



# 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

*Engaging the Community in Watershed Health*

[coquitlamriverwatershed.ca](http://coquitlamriverwatershed.ca)

Coquitlam River  
Watershed Roundtable



*Prepared By*  
Coquitlam River  
Watershed Society

February 28, 2025

*Final Report*

## **Our Mission**

*To preserve and enhance the health of the Coquitlam River Watershed through collaboration, education, and advisory action*



# Table of Contents

Executive Summary .....	1
Acknowledgements .....	3
Core Committee .....	5
Sector Representatives (with photos) .....	5
Sector Alternates .....	8
Staff and Support .....	9
Interim Society Board .....	10
Annual General Meeting and New Board of Directors .....	12
Society Board .....	13
Sub-Committees .....	14
Community Supporters .....	15
Operations .....	16
Watershed Plan Implementation .....	19
Stormwater Management .....	19
Rain Garden Renewal Project .....	21
Anti-littering and Dumping .....	24
Salmon and Habitat Conservation .....	25
Outreach Events .....	26
Social Media and Communications .....	28
Website .....	28
Social Media .....	30
Financials and In-kind Contributions .....	31
Moving Forward .....	34
Year in Review .....	37

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2024, the Coquitlam River Watershed Society (CRWS) navigated a year of significant growth, transition, and collaboration. With the generous financial and in-kind support of our partners—including the City of Coquitlam, Metro Vancouver, Kʷikwə́łəm First Nation, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Jack Cewe Construction, the City of Port Coquitlam and numerous community organizations—the Society continued its mission to preserve and enhance the health of the Coquitlam River Watershed through collaboration, education, and advisory action.

A major milestone was the successful transition to a formalized Society structure. Following extensive planning, consultation, and governance restructuring, the Interim Society Board finalized new bylaws, elected its first official Board of Directors, and implemented a framework to guide the organization into the future. This shift ensures long-term financial and operational sustainability, while maintaining the inclusive, multi-sector representation that has been the foundation of our organization.

## Key Achievements in 2024

- **Governance & Organizational Transition:** The CRWS completed its transition to a Society, culminating in the adoption of new bylaws at the October AGM and the election of a new Board of Directors. The Board will provide leadership in financial and strategic planning while continuing to engage Core Committee members in decision-making.
- **Rain Garden Renewal & BC Rivers Day Event:** The revitalization of the Rain Garden at Lions Park was a standout initiative, combining ecological restoration, public engagement, and artistic expression. Volunteers, community groups, and municipal staff collaborated on native plant restoration, drainage improvements, and the creation of a mural by artist Laura Kwok. The mural unveiling at the BC Rivers Day event was attended by 42 community members, including representatives from Kʷikwə́łəm First Nation, local governments, and environmental organizations.

- **Watershed Plan Implementation:** Several initiatives addressed key pressures on the watershed, including stormwater management, illegal dumping, and salmon habitat conservation. Notable efforts included video productions on stormwater management, clean-up initiatives led by QMC Metering Solutions, and ongoing advocacy for fish-friendly floodgate infrastructure at Léxətəm Regional Park.
- **Expanded Outreach & Communications:** CRWS significantly increased its digital presence, doubling website engagement and launching new educational video content. Outreach activities at festivals and community events, including Canada Day and Salmon Come Home, allowed us to connect with a broad audience and reinforce watershed stewardship messaging.
- **Financial Management & Sustainability:** In-kind contributions for the year totaled \$12,0462, with approximately 390.3 volunteer hours generously contributed by Society Members, staff from partner organizations, and engaged community members. Despite a reduction in operational funding, CRWS secured new grants and increased contributions from existing partners. Revenue totaled \$110,332, and careful financial stewardship allowed the Society to enter 2025 with a stable financial outlook. The successful transition of financial management from Watershed Watch Salmon Society to CRWS marks an important step in long-term independence.

## Looking Ahead to 2025

As CRWS moves into 2025, the organization remains committed to strengthening watershed stewardship through targeted initiatives and collaborative partnerships. With a renewed focus on outreach and education, early efforts will include updating our outreach display with a salmon theme. CRWS members and supporters will meet to collaboratively develop in a Work Plan for the coming year on February 26. This session will shape the year's priorities, exploring new opportunities in stormwater management, habitat restoration, invasive species control, and responsible recreation. With continued engagement from sector representatives, local governments, and community partners, CRWS is well-positioned to implement impactful projects that align with the Lower Coquitlam River Watershed Plan and advance the long-term health of the watershed.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Throughout 2024, the Coquitlam River Watershed Society was fortunate to receive generous financial support from several key partners, including the City of Coquitlam, the Greater Vancouver Water District (Metro Vancouver), Kʷikwə́łəm First Nation, the Government of Canada, Jack Cewe Construction Ltd., Fisheries and Oceans Canada, the Port Coquitlam Community Foundation, the Pacific Salmon Foundation, and QMC Metering Solutions.

We extend our sincere gratitude to these organizations for their continued commitment to supporting our work in 2024.



Invaluable in-kind contributions of staff and resources were provided by the following partners:

- City of Coquitlam
- City of Port Coquitlam
- Tri-City Green Council
- Kʷikwə́łəm First Nation
- Arts Connect
- Allard Contracting Ltd.
- Vancity Savings
- Maple Creek Streamkeepers
- Originelle Designs Photography
- Watershed Watch Salmon Society
- Jack Cewe Construction Ltd.
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada
- Heidelberg Materials Ltd.
- BMP Engineering and Inspection
- North Fraser Salmon Assistance Project
- Morguard Corporation
- Hoy/Scott Watershed Society

We extend our deepest gratitude to the dedicated stewards, organizations, businesses and volunteers who generously contributed their time and effort to support the Society's events and activities throughout 2024. Their commitment and hard work continue to be instrumental in advancing our mission.

*Thank you!*

# CORE COMMITTEE

The Core Committee is made up of representatives who generously contribute their time in-kind to support the Society's work. Their involvement includes attending Core Committee and Community Society meetings, serving on standing and project committees, and participating in outreach events. Their dedication and collaboration are essential to the Society's success. While members serve 18 to 24-month terms, many continue their contributions well beyond their official tenure.

In 2024, the Core Committee included 18 voting members representing 13 sectors. Under the new Society Bylaws, adopted in 2024, voting members are responsible for electing Board Directors and voting on Special Resolutions. They also play an active role in committees, information exchange relevant to the Lower Watershed, work planning, and providing advisory support to the Society Board. Their leadership and engagement help shape the direction of the Society and its initiatives.

## Sector Representatives

Local Government

**Cllr. Trish Mandewo**  
*City of Coquitlam*



Local Government



**Caresse Selk**  
*City of Coquitlam*

Local Government

**Cllr. Nancy McCurrach**  
*City of Port Coquitlam*



Local Government

**Scott Walmsley**  
*City of Port Coquitlam*



First Nations Gov.



**Lance Meyers**  
*Kwikwáḷá m First Nation*

First Nations Gov.

**Cllr. George Chaffee**  
*Kwikwáḷá m First Nation*



Regional Government



**Jesse Montgomery**  
*Greater Vancouver  
Water District*

Utilities

**Katy Jay**  
*BC Hydro*

*Photo not  
available*

Federal Government



**Elan Park**  
*Fisheries and  
Oceans Canada*

Industrial

**Jim Allard**  
*Allard  
Contracting Ltd.*



Industrial



**Kirsten Wilson**  
*Jack Cewe  
Construction Ltd.*

Real Estate

**Geoff Nagle**  
*Morguard  
Corporation*



Stewardship



**Anne Woosnam**  
*Hoy-Scott  
Watershed Society*

Stewardship

**Eve Gauthier**  
*Tri-City Green  
Council*



Stewardship



**Tony Matahlija**  
*North Fraser Salmon  
Assistance Project*

Arts & Culture



**Sherry Carroll**  
*ArtsConnect*

Community



**Pardeep Grewal**  
*Vancity Savings*

In late March 2024 Tony Matahlija of the North Fraser Salmon Assistance Project, and Eve Gauthier of the Tri-Cities Green Council resigned their Stewardship sector seats.

In April, new representatives for Fisheries and Oceans Canada joined the Society. Catriona (Cat) Day is a Stewardship Program Officer in the Fraser & Interior Area. Elan Park is a Partnerships Coordinator in the Fraser & Interior Area, and is the official sector representative for Fisheries and Oceans. Catriona and Elan have both been very active in sharing knowledge, networking among partners and community members within the watershed, and supporting the project work of the CRWS. Their primary responsibilities include supporting and renewing connections with organizations and individuals involved in stewardship, serving as primary DFO contacts for non-enhancement related stewardship work, including grant agreements and support requests outside of salmon enhancement. Elan is the representative representing the Federal Government on the Core Committee.

For several years now, the Education and Provincial Government seats on the Core Committee have remained vacant. Efforts to fill these seats, as well as 2 vacant seats in the Stewardship sector are in progress at the time of writing this report.

This year, the Core Committee met 5 times:

- January: Presentation by Layne Myhre, PhD, on water quality and bacterial salmon pathogens.
- March: Nina Bader of Foresight discussed collaborative networks for sustainable water solutions in British Columbia.
- May: CRWS Coordinator provided updates on organizational changes.
- September: Metro Vancouver staff presented a Coquitlam Water Main update.
- November: A presentation by CRWS Coordinator Georgia Ohm to review the Lower Coquitlam River Watershed Plan, the strategies it proposes, and our work to implement these strategies over the past year and new direction for future years.

## SECTOR ALTERNATES

Like sector representatives, alternates play a valuable role participating on committees, exchanging information relevant to the Lower Watershed, contributing to work planning and advising the Society Board.

- Cllr. Steve Kim, City of Coquitlam
- Jenny Tough, City of Coquitlam
- Theo Mahdi, City of Port Coquitlam
- Glen Joe, Kʷikwə́łə́m First Nation
- Catriona Day, Fisheries and Oceans Canada
- Cathy McClean, Fisheries and Oceans Canada
- Dan Allard, Allard Contracting Ltd.
- Sophie Mullen, Heidelberg Materials Ltd.
- Manfred Kraus, Arts Connect
- Dianne Ramage, stewardship (non-affiliated)
- Sandy Budd, Maple Creek Streamkeepers Society
- Paul Lambert, Tri-City Green Council

# STAFF AND SUPPORT

The following individuals provide vital services to the Society in communications, administration, financial management and creative services.

Financial Trustee

**Dawn Roumieu**  
*Watershed Watch  
Salmon Society*



Coordinator



**Georgia Ohm**  
*Coquitlam River  
Watershed Society*

Communications

**Jacqueline Chan**  
*Coquitlam River  
Watershed Society*



Videographer

**Grant Holt**  
*Coquitlam River  
Watershed Society*



Project Support



**Margaret Birch**  
*Coquitlam River  
Watershed Society*

Outreach

**Melissa Plisic**  
*Coquitlam River  
Watershed Society*



## INTERIM SOCIETY BOARD

Throughout 2023, a Terms of Reference and Society Bylaws Task Force met several times to fulfill a commitment stated in the Society Terms of Reference to conduct an annual review of the Terms of Reference. This also provided an opportunity to review and clarify our organizational structure, which now included a Society. In December of 2023, sector representatives passed a motion that the “Coquitlam River Watershed Society will operate as one entity which is a society, and that the society board shall provide financial, legal, governance and stewardship knowledge and oversight.”

With this decision in place, the Coquitlam River Watershed Society’s legal name was formalized as the “Coquitlam River Watershed Society”, although the organization continues to operate publicly as the Coquitlam River Watershed Society.

Through 2024, an interim Society Board considered how to integrate a decision-making Board into the existing Society organization, while preserving the diverse representation and guidance provided by the Core Committee.

The Interim Board in 2024 included the following directors:



**Kirsten Wilson**

*Interim Board Chair,  
January - December*



**Caresse Selk**

*January - October*



**Tony Matahlija**

*January - April*



**Sherry Carroll**

*January - June*



**Eve Gauthier**

*January - April*



**Jim Allard**

*January - December*



**Scott Walmsley**

*January - October*

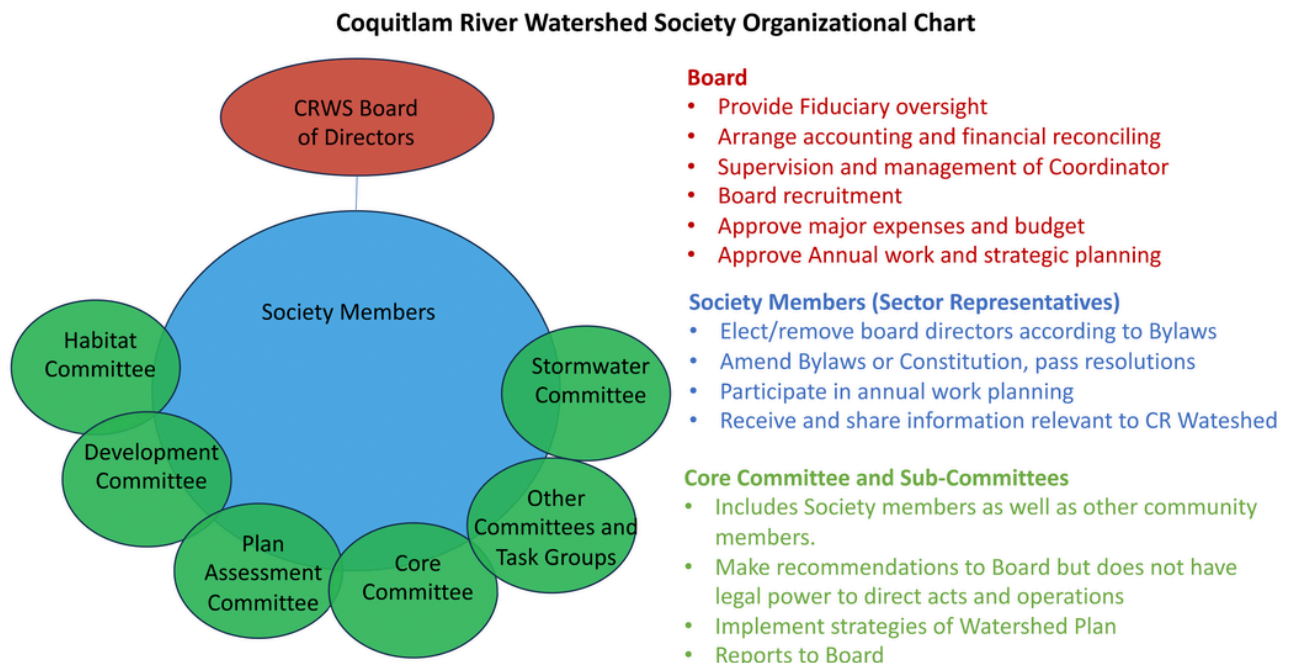
Over the course of 2024 the Interim Board met 6 times.

The Interim Society Board of 2024 considered financial reports provided by the Financial Trustee, reviewed funding applications and advised on funding and partnerships for projects.

During these meetings the Board considered new models for an organizational structure and operational procedures that would be reflected in a new set of Society Bylaws. Rhys Volkenant of DeJager Volkenant Barristers and Solicitors was hired to assist the Interim Board with the development of a new set of Bylaws. Hazel Postma, a board governance coach, provided guidance to assist with the establishment of a well-functioning Board.

By September 2024, the Interim Board established the following:

- A revised organizational structure
- A new set of draft bylaws
- An orientation package for new directors
- Board Roles and Responsibilities and best practices
- A board application and appointment process
- Outreach to several candidates willing to stand for election to the Board during our AGM.



## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS



With the establishment of the new Draft Bylaws, the Interim Board convened an Annual General Meeting (AGM) on October 9, 2024. The meeting was held online and attended by nine of the twelve sector representatives, along with nine community supporters and four administrative supports. During the AGM, the Draft Bylaws were unanimously approved by the sector representatives of the Core Committee, officially putting the new organizational structure into effect.

Additionally, a new Board was elected in accordance with the procedures outlined in the newly adopted Bylaws. The newly formed Board included two returning members from the Interim Board, alongside community members with expertise in governance, law, finance, and environmental stewardship.

## SOCIETY BOARD

The Board of Directors of the Coquitlam River Watershed Society (CRWS) consists of up to 11 seats, ensuring diverse representation and expertise to guide the organization. Of these, three seats are designated for key partners:

- One seat is reserved for a council appointee from the City of Coquitlam.
- One seat is reserved for a council appointee from the City of Port Coquitlam.
- One seat is reserved for a representative from Kʷikwə́łəm First Nation.

The remaining seats are filled by community members who bring valuable experience in governance, finance, legal matters, environmental stewardship, and project management. Directors serve one- or two-year terms, with the option for renewal, ensuring continuity while allowing for fresh perspectives on the Board. Elections take place at the Annual General Meeting (AGM), and staggered terms are implemented to maintain institutional knowledge and stability.

Following each AGM, the newly elected Board held its first meeting to assign key executive roles, including Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary, as needed. While Board members are primarily responsible for overseeing the Society's governance and strategic direction, they are also invited to participate in committees and initiatives that support the Society's ongoing projects and priorities.

By maintaining a balanced mix of municipal, Indigenous, and community leadership, the CRWS Board of Directors plays a crucial role in advancing the mission of preserving and enhancing the health of the Coquitlam River Watershed.



## SUB-COMMITTEES

With the Interim Society Board assuming many of the standard duties of a Society Board, several Sub-committees were not required to meet in 2024.

The Interim Society Board of 2024 reviewed financial reports provided by the Financial Trustee and considered funding opportunities and applications and advised on funding and partnerships for projects. This work was previously assigned to the Resilience and Capacity Building Committee.

The Society Board and Coordinator also took on the work of the Public Event Planning Committee. The Board advised on topics and outcomes for the Annual General Meeting and advised on public events and meetings to attend.

Other work on Communications and Stormwater was carried out by support staff with the help of Society members and partners as needed. Margaret Birch has been instrumental in advising on communications efforts on the Society webpage, social media, and print materials.

Efforts to raise awareness and public support for stormwater management received strong support from staff at both the Cities of Coquitlam and Port Coquitlam, in cooperation with CRWS staff. Municipal staff donated 6 hours of time to advise on, and appear in, 2 videos produced about Stormwater and watershed management plans. Municipal staff from the City of Port Coquitlam were also instrumental in advising on and supporting the work of the Rain Garden Renewal Project in Lions Park.



## COMMUNITY SUPPORTERS

Riverside Secondary School (RSS) student volunteers and teacher Brian Chan met with the Coordinator and Margaret Birch to discuss the potential to install a Rain Garden at RSS. Brian and several students from RSS provided strong support and participation at meetings and volunteered during work party events at our Rain Garden in Lions Park, and later in December to assist with drainage improvements in the Garden.

Langara Research Chair, Yue-Ching Cheng met with the Coordinator to discuss potential project partnerships in 2025. Langara has several programs which may support potential projects in 2025, including student projects that may contribute education or outreach materials for responsible riverside recreation.

Canada Water Agency's Ian Rogalski leads the development and implementation of the Freshwater Ecosystem Initiative for the Fraser River Basin under the Canada Water Agency's Fresh Water Action Plan. As a Senior Ecosystems Analyst with Environment and Climate Change Canada, he is responsible for advancing national freshwater management strategies and funding programs, including the EcoAction Community Funding Program. Ian has attended several Core Committee meetings and also met separately with Margaret Birch and Georgia Ohm. He is eager to collaborate with the Coquitlam River Watershed Society to explore opportunities for engagement and potential funding support for watershed initiatives as the Fund develops.





Throughout most of 2024, Georgia Ohm continued in her full-time role as Coordinator, focusing on supporting the Society Board through the organization's transition. Her key responsibilities included:

- Coordinating legal and governance advice for the Society Board.
- Scheduling, facilitating, recording and implementing the decisions of the Interim Board at 6 meetings.
- Managing financial statements and reports provided by the Financial Trustee for Board review.
- Organizing presentations and meetings for Core Committee sessions.
- Hiring and supervising a videographer, funded through Canada Summer Jobs, to support the Society's outreach efforts.
- Coordinating between the CRWS' various partners, members and supporters to facilitate the implementation of projects and communication.

Margaret Birch provided valuable support in drafting several grant applications. As one of the Society's founding members, Margaret continues to provide much valued knowledge and guidance to the Coordinator. While some of her assistance to the Society has been in a paid capacity, much of Margaret's time was generously contributed in-kind in both 2023 and 2024. As Margaret has assumed a role on the Board of Directors beginning in October 2024, she will no longer be paid for her services.

Jacqueline Chan continued in her role as Communications Coordinator. Jacqueline was brought on board in May 2023, and quickly proved indispensable, efficiently addressing the effects of malware that had persistently disrupted the website. Through 2024, Jacqueline has reliably maintained the CRWS website and social media accounts on a part-time basis. She has also assisted at several outreach events in 2024.

An outreach coordinator, Melissa Plisic was brought on board from September to December of 2024. Melissa Plisic led and facilitated multiple events for the Rain Garden renewal project (September–December 2024). A passionate advocate for the project, Melissa helped strengthen relationships with youth volunteers, community partners, and kʷikwə́łəm First Nation members.



With Melissa's support, Georgia was able to reduce her hours from September to December, allowing her to focus on personal goals while dedicating her part-time work to coordinating the Annual General Meeting and Core Committee Meetings, onboarding the newly elected Society Board and preparing funding applications for 2025.

With the help of a Canada Summer Jobs grant from the Government of Canada, the CRWS was able to hire Grant Holt as a videographer for a total of 270 hours from June through August. Grant produced several videos with support from our partners to raise awareness of pressures on the watershed and strategies to preserve it.

For several years, Watershed Watch Salmon Society has served as the Coquitlam River Watershed Society's Financial Trustee. Over the course of 2023, WWSS worked with CNC accounting, who provided book-keeping services, and reviewed our 2023 finances.

Beginning in 2025, WWSS will conclude their service as a Financial Trustee to CRWS. Through the end of 2024, Dawn Roumieu of WWSS has been working with the Coordinator to transition financial management under the purview of the CRWS. In 2024, the CRWS established its own chequing and savings accounts with Vancity Savings, and the Society hopes soon to have its own credit card with Vancity. In 2025 all deposits will be made directly to CRWS. Reflecting the change in accounts, all contracts will be amended to be held by CRWS rather than by Watershed Watch Salmon Society.

# WATERSHED PLAN IMPLEMENTATION



Developed in 2014-2015 with input from Society members and the public, the Lower Coquitlam River Watershed Plan (LCRWP) continues to guide efforts to protect watershed health a decade later.

The plan identifies key pressures, their effects on ecological and human well-being, and strategies to mitigate impacts. Challenges such as urban development, stormwater runoff, and invasive species remain priorities for action.

Through collaboration, education, and advisory efforts, the Society advances sustainable practices that enhance water quality, biodiversity, and ecosystem resilience. This section outlines key progress and ongoing initiatives in implementing the LCRWP.

## Stormwater Management

Stormwater is a high-rated pressure in the watershed. As surface water runs off the built environment, foreign and excess material is introduced, degrading water quality and aquatic habitats. With increased frequency and intensity of Climate Change related storms, flooding and associated erosion increase damage to riparian areas and streambeds.

As part of the Watershed’s plan to address this pressure through communication, Canada Summer Jobs student, Grant Holt, created 2 videos on the subject, relevant to each municipality in the watershed:

- [City of Coquitlam: Water Quality Monitoring](#)
- [Stormwater Management in Port Coquitlam](#)

The videos were produced with the help and support of staff from each municipality, who contributed their time to advise on the content, provide supplemental footage and images and appeared on camera. The videos are available on our website as part of a growing library of resources.

Grant created an additional video on our Rain Garden to encourage volunteers to sign up to water the garden over summer 2024. The video was widely shared, and we received support from 5 new volunteers to keep our Garden watered over the summer. From May to September, volunteers contributed over 40 hours of volunteer time to water the garden.



## Rain Garden Renewal Project

The Rain Garden Renewal Project at Lions Park in Port Coquitlam was a significant initiative in 2024 that focused on restoring plant health, improving drainage, and enhancing community engagement. Volunteers and partner organizations played a crucial role in revitalizing the garden, ensuring its continued function as an effective stormwater management feature.

Over the summer and fall, over 100 hours of volunteer time went into watering, weeding, removing dead plants, soil and mulch amendment, and adding drought-tolerant native species. The project team collaborated with City of Port Coquitlam engineers and environmental staff, who assessed the site and provided recommendations for improving drainage, which was completed in December.



A major highlight of the renewal project was the creation of a 150-square-foot mural on the decommissioned washroom building adjacent to the Rain Garden. Local artist Laura Kwok was commissioned for the project, with input from kwikwə́łəm First Nation and Core Committee members to ensure cultural and ecological significance were incorporated. The mural features native plants found in the Rain Garden, including Red Osier Dogwood, Deer Fern, Serviceberry, and Nootka Rose, alongside a subtle Sockeye Salmon silhouette, symbolizing the meaning of Kwikwetlem – “Red Fish Up the River.” The design also pays tribute to local conservation efforts, particularly the work of the Port Coquitlam and District Hunting and Fishing Club, which supports salmon enhancement in the Coquitlam River.

The mural's public unveiling took place during the BC Rivers Day event on September 22, 2024. The event was attended by 42 participants, including kwikwə́łəm First Nation drummers, community members, and local dignitaries from the City of Port Coquitlam, the Port Coquitlam Community Foundation, and Fisheries and Oceans Canada. The event also included a community planting session, where volunteers added new plants, mulch, and soil to the Rain Garden, reinforcing its role in stormwater filtration and watershed health.

In preparation for BC Rivers Day and to complete the Rain Garden renewal, three work parties were held in September and October 2024, engaging volunteers in key restoration activities. On September 15, four volunteers participated in painting the background of the mural, laying the foundation for the final artwork. On September 19, another four volunteers helped remove unwanted plants from the garden, ensuring that only beneficial native species remained. Finally, on October 13, two volunteers applied a final coat of anti-graffiti varnish to the mural, protecting it from weather and vandalism. These hands-on efforts played a crucial role in maintaining the Rain Garden and fostering community stewardship.



The success of the Rain Garden Renewal Project was made possible through the generous support of several key funding partners and community collaborators. The Port Coquitlam Community Foundation provided essential financial support, enabling key project components such as plant renewal, soil amendments, and mural development. Additional contributions came from Fisheries and Oceans Canada, which provided late-summer funding to help cover project costs. The City of Port Coquitlam played a crucial role in supporting site assessments, logistics, and event planning. Further in-kind and financial support was provided by kwikwə́łəm First Nation, which actively participated in the project's cultural and ecological integration. Volunteers from the Coquitlam River Watershed Society, Riverside Secondary's Environmental Club, and community members dedicated their time to ensuring the garden's sustainability. Their collective efforts have strengthened community connections and reaffirmed the importance of urban green spaces in stormwater management and watershed health.

The Rain Garden Renewal Project successfully strengthened community involvement, enhanced watershed education, and improved the long-term sustainability of this key urban green space. Looking ahead to 2025, continued engagement and stewardship will ensure the Rain Garden remains a thriving demonstration site for rainwater management and native plant conservation.

Finally, on December 15, additional work on the Rain Garden was completed to improve drainage. With the help of BMP Engineering and Inspection, Heidelberg Materials, and City of Port Coquitlam staff, staff from BMP Engineering and Inspection, Society Members and volunteers from Riverside Secondary School installed perforated drainage pipe and gravel to improve the function of the Rain Garden.

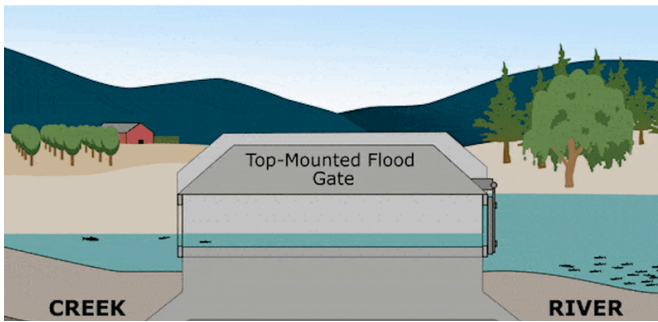


## Anti-littering and dumping

Illegal dumping along the Coquitlam River poses a significant threat to both environmental and human health, as identified in the Lower Coquitlam River Watershed Plan. Discarded waste—including plastics, construction debris, and hazardous materials—can leach pollutants into the water, degrading water quality and aquatic habitat. This contamination affects salmon populations, a keystone species in the watershed, as well as other fish and wildlife that depend on clean water for survival. Additionally, litter and debris along the riverbanks contribute to erosion and habitat destruction, further destabilizing the watershed’s delicate ecological balance. Beyond the environmental impact, illegal dumping undermines community efforts to maintain a healthy and accessible riverfront, discouraging recreational use and cultural connections to the land. Addressing this issue requires stronger enforcement, increased public awareness, and active stewardship programs to protect the Coquitlam River for future generations.

For the second year in a row, QMC Metering Solutions brought staff to a clean-up day at Gates Park on July 30, 2024. 14 staff from QMC worked through a very rainy morning, removing a significant amount of garbage from the Riverside. This was also an opportunity for Grant Holt to create a short informative video on the Clean-up effort. After several successive clean-ups in this location, the amount of garbage appears to be declining year-over-year. QMC has expressed their interest in continuing with this annual event.





## Salmon and Habitat Conservation

Salmon is recognized in the Lower Coquitlam River Watershed Plan (LCRWP) as a key Ecological Component, significantly impacted by multiple pressures in the watershed, including invasive species, stormwater runoff, water extraction, recreation, and mining. The Watershed Plan outlines strategic actions to mitigate these impacts and enhance salmon and aquatic habitat health.

Efforts to support salmon, fish populations, and habitat conservation are also strengthened through ongoing outreach and education initiatives, which help raise awareness and promote stewardship within the community.

One example of these efforts is Grant Holt's video, "[Fish-Friendly Floodgates](#)". The video communicates how salmon habitat at  $\acute{\lambda}\acute{e}x\acute{a}t\acute{e}m$  Regional Park (formerly Colony Farm) could be improved with infrastructure upgrades that would facilitate fish passage while also enhancing flood risk. The video was developed with the support of University of British Columbia Ph.D. candidate Zackary Sherker and Lina Azeez from Watershed Watch Salmon Society.

In 2024, the Coquitlam River Watershed Society (CRWS) received funding from the Pacific Salmon Foundation (PSF) to renew its outreach display, with a particular focus on salmon conservation in the watershed. Consultation with partners began in December 2024 and will continue into the spring of 2025 to finalize the project.

## OUTREACH EVENTS



In 2024, the Coquitlam River Watershed Society (CRWS) continued its strong presence at festivals and community events, engaging the public on topics of watershed stewardship, water conservation, salmon habitat protection, and invasive species. These events provided valuable opportunities to connect with residents, share information, and inspire action to protect the Coquitlam River Watershed.

In 2024, CRWS returned to several events, including: Canada Day at Coquitlam's Town Centre Park. A short video was produced as part of the event. CRWS was also at the Salmon Come Home Festival on October 27. A highlight of the fall season, this event at Hoy Creek Linear Park drew large crowds eager to witness returning salmon and learn about conservation efforts. For the second year in a row, we attended Salmon Day at Álexatám Regional Park (formerly Colony Farm), on October 6, organized by Watershed Watch Salmon Society.

New Events this year included Earth Day at Lions Park, Port Coquitlam, an event highlighting the environmental initiatives of the City of Port Coquitlam and their partners. And finally, we brought our outreach display to Lions Park, Port Coquitlam for our own BC Rivers Day & Rain Garden Renewal event. This event at Lions Park in Port Coquitlam coincided with the Rain Garden Renewal Project, bringing together community members, local dignitaries, and volunteers to learn about the importance of rainwater management and riparian restoration. Attendees participated in planting activities, mural unveiling, and educational games on salmon and invasive species.

As part of our effort to remain connected with our partners, Margaret Birch represented CRWS at the Port Coquitlam Cultural Roundtable on November 21, where she shared insights on the Rain Garden Renewal and Mural Project. Her presentation highlighted the project's role in enhancing stormwater management, supporting biodiversity, and integrating public art as a tool for environmental awareness. Georgia Ohm addressed the City of Port Coquitlam Council in Committee on December 3 to request renewed operational funding from the City of Port Coquitlam in 2025. Her report included updates on the CRWS's implementation of the Watershed Plan through 2023 and 2024, and provided an update on the CRWS' structural transition.



## SOCIAL MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS

Throughout 2024, Jacqueline Chan continued to play a key role in managing and optimizing CRWS’s digital presence, ensuring both the website and social media platforms remained functional, engaging, and up to date. She enhanced the website’s mobile compatibility, resolved technical issues, and collaborated with Georgia and Margaret to update content, including meeting agendas, event listings, and sponsor acknowledgments.

On social media, Jacqueline promoted events, shared educational videos, and engaged with the community, increasing visibility for CRWS initiatives such as Salmon Day, rain garden volunteer opportunities, and watershed conservation efforts. She also designed custom graphics, managed volunteer registrations, and maintained active communication across multiple platforms, strengthening CRWS’s outreach and public engagement throughout the year.

### Website

The website shows a notable increase in use from 2023 to 2024:

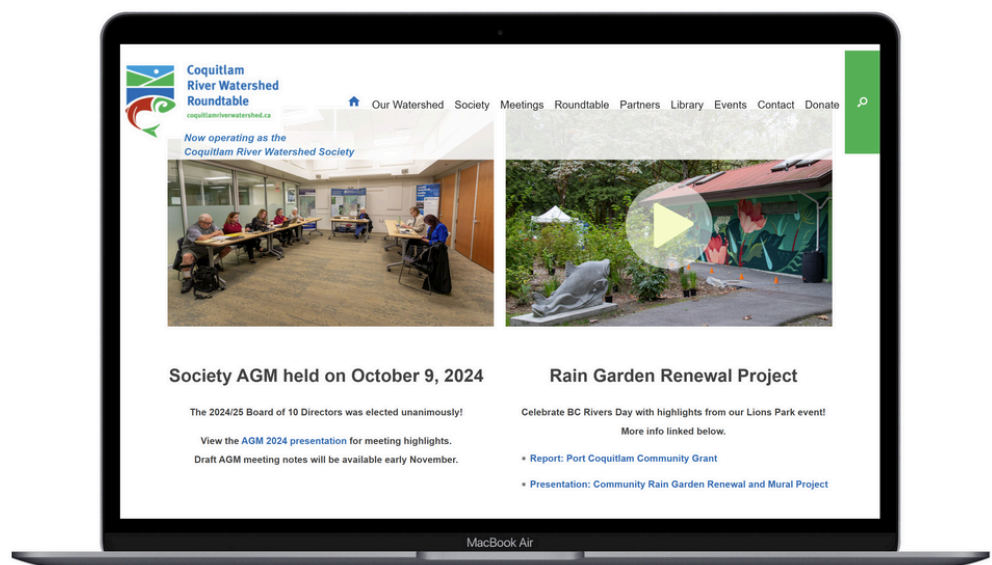
Website	2023	2024
Total Views	6,556	16,786
Total Users	3,146	3,903
Views Per User	2.08	4.30
Average Engagement Time (seconds)	44	86
Total downloads	53	181
Users who downloaded documents	36	89
Average number of downloaded files/user	1.5	2.0

This may be attributable to much of the work that was completed on the website through late 2023. Through 2024, the website benefited from consistent maintenance, as well as content updates and alignment with our Social Media platforms.

Website analytics for 2024 reveal key insights into user behavior and engagement patterns. The 'History' and 'Coquitlam Lake Dam' pages showed notably high engagement, with visitors spending an average of one minute on these pages. Meanwhile, the 'Meetings and Agendas' page emerged as the most frequently visited section after the homepage, recording the highest number of views per active user (5 views), compared to 1-2 views per user on other pages. Given that this page is regularly updated with meeting information and presentations, it makes sense that users frequently revisit it.

While the homepage remains the most visited page, users typically do not stay on it for extended periods, with an average engagement time of under 10 seconds, suggesting that visitors quickly navigate to other sections of interest.

File downloads saw a significant increase in 2024, with 181 downloads from 89 users, compared to 53 downloads from 36 users in the previous year. This growth in downloads per user (2 files per user in 2024, up from 1.5 in 2023) indicates greater engagement with downloadable resources, likely due to an overall increase in website traffic and improved content accessibility.

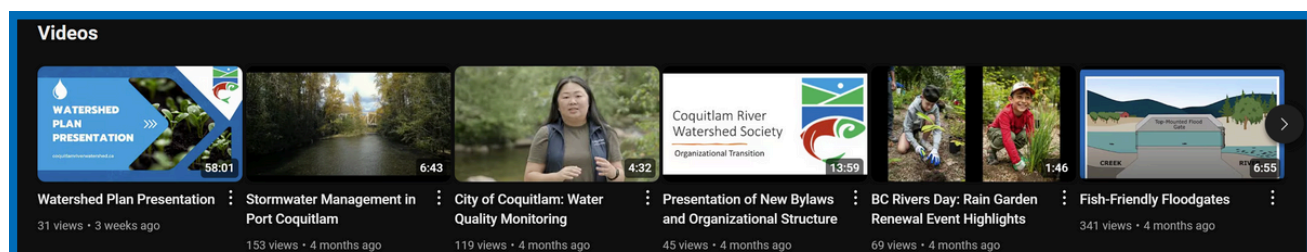


## Social Media

Social media engagement trends in 2024 remained consistent with those observed in 2023, with Facebook continuing to have a significantly larger audience base than Instagram. Over the course of the year, Facebook recorded 1,100 total visits, while Instagram saw 316 visits. Engagement was evenly distributed throughout the months, with a few small spikes, likely corresponding to the posting of key content. The top-performing Facebook posts were primarily focused on current events, such as BC Rivers Day and extreme weather alerts affecting the Coquitlam River Watershed.

On Instagram, the Linktree (link in bio) served as a central hub for event registrations and other key links. The most-clicked URL in 2024 was the volunteer sign-up link for the Rain Garden project, followed closely by the Board Member information page on the CRWS website and the BC Rivers Day event link hosted by the Outdoor Recreation Council of BC (ORCBC). Like Facebook, Instagram's top posts were Call-to-Action driven, encouraging users to volunteer, attend events, or take action related to watershed conservation and local environmental issues. Outdated links were regularly removed from Linktree to keep content relevant and accessible.

This year also saw a major increase in CRWS's YouTube presence, following the hiring of a Canada Summer Jobs Videographer in the summer of 2024. With no new videos posted in 2023, there was no direct comparison to previous years, but YouTube content in 2024 reached over 3,000 video views. Community feedback on these videos was overwhelmingly positive, with users expressing appreciation for the educational content and accessibility of meeting recordings. Key additions to CRWS's YouTube channel included recordings of community meetings for those unable to attend, educational content on watershed health, and videos highlighting the Rain Garden project. These efforts significantly expanded CRWS's digital outreach, making valuable information more widely available to the public.



## FINANCIALS AND IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS

The Society's achievements in 2024 were made possible through the invaluable contributions of time, staff resources, and donations of venues, event support, and refreshments. In-kind contributions for the year totaled \$12,0462, with approximately 390.3 volunteer hours generously contributed by Society Members, staff from partner organizations, and engaged community members. Volunteers played a crucial role in various stewardship efforts, including supporting the maintenance and renewal of the Rain Garden, and participating in Core Committee meetings, all of which strengthened the Society's commitment to watershed health and community collaboration.

The financial outlook for 2024 was significantly different from 2023. Revenue for 2024 was \$110,332, significantly less than \$127,911 in 2023. We began the year with a smaller carryover amount than we have in recent previous years. While it is common, and in fact ideal for non-profits to end the year at net-zero, the reduced carry-over left us with reduced operational funds in 2024. Additionally, the valuable contribution to CRWS Operation Funds from the City of Port Coquitlam was unavailable in 2024. Despite these constraints, the CRWS was able to adapt and to reduce expenditures, allowing us to complete the year with a modest carryover of \$8,731.

The positive financial news for 2024 was that we received several new grants for project work. Port Coquitlam Community Foundation, Pacific Salmon Foundation, and QMC Metering Solutions provided new partnerships and sources of funding. The Government of Canada, Canada Summer Jobs Program, and Fisheries and Oceans continued to offer support through valuable funding that ensured that we maintained capacity to implement projects related to our Lower Coquitlam River Watershed Implementation Plan (LCRWP). Further, Jack Cewe Construction increased their contribution this year to help off-set the shortfall in operational funds.

Recognizing our reduced operational funds, we were able to reduce our expenditures in 2024. This was partly facilitated in part by the Coordinator reducing her hours through in the final quarter of the year. Other administrative expenses included \$5,352.77 in legal fees associated with the development of new Bylaws, and the organizational transition. Increased expenses toward Communications, as well as Outreach and Events, reflect the grant funding for projects, and the matching funds provided by the Society.

Overall, with Revenue of \$101,600.36, the CRWS enters 2025 with a \$8,731 carryover in available funds.

Since 2020, the Coquitlam River Watershed Society has made an annual contribution of \$10,000 to a Contingency Fund. With our last contribution made at the end of 2023, the fund is now worth \$40,000. With a smaller carryover in 2025, the Society Board will consider the contribution to be made for 2024.

## Coquitlam River Watershed Society Financial Statement 2024

As at February 10, 2025

REVENUE		2024
Source		Amount
Carryover		3,217.17
City of Coquitlam		35,000.00
BC Hydro FWCP		
Metro Vancouver		35,020.00
City of Port Coquitlam		
Kwikwetlem First Nation		14,000.00
Fisheries and Oceans Canada		2,250.00
Jack Cewe		7,500.00
Government of Canada - CSJ		5,345.00
PSF		2,250.00
Port Coquitlam Community Foundation		5,000.00
QMC		750.00
	<b>Total Revenue Received</b>	<b>110,332.17</b>

EXPENDITURES		
Payroll Expenses		75,301.14
Communications		1,900.12
Outreach and Events		7,506.26
Mileage		733.73
Insurance		519.00
Professional Fees		1,231.40
Photography		1,407.57
Misc. Fees & Disbursements		477.75
Office, Admin & Refreshments		997.99
Legal Fees		5,006.52
WWSS Admin Fee (5% of total expenditures)		5,000.00
Locker		1,518.88
	<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>101,600.36</b>

<b>FUNDS AVAILABLE (Remainder - Payables)</b>	<b>8,731.81</b>
Contingency	-
<b>FUNDS AVAILABLE (Remainder - Contingency)</b>	<b>8,731.81</b>

ASSETS		
Remaining Kwikwetlem Funds*		28,000.00
Contingency Fund		40,000.00
		<u>68,000.00</u>

\*Kwikwetlem Contribution of \$70,000 provided in 2022, to be disbursed each year as \$14,000 until 2026

## MOVING FORWARD

As CRWS embarks on 2025, the organization is set to build on the momentum of the past year with a renewed focus on outreach, education, and collaborative action. A key early initiative will be the renewal of our outreach display, featuring a salmon theme, made possible through a grant from the Pacific Salmon Foundation. Additionally, on February 26, CRWS will host a Work Planning Session, bringing together Sector Representatives, Core Committee Members, Community Members, and Board Members to identify and prioritize projects that align with strategies in the Lower Coquitlam River Watershed Plan. The session will explore a wide range of initiatives, from expanding stormwater solutions and addressing invasive species to fostering responsible recreation and protecting salmon habitat. With continued community engagement and strategic partnerships, CRWS is well-positioned to advance its mission of preserving and enhancing the health of the Coquitlam River Watershed in the year ahead.

Some suggestions that have already been proposed and will be considered include the following:

### Stormwater

- Consider installing a Rain Garden along a boulevard or roadside
- Install tamper-proof upgrades and repairs to Rain Garden rain barrels.
- Reach out to businesses to participate in Stormwater solutions such Rain Gardens or Rain Barrels
- Promote the City of Port Coquitlam's Rain Barrel Program

### Invasive Species

- Develop an Invasive Species Walking tour for High School Students.
- Partner with municipalities in the Adopt-a-trail Program

## Development

- Re-establish Development Committee
- Share Low Impact Development Research with a wider audience by providing short, succinct summaries and press releases.

## Vandalism and Illegal Activity

- Continue riverside clean-ups with QMC Metering Solutions and reach out to other potential companies and partners.
- Host more clean-up activities with youth
- Partner with municipalities Adopt-a-trail program

## Recreation

- Develop a workshop or communications materials such as videos or printed or digital content that respond to recent public inquiries about the impact of rock dams, handling salmon during spawning, dogs in rivers and other behaviour along the river.

## Salmon and Habitat

- Re-establish the Habitat Committee
- Ensure that new restoration sites are included in the Watershed Atlas - <https://cmnmaps.ca/coquitlamwatershed/>

## Communications

- Promote the online Watershed Atlas to members and the community.
- Catalogue resources and develop a searchable database for the website to enable the public to search and access watershed related resources more easily.
- A Canada Summer Jobs application has been submitted for a graphic designer to assist with renewal of education and outreach materials.

## Partnerships

- Langara College has expressed interest in partnering with us. They have a capstone project for recreation. There are other more complex problems such as Development where faculty could be involved.
- Catalogue resources and develop a searchable database for the website to enable the public to search and access watershed related resources more easily.



# YEAR IN REVIEW



## Navigating Growth, Transition, and Impact in 2024

The Coquitlam River Watershed Society experienced a year of transformation and achievement in 2024, building on its legacy of collaboration, education, and advisory action. The organization took a significant step forward, completing the formal transition to a Society, solidifying its governance structure while continuing to engage its diverse network of partners and volunteers in advancing watershed health initiatives.

## Strengthening Governance and Organizational Resilience

One of the most pivotal milestones of the year was the adoption of new Society Bylaws and the election of the first Board of Directors at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in October. This transition from an interim to a permanent board ensures financial stability, strengthens governance, and enhances CRWS's ability to secure funding and implement long-term initiatives. The new Board, composed of community leaders with expertise in governance, finance, and environmental stewardship, will guide the Society into the future while maintaining the Society's collaborative spirit.

With this transition, CRWS also assumed direct financial management, marking the end of its long-standing trustee relationship with Watershed Watch Salmon Society. This shift represents a key step toward operational independence and greater financial autonomy.

## Implementing the Watershed Plan: Key Initiatives and Accomplishments

Throughout 2024, CRWS remained steadfast in its commitment to implementing the Lower Coquitlam River Watershed Plan (LCRWP). Several initiatives targeted the most pressing challenges facing the watershed, including stormwater management, illegal dumping, water use conservation, and the preservation of fish and salmon habitat:

- **Rain Garden Renewal at Lions Park:** A major restoration effort saw volunteers, municipal staff, and community members come together to improve plant health, address drainage concerns, and install new signage. The project culminated in a BC Rivers Day celebration featuring the unveiling of a mural by local artist Laura Kwok, reflecting the natural and cultural significance of the watershed.
- **Stormwater Awareness and Education:** With climate change intensifying weather events, stormwater management remained a priority. Two educational videos—produced with support from municipal staff—highlighted water quality monitoring and local stormwater management strategies.
- **Community-Led Cleanups and Stewardship:** Illegal dumping continues to pose a challenge along the Coquitlam River. Thanks to QMC Metering Solutions, staff volunteers removed significant amounts of waste from Gates Park during a dedicated cleanup day. The Society also produced a video to raise awareness about the impact of litter on the watershed.
- **Salmon and Habitat Conservation:** Outreach efforts expanded to promote fish-friendly infrastructure solutions, particularly at ʔéxətəm Regional Park, where improved floodgate management could enhance salmon passage. Additionally, CRWS secured funding from the Pacific Salmon Foundation to update its outreach materials, reinforcing its commitment to protecting aquatic habitats.
- **Ongoing education of invasive species and overuse of water** through display materials at table events.

## Expanding Public Engagement and Digital Outreach

CRWS strengthened its presence in the community through participation in key festivals and events, including Canada Day, Earth Day, and Salmon Come Home. The organization also hosted its own BC Rivers Day event at Lions Park, engaging 42 participants in hands-on rain garden restoration and educational activities.

On the digital front, CRWS’s website saw a significant increase in engagement, with total views jumping from 6,556 in 2023 to 16,786 in 2024. The organization’s growing YouTube presence, fueled by new video content, provided an accessible platform for watershed education, while social media engagement remained steady, reinforcing connections with the community.

## Financial Stewardship and Sustainability

While 2024 presented financial challenges, CRWS successfully diversified its funding sources. New grants from the Port Coquitlam Community Foundation and the Pacific Salmon Foundation helped offset the shortfall, and additional contributions from Jack Cewe Construction provided critical operational support. In-kind contributions for the year totaled \$12,0462, with approximately 390.3 volunteer hours generously contributed by Society Members, staff from partner organizations, and engaged community members.

Revenue for the year totaled \$110,332, with a carryover of \$8,731 into 2025. While expenses were carefully managed—including a reduction in Coordinator hours in the final quarter—the Society will continue exploring funding efficiencies to ensure long-term stability. The Board will also review the annual \$10,000 contribution to the Contingency Fund, which currently stands at \$40,000.





**Coquitlam  
River Watershed  
Roundtable**

Visit us at our website:  
[coquitlamriverwatershed.ca](http://coquitlamriverwatershed.ca)

