

## Shawnigan Basin Society: 2014 Successes Business Plan and Budget 2015

### **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 resulting 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 and the Authority 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 and Administration Officer to organize the day-to-day work of the Society and the Authority in public communication and involvement, engagement and support of volunteers, research assembly, planning, fund raising, record keeping, and project reporting.

## **2014 – A Large Success!**

### **Science and Technology – Solidifying Understanding**

- The Shawnigan Basin Society is proud of their accomplishments for the 2014 fiscal year, many of which are founded in technological

advancements not only working to support a focused and broader understanding and credibility, but also complement and solidify the necessarily critical foundation for developing a Shawnigan Lake Watershed Master Plan. 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 pressure 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. To that end, the Basin Society is funding a major project with Herb Hammond of the Silva Forest Foundation. This study is well underway and will result in a comprehensive ecosystem-based conservation mapping analysis and report. Other water projects include: the collaborative efforts of the CVRD and the Ministry of Environment's two-year water quality study, which identifies whether or not Ministry set water quality objectives have been achieved; the ongoing work of Dr. Mazumder from the University of Victoria who continues to compare and contrast neighbouring Shawnigan Lake and Sooke Lake watersheds; Dr. Linda Gregory's (Basin Society Board member) work in synthesizing 30+ previous water studies into one comprehensive document; the introduction of RES'EAU's (partnering with Ecole Polytechnique, Veolia, UVic, and UBC) \$2 million laboratory onto Mason's Beach, whose study will ultimately provide recommendations on how to best enhance the drinking water quality for Shawnigan Lake residents – paid for by senior government for the purposes of case study acquisition; and remote sensing mapping completed by Mar Martinez of ASL Environmental Services Inc., which uses LANDSAT images between 1984 and 2014 to deliver spatial data for use as GIS layers as well as hardcopy maps illustrating vegetation changes and other valuable information.

### **TimberWest/Couverdon – Shawnigan Basin Community Engagement**

- The Basin Society underwent a major success through collaborative work with TimberWest, a significant stakeholder in the watershed and western Canada's largest timber and land Management Company. Undertaking professional and evolved perspectives, TimberWest managers undertook the task of considering new approaches to land and forest management practices specific to Shawnigan Lake. Their Real Estate Arm, Couverdon, hired a community planning company, Ekistics, who facilitated (at their expense) several "Thinking like a Watershed"

meetings. Doing so engaged the community at large and encouraged an increased understanding of the watershed related realities faced by the Shawnigan Lake community. Overall results from this exercise include: relationship building, ecologically premised discussions, the donation of approximately \$50,000 in extensive mapping including: 1) Community Mapping consisting of aerial and cadastral, contour base, Official Community Plan land uses, Shawnigan Basin and “South Cowichan” zoning, land ownership, development patterns, lot size classification, and sanitary infrastructure and 2) Shawnigan Basin Bio-Physical Mapping consisting of areal and cadastral, contour base, landform analysis, slope analysis, aspect analysis, forest cover, and aquifer vulnerability. Additionally, Couverdon was responsible for the creation and community donation of a \$10,000 3-D hard density foam model (1/10,000 scale) depicting the watershed and its geographical surroundings. These acquisitions are valuable tools which illustrate the fragility of the Shawnigan watershed and the need for long-term planning and protection.

### **Real Estate Foundation Grant - \$40K**

- Tremendous gain was made for the Basin Society given their ability to use the \$50,000 annual tax fund as leverage to receive an additional budget of \$40,000 from the Real Estate Foundation! Without the demonstration of an ongoing community supported allocation in addition to scientific arguments made grounding the need to develop a watershed protection master plan, the likelihood of success would have been largely reduced. An additional \$6,000 grant was received in December from the CVRD, specifically, from the South Cowichan Water Study Fund.

### **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 and emerging Authority. Doing so caused motivated and logistical development of objective criterion to be used when considering land use and rezoning applications. As all land use applications are first deliberated by the APC who then make recommendations to the Area Director, procedural changes mean they are now considered on

individual and holistic merit, are assessed “on the ground” (in most cases with the help of an ecological professional), and are evaluated using an ecological lens, which fundamentally emphasizes that all applications must demonstrate that a net ecological gain will be achieved in the watershed as a direct result of development approval.

### **Sharing Commercial Space and Resources**

- It is also of great importance that commercial space, unused for many years in the heart of the Village, is now being rented and used thus revitalizing the Shawnigan Village core. The space acquired by the Basin Society (as of April 2014) is not only shared with the local Area Director as she provides regular public consultation opportunities, but also by a number of ongoing local groups including: Elkington Forest, the Basin Society Board, Advisory Planning Commission, the Shawnigan Parks Commission, the Village Development Council, Shawnigan Gathering collaborators, Inspire! (prior to moving next door), and others. The overall hope in sharing the use of this space (paid for collaboratively by the Basin Society and Living Forest Communities) is to further offer any unused office time to local groups - free of cost. As of January 2015, RES'EAU's John Bergese and Laurent Oigny will join these groups with the intent of promoting public engagement and information sessions pertaining to their water study, the Shawnigan Basin Authority will hold regular board meetings, and the YSAG (Young Senior's Action Group) will undergo weekly chess tournaments, where generational bridging is beginning so that young chess enthusiasts can also participate and enhance their skills! Additionally, the Basin Society Office is an informational depository with a developing library of resources for public use.

### **Board Table Donation**

- Eugene Laughren of Raven Creek Timber Products along with John Lore of Live Edge Design, Russ Crawford of Mid Island Aggregate, Owen Kelly of Victoria Construction, and Malahat Nation donated a stunning reclaimed west coast Douglas Fir old growth single-slab board with impressive dimensions of 4 feet by 21 feet by 2+ inches, which has been integrated as our Basin Society Board table. A conversation piece, to be sure, where 24 people often sit to discuss the many projects and initiatives taking place in the Shawnigan community.

## **Royal Roads University Leadership**

- An on-going annual partnership with Royal Roads University graduate level Ecological Leadership program. In 2013/14, this partnership focused on evaluating the value of Ecological Goods and Services in the Shawnigan Basin, as perceived from the perspective of First Nations, major timber companies, Elkington Forest, and local NGOs. This association with RRU also is expanding within 2015 to include local native plant rescue and ecosystem restoration with Malahat First Nation, and CVRD Parks and Recreation Commission initiatives.

## **Malahat Youth – Community Outreach**

- The Basin Society gained much from their experience in hiring Ashley Harry, a summer intern in 2014, in an effort to build community understanding and awareness of Malahat First Nations initiatives and cultural events using the Focus Newspaper and Basin Society's website as publication methods. Ashley did a wonderful job bringing the two communities together. She coordinated Malahat youth to fulfill the community outreach portion of a fall restoration project during the summer months.

## **CVRD Staff Contributions**

- Finally, yet very significantly, much recognition is owed to the Cowichan Valley Regional District's Emily Doyle-Yamaguchi, specifically, as well as staff in the Planning and Engineering Departments for their remarkable contributions in collaborating the profound and successful achievements of the Shawnigan Basin Society. Their expertise and professionalism are formally acknowledged with infinite appreciation!

## **Looking Ahead for 2015**

The Society will focus on three areas:

- 1. Financial**
  - Fundraising and grant applications
  - Silva Contract
  - Public engagement work

## **2. Watershed Planning**

- Completion of Silva Project (foundation for moving forward with Watershed Management Plan)
- Integration with ASL LANDSAT data and CVRD cadastral data
- Development of Shawnigan Basin Authority
- Integration with CVRD Regional Water Management initiative
- Discussions with watershed stakeholders including TimberWest, Malahat Band, and Island Timberlands.

## **3. Public Engagement**

- Effective communication
- Focus on youth
- Walkabouts
- Surveys with incentives
- Online curriculum
- Topics include: 2015 Coho salmon run, summer student engagement, interaction with Camp Pringle and Easter Seal Camp, geocaching with water and ecological themes, etc.

## **Moving Forward**

Already achieved in the 2014/15 Fiscal

- A foreshore restoration project was undertaken at the home of a local resident, who volunteered his property to undertake the transition of a cement retaining wall to one constructed of a willow tree branches, a project funded by the Pacific Salmon Foundation and largely supported by local resident and student volunteers.
- A First Nations partnership for a Royal Roads Restoration Project at Elkington Forest.

## Budget Summary

Administration	\$33,240
Watershed Planning	\$38,750
Public Engagement	\$4,000
Secured Grants	-\$26,000
	\$49,990



## Administration

	Income	Expense
Watershed Planning Office Rental (plus GST)		\$12,600
Living Forest Communities contribution	\$4,410	
Office Equipment		\$500
Office Expenses		\$700
Utilities		\$1,200
Insurance/Membership		\$900
Banking Fees		\$150
Conference Expenses		\$1,000
In-house Meetings/Meals/Catering		\$800
Executive Director salary		\$12,000
Administrative Officer salary		\$4,800
Website & Database		\$2,500
Advertising		\$500
	<b>\$4,410</b>	<b>\$37,650</b>

Cost to SBS  
**\$33,240**

## Watershed Planning

	Expense
Completion of Silva Foundations Ecosystem-Based Conservation Plan (Remaining 2015 portion)	\$24,000
• LANDSAT and CVRD Cadastral Data Integration	\$3,500
Research, Analysis and Reporting	\$10,000
Development of Shawnigan Basin Authority	\$1,250

Cost to SBS  
**\$38,750**

## Public Engagement

Watershed Tours  
Surveys  
Curriculum Development  
Summer Student Engagement

Expense

Total Cost  
\$4,000

Cost to SBS  
**\$4,000**

Respectfully Submitted by Shawnigan Basin Society Board of Directors:

Dave Hutchinson, Chair  
Kelly Musselwhite, Executive Director  
Doug Makaroff, Treasurer

