



Shawnigan
Basin Society

**The Shawnigan Basin Society
Financial Report for the CVRD
2017 Expenses and 2018 Projected Budget
Website: Shawniganwater.org**

Basic Elements of the Business Plan

The Shawnigan Basin Society, a registered non-profit with a Board of Directors made up of local residents, is working to develop a Shawnigan Basin Authority as the mechanism for engaging the basin public in management of the Shawnigan Watershed. The underlying philosophy is that the watershed should be managed on “ecological governance” principles and the effort should be fully collaborative with the Malahat First Nation as well as private landowners, the CVRD, senior government agencies, and interested academic research organizations. Watershed management in the Shawnigan Basin is particularly complex because of the fragmented nature of resource management, settlement jurisdictions, and the intensively privatized landscape provided by the history of the Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway land grant. There is no single agency that is charged with, or capable of, dealing with the cumulative impacts of all the various development interventions in the basin. Thus, a broadly based and locally-focused authority would act as the necessary catalyst for integration of all the various interests. The Shawnigan Basin Authority is intended to attract integrated responsibility from senior government over time, to work within the local government framework of the CVRD, and to eventually become a working component of an incorporated municipality.

Budget Strategy

The core funding provided by the tax base of \$50,000 per year is intended to give the Shawnigan Basin Society the administrative capability to raise and manage project funds.

Administrative support is very rarely supported by grant programs, which results in NGO's scrambling to support basic office and staff functions that provide management continuity, support for volunteers, grant writing capacity, financial management, and project reporting. The core funding provided from the Area B tax base thus ensures basic society management capability and creates the necessary and significant leverage from local contributions required by virtually all grant programs.

Functional Core Capabilities of the SBS

- Establishment of a public Basin Authority based on ecological governance principles and broad public engagement in land and water use planning.
- Development of a Watershed Master Plan based on ecological, physiographic and socioeconomic information that is assembled and catalogued from a variety of governments, research programs, and private sector sources.
- Systematic engagement and integration of local watershed management efforts with private sector land owners, the CVRD, agencies of senior governments, and similar civic watershed initiatives arising elsewhere.
- Preparation of grant requests to foundations and government infrastructure and environmental improvement programs for projects intended to improve the ecological status and function of the Shawnigan Watershed.

Core Administrative Functions of the Society

- Provisions of a watershed planning office in Shawnigan Village, cost-shared with other public and private sector partners, where the Society can keep records, display maps and models, meet with interested parties, hold public planning sessions, and provide access to Basin Authority and Society members and staff.
- Provision of a core staff of Executive Director to organize the day-to-day work of the Society in public communication and involvement, engagement and support of volunteers, research assembly, planning, fund raising, record keeping, and project reporting.
- It is important to note that the Board of Directors voted to change our fiscal year end date on September 30, 2015 from December 31 to March 31 to match the year-end reporting cycle of the CVRD.

2017 – Another Successful Year!

Science and Technology – Solidifying Understanding

The Shawnigan Basin Society is once again proud of their accomplishments for the 2017 fiscal year. Like any project and methodology, strategic planning is important when accomplishing established objectives and progressing toward an overall goal. Engaging the community in teams at kitchen table gatherings or in the Village Office has acted to convey a baseline understanding of the state of the watershed as well as support discussions on how to protect and restore the watershed into a state of ecological integrity. “From Foreshore to Forest” assumes the goal of developing a Shawnigan Lake Watershed Master Plan and securing the hydrological proficiency of the Shawnigan Lake watershed so as to provide clean and abundant drinking water to in perpetuity. Such achievements reinforce potential and local power to assume control for the long-term protection of the community’s drinking water supply as climate change, development pressures, and environmental degradation work to further the cumulative vulnerabilities imposed upon the lake. The importance of relevant and professional research to determine “where we are” cannot be overstated as the Shawnigan Lake basin is responsible for providing clean drinking water to approximately 12,000 people!

Four Information Sessions Offered to the Public

The Shawnigan Basin Society hosted a Shawnigan Watershed Information Program during the Fall of 2017. Each Tuesday evening from September 12th, from 7-9 pm in the Village Watershed Office, across from the coffee shop & bakery, a special topic was presented totaling six overall. Questions were answered and thoughts from member of the community were sought. The list of topics was as follows:

September 12: Milfoil invasion in the lake, and what we can do about it.

September 19: Foreshore Restoration, and how to make your shoreline natural again

September 26: A 50 Year Perspective on the watershed forest, how forest companies are planning for the future in the shadow of climate change and how we also could look 50 years ahead for all of our community interests

October 10: Whole watershed planning. How to take advantage of the new water sustainability act to develop a sustainable watershed management plan. Incorporating Shawnigan is discussed in *Saving Water: Stewardship of the Shawnigan Community Watershed* in Chapter Eleven.

October 14: Watershed Forest Tour...see below for details.

October 17: Has the time come for Municipal incorporation? pros, cons, boundaries, costs and how does incorporation actually get established.

Koksilah Watershed Society Receives \$10,000

On April 5, 2017, the Cowichan Station Area Association was given a \$10,000 cheque toward their efforts to acquire an ecosystems-based conservation plan from Herb Hammond's Silva Forest Foundation. This work is similar to that accomplished by the Shawnigan Basin Society and its initiative to understand what lands ought not be used versus what lands ought not be used and are intended to protect, conserve, and restore ecologically sustainable futures for both the Shawnigan and Koksilah watersheds within Area B.

Two Meetings with TimberWest – Looking 50 Years into the Future

On February 24, 2017, a meeting was held to share perspectives between the goals of a well-known timber company, the Shawnigan Basin Society, and the Ecological Design Panel. Thank you, TimberWest, for your collaboration and interest in the Shawnigan Watershed!

**Foreshore to Forest
A 50 Year Plan for the Shawnigan Watershed
An Initiative of the Shawnigan Basin Society
Dr. Bruce Fraser**

“Our two largest landowners in the Shawnigan Watershed are TimberWest and Island Timberlands. In the normal course of forestry planning, these two firms must project the current status of their timberland holdings forward for at least the length of a rotation, and in many cases for several rotations. In order to pursue forest management over such lengthy time scales they, out of necessity, have developed very comprehensive inventories of the physical and biological characteristics of their land base. This information is much more specific and much better recorded than almost any other aspect of the Shawnigan Basin environment.

Because the forest holdings of the two major companies have just passed through the harvest phase of the last rotation it will now be approximately 50 years before the next harvest phase is likely to take place. In the meantime, maintaining reforestation success and road network stability, tracking market demands and regulatory

requirements and estimating the effects of changed physical conditions on forest health must continue as their resource base is managed for the long term.

The context for upland forest management in the Shawnigan Basin extends well beyond the direct land base and tree growth considerations of a forest company. In the next fifty years, climate change on the east coast of Vancouver Island is projected, by the University of Victoria, to create increasingly volatile changes in hydrology, including longer and more severe summer droughts and milder winters with more frequent and intense rainstorms. These changes will have direct impacts on the viability of both natural and planted forest species, the stability of road systems on steep slopes, vulnerability to pests and pathogens and risks of major wildfires. They will have impacts on the stability of upland forest and shoreline areas that provide domestic and ecosystem sustaining water supplies. They will also have reverberating effects on public health, the aquatic ecology of the lake and the attractiveness of its surroundings for recreation and sustained property values.

Over the next 50 years, the Shawnigan Basin will see growth in population, increased water demand, increased impact of habitation, increased extraction of gravel, more dense housing tracts, more sewage, more fertilizer usage, more domestic chemical pollutants, more invasive aquatic species, more road development, more recreation intensity and much more public concern for the environmental security that underwrites their health, their property values and their investments. All this will occur in a relatively small and crowded basin held largely in a multitude of private hands. Compounding this complexity is the numerous agency jurisdictions that are largely independent of one another and lack any established mechanism for dealing with cumulative impacts of the human footprint. Even our local government Official Community Plans are expected to lose relevance in a single decade.

Shawnigan is a classic case history of the march of cumulative impact in which each user of their portion of the area pursues the exploitation of their “entitlement” without a requirement to assess the overall outcome for the basin or the lake and certainly without measures to address it as it emerges. So, how do we proceed to bring a sense of the whole basin and the integrity of the lake into everyone’s thinking when there is no single formally mandated authority to conduct the process?

Timber West and Island Timberlands have agreed to collaborate as partners in this challenge. The Shawnigan Basin Society’s responsibility will be to reconvene the Shawnigan Roundtable initiated in 2012, inviting land owners, government agencies and the public to participate in preparing a 50 Year Plan for the Basin. It will use the generation-spanning, rotation length of forestry planning as the model and add in the climate projections, the ecological information, the technical advice and the public

interests already assembled by the Society. To begin with, the forest companies will undertake to illustrate how their fifty-year rotation plans are constructed and what they reveal about their environmental change assumptions. Then, each other participant will be invited to project their interests forward for fifty years, considering what changing conditions are expected to apply to them and how they will need to respond. What could arise out of this thinking is that all parties would begin to think of Shawnigan as a whole, how their aspirations interact and what they each must contribute to ensure that in 50 years we will still have an environment that serves our many existing interests. Of course, we will also have to anticipate that new interests will inevitably emerge as conditions change and that any plan will have to be adjusted accordingly.

Creating a 50 Year plan for the Shawnigan Basin is a magnificent challenge of multigenerational vision. Our grandchildren will inherit our results, let's turn what could be a burden into a gift.”

On October 14, 2017, TimberWest hosted a tour and information sharing of five of their properties in the Shawnigan Watershed. Further collaboration among these groups will continue into the future...

Another Masters Study Thesis Conducted for Shawnigan Lake

Kelly Musselwhite, Executive Director for the Shawnigan Basin Society, submitted a recent final project for her Environmental Practice Master's Degree from Royal Roads University at the beginning of December 2017. Specifically, Kelly's abstract reads: “The objectives of this paper are to investigate the current governance model in Shawnigan Lake, to identify its problems and consequences, and to recommend improvements. As such, two research questions will be considered: What is the current governance model for Shawnigan Lake, BC? and what other models might promote better environmental outcomes to maintain a healthy community and economy? The significance of this topic cannot be overstated: Shawnigan Lake is the largest populated unincorporated electoral area in the province and perfectly characterizes how fragmented jurisdictions prevent a cohesive environmental, social, economic, and political commons. With forty-five distinct regulatory authorities, collaborative and place-based decision-making is prevented while cumulative ecological impacts are enhanced. By undertaking a quantitative and qualitative analysis, this paper compares alternative governance models to that being developed by the Shawnigan Basin Society, a local NGO working toward participatory ecological governance designed to overcome fragmentation, implement long-term sustainability, and achieve a holistic

approach to land and watershed management.” This document will be added to the Shawniganwater.org website.

Local Collaboration and Unified Thinking

Great strides were made in linking the work of the CVRD’s Advisory Planning Commission, the Ecological Design Panel (a professional technical advisory volunteer group) and the work of the Basin Society. Doing so has motivated the movement toward the formal and logistical development of objective criteria to be used when considering land use and rezoning applications. By fully understanding the particular vulnerabilities to areas within each sub-basin, the Advisory Planning Commission can best support not only their recommendations to the Area Director, but also ground their decisions in a technically objective rationale. With the first criteria asking, “Does this application demonstrate a net ecological gain to the community?” a demonstration of the framing of development expectations is portrayed. “Approval of land development applications for Rural Resource zoned land in Shawnigan Lake requires an exception to South Cowichan Official Community Plan (OCP) policy. An *Evaluation Framework* has been developed by the Shawnigan Advisory Planning Commission (APC); it is intended to be a tool for the APC to use when such applications are being considered for Rural Resource zoned land within the watershed. This document also informs developers, the community, and the CVRD Board on the related community priorities and decision-making framework used by the APC. *The Shawnigan Lake Ecosystem Based Conservation Plan*, commissioned by the Shawnigan Basin Society, was an important component of the development of the *Evaluation Framework*. Our long-term objective is to make this *Evaluation Framework* suitable as an OCP amendment to policies related to Rural Resource zoned land development in the watershed (Grant Treloar, 2017 Chair, Shawnigan Lake APC).” Final criteria for the evaluation framework was approved, and used, in the 2017 fiscal year.

Eurasian Milfoil Confirmed in Shawnigan Lake

Representing the first human-induced and non-eradicable example in Shawnigan Lake, the problem of “milfoil” is being taken very seriously. Consequently, the Shawnigan Basin Society along with the Shawnigan Residents Association are working toward public outreach initiatives and locally-driven solutions. On July 17, 2017, Mar Martinez gave a presentation on the details of milfoil, which received a large and concerned audience. Resulting from this meeting was the effort from a local resident to develop and evolve a milfoil “vacuum” as one potential tool to help control and manage both the confirmed invasive and hybrid species. A second information workshop was then held on September 12, 2017, which again proved popular given attendance and the

subsequent discussion. TimberWest, who own the bottom of the lake, have agreed to donate a pump to further enable the milfoil vacuum's development and three demonstrations have been given to date. Additionally, public support has grown such that several foreshore residents have committed to purchasing the necessary components to build their own vacuum to be shared amongst their immediate community. Further information about milfoil can be found on the SBS website and additional work will be conducted to educate and promote appropriate and necessary annual methods of milfoil management. Funding through grants is also being sought to extend both foreshore restoration and milfoil control by the Basin Society.

Community Outreach with Foreshore Restoration

Two foreshore restoration projects took place this year on the Shawnigan foreshore: one on private property volunteered by its owner on August 24, 2017 and further work (originally completed September 25, 2016) was done on a second public property at Shawnigan Lake's West Provincial Park on September 13, 2017. A host of volunteers totalling approximately fifteen people at each occasion contributed to each cause and are displayed on the Basin Society's website. Finally, signage was installed at the Provincial Park restoration site where information about the evolution of that project will be made available to the public.

CVRD Delegation, October 11, 2017

Dr. Bruce Fraser, President of the Shawnigan Basin Society, and Kelly Musselwhite, Executive Director of the Shawnigan Basin Society, gave a delegation to the CVRD Board of Directors with the goal of updating their knowledge on the objectives of the NGO. Additionally, they spoke to the book *Saving Water: Stewardship of the Shawnigan Community Watershed* (by Dr. Bruce Fraser, Kelly Musselwhite, Brock Musselwhite and Chase Musselwhite), which has been published and is now available through the Shawnigan Lake Museum for \$20 per copy. All proceeds will be donated to the Museum to help with their expansion project.

"Three generations speak about the state of the Shawnigan watershed, the need for a heightened sense of environmental awareness and a wide-ranging approach to ecological governance of the community. Topics include ecological principles, lake and watershed issues, planning for the future and municipal incorporation. The book contains both technical and deeply personal material but it is the comments from Brock at twelve and Chase at ten that give a stunningly clear perspective on what really matters." (Dr. Bruce Fraser)

Technological Upgrades and Contributions

The Shawnigan Basin Society's website (Shawniganwater.org) was updated with the help of Jenny Berg, Mar Martinez, and Kelly Musselwhite to ensure current information is available to the public. Additionally, the SBS contributed \$600 toward the development of a PowerPoint presentation for the Shawnigan Bioremediation Society whose goals run similar to the SBS: to follow and apply Nature's principles to secure abundant and long-term drinking water for its citizens.

CVRD Staff Contributions

Finally, yet very significantly, much recognition is owed to the Cowichan Valley Regional District Board of Directors and Staff for their remarkable contributions to the successful achievements of the Shawnigan Basin Society. Their expertise and professionalism are formally acknowledged with infinite appreciation!

Budget Summary – April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019 (12 months)

Operating Costs:

Public Engagement and Project Coordination:

Executive Director	14,400.00
Summer Student (May to August 2018)	4,000.00
Website Updates	1,000.00
Rent - Village Office for Mtgs/Public Access	12,600.00

Utilities for Village Office:

Telus Internet	500.00
Hydro	1000.00
Community Centre Rental for Public Events (three as below)	600.00
Prof. Fees for Presentations at Public Events	2000.00
Prof. Fees for Foreshore Restoration Projects	5000.00

Capital Costs:

Village Office Equipment:

Foreshore Restoration Equipment	1,500.00
Eurasian Milfoil Vacuum Equipment	1,500.00

Public Meeting Support:

Mapping	2,500.00
Brochures	1,500.00
Mailouts/Invitations	1,000.00
Professional Banner	900.00

Program Budget **50,000.00**

Respectfully submitted by the Shawnigan Basin Society Board of Directors;
Dr. Bruce Fraser, President; and
Kelly Musselwhite, Executive Director
January 10, 2018