

MEDIA RELEASE

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Shuswap Watershed Council awarding two grants for water quality improvement

The Shuswap Watershed Council (SWC) has announced grant funding for projects that protect and improve water quality in the Shuswap watershed.

“Protecting and enhancing our water quality is an important objective for the SWC,” states Jay Simpson, Chair of the SWC. “We know our water quality here is pretty good, and we want to keep it that way. However, there are also risk factors and we’re working to mitigate those.”

The SWC’s Water Quality Grant Program offers funds to assist farms, landowners, and stewardship groups with projects that protect and improve water quality, with a particular focus on mitigating the risks associated with nutrient loading from land into surface waters.

“Nutrients – especially phosphorus – are an important factor of water quality and soil health,” explains Erin Vieira, Program Manager for the SWC. “Phosphorus is one of the factors contributing to algal blooms – when more phosphorus and other nutrients flow into the lake, the likelihood of water quality issues and algal blooms can increase.”

“Our goal with the grant program is to help farmers and other land stewards keep nutrients on the land and in the soil, not running off or leaching into nearby creeks and rivers where it could contribute to water quality concerns,” Vieira says.

One of the grant recipients, a ranch in Malakwa owned and operated by Werner and Jody Stump, is using grant funds to restore a 600-m section of riverbank on the Eagle River. The restoration will mitigate erosion from the riverbank and limit access to the river by cattle. The other grant recipient, the Gardom Lake Stewardship Society, is using grant funds to enlarge a constructed wetland along the creek that flows into Gardom Lake. The wetland will improve water quality in the creek before it flows into Gardom Lake.

The total value of the grants being awarded is \$52,010. The expense was approved at a SWC meeting in March, with work getting underway later this year. The SWC grant funds will leverage other cash and in-kind contributions for a combined project value of \$176,915.

Since the Water Quality Grant Program began in 2020, the SWC has awarded nine grants worth a total of \$144,233. The next round of intakes for the grant program will open in November.



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About: The Shuswap Watershed Council is a watershed-based partnership organization that works on water quality and safe recreation in the Shuswap.

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