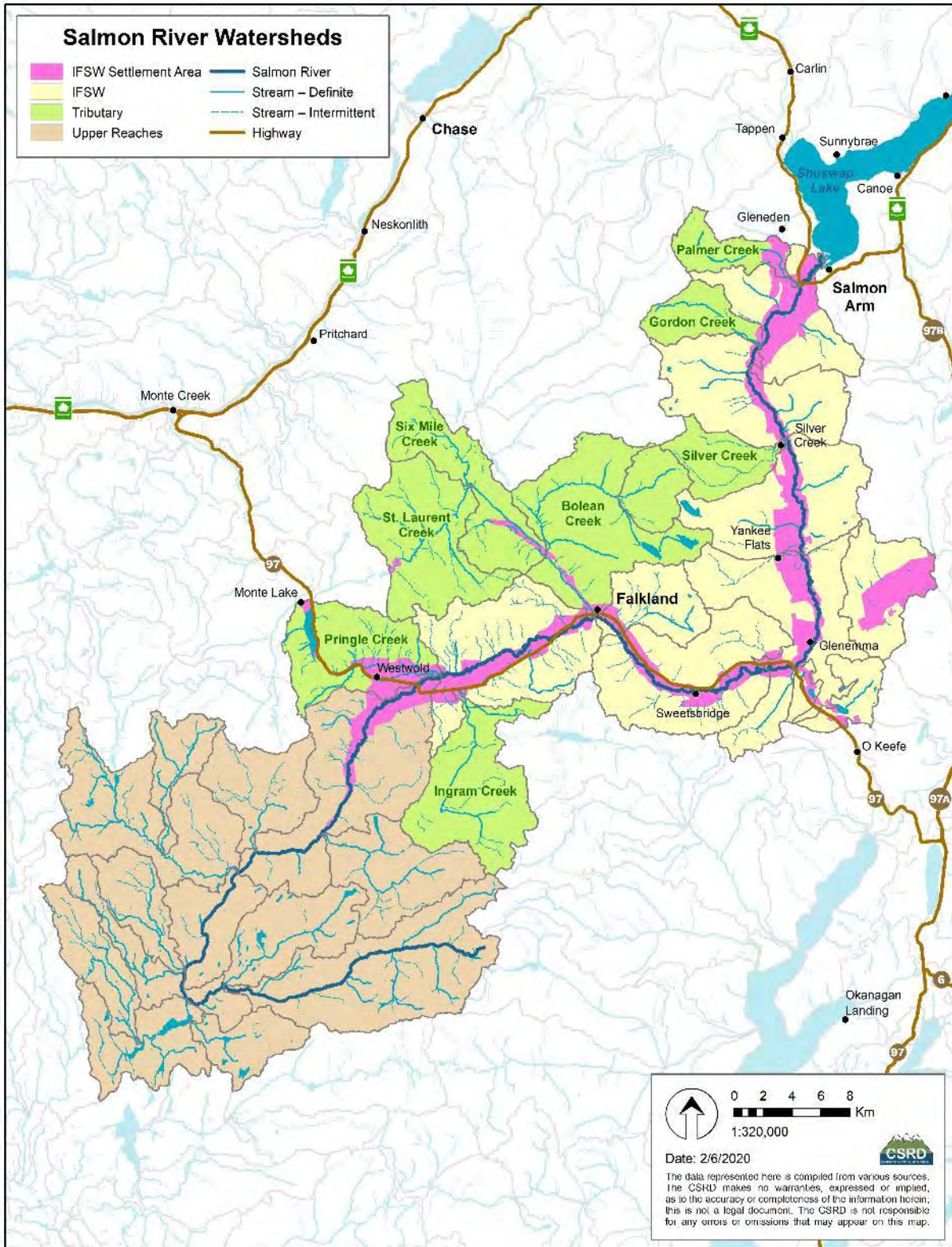
The SWC was established in 2014 as a watershed-based partnership of several organizations with an interest in or a responsibility for protecting water quality. There are up to 22 members that represent three regional districts, two municipalities, the Secwepemc Nation, three Provincial government agencies and Shuswap communities. The SWC is a collaborative, non-regulatory group that focuses on strategic initiatives to protect, maintain, and enhance water quality and promote safe recreation in the Shuswap. The SWC works alongside organizations that have regulatory roles in managing the Shuswap watershed, complementing their work, and carefully avoiding duplication.

Appendix 1 – Maps

Shuswap Watershed. Applicants can also use this online [Mapping Tool](#) to find out if your property is in the watershed.







Appendix 2 – Standard rates for in-kind contributions

In-kind contributions are labour, materials and supplies, or use of equipment that the applicant owns and provides. When completing your application and final report, you must use the following standardized rates.

Labour – all found including employer costs, payroll loading

- \$25/hour

Material and supplies

- At cost or fair market value
- Proof of value may be sought by program staff.

Equipment – all found including operator cost, fuel, insurance

- Excavator - \$120/hour
- Tractor with loader, or loader - \$100/hour
- Dozer - \$80/hour
- Backhoe - \$80/hour
- Skid-steer - \$85/hour
- Flat deck trailer - \$50/hour
- Chainsaw - \$30/hour.

Appendix 3 – Other potential funding sources

- [Farmland-Riparian Interface Stewardship Program](#)
- [Investment Agriculture Foundation](#)
- [Canada-BC Agri-Innovation Program](#)
- [Climate Change Adaptation Program](#)
- [Environmental Farm Plan](#)
- [BC Climate Agri-Solutions Fund](#)
- [Farmland Advantage](#)
- [BC Water Funders](#)
- [Infrastructure Planning Grant](#)
- [EcoAction Community Funding Program](#)
- [Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation](#)
- [RBC Environmental Program](#)
- [Real Estate Foundation of BC](#)
- [Beneficial Management Practices](#)
- [Clean BC – Agriculture](#)
- [Agriculture Water Infrastructure Program](#)
- [Habitat Stewardship Program](#)
- [New Entrant Farm Business Accelerator Program](#)
- [Agribusiness Planning Program](#)
- [Watershed Security Fund](#)