



# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

*Revitalizing our roots for new growth*

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

Coquitlam River  
Watershed Roundtable



*Prepared By*  
Coquitlam River  
Watershed Society

February 28, 2024

## **Our Mission**

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



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2023 set the stage for a new phase of growth for the Coquitlam River Watershed Roundtable.

This year, the Roundtable committed significant effort toward organizational restructuring, resulting in the decision to move forward as a single entity, the Coquitlam River Watershed Society (CRWS).

The transition to legal society status provides greater organizational transparency and efficiency, paving the way for the Coquitlam River Watershed Society to move confidently forward in 2024.

While the members of the Roundtable devoted a great deal of time, thought and effort to the transition to become a fully integrated Society, we continued to advance projects and activities to implement the Lower Coquitlam River Watershed Plan (LCRWP). The Report on Barriers and Facilitators to Low Impact Development was brought to a successful completion after two years of consultation and development with partners.

Other projects focused on building-up and maintaining existing accomplishments. The Lions Park Demonstration Rain Garden was this year cared for entirely by Roundtable and Community volunteers.



Roundtable members marshalled watering equipment, water access, and an app to sign up for watering shifts over the summer of 2023. The Roundtable's website and digital media presence was updated and enhanced by removing outdated content and plugins, replicated or un-used social media accounts.

Other accomplishments of 2023 are listed below:

- Undertook a work planning process, identifying achievable goals for 2023 and 2024.
- Hired two new part-time contractors: Jenny Zheng came onboard as an engagement coordinator, Jacqueline Chan came on board as a communications coordinator.
- Completed major upgrades our website's structure, and website content was renewed.
- Aligned identity and links across a variety of social media platforms.
- Initiated an outreach program to local Elementary Schools, beginning with a workshop at Castle Park Elementary in Port Coquitlam.
- Undertook an invasive species pull with Lime Bikes and staff from the City of Coquitlam, helping to remove blackberry from a 20 metre section of the Coquitlam River Trail.
- Created a volunteer sign-up system and engaged members and partners of the Roundtable to water and support the Rain Garden from spring through autumn 2023. Volunteers contributed 40 hours over the summer to care for the Rain Garden.
- Undertook a clean-up event with QMC Water metering Inc, removing 15 m<sup>3</sup> of trash from the Coquitlam River in Gates Park, Port Coquitlam.
- Produced a comprehensive research paper on Low Impact Development with UBC's Centre for Law and the Environment and the participation of municipal partners.
- Held a successful Community Roundtable Event, featuring presentations from six environmental professionals and municipal staff on various aspects of watershed health in the Coquitlam River Watershed.
- Participated in 9 events and public festivals within the Community, including Salmon Day at Colony Farm, organized by Watershed Watch Salmon Society (WWSS).
- Completed the Terms of Reference (TOR) and Society Bylaws Task Force review, resulting in an organizational restructuring to streamline the Coquitlam River Watershed Roundtable as a Society. The Society Board will provide the operational direction for our organization to move forward.

Our received funds this year totalled \$106,250, with a carry-over from 2022 of \$21,661. Cash expenditures totalled \$111,132. Together with a \$10,000 annual contribution to our contingency fund, there was a carry-over from 2022-2023 of \$6,778. The CRWS also gained new funding through the Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program (FWCP), which provided \$1000 toward our Annual Community Event. Generous in-kind support was contributed in 2023 with 403 hours valued at \$10,882.

In January, Georgia Ohm moved into a full-time Coordinator role with support from Margaret Birch, who continued to provide support for specific projects, and invaluable advice to the Coordinator. Jenny Zheng was hired as a part-time engagement coordinator to assist with outreach events and school programs. A part-time communications coordinator role was created and filled by Jacqueline Chan, who brought much needed technical expertise to stabilize the CRWS's website, and align social media accounts.

The CRWS' 2023 Annual Community Event, *Vital Signs: Checking our Watershed's Health* received much community interest and support, drawing 41 participants, as well as attention from local media. As the CRWS moves forward into 2024, the accomplishments of 2023 and the years preceding it provide a solid foundation for future growth and development.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Through 2023, the Coquitlam River Watershed Roundtable received financial support from the City of Coquitlam, the Greater Vancouver Water District (Metro Vancouver), Kʷikwə́ləm First Nation, the City of Port Coquitlam, Jack Cewe Construction Ltd, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and the Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program. We wish to thank these organizations for their generous financial support in 2023.



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
- Hoy/Scott Watershed Society
- Kʷikwə́ləm First Nation
- Arts Connect
- Allard Contracting Ltd.
- Heidelberg Materials Ltd.
- Watershed Watch Salmon Society
- Jack Cewe Construction Ltd.
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada
- Living Resources Environmental Consultants
- Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program
- North Fraser Salmon Assistance Project
- Originelle Designs Photography

Finally, our deep gratitude is extended to the many stewards and volunteers who regularly contributed their time to support the Roundtable's events activities through 2023.

*Thank you!*

# CORE COMMITTEE SECTORS AND REPRESENTATIVES

The Core Committee comprises a team of 19 sector representatives from 13 diverse sectors, all of whom contribute their time in-kind to attend Core Committee and Community Roundtable meetings, sit on sub-committees, and attend outreach events. Without their dedication and collaborative efforts, the Roundtable would not be what it is today. Each member sits on the Core Committee for 18–24-month terms, although many continue for years beyond their tenure. We wish to thank our Core Committee members for their generous contributions of time in 2023.

**Saara Majuri**  
*Vancity*

Community



**Isaac Nelson**  
*Fisheries and Oceans Canada*

Federal Government



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

Local Government



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

Local Government



**Lillian Kan**  
*Colliers International*


Real Estate Dev.



**Katy Jay**  
*BC Hydro*

Utilities

Photo not available



**Sherry Carroll**  
*ArtsConnect*

Arts & Culture



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

Regional Government





# CORE COMMITTEE SECTORS AND REPRESENTATIVES

Stewardship



**Tony Matahlija**

*North Fraser Salmon Assistance Project*

Local Government

**Cllr. Trish Mandewo**

*City of Coquitlam*



Local Government



**Caresse Selk**

*City of Coquitlam*

Industrial



**Kirsten Wilson**

*Jack Cewe*

First Nations Gov.



**Lance Meyers**

*Kw̓ikw̓əłá' m First Nation*

Stewardship



**Anne Woosnam**

*Hoy-Scott Watershed Society*

Stewardship

**Eve Gauthier**

*Tri-City Green Council*



First Nations Gov.

**Cllr. George Chaffee**

*Kw̓ikw̓əłá' m First Nation*



Industrial

**Sophie Mullen**

*Heidelberg Materials Ltd.*



## CORE COMMITTEE ALTERNATES

Many of the sectors represented on the Core Committee are also supported by an alternate representative. Alternate representatives regularly attend core committee meetings, participate on sub-committees and task groups, and submit proxy votes when the sector designate is unavailable to do so. These members contribute substantial time thought to the Coquitlam River Watershed Society. Current Core Committee members who participate as alternates include:

- Cllr. Steve Kim, City of Coquitlam
- Jenny Tough, City of Coquitlam
- Glen Joe, Kʷikwə́łə́ m First Nation
- Craig Orr, Kʷikwə́łə́ m First Nation
- Dan Allard, Allard Contracting
- Jim Allard, Allard Contracting
- Geoff Nagel, Morguard Corporation
- Sandra Budd, Maple Creek Streamkeepers
- Dianne Ramage, stewardship (non-affiliated)
- Paul Lambert, Tri-City Green Council
- Manfred Kraus, Arts Connect

# SOCIETY DIRECTORS

**Kirsten Wilson**  
*Jack Cewe*



Industrial

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



Stewardship

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




Stewardship

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



Industrial

**Caresse Selk**  
*City of Coquitlam*



Local Government

**Sherry Carroll**  
*ArtsConnect*



Arts & Culture

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



Local Government

**Craig Orr**  
*Kwíkwáłá m First Nation Staff*



First Nations Gov.

**Lillian Kan**  
*Colliers International*



Real Estate Dev.

# STAFF AND SUPPORT

The following representatives are not members of the Core Committee but provide vital services to the Roundtable.

The Financial Trustee contributes a large portion of their time in-kind to attend meetings and participate in sub-committees.

Financial Trustee

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



Coordinator



**Georgia Ohm**  
*Coquitlam River  
Watershed Roundtable*

Communications

**Jacqueline Chan**  
*Coquitlam River  
Watershed Roundtable*



Communications

**Trish Hall**  
*Coquitlam River  
Watershed Roundtable*



Project Support



**Margaret Birch**  
*Coquitlam River  
Watershed Roundtable*

Engagement

**Jenny Zheng**  
*Coquitlam River  
Watershed Roundtable*



# SUB-COMMITTEE AND TASK FORCE MEMBERSHIP



## Resilience and Capacity Building Committee

Cllr. Nancy McCurrach, Cllr. Trish Mandewo, Jesse Montgomery, Caresse Selk, Dawn Roumieu, Kirsten Wilson, Margaret Birch, Georgia Ohm

## Communications Committee

Jenny Tough, Jenny Zheng, Jacqueline Chan, Georgia Ohm



## Development Project Committee

Geoff Nagle, Lilian Kan, Melissa Chaun, Margaret Birch

## Roundtable Public Event Planning Committees

Sherry Carroll, Jenny Zheng, Jacqueline Chan, Margaret Birch, Georgia Ohm



## Stormwater Management Committee

Scott Walmsley, Eve Gauthier, Georgia Ohm

## Roundtable TOR and Society Bylaws Review Task Force

Eve Gauthier, Tony Matahlija, Jim/Dan Allard, Dianne Ramage, Sherry Carroll, Caresse Selk, Kirsten Wilson, Margaret Birch, Georgia Ohm



## Society Board

Lillian Kan, Craig Orr, Scott Walmsley, Caresse Selk, Eve Gauthier, Kirsten Wilson, Jim Allard, Sherry Carrol, Tony Matahalija

## SUBCOMMITTEE AND TASK FORCE UPDATES



The Terms of Reference and Society Bylaws Task Force put in significant effort this year to steer the Roundtable toward its transition to a fully integrated Society. The committee met once in late 2022, and three times in 2023, contributing approximately 30 volunteer hours. Additionally, much time was spent by the members of this committee in informal discussion, research, and review. This important contribution from many of the Roundtable's active members, including Eve Gauthier, Tony Matahija, Jim and Dan Allard, Dianne Ramage, Sherry Carroll, Caresse Selk and Kirsten Wilson, comprised the majority of subcommittee work in 2023.

The Resilience and Capacity Building Committee was also very active in maintaining the Roundtable's financial well-being through 2023. Cllr. Nancy McCurrach joined the Committee as Port Coquitlam's representative from Council, and Cllr. Trish Mandewo took over from Cllr. Steve Kim as Coquitlam's City Council representative. Cllr. Nancy McCurrach, Cllr. Trish Mandewo, Jesse Montgomery, Caresse Selk, Dawn Roumieu, Kirsten Wilson participated in this committee through 2023. During the RCBC's final meeting of 2023, it was agreed that Scott Walmsley be invited to join the RCBC as a staff representative of Port Coquitlam.

With the transition to a Society, there is the possibility of reviewing the membership and structure of the Core Committee in 2024, to broaden participation to other community groups.



In 2023 Georgia Ohm moved from a part-time role into a full-time Coordinator role at 35 hours per week. Her work focused on CRWS operations including meeting administration, coordination and note taking and distribution, hiring additional Roundtable support, communications within the Roundtable and other community partners, coordinating outreach events and applying for and reporting on grants, and completing work plans and the annual report.

Georgia was supported by additional Roundtable contractors who contributed expertise toward more focused initiatives. Margaret Birch remained in a part-time capacity to support the completion of important projects where her background proved uniquely valuable. These included supporting the work of the Terms of Reference and Society Bylaws Task Force, which was aided by Margaret's long history with the Roundtable. With a background with municipalities, Margaret also brought valuable knowledge to support the collaborative development of the Report on Low Impact Development (LIDS), with valuable contributions from the CRWS's municipal partners.

Jenny Zheng was hired as an Engagement Coordinator, bringing experience working with youth and the school system. Over the course of June to November, Jenny developed and presented a workshop for elementary school students on watershed ecosystems, created new activities, posters and social media content, and attended stewardship and outreach events. With other full-time employment, Jenny's schedule was limited, but her warm vibrancy and enthusiasm for watershed health made her a valued part of the CRWS.

In late 2022, several content updates were ready to be loaded to our website. Unfortunately, around that time, the CRWS suffered a malware attack on our website. Despite efforts from staff, including Trish Hall, who has been a supporter and contractor for the Roundtable, as well as New Earth Marketing, the website remained vulnerable to disruption over the course of several months. In May 2023, Jacqueline Chan was hired by the CRWS as a Communications Coordinator. With a B.Sc. in Computer Science, Jacqueline brought much needed expertise, and quickly re-established the stability of our website. She also made significant improvements to our social media presence, aligning social media accounts, developing dedicated email addresses to allow for consistency between staff in these roles. A digital communications manual was developed to assist future staff.



## COQUITLAM RIVER WATERSHED SOCIETY



The Coquitlam River Watershed Society (CRWS) was incorporated on November 2, 2020, under the *BC Societies Act*, enabling the Coquitlam River Watershed Society to access insurance for its members. Over the following two years, the Society Board remained a mostly nominal body, with the Core Committee acting as the decision-making body of the organization.

In November 2022, the Core Committee approved a motion to form “The Terms of Reference and Society Bylaws Task Force”. The Task Force fulfilled a commitment stated in the Roundtable 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.

The Task Force met four times from November 2022 – December 2023. Through this process, research was conducted by members and external advice was sought. Board Governance Coach Hazel Postma worked with the Task Force to provide guidance. Legal advice was provided by Dejager Volkenant Barristers and Solicitors. In September 2023 a legal workshop for all Core Committee members was held with Luke Johnson of Dejager Volkenant Barristers and Solicitors. Through this process Roundtable members received answers to critical legal questions, and develop a shared understanding of the benefits of moving forward as a Society.

Through this work, it became clear that to move forward as a Society would provide greater clarity to Roundtable members and the community at large. Being organized as a Society would also confer legal clarity for our organization, streamline operations and decision-making, and provide a stronger foundation for future growth. In light of these considerations, in December 2023, sector representatives passed a motion that “The Coquitlam River Watershed Roundtable will operate as one entity, which is a Society, and that the Society Board shall provide financial, legal, governance and stewardship knowledge and oversight.”

In 2024, the Society Board will be responsible for completing this transition. An interim board that includes previous Board members, as well as members of the Society Task Force, will establish Board member roles and responsibilities, new bylaws, and recruit new board members. Meanwhile, the Core Committee will continue to offer educational and stewardship opportunities to the community within the Coquitlam River Watershed, facilitate collaboration among its members, and preserve and enhance the health of the Coquitlam River Watershed through the strategies described in the Lower Coquitlam River Watershed Plan.

This year, the Society Directors met once in a dedicated meeting on June 14, 2023. Since all Society Directors were also Core Committee members, information was shared and discussed between Directors at Core Committee meetings as well.

## WATERSHED PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Through 2023 the Roundtable continued to implement its Lower Coquitlam River Watershed Plan through stewardship activities, educational workshops and displays, and advisory action.



## DEVELOPMENT



The need for new homes and infrastructure to house a growing population continues to drive rapid urban growth. Since 2018, the Development Committee has supported research to reduce the impact of development on the Watershed.

In recognition that development is the top-rated pressure in the Coquitlam River Watershed and affects the highest number of ecosystem and community components in the Watershed, the Development Committee commissioned a paper titled *"The Effects of Urban Development on Watersheds, and Low Impact Development Strategies"*. This paper, finalized in 2021, reviews green infrastructure opportunities for consideration by municipalities and the development community.

In summer 2022 a new research study focused on Low Impact Development (LID). The study followed a definition of LID as the "systems and practices that use or mimic natural processes that result in infiltration, evapotranspiration, or use of stormwater in order to protect water quality and associated habitat."

The Roundtable contracted researchers at UBC's Centre for Law and the Environment, Dr. Stepan Wood, and graduate law student Paul Johnson. Initially, the researchers were contracted to review the techniques and related building codes, bylaws, policies, and regulations and other publicly available documents that were provided by the Development Committee.

Through 2023, as drafts of the document were shared with municipal staff at the cities of Coquitlam and Port Coquitlam, the scope and timeline of this project was extended to include a comprehensive review of the many municipal documents that address LID. The resulting research paper demonstrates that both cities generally favour Low Impact Development, and each include numerous provisions that support LID explicitly and implicitly. There were no fundamental barriers to LID. As quoted by the authors, "...local government laws and regulations do not prevent the two cities from making LID an integral part of land use planning and development." Further, there were many opportunities identified, big and small, that could make the current framework of local bylaws and regulations more supportive of LID.

The Report is currently being finalized, and funding is being sought to share its findings with members of the public and the Development Community in 2024. Late in 2023, the Province of BC passed Bill 44, which allows for multi-unit construction on previously single-family lots, and Bill 47, which sets minimum standards for increased zoning around transit hubs. As the CRWS moves forward with presenting the report in 2024, it will seek and opportunity to review the impact that these Bills will have on the LIDS laws and regulations reviewed in the Report.



## STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

In 2021, as an initiative of the Stormwater Committee, a demonstration rain garden was installed in Lions Park, Port Coquitlam. With support from Vancity, the Kʷikwə́łəm First Nation, and Jack Cewe Construction, CRWS volunteers placed soils, mulch, and young plants adjacent to a Field House, demonstrating the ability of rain gardens to absorb and filter excess stormwater run-off.

Stormwater is another 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.

Since 80% of the land in the Lower Coquitlam River watershed is privately owned, there is significant potential for stormwater reduction through retention and diversion on private property. The demonstration rain garden is meant to encourage private property owners to take steps on their land to reduce stormwater runoff.

Through 2022, the rain garden was maintained and cared for with the help of the Parks staff from the City of Port Coquitlam. A salmon sculpture, donated by Fisheries and Oceans staff was added to the Rain Garden. An interpretive sign was created with help from City of Port Coquitlam staff.

In 2023, Rain Garden care and maintenance was carried out by dedicated Roundtable and Community volunteers. Members of the Stormwater Committee, particularly Eve Gauthier, worked with the city's Environmental Coordinator, Scott Walmsley to establish a water source and install a garden box with on-site watering equipment at the rain garden. The Stormwater Committee also created an app to allow volunteers to sign up for watering shifts. An instructional video on the app helped volunteers access equipment, water the Garden thoroughly, and store equipment correctly. Over the summer of 2023, eight volunteers from the community and the Roundtable contributed a total of 40 hours of volunteer time to care for the Garden.

## ANTI-LITTERING AND DUMPING



Litter and illegal dumping along waterways put pressure on the health of the watershed by introducing contaminants to waterways.

Conflict with wildlife also increases as animals are attracted to eat garbage. Wildlife entering urban areas in search of garbage may suffer health impacts of consuming garbage or be trapped and in some cases killed.

This year, the Coquitlam River Watershed Society worked with QMC Metering Solutions, a water metering company, to clean-up a riverside section of Gates Park in Port Coquitlam. In August, eleven staff from the QMC joined CRWS staff for a morning clean-up lasting 2.5 hours. Participants removed approximately 15m<sup>3</sup> of garbage from the riverside. Staff from the City of Port Coquitlam assisted with the removal of collected garbage.



## INVASIVE SPECIES



Invasive species are identified as a high-pressure affecting Watershed Health. Many non-native and invasive plants have shallow root systems, which can lead to greater bank and shoreline instability. With increased erosion, the amount of sediment and pollutants carried into our waterways also increases, leading to poorer water quality. Other plants simply out-compete native species that can be beneficial to wildlife and the ecosystem.

In July 2023, Roundtable staff joined staff from the City of Coquitlam, and volunteers from Lime Bikes Micromobility to remove invasive Himalayan blackberry from a 30 - metre section of the Coquitlam River Trail near Gabriola Drive in Coquitlam. Five volunteers from Lime Bikes worked for two hours, removing blackberries by the root, allowing City of Coquitlam staff to subsequently re-plant the area with native species.

## EDUCATION AND OUTREACH



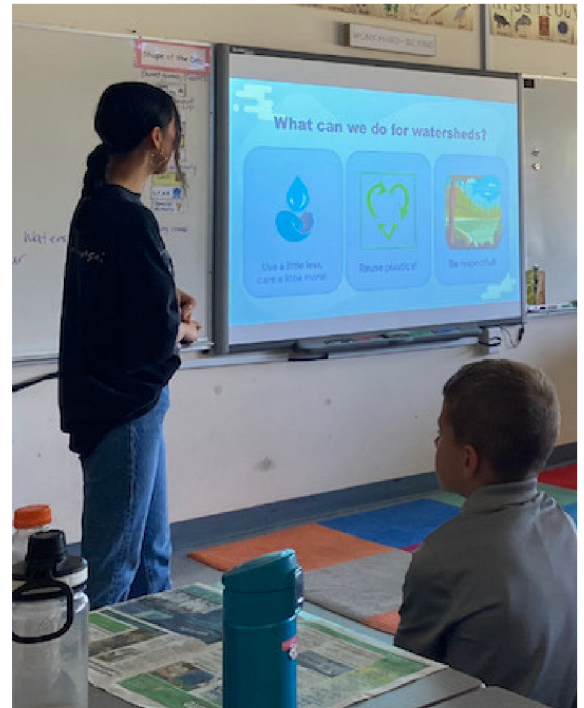
Education and Outreach are strategies that address the pressure of Mainstream Cultural Norms, rated in the Lower Coquitlam River Watershed Plan as a medium-level pressure on the watershed.

This pressure results from disconnection and a lack of understanding of the value of local ecosystem services provided to people by local natural resources. The stresses caused by mainstream cultural norms include apathy, decreased stewardship, lack of environmental knowledge and awareness, and lack of a sense of place or connection with nature.

A number of events and activities were undertaken in 2023 to promote understanding and appreciation of the Coquitlam River watershed.

## Outreach to Schools

In early 2023, school teacher Michelle Oulette at Castle Park Elementary reached out to the CRWS to share art made by her Grade 2/3 students to raise awareness about the disturbance to salmon redds and habitat that off-leash dogs in the river presented. In recognition of the effort and concern shown by Mrs. Oulette and her students, the CRWS's Jenny Zheng created a presentation on the Coquitlam River Watershed, from headwaters to the ocean.



## Outreach at Festivals and Events

Through participation at Festivals and Events, the CRWS reaches many residents and community members who have varying levels of awareness about the watershed and its value. This year, the Coquitlam River Watershed Roundtable maintained a booth with



information and activities at Salmon Leave Home, at the Hoy Creek Hatchery in Coquitlam, Canada Day at Coquitlam's Town Centre Park, Salmon Day at ʕéxətəm (tla-hut-um) Regional Park (formerly Colony Farm Regional Park) in Port Coquitlam, and Salmon Come Home Day at Hoy Creek Hatchery. Visitors to the CRWS table can also view a banner-sized map of the watershed, and discuss any concerns or questions with CRWS staff and volunteers and participate in educational activities.

Visitors to the CRWS table were invited to play a guessing game about salmon habitat. The new game, created by staff member Jenny Zheng, invited participants to consider the threats and barriers faced by salmon attempting to access spawning habitat in the Coquitlam River.

# ROUNDTABLE COMMUNITY EVENT



The Roundtable’s 2023 Community Event this year was titled “Vital Signs: Checking our Watershed’s Health”. The theme of the event was inspired by the many questions that were heard by CRWS staff during public events and over email. Questions such as, “How are the fish?”, and “How much is the drought affecting water levels?” are evidence that many community members are concerned and curious about their watershed.



The meeting featured short presentations on key ecological aspects of the Coquitlam River Watershed, offering participants insight into the natural systems that sustain our community. Featured presentations included:

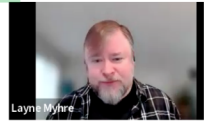
- ***Coquitlam River Water Quality Monitoring***, Angela Yeung, Environmental Services Projects Specialist, City of Coquitlam
- ***Trends in Adult Salmon Returns to the kʷikwə́łəm River***, Jason McNair, Principal, Living Resources Environmental Consultants
- ***kíwə́łəm (Coquitlam) Sockeye Restoration***, Rodney Lee, Project Coordinator, leading Coquitlam River Sockeye Restoration on behalf of the Kʷikwə́łəm First Nation
- ***Challenges and Opportunities in Managing Our Urban Forest***, Erin Gorby, Urban Forestry and Parks Services Manager, City of Coquitlam
- ***City of Coquitlam's Climate Action Plan***, Laura Sampliner, Environmental Sustainability Manager, City of Coquitlam
- ***Making Maple Creek Fish Friendly***, Theo Mahdi, Engineering and Public Works, City of Port Coquitlam

Following presentations, the audience and speakers engaged through a short Q&A panel discussion. Seven tables from local community organizations, offered additional opportunities for participants to learn through conversation and educational resources.

The meeting was very well attended, with 41 participants. This represents a 65% increase in attendance from the Roundtable's 2022 Community Event. Of those attending in 2023, 25 were not regular members of the CRWS.

Strong promotion of the event via community news, posters, and social media may help to explain the increase in attendees in 2023. The Tri-City News published a story about the event, and social media postings were shared widely among our partners.

Minutes of the event, with links to each of the presentations are available on our website and here: [Click here to access meeting minutes](#)



# Watershed Monitoring in the Coquitlam River

Monitoring Toxicology and eDNA in Partnership with the kʷikʷəłəm First Nation



Meetings between partner organizations is critical to achieving the collaborative governance mission of the Roundtable. Presentations from Community Partners to the Core Committee during meetings included:

- Metro Vancouver: A Brief Glacial History And Geomorphology Of The Coquitlam River Watershed
- BC Watershed Security Coalition: Presentation on the Provincial Watershed Security Fund
- Zachary Sherker, PhD Candidate at Pacific Salmon Ecology & Conservation Lab at University of British Columbia: Fish Friendly Flood Infrastructure
- Layne Myhre, Ph.D., Co-Chair, Dept. of Biology, Kwantlen Polytechnic University: Watershed Monitoring in the Coquitlam River: Monitoring Toxicology and eDNA in Partnership with the kʷikʷəłəm First Nation.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING AND PARTNERSHIPS

Early in 2023, the Core Committee gathered for a half-day strategic work planning session. Members considered how we have implemented the three pillars of our mission: Collaboration, Education and Advisory Action, and how we might build upon these achievements in 2023 and beyond. The operational and administrative requirements of the organization were considered, as were the goals set out in the Lower Coquitlam River Watershed Plan. A SWOT analysis, to consider strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats was also undertaken. Several themes emerged during the Work Planning Session:

- Collaboration is one of the unique strengths of the Roundtable. Strengthening our relationships with our partners, particularly the Kwikwə́łəm First Nation, was identified as a top priority for the Roundtable.
- The value of aligning our research projects and priorities with those of our partners was highlighted.
- There was a call to hire an engagement coordinator to assist the Roundtable to take a more coordinated programmatic approach to outreach and education efforts.

Following from the priorities that were identified, significant efforts were made to connect with our KFN partners, including written requests for documents outlining KFN project priorities, and offers to visit the Band Office, or schedule an on-line meeting. During the early part of the year, many competing demands on staff time proved a challenge to meeting this goal, but in the latter half of 2023, the KFN staff have been able to attend Core Committee meetings to contribute to setting plans and priorities for the CRWS.

Over the course of the year, the CRWS continued to provide letters of the support to the KFN for projects including:

- Support for the Renovation of a Designated Community Space for Kwikwə́łəm Artistic Creation and Mentorship
- Support for Reeve Slough Salmon Habitat Reconnection Project
- Support for Trail Upgrades and Placement of Cultural Signage and Kiosks at Á́léxətəm Regional Park
- Support for Dike Improvements and Flood Prevention Measures along the Coquitlam River and the Fraser River

A letter of support was also provided to Layne Myhre of Kwantlen Polytechnic University in support of pilot project in partnership with the KFN to study Coquitlam River salmon and salmon pathogen eDNA.

On July 4, 2023, the Coordinator, Georgia Ohm delivered a Delegation Presentation to City of Port Coquitlam Council-in-Committee to share accomplishments of 2022 and renew our request for funding. The presentation was favorably received, the City of Port Coquitlam continues to be an active partner, informing and guiding the efforts of the CRWS through its representatives, Cllr Nancy McCurrach and Scott Walmsley. Late in 2023, Theo Mahdi, Civil Engineering Technologist from the City of Port Coquitlam joined the Core Committee and shared encouragement and information in support of proposed projects for 2024.





# WEBSITE AND COMMUNICATIONS

In late 2022, several content updates were ready to be loaded to our website. Unfortunately, around that time, the CRWS suffered a malware attack on our website. Despite efforts from staff and New Earth Marketing, the website remained vulnerable to disruption over the course of several months.

In May 2023, Jacqueline Chan was hired by the CRWS as a Communications Coordinator. With a B.Sc. in Computer Science, Jacqueline brought much needed expertise, and quickly re-established the stability of our website. She also made significant improvements to our social media presence, aligning social media accounts, developing dedicated email addresses to allow for consistency between staff in these roles. A digital communications manual was developed to assist future staff.

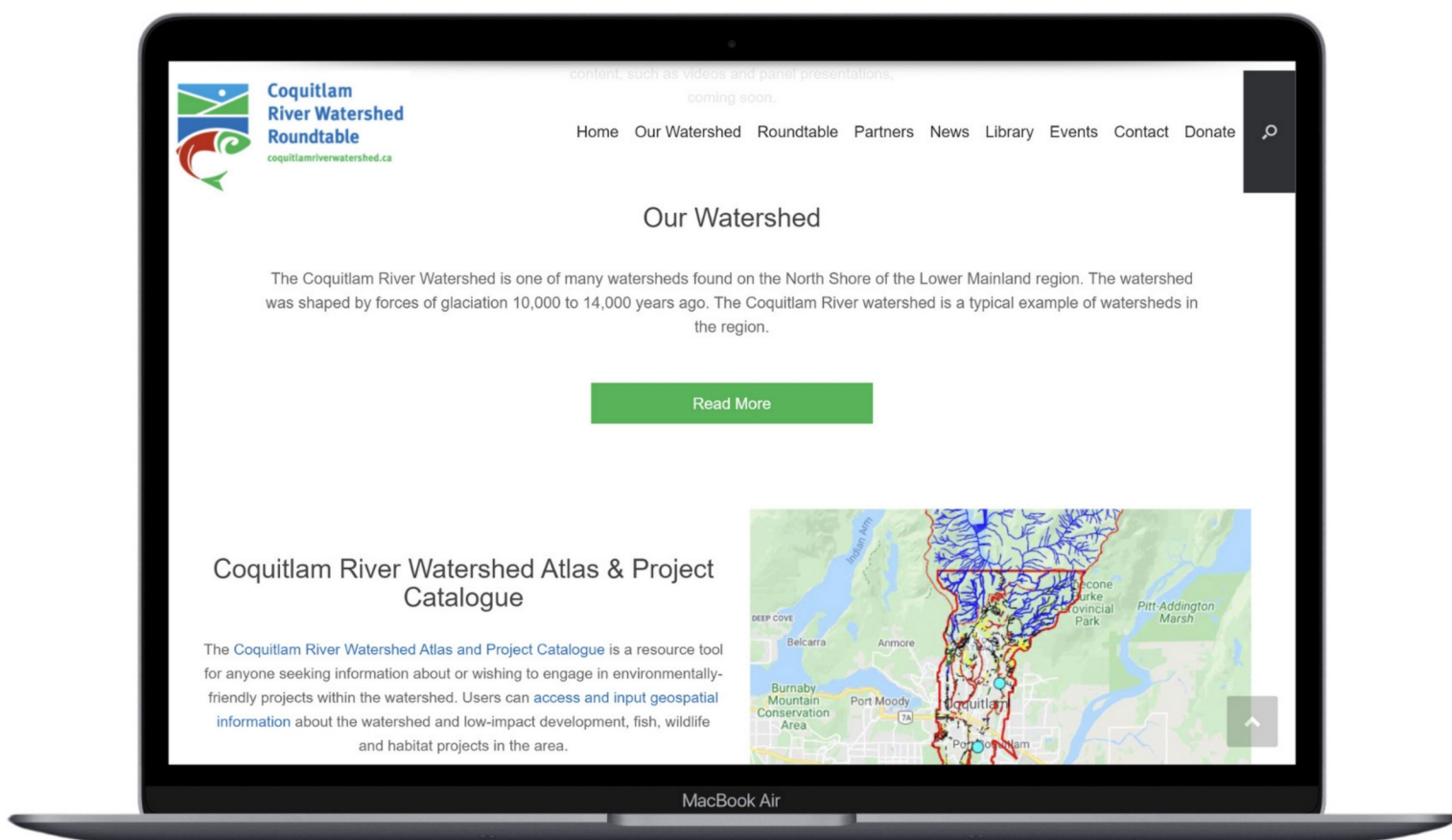
## Website

Significant enhancements to website stability were made throughout 2023, including:

- Updating WordPress plugins and resolving conflicting installations.
- Verified the status of the Basic SSL certificate to ensure secure connections through HTTPS, providing encryption for transferred website information.
- Resolved split email delivery issues in Bluehost, preventing email redirection problems.
- Addressed firewall issues and cache settings to assist consistency in page loading times and display.
- Conducted a review of website backups, ensuring proper storage and maintenance of data.
- Consistency and stability across different devices were improved.

Recent Changes to Google’s analytics and user tracking have been made over the course of 2023. The changes preclude a meaningful comparison between analytics generated in 2022 to 2023. That said, there were several noteworthy trends in website usage over 2023.

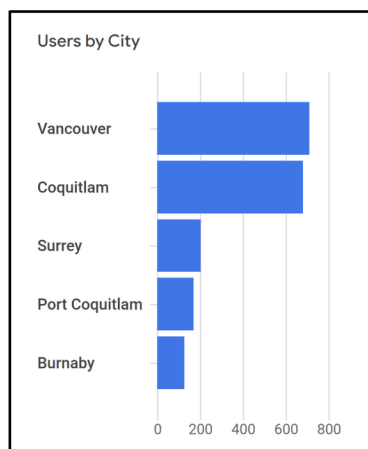
- Total users of the website declined from 6,916 in 2022 to 3,900 in 2023. This is consistent with a general downward trend in website users since 2022.
- There is a consistent trend toward new users to the site with 87.5 % in 2022 and 97% in 2023. The way that Google determines a “new user” continues to be adjusted. In most cases a user signing on from a different device will appear as a new user. Typically a new user is defined as a device which has not accessed the webpage within the last 2 years.



Page path and screen class ▾ +		↓ Views	Users	Views per user	Average engagement time
		6,556 100% of total	3,146 100% of total	2.08 Avg 0%	44s Avg 0%
1	/	2,223	1,629	1.36	16s
2	/coquitlam-lake-dam/	386	310	1.25	46s
3	/kwikwetlem-first-nation/	343	224	1.53	56s
4	/hatcheries-habitats/	232	173	1.34	43s
5	/history/	191	143	1.34	57s
6	/location/	162	119	1.36	38s
7	/our-watershed/	157	121	1.30	42s
8	/roundtable/meetings-and-agendas/	138	50	2.76	1m 16s
9	/orthomaps/	136	102	1.33	31s
10	/roundtable/	121	70	1.73	31s

Despite the apparent drop in website users in 2023, there were 2,647 more visits to the Home Page, an increase of 119% over the previous year. This may be explained by the following factors:

- Website re-design made access across different devices more user-friendly.
- The 'Meetings and Agendas' page exhibits a noteworthy average engagement time, surpassing one minute. This page seems to be revisited by visitors, as evidenced by the highest views per user across the website, standing at 4.96 views per user. This observation underscores the page's role as a resource database, drawing repeated user engagement and interaction.
- This year, there were 53 file downloads (amongst 36 total users). That represents a significant increase compared to 26 downloads last year (amongst 20 total users).



Although CRWR primarily hosts events in the Coquitlam and Port Coquitlam area, the organization appears to be gaining traction outside of the Tri-Cities as well. As shown, many users are from the City of Vancouver. Viewership is also received in Burnaby and Surrey, both of which are included in the top 5 cities with the most CRWR website traffic.

# Social Media

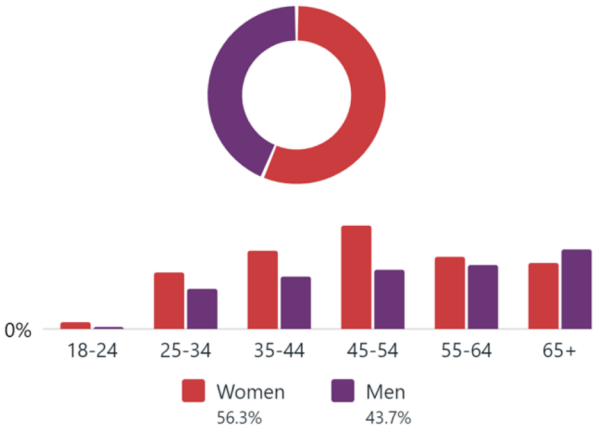
Social Media trends established in 2021 have continued through 2022 and 2023:

- Women tend to lead men slightly in overall use and engagement across both Facebook and Instagram.
- Over the past year, both Facebook and Instagram visits have grown in number. However, Facebook grew substantially more (174%, compared to Instagram’s 69%).
- Instagram followers increased from 673 in 2022 to 760 in 2023.
- Facebook shows a strong increase in use, with 1068 users in 2023.
- Content that had the highest engagement across both platforms was content that was associated with partner organizations (for example, events organized by municipalities or stewardship groups). Calls-to-action, such as requests to register for an event, also appear to have a positive correlation with user engagement.

Facebook followers ⓘ

1,068

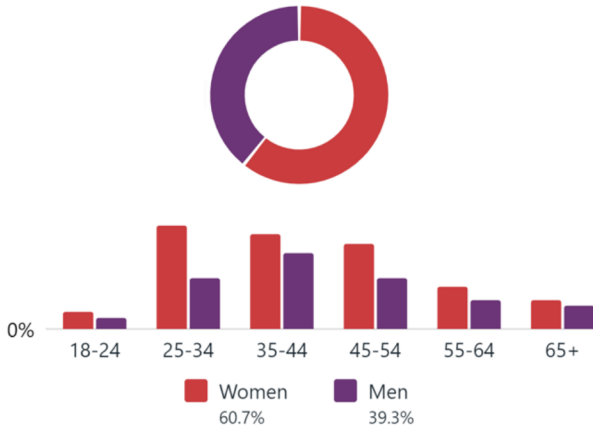
Age & gender ⓘ



Instagram followers ⓘ

760

Age & gender ⓘ



# Print Communications

This year, one Summer Backgrounder was produced, and our print communications were scaled back. Following advice expressed by Core Committee members at the Work Planning session early in 2023, less effort was placed on producing print publications this year in order to reduce cost and environmental impact, and focus on on-line communications.

Given the increasing use of social media to access information about the CRWS, it was felt that this was a more effective means communication tool than print.

## Coquitlam River Watershed Roundtable

Summer 2023

*Kwikwetlem, known as “Red fish up the river.”  
A living river that reveals its spirit.*

### The Coquitlam River Watershed Roundtable

The Coquitlam River Watershed Roundtable was founded in 2011 following a four-year community engagement process. During this development period, individuals and organizations representing a broad range of perspectives on the watershed came together to develop a solid foundation for the Roundtable, including developing a mission statement, values and guiding principles for the Roundtable.

The Roundtable coordinates and implements activities that promote the health and long-term sustainability of the watershed.

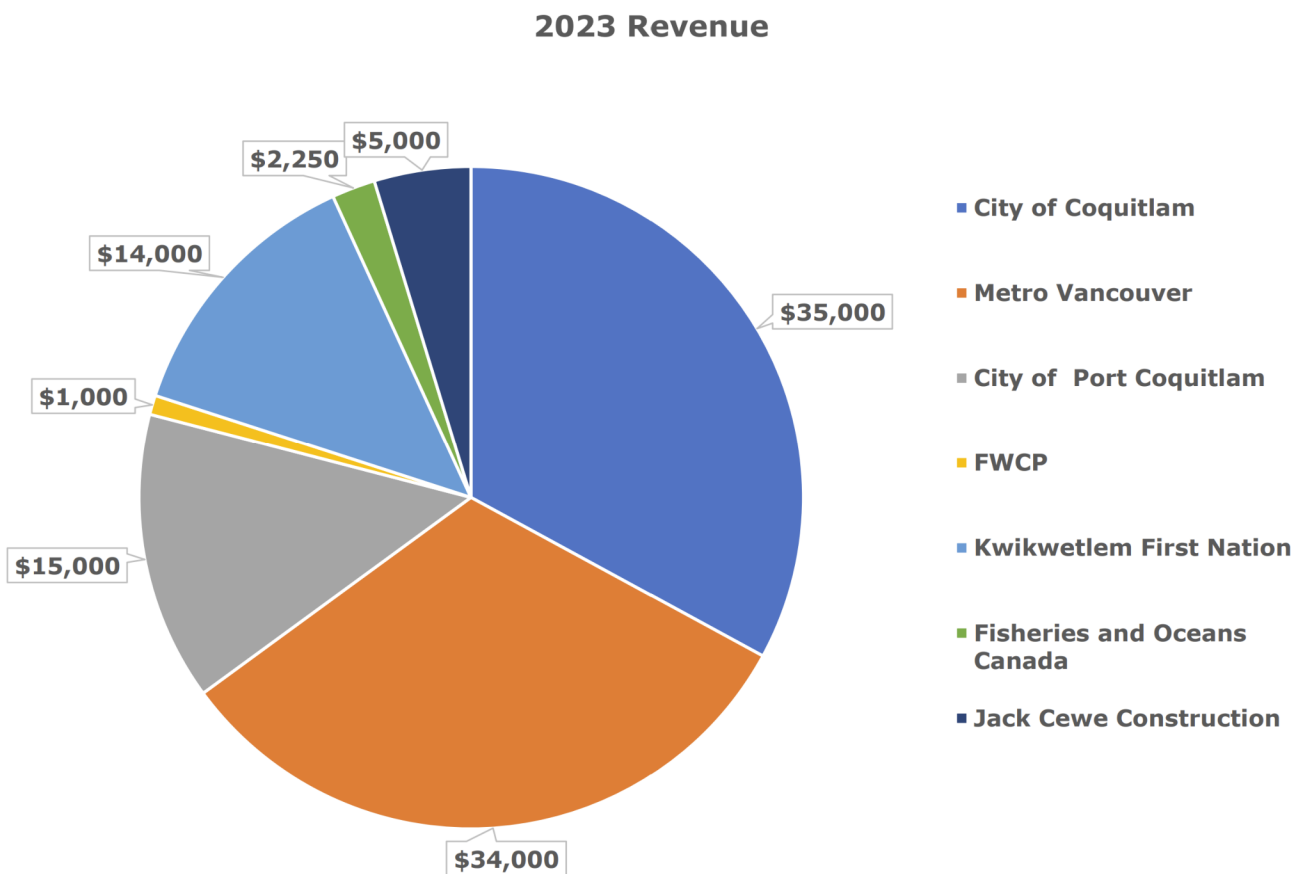
Anyone who supports the Roundtable’s mission can participate in Roundtable meetings, which are held once or twice a year. A multi-sector Core Committee, whose members represent the diverse sectors of interest in the watershed, meet on a regular basis to carry out the work of the Roundtable. Sectors represented on the Core Committee include municipal, provincial, regional and federal governments, First Nations elected officials and staff, industrial, arts and culture, education, community, real estate development and stewardship groups.

# FINANCIALS AND IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS

The Roundtable’s success relies heavily on the generous contributions of time, staff resources and venue, event, and refreshment supplies. In-kind contributions for 2023 were valued at \$10,882. This figure includes approximately 403 Hours of volunteer time, contributed from Roundtable Members, staff from partner organizations, and community members. Stewardship activities including care and maintenance of the Rain Garden, the Community Roundtable Event, and regular Core Committee meetings were all areas that received significant support from volunteers.

## Revenue

In 2023, the Roundtable received \$106,250.

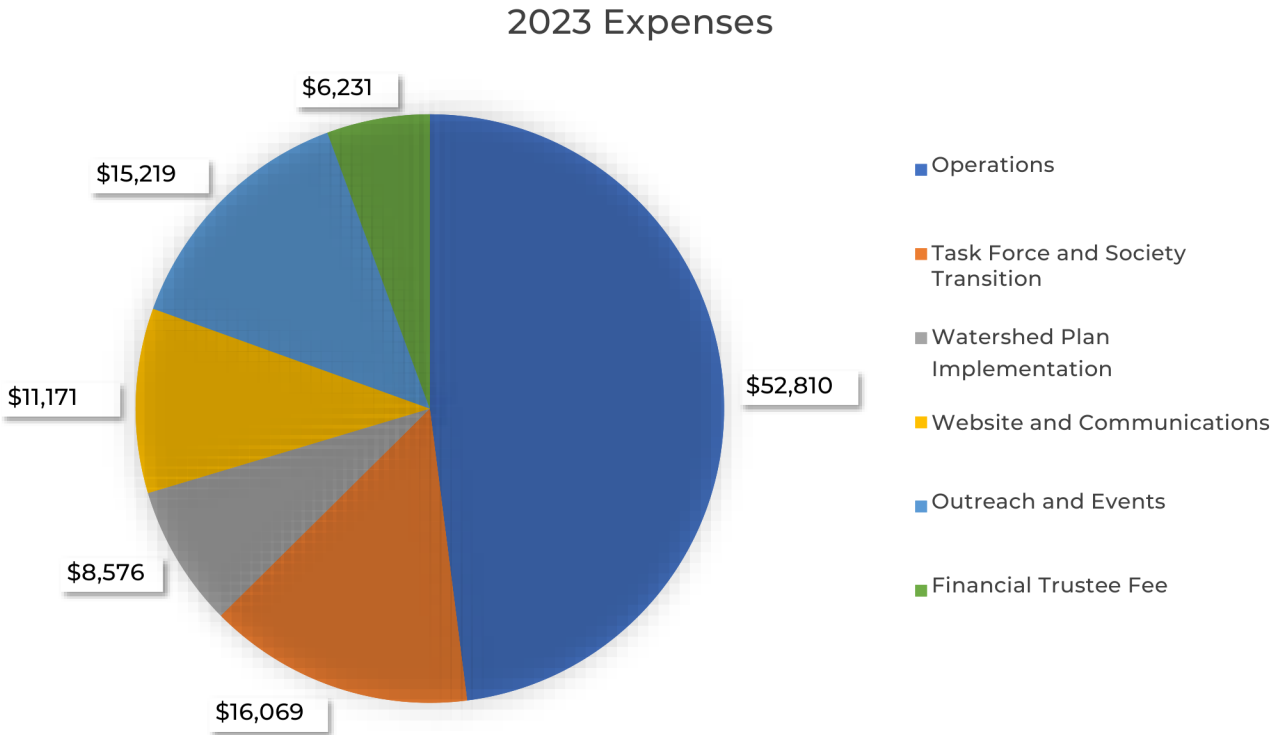


There was a slight decrease from the 2022's committed revenue of \$113,683. The discrepancy is due in part to the lack of support from the Government of Canada Summer Jobs Program in 2023. New funding, however, was received in 2023 from the Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program.

Since 2020, \$10,000 has been contributed annually to a contingency fund. The fund now has a balance of \$40,000.

## Expenditures

In 2023, the Roundtable's cash expenditures totalled \$111,132.18. When combined with in-kind contributions of 10,882.08 the organization's operating costs totalled 122,014.26.



At \$52,810, operations and administration comprised the largest proportion of total expenditures. This included costs associated with Core Committee and RCBC meetings, report writing and funding applications, software subscriptions, insurance, the storage locker and photography and other minor expenses. Wages included in this category totalled \$47,610.00.

<b>Budget Category</b>	<b>Totals</b>	
<b>Operations, including wages, regular meetings, reports and internal comms, funding applications</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>53,865.43</b>
<b>Task Force and Society Transition</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>16,069.41</b>
<b>Plan Implementation</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>8,576.36</b>
Development	\$	4,913.13
Stormwater	\$	954.57
Invasive Species	\$	1,224.19
Anti-littering	\$	1,484.48
<b>Website and Communications</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>11,171.24</b>
<b>Outreach and Events</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>15,218.74</b>
Annual Community Event	\$	8,041.37
Other Annual Events	\$	5,469.25
Education - Castle Park School	\$	1,708.12
<b>Financial Trustee Fee</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>6,231.00</b>
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>111,132.18</b>

The work of the Terms of Reference and Society Bylaws Task Force totalled \$16,069.00 in 2023. This category included Legal Fees, totalling \$4,256.00. This category also includes any associated costs of the Society, such as filing charges associated with the BC Societies Registry or meeting expenses. Wages in this category totalled \$11,171.00.

Outreach and Events totalled \$15,219.00. The Annual Community Event represents a significant proportion of this total, at \$8,041.37. Other outreach events, as well as a workshop at Castle Park Elementary were included in this category. Wages associated with Outreach and Events totalled \$14,221.



Watershed Plan Implementation costs included work on Development, Stormwater, Invasive Species, and Anti-littering. Any honoraria or fees associated with the LIDS report were paid in 2022, and so wages contributed the largest portion toward Watershed Plan Implementation at \$8,039.04.

With the significant effort and achievements to stabilize and updated our website, and streamline the CRWS' social media, website and communications expenditures totalled \$11,171.00. While this total includes service fees for New Earth Marketing, wages contribute \$10,541.00.

While 2023 experienced a slight decrease in revenue and an increase in expenditures from 2022, the CRWS nonetheless enters 2024 with a modest carry-over of \$6,779.00. The CRWS maintained its annual contribution of \$10,000 to the contingency fund, which now stands at \$40,000.

Early this year, a revised Financial Trustee Agreement was finalized with Watershed Watch Salmon Society (WWSS). The services provided by WWSS include holding CRWS funds in trust, record-keeping, payment of invoices, and communication regarding finances with the CRWS coordinator. In 2023, the administrative fee for these services totalled \$6,231, representing 6% of CRWS revenue. 2023's fee is slightly higher than in 2022, owing to an attempt to balance more modest fees that were paid out using a different calculation from 2020 - 2022.

Going forward, WWSS' financial trustee fee will stabilize at 5% of CRWS revenue through 2026. This represents a modest charge, generally below industry average. It is worth noting the significant improvements in financial tracking and communication achieved by WWSS' staff over 2023 have contributed to greater financial clarity for the CRWS. The service is much valued by CRWS staff and members, and WWSS has provided assurance of continued willingness to support the CRWS.

## YEAR IN REVIEW

2023 was a year to resolve several of the more complex questions that the Roundtable has faced in recent years.

While our organization had chosen to become a Society in 2020, the implications of this choice were not apparent or deeply considered at the time. At the outset of 2023, the Roundtable continued to function as it had since its inception in 2011, as an informal association of individuals who came together around a common cause.

As the Terms of Reference and Society Bylaws Task Force embarked on their assignment in late 2022 to provide a report and recommendation on our Society status to the Core Committee, they began with only a vague expectation of the process and outcomes associated with integrating the established structure of the Roundtable with the structure of a Society. The meetings, staff time, informal discussions, research, legal review, and consultation with external experts that were required to progress strategically represented a significant commitment of time and thought.

The Roundtable has chosen a path forward that will lead to a clearer organizational structure, more direct oversight, and a more streamlined organizational structure that will benefit our members and community supporters.

Similarly, in 2023, the Roundtable was able to establish a stronger basis for continued and consistent digital communications. Transition of staff and volunteers over the course of a decade had resulted in inconsistencies, dis-used social media accounts, and a website in need of significant structural updates. With accounts aligned, an updated website, and an up-to-date digital communications manual, the Roundtable has the pieces in place to maximize the reach and effectiveness of our communications going forward.

While few new projects were initiated in 2023, the CRWS continued to support and complete several in-progress projects. The rain garden in Lions Park was given the care and attention needed to keep it thriving through summer 2023. The technical research report on Low Impact Development received significant time and consideration from our municipal partners, CRWS staff and contractors. With the completion of the report, the CRWS has a thorough review of bylaws affecting LIDS that can assist developers, City staff, and the public, in enacting and supporting Low Impact Development in the Watershed. Meanwhile, throughout 2023, we continued to build new partnerships through stewardship and educational outreach, and nurtured collaborative partnerships among the member representatives and organizations within the CRWS.



## MOVING FORWARD

The accomplishments of 2023 have cleared a path forward for 2024. The CRWS can advance with clarity of our organization's structure and legal status. However, there remains much work to be done to complete the transition. An interim board will need to create a new set of bylaws, clarify directors' roles, and recruit new members to our Board. Further, some established practices will need to be adjusted. Core Committee meetings will be split into informational Community meetings and Society Board meetings. Adjusting to new practices and roles will take some time and attention.

As we continue to grow into our Society over the coming year, advancing our Lower Coquitlam River Watershed Plan through projects will remain our focus and priority. At the time of writing this report, strategic planning for 2024 is underway, and funding is being sought for several proposed projects.

An application has been submitted for funding to hire a videographer through Canada Summer Jobs. This would allow us to continue to add to our collection of educational videos that provide up-to-date and easily accessible information about the Watershed to the community. Enhancements to our website and social media will allow us to communicate more efficiently and effectively with our members and the community.

With the Low Impact Development Report complete, we hope to maximize its value to the development community and the broader community through a workshop that will introduce participants to key regulatory documents governing development in the Watershed, and establish a stronger understanding and appreciation for available approaches to Low Impact Development approaches that can be implemented by developers and homeowners.

In the early years of the Roundtable, several bus tours throughout the watershed proved an effective means to build shared understanding and collaboration between the diverse perspectives that were brought to the Roundtable. As we move forward with a new structure, there have been calls from members to host a bus tour once again through the Lower Coquitlam Watershed and into the Upper Watershed. This event would be open to new community partners and supporters, and build strong watershed awareness among participants.

With snowpack at near record low levels in early 2024, the coming year will likely bring further drought. The Coquitlam River Watershed Society will continue to seek ways to respond to the increasing pressure of drought on the watershed, and share knowledge and recommendations to the community for an ecosystems-based approach to drought.

The CRWS was pleased this year to be able to offer a Watershed presentation and activity at Castle Park Elementary. Reaching out to students continues to be a priority. In 2024, the CRWS will look to working with agencies such as Green Bricks that develop and deliver school programs that meet curricula objectives and are effectively aligned with school system priorities. We hope again to hire an Outreach Coordinator who can facilitate collaboration to have Coquitlam River watershed content delivered in schools.

We will continue to prioritize strengthening our partnerships. In early 2024, the CRWS Coordinator has already presented to Coquitlam City Council to provide an update on our activities over the past year, and our organizational transition. The ongoing participation of our partner organizations through their representatives on the Society Board, Core Committee and sub-committees ensures that our organization will continue to collaborate with its members effectively. The Kwikwā'łəm First Nation remains one of the CRWS's most long-standing and supportive partners. Continuing to find ways to align and collaborate with the KFN without over stretching their limited time and staff remains a top consideration in the operations of the CRWS.

The Roundtable would like to express its deepest gratitude to all partners, volunteers, and contributors for their ongoing support. The diversity of our partners across multiple sectors provides a solid foundation for the Roundtable. We look forward to working with all our partners and supporters for years to come.





## Coquitlam River Watershed Map

Points of Interest, Invasive Plant Hot Spots  
& Fish Habitat/Enhancement Sites



Coquitlam River  
Watershed Roundtable  
coquitlamriverwatershed.ca



Contact Us! Get Involved!



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River Watershed  
Roundtable

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

