

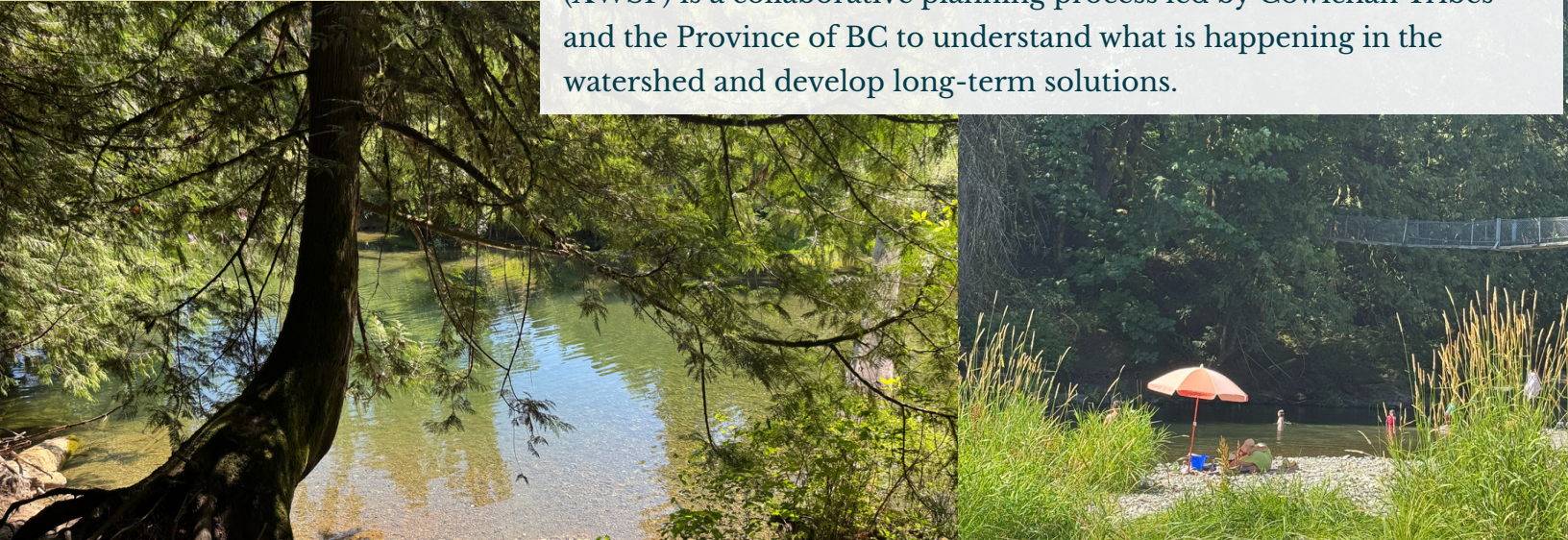
Xwulqw'selu

WATERSHED PLANNING

XWSP

September 2025, Vol. 4

The Xwulqw'selu (Koksilah) Water and Watershed Sustainability Plan (XWSP) is a collaborative planning process led by Cowichan Tribes and the Province of BC to understand what is happening in the watershed and develop long-term solutions.



HELLO FROM THE XWULQW'SELU WATERSHED PLAN TEAM!

SUMMER AND EARLY FALL:

This period marks one of the driest times of the year where water demand is high, and supplies for our community, farms, and wildlife are low. In past years, extreme low flows have had detrimental impacts on ecosystems, fish, community members, and businesses alike.

We know residents make efforts to reduce water use in their day-to-day lives and operations, and may be looking for updates on what is being done to better understand and manage water flows in the Xwulqw'selu. See page 2 for our recent progress!

Watershed Context:

- The watershed flows are out of balance. Flows swing between too much and not enough and these extremes are getting worse.
- Increasing water use, land use practices, and climate change are all contributors to watershed change.
- There is no single-quick fix solution. Restoring watershed health requires both immediate action and sustained effort.
- In the short-term, reducing water use and restoring streams is the fastest and most direct way to improve fish habitat and ecosystem health. Given the urgent needs to restore low flows, actions to reduce water use is the current focus of the XWSP process.

WHAT'S BEEN DONE BY THE PLANNING TEAM

Updates from Spring/Summer 2025:

Flow Targets: We are working to bring together Indigenous and Western knowledge to come up with target flow levels needed to support a healthy river and healthy fish.

Water Use: We know that Temporary Protection Orders are challenging. We are exploring a range of regulatory and non-regulatory approaches to conserve water and support water users to adapt to change. The aim is to balance ecological needs with the needs of all watershed users.

Water Storage: The Planning Team engaged with experts and community members to identify promising water storage options, leading to a new Ministry of Agriculture study with local farms to assess on-farm storage feasibility in the Xwulqw'selu watershed, and efforts by CVRD to explore community-scale storage.

Restoration and Land Use: We know land use practices and their potential impacts on streamflows are a concern for many residents. We are engaging experts to understand the watershed's hydrology and inform recommendations for restoration, land use practices, and long-term watershed monitoring and decision-making.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

As the Planning Team continues to develop solutions, people are invited to share their input to help guide the development of the Water and Watershed Sustainability Plan (the Plan) and shape long-term solutions for water supply and ecosystem health.

1.

Come by our open house on November 13 at the Quw'utsun Cultural Centre (200 Cowichan Way, Duncan, BC V9L 6P4) between 3-7pm to learn more about the process!

2.

Complete our online survey to share your input, particularly related to actions to reduce water use.

3.

Get in touch with a representative from one of our Community Advisory Tables

SCAN HERE
to complete the
Community Survey!



PROJECT TIMELINE

