

Local Watershed Boards: Empowering Communities to Build Watershed Security

Watershed Boards Empowering Communities To Build Watershed Security

**UBCM
September 25, 7:30am–8:15am**

COWICHAN WATERSHED BOARD



3 Significant Impacts

1

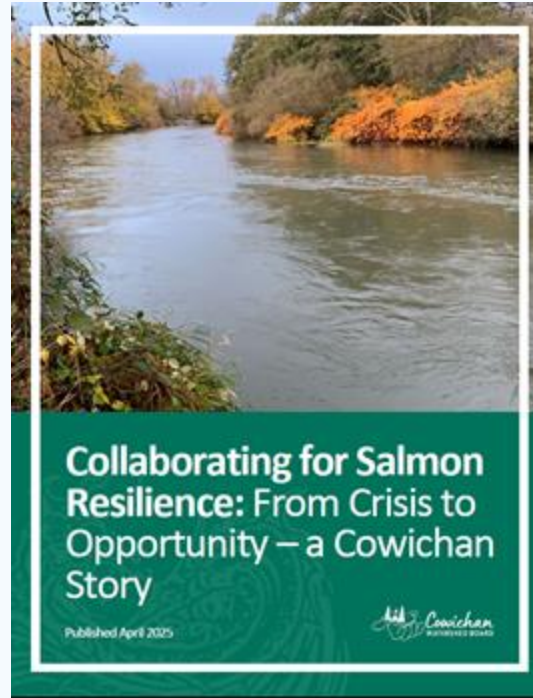
Durable collaborative multi-jurisdictional **relationships** - key to fast, informed, resourced responses. Eg. Fish Kill reponse.

2

Shifting to **Indigenous-led projects** with whole- of-watershed outcomes. e.g. Xwulqw'selu/ Koksilah Watershed Sustainability Plan

3

Social Cohesion to support solutions. e.g. Weir Ready! Water challenge.



3 Keys to Success



1

Embracing **Indigenous Ways of Knowing** at all levels (governance, operations, stewardship partners, etc) e.g. language Lessons.

2

Throw long! Our **targets** are broad, inspiring and aspirational. They will keep us paddling together for generations, fostering durable relationships.

3

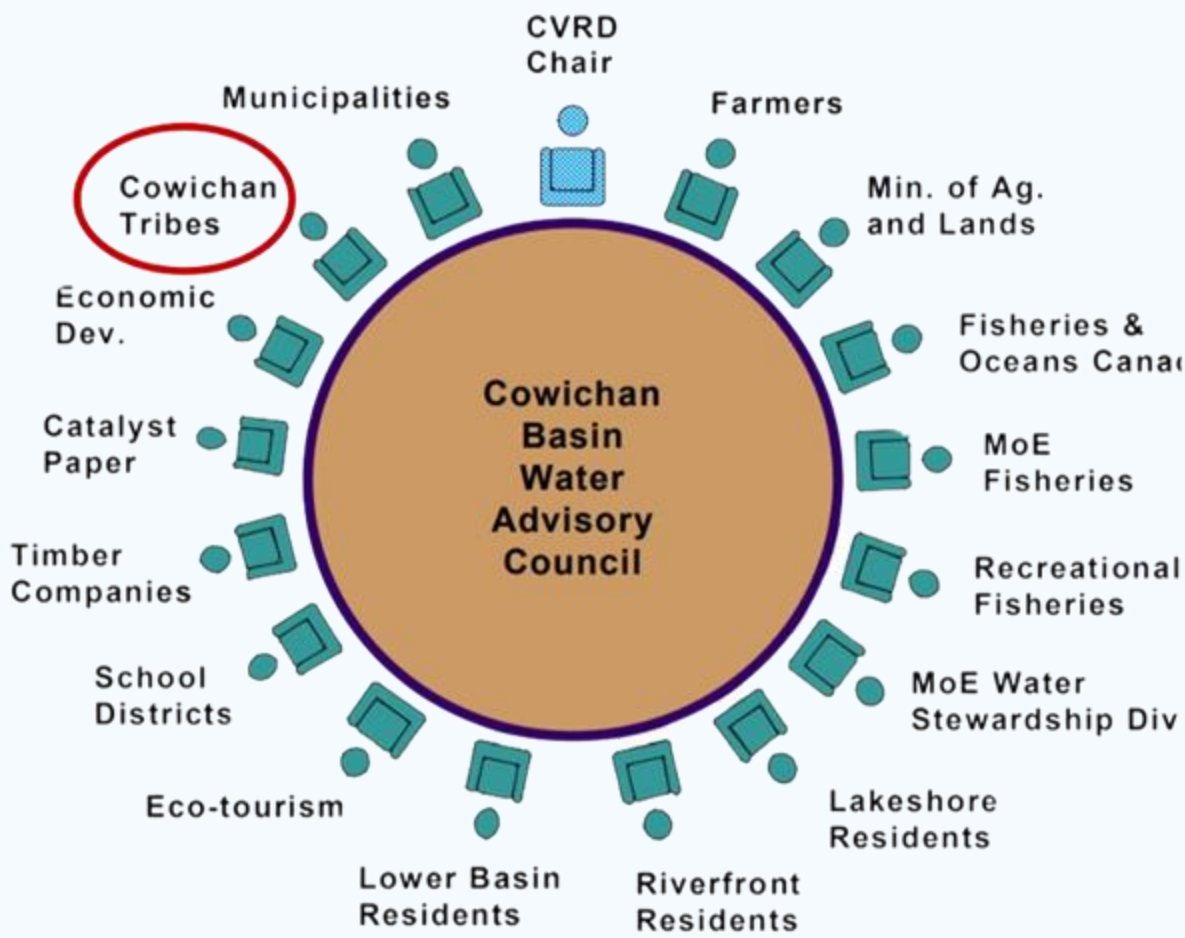
Governance Structure that centres the watershed as the goal, with equal co-chairs. Not a stakeholder table.



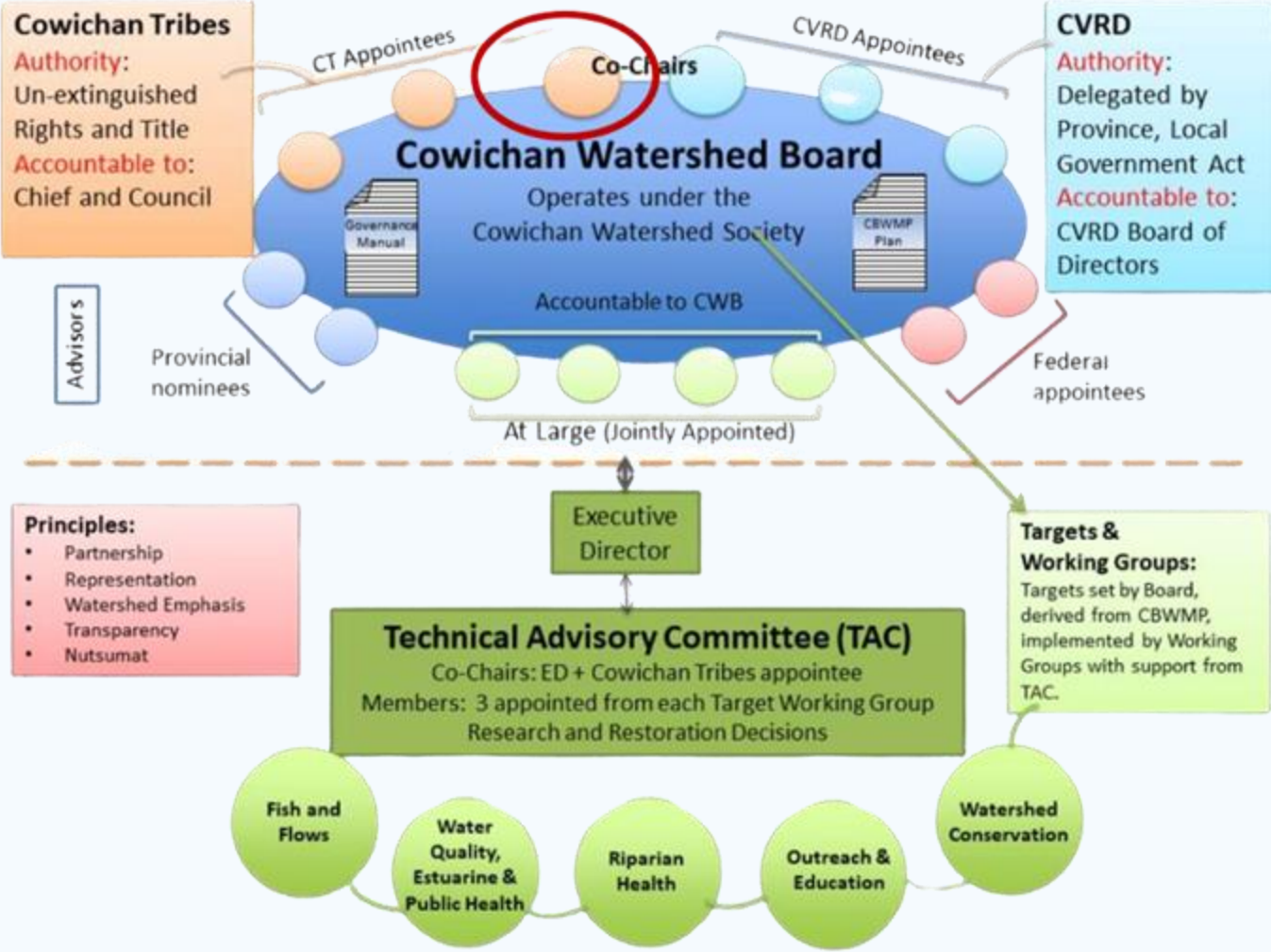
GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Figure 6

Major groups to be represented on the Cowichan Basin Water Advisory Council



PROPOSED GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE



ACTUAL GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE



HUY TSEEP Q'U SIEM

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PHOTO CREDITS

Slide 1: Quw'utsun Sta'lo bus trip with elected representatives and senior staff of CWB, Cowichan Tribes, and CVRD. July 2024 - G.Twomey

Slide 2: (L-R): [Fish Kill Report](#) - cover page thumbnail; Chief Hwitsum, Minister Cullen, and 11 Hul'q'umi'num' Teachings at [Xwulqw'selu WSP](#) Launch Ceremony, May 2023. Photo by C.Bergenhenegouwen; Bringing all levels of government together behind the decision, and plan, to replace the [Cowichan Lake weir](#) to improve summer water flows in the Cowichan River for fish. Lake Cowichan. July 2024 - G.Twomey








Slide 3: [Cowichan Watershed Board](#) Co-Chairs Chief Cindy Daniels and Chair Kate Segall at the Quw'utsun Sta'lo. 2025. Photo by Tara Zwaan, Cowichan Tribes

Slide 4: [CWB Governance](#) structure diagram, contributed by Dr. Shannon Waters

Slide 5: Bringing all levels of government together behind the decision, and plan, to replace the [Cowichan Lake weir](#) to improve summer water flows in the Cowichan River for fish. Lake Cowichan. July 2024 - G.Twomey

Cowichan Watershed Board Targets (revised 2023)

CWB's Targets for Watershed Health

Flows:	We want seasonal flows throughout the Cowichan-Koksilah watershed to support the needs of communities and aquatic ecosystems	
Fish:	We want healthy, wild, and diverse fish populations in the Cowichan-Koksilah watershed	
Water Conservation:	We want Cowichan watershed residents to use water wisely	
Water Quality:	We want fish-friendly, swimmable, and drinkable water in our watersheds	
Estuary Health:	We want to be able to safely eat shellfish from Cowichan Bay	
Riparian:	We want to protect and restore fully functioning streamside, lakefront, wetland, and estuary habitats	
Watershed Connections:	We want the people of the Cowichan Valley to understand and value that their well-being is interconnected with the well-being of their watershed	

Updated Targets, 2023