



# Lower Coquitlam River Watershed Plan Implementation Update – Fall 2021



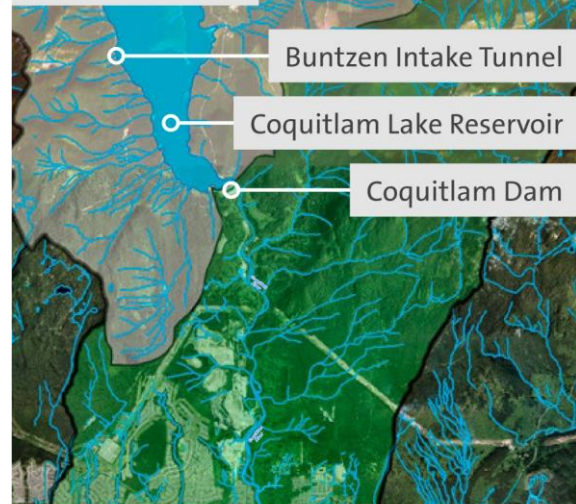
Lions Park rain garden planting volunteers  
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## Lower Coquitlam River Watershed Plan

The Coquitlam River Watershed Roundtable is a collaborative body that coordinates and implements activities that promote the long-term sustainability of the watershed. Between 2012 and 2015, the Roundtable created the Lower Coquitlam River Watershed Plan (LCRWP), which resulted from the efforts of more than 60 partners from municipal, provincial, regional, federal and First Nations governments,

industrial, arts and culture, education, community, real estate development sectors and stewardship groups. The LCRWP responds to key pressures that affect watershed health and provides some initial strategies to address them. Implementing the LCRWP requires the commitment of key partners to support the plan's strategies for action, which aim to provide a healthy watershed for humans and non-humans alike.

### Upper Coquitlam River Watershed

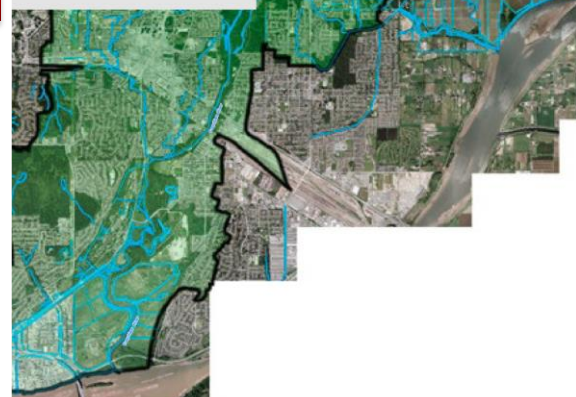


## Strategies for Action – Progress Update

This update highlights progress-to-date on the 17 strategies provided in the LCRWP. Since our Spring issue, marked progress was achieved in addressing pressures from stormwater, illegal activity and mainstream cultural norms. Work with industry and community sector partners, homeless outreach and immigration settlement

programs, recreation organizations, government and stewardship groups resulted in positive engagement outcomes that will lead to improved watershed health. Thanks to support from our partners, the Roundtable has developed strategies to continue to safely implement its Watershed Plan during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Lower Coquitlam River Watershed



The Coquitlam River Watershed Roundtable was founded in 2011 following a four-year community engagement process. The Roundtable coordinates and implements activities that promote the health and long-term sustainability of the watershed.

# WHAT PRESSURES ARE AFFECTING THE THINGS WE CARE ABOUT?

## Development (High)



## Invasive Species (High)



## Stormwater (High)



### Which components of the watershed do these pressures affect?

Riparian Areas, Natural Areas, Liveable Communities and Recreation

Riparian Areas, Recreation and possibly Coquitlam River System and Salmon

Coquitlam River System, Riparian Areas, Salmon, Cultural and Spiritual Values, Human Health and Safety and Resource Industries

### Strategies for Action

**Development Incentives Study:** to explore options with the development community, Kwikwetlem First Nations, environmental and legislative experts and devise strategies that may address development pressures in the watershed.

**Natural Space Strategy:** to assess the current open space system to identify areas of high importance that provide multi-benefits for future development areas based on ecological, social and economic values.

**Develop an Impact Map:** to show the watershed-wide environmental activities, natural areas and human impacts to inform decision-makers and the community about ways to address pressures from development on lower Coquitlam River watershed health.

**Implementation Status: ACTIVE/ONGOING.**

Successful workshops and learning events discussed potential development incentives, natural assets as a component of infrastructure, including First Nations engagement in land-use reviews. Two research papers on proposed environmental policies for land-use development and a Natural Space Strategy were completed by external groups. An informational Coquitlam River watershed map was produced for outreach discussion. In late 2020, the Development Project Committee released an interactive Watershed Atlas and Project Catalogue, which provides geospatial information on the watershed and allows users to access and input environmentally conscious development, fish, wildlife and habitat projects.

### Strategies for Action

**Alignment of Invasive Species Management Efforts:** to address Metro Vancouver Invasive Species Management Strategy (Goal 3-L). Compile watershed-wide data and apply across municipalities.

**Implement Ban on Sale of Invasive Species:** to address Metro Vancouver Invasive Species Strategy (Goal 3-L and 3-M). Initial effort would target development of an educational awareness campaign for watershed residents to learn about the impacts invasive species can have on watershed health and how to help manage them.

**Implementation Status: ONGOING.** Since 2016 through Fall 2019, the Roundtable has accessed funding support from financial business and community organizations, municipal, federal and regional governments to develop a comprehensive outreach program to educate the community on the impact of invasive species and watershed health, with the aim to achieve a measurable change in human behaviour. Through a series of coordinated events held in the cities of Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam and Metro Vancouver, outreach and education materials were developed and tested, resulting in a transferable set of informational materials, community surveys and a table-top display. These tools highlight the impacts invasive species and water quality, quantity and overuse have on watershed health. The Roundtable will continue to align with other municipalities to advance messaging with the aim to achieve Metro Vancouver Management Strategy goals to ban the sale of invasive species.

### Strategies for Action

**Stormwater Homeowner Outreach:** to help single-family homeowners improve stormwater practices in the lower watershed. Development of this strategy also aligns with the implementation of a **water conservation outreach program** strategy.

**Promote Adaptive Stormwater Management Process:** to achieve stormwater improvements at a watershed-wide scale.

**Implementation Status: ACTIVE.** In the Summer of 2020, a Stormwater Management subcommittee was formed to begin drafting recommendations for a watershed-wide adaptive stormwater management plan. In Spring 2021 the committee brought all governments in the watershed together to discuss their respective stormwater management plans and align adaptive monitoring programs. The subcommittee has also begun implementing an outreach campaign to single family homeowners by installing a demonstration rain garden in Lions Park, Port Coquitlam. The garden will feature rain barrels for rainwater harvesting and signage explaining how rain gardens work and how they can be constructed.



Volunteer mulching the rain garden

# WHAT PRESSURES ARE AFFECTING THE THINGS WE CARE ABOUT?

## Water Extraction (Medium)



## Recreation (Medium)



## Vandalism / Illegal Activity (Medium)



### Which components of the watershed do these pressures affect?

Coquitlam River System, Salmon, Human Health and Safety, Resource Industries, Cultural and Spiritual Values and Recreation.

Coquitlam River System, Riparian Areas, Natural Areas, Salmon, Resource Industries and Recreation.

Coquitlam River System, Riparian Areas, Natural Areas, Stewardship, Cultural and Spiritual Values and Recreation.

### Strategies for Action

**Develop a Set of Recommendations for Next Revision of Water Use Plan (WUP):** to determine whether local-area water conservation efforts can offset water needs beyond WUP requirements to improve flows needed for salmon.

**Implement Water Conservation Outreach Program:** that focuses on the environmental flow benefits. Connect water extraction and reduced water consumption of water to stream and salmon health. This strategy also aligns with **stormwater homeowner outreach** strategy.

**Promote “high” standards of water practices for new development, including supporting research:** to show the benefits of reducing water demands and preserving water quality of new development in the watershed. This strategy links to both Stormwater and Development actions and may be captured as part of an alignment to address those pressures.

**Implementation Status: ACTIVE.** The plan to form a Water Extraction Committee was put on hold in 2018 due to a research extension of BC Hydro’s Water Use Plan. An external review of water extraction issues in the watershed proceeded and was released in early 2021. The report provided recommendations that could improve flows for both environmental and cultural benefits. The Water Extraction committee is currently liaising with municipalities on which recommendations can be implemented and exploring the feasibility of a Water Sustainability Plan for the watershed. A small component of a water conservation outreach was initiated in conjunction with the Invasive Species outreach program.

### Strategies for Action

**“No Impact” Campaign in Schools:** to provide a school program where kids have access to learn to recreate without an environmental impact. Additional work and implementer support is required to advance the action plan.

**Coquitlam River Mainstem Outreach Campaign:** to prevent unsustainable recreation on the river corridor mainstem that harms riparian areas, wildlife and aquatic habitat, native plants and species at risk. This idea will be considered as capacity grows and resources become available.

**Implementation Status: PARTIAL.** During Fall 2019 the Roundtable implemented a new branch of their outreach campaign that solicited input from community secondary students on pressures that stem from recreational activities. The data received will be considered in planning future recreation campaigns.



Photo by Originelle Designs

### Strategies for Action

**Littering / Dumping Public Outreach Campaign:** to educate residents on cumulative damage of littering / dumping on a watershed-wide scale.

**Outreach Program:** to provide awareness and understanding about existing tree management and clearing bylaws in the municipalities. This idea will be further developed as capacity grows and resources become available.

**Implementation Status: ACTIVE.** In 2019 and 2020 the Roundtable was active in various shoreline clean-ups. The events sparked a new “changing behaviours” public outreach campaign in 2021 that educated newcomers to the watershed, empowered people who are homeless to participate in an incentivized clean-up program and encouraged student awareness by having them create an art piece from the litter collected. Multiple partners also came together on Rivers Day 2021 to conduct both an in-stream and streamside clean-up of the Coquitlam River trails just north of the Red Bridge in Port Coquitlam. Over 6 cubic yards of litter was removed from the Coquitlam River and its shores in 2021.



Earth Week litter clean-up with Raincity Housing volunteers

# Implementation Partners for Watershed Plan Strategies for Action

The Roundtable gratefully acknowledges the ongoing support provided by its partners for the implementation of several strategies for action through Fall 2021.

- **ArtsConnect** (Mainstream Cultural Norms)
- **City of Coquitlam** (Development, Capacity Building, Stormwater Management)
- **City of Port Coquitlam** (Development, Stormwater Management, Capacity Building)
- **Environmental Law Centre, UVic** (Development, Water Extraction)
- **Fisheries and Oceans Canada** (Mainstream Cultural Norms, Illegal Activity, Development)
- **Jack Cewe Ltd.** (Stormwater Management, Capacity Building)
- **Lehigh Hanson Materials Ltd.** (Mainstream Cultural Norms, Mining)
- **Kwikwetlem First Nation** (Development, Stormwater Management, Capacity Building)
- **Metro Vancouver** (Capacity Building)
- **Morguard** (Development)
- **Vancity** (Stormwater Management)

**In 2020 Roundtable partners and volunteers gave in-kind contributions valued at \$18,822, including 632 hours of time and \$600 of venue and refreshment donations.**

## Mainstream Cultural Norms (Medium)

## Mining (Low)



Human Health and Safety, Stewardship, Resource Industries, Cultural and Spiritual Values and Recreation

Coquitlam River System, Salmon and Liveable Communities

### Strategies for Action

**Outreach Work:** with linkages to **Natural Space Strategy** (Development) and **Coquitlam River Mainstem Campaign** (Recreation) to make outdoor access easier. This concept requires further research and interest from partners.

### Strategies for Action

**Conduct Outreach Between Stewardship Groups and Mining Community:** to share information about current mining operations to provide better transparency on mining operations in the watershed.

**Implementation Status: ACTIVE.** During Fall 2019 the Roundtable solicited input from secondary students on pressures that stem from mainstream cultural norms. The data received will be considered in planning future outreach campaigns. In Summer 2020, a virtual watershed tour was also filmed to encourage people to visit and get involved in projects around the watershed. Thanks to funds from the Canada Summer Jobs program in 2021, a videographer was hired to film a "Hidden Gems" series, which highlighted some of the lesser-known areas of the watershed and encouraged people to visit and get involved. All videos are available on the Roundtable's website, social media pages and Telus Community Content TV.

**Outreach on Current State of Mining Practices:** to inform the community what mining operations are doing to protect the river.

**Implementation Status: ACTIVE.** The Roundtable includes aggregate industry sector representation and provides a forum for mine operations to provide information about the industry. Aggregate representatives regularly attend meetings and provide updates. During 2019, Lehigh Hanson Materials Ltd. participated in a watershed tour to provide information about their mining operations and the current state of mining practices at their site. The Lehigh Hanson Aggregate site was also featured in a filmed virtual watershed tour in 2020. Jack Cewe also provided aggregate in-kind for the Roundtable's rain garden project.



For more information: [coquitlamriverwatershed.ca](http://coquitlamriverwatershed.ca)

For more information on Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation: [cmp-openstandards.org](http://cmp-openstandards.org)

Check us out on the socials:

