

Update from CSRD Chief Administrative Officer

John MacLean, Columbia Shuswap Regional District (CSRD) Chief Administrative Officer, summarized the results of the CSRD referendum held in February and explained that the CSRD bylaw and service for the Shuswap Watershed Council will end on December 31st 2024. After that, the CSRD will not appoint directors to the Shuswap Watershed Council nor will it provide funding collected through a service. Mr. MacLean clarified that CSRD directors may choose to provide discretionary or grant-in-aid funding to the SWC.

Year-end report from Program Managers

Erin Vieira provided a brief report summarizing the year, April 1st 2023 – March 31st 2024:

- 10 organizations participated in the Shuswap Watershed Council and 19 organizations in the Water Monitoring Group, enabling collaboration on water issues
- The Water Quality Grant Program awarded five grants in 2023 worth \$52,760 which leveraged an additional \$56,860
- Development of a Wetland Strategy for the Shuswap watershed began, with two phases of data collection and analyses complete
- The Zebra & Quagga Mussel Prevention Program supported early-detection monitoring on seven waterbodies while the education/outreach had approximately 2.5 million impressions through articles, advertising and signs
- Safe boating campaigns had approximately 686,000 impressions
- Two new watershed research projects commenced with universities
- The 2023-24 Annual Report will be published online later in June.

Expenses for the year are \$309,890 against the annual operating budget of \$394,964, resulting in a surplus of \$85,074; of the surplus, \$59,961 is approved and carried forward to 2024-25 for the Water Quality Grant Program.

Operations update from Program Managers

Erin Vieira provided an update on program operations since the last SWC meeting:

- The new Community Water Monitoring Grants Program is now operational with a \$3000 budget
- The Water Quality Grant Program is operational, six projects have been approved for funding. Contribution agreements are in place with grant recipients and all projects are underway.
- A new research project by graduate student Margot Webster, Royal Roads University, is underway in the Salmon River. The SWC is providing funding support for the project.
- Education/awareness campaigns to prevent the movement of invasive zebra and quagga mussels into the Shuswap watershed are underway
- 12 sites on six waterbodies in the Shuswap are being monitored for invasive mussels in 2024 by the Columbia Shuswap Invasive Species Society with funding support from the SWC

SWC MEMBERS:

Rhona Martin – Chair

CSRD Area 'E'

Natalya Melnychuk – Vice Chair

CSRD Area 'G'

Marty Gibbons

CSRD Area 'C'

Dean Trumbley

CSRD Area 'D'

Jay Simpson

CSRD Area 'F'

David Lepsoe

TNRD, Village of Chase

Reid Hamer-Jackson

TNRD, City of Kamloops

Debbie Cannon

City of Salmon Arm

Pam Beech

District of Sicamous

Howard Nordquist

Secwepemc Nation,
Adams Lake Indian Band

Robyn Laubman

Splatsin te Secwepemc

Rick Fairbairn

RDNO Area 'F'

Brian Schreiner

RDNO, City of Enderby

Kym Keogh

BC Ministry of Environment
& Climate Change Strategy

Lindsay Benbow

BC Ministry of Agriculture &
Food

Kelly Chiatto

BC Ministry of Forests

Erik Kok

Community Representative

Kimm Magill-Hofmann

Community Representative

Phil Owen

Community Representative

Dennis Einarson

Senior Scientific Advisor

- Staff reported that Transport Canada turned down the SWC's application for \$24,000 federal grant funding due to the fund being over-subscribed
- Staff are looking into new funding opportunities from the Province that could support the SWC in 2025 and beyond.

Changes to SWC Safe Recreation Program

For the past five years, the SWC has run an educational safe boating and recreation program that has been largely funded by federal grant funding from Transport Canada. Since 2019, SWC staff have applied for and received the funding. In 2024, the application for funding was turned down due to the federal fund being over-subscribed. As a result, the SWC directed staff to reduce further expenditures in the Safe Recreation Program this year.

Guest presentations

The SWC received presentations from Mr. Ian Rogalski, Environment & Climate Change Canada about the Canada Water Agency; Mr. Bryan Vroom, BC Ministry of Environment & Climate Change Strategy about the Ministry's compliance management framework; and Mr. Tay Powrie, graduate student at Thompson Rivers University, about Adams River headwaters glacier research.

A full meeting summary is available on the SWC website.