



**Cowichan Lake & River  
Stewardship Society**

## ***April/May 2025***

CLRSS acknowledges and appreciates that our virtual newsletter is being shared on the unceded territories of the following nations:

***Quw'utsun (Cow-ut-zun)***  
***Pauquachin (Pak-quw-chin)***  
***Ts'uubaa-asatx (Tsoo-bah-seht)***  
***Malahat (Malah-hat)***  
***Halalt (Ha-lalt)***  
***Penelakut (Pen-EL-ah-kut)***  
***Stz'uminus (Stuh-mee-nus)***  
***Lyackson (Lay-ik-sen)***  
***Ditidaht (Dee-tee-dot / Dee-tee-dat)***  
***Pacheedaht (Pah-chee-da / Pah-chee- dat)***

CLRSS will be emailing member newsletters every six weeks. Thanks to ongoing contributions from members: Judy Brayden (editor), Jacqueline Sherk, Genevieve Singleton, Jean Atkinson, Christoph Steeger, Dianne Flood, Maureen Quested and many others. Any questions, comments or feedback please see [Home | Cowichan Lake & River Stewardship Society British Columbia \(cowichan-lake-stewards.ca\)](http://www.cowichan-lake-stewards.ca)

**Love to see your  
faces!**

**Our next regular CLRSS Board meeting  
Thursday, May 1, 2025, at 6:30  
– IN PERSON  
Country Grocer Meeting Room in Lake  
Cowichan - Everyone welcome!**



***Come and join us for a very important discussion about the future of CLRSS.***

**In this Edition:**

- **Why CLRSS needs you now, more than ever!**
- **Renew your CLRSS membership by APRIL 24 SO YOU CAN VOTE AT THE AGM - Go to [Membership | Cowichan Lake & River Stewardship Society](#) - renewal**
- **Why AGM attendance is important?**
- **What your Strategic plan looks like...**
- **Report on recent *World Water Day Weir Tour* – Dianne Flood**

**Why CLRSS needs you now, *more than ever!***

Volunteers are more crucial than ever because the work of many nonprofits was disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and in that time critical populations aged, causing physical participation to fall off. The essential support of volunteers and supporters, whether through direct service, fundraising, advocacy or simply believing in the holistic goals of an organization, is crucial to our emotional health in this fractious world in which we find ourselves.

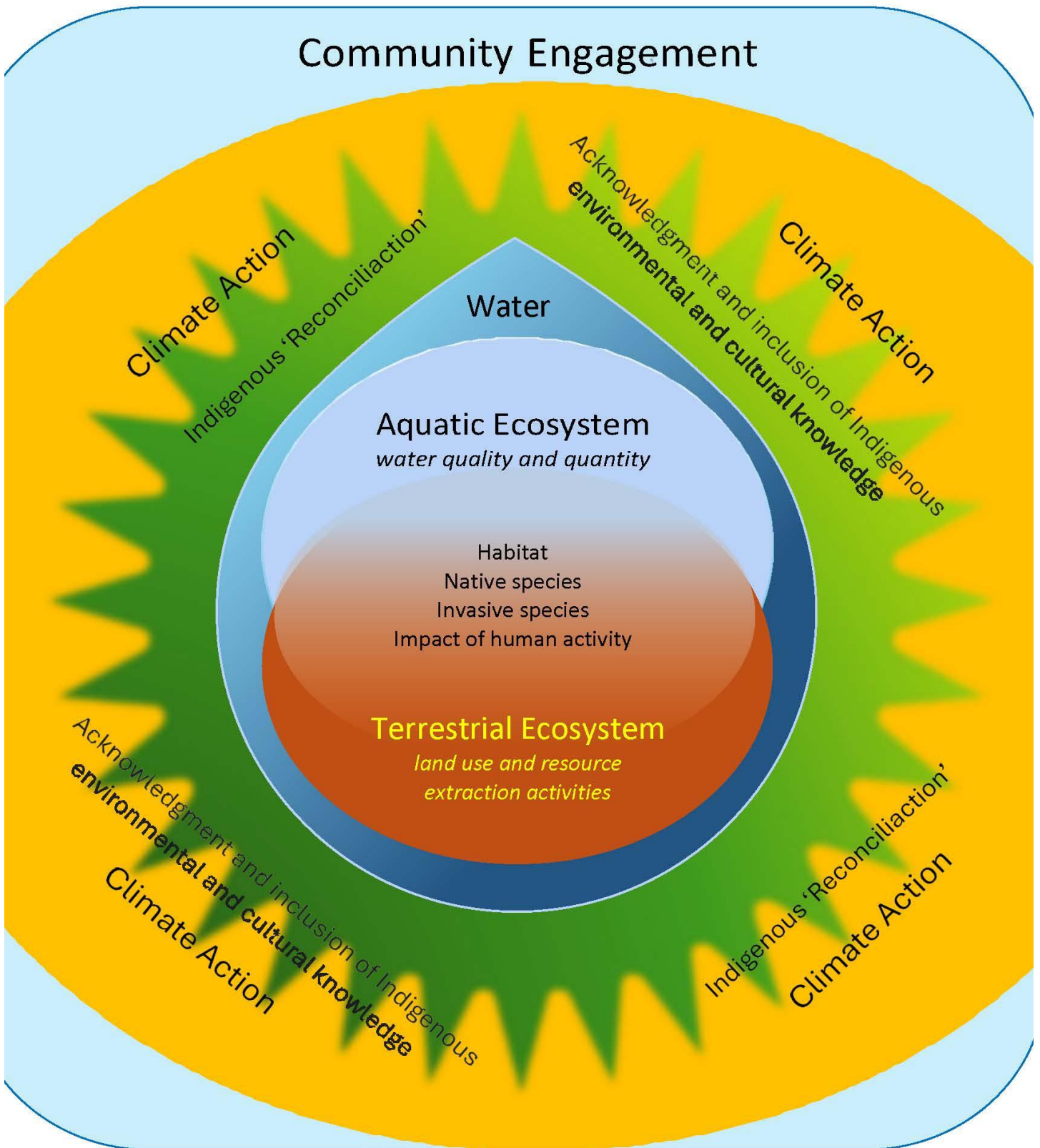
Volunteering for the Cowichan Lake and River Stewardship Society is a great way to have a tangible impact on the environment and your local community.

***Why join us?*** Because we are dedicated to protecting the Cowichan watershed, ensuring its sustainability for future generations. Join us to help preserve local ecosystems, remove waste and debris to keep the waterways healthy, collaborate with schools and residents to raise awareness about environmental stewardship and get hands-on experience, working alongside experts and fellow volunteers.

**Why AGM attendance is important?** Okay, they can be boring for sure... and absolutely...folks can be asked to step up and volunteer too... but their most important function is to report to you, the members, on all the things that your society has undertaken in the previous year.

This year your CLRSS AGM is on Sunday, May 25<sup>th</sup> at the Lake Cowichan Sports Arena Curling Lounge at 1:00 to 2:45. Guest speaker from 3:00 – 3:45.

Diagram to Accompany CLRSS 2025 Strategic Plan



## **What your 2025 Strategic plan looks like...covered in depth at the upcoming AGM**

### **GOAL ONE: ENGAGEMENT, AWARENESS, COMMUNICATION**

- a. Increase community involvement by promoting water traffic monitoring and reporting through the Decibel Coalition
- b. Enhance community outreach and engagement
- c. Participate in and support CSRT and CWB activities
- d. Review all communication tools and strategies and devise a plan for improved efficacy, feedback, and continued improvement

### **GOAL TWO: PROTECTION, ENHANCEMENT, AND MONITORING OF AQUATIC ECOSYSTEMS**

- a. Conduct water quality monitoring
- b. Complete a state of the resource report for the Cowichan Lake ecosystem
- c. Maintain and/or install signage on fish-bearing streams
- d. Restore and enhance salmonid habitat in watercourses in the upper Cowichan Watershed where overall productivity and annual recruitment has decreased due to human action
- e. Advocate for improved riparian zone monitoring and protection
- f. Prevent further expansion of key aquatic invasive species (as defined by the CLRSS invasive species working group) into new areas of Cowichan Lake and the upper Cowichan River and prevent the introduction and establishment of new aquatic invasive species.
- g. Support sustainable water use and storage monitoring in coordination with the Cowichan Watershed Board

### **GOAL THREE: PROTECTION, ENHANCEMENT, AND MONITORING OF TERRESTRIAL ECOSYSTEMS**

- a. Develop and maintain the GTMNP Demonstration Garden with ongoing efforts by the gardening crew and liaison with the Town of Lake Cowichan
- b. Protect and monitor terrestrial habitats and watercourse riparian zones through community-driven initiatives and collaborations

- c. Conduct regular monitoring and outreach to manage invasive species affecting terrestrial ecosystems
- d. Support projects on terrestrial species and habitats within the Cowichan watershed
- e. Advocate for improved forest protection and management



### **World Water Day Weir Tour – Dianne Flood**

By all measures, the event was a great success!!!!!!

- 113 people toured the weir in three separate tours (of the 113 about 10 were children).

- 60 of those completed feedback surveys.
- Approximately a dozen other folks attended the event but did not go on a tour (by choice or due to time commitments).



- Surveys and the oral comments made to the various event volunteers were highly positive.

- About 60% of survey respondents had heard about the CLRSS prior to the event, with about 40% being introduced to the CLRSS for the first time.
- Survey respondents came from the Town of Lake Cowichan (10), across a wide range of locations within the CVRD (35) and Victoria and the Saanich Peninsula (10).
- Lots of good conversations happened regarding the watershed, the weir, the proposed construction, invasive plants and the work of CLRSS and the CWB.
- While the weather was a bit chilly, the rain held off until the very end!





## Thank go out to:

- Jill Thompson of the CWB, who not only invited the CLRSS to participate as co-hosts, but she also booked the site, arranged insurance, liaised with the tour guides Tom and Brian, managed most of the publicity, provided the hot tea and pizza, and three ball caps as draw prizes!
- The tour guides, Tom Rutherford and Brian Houle, who conducted three 45-minute tours in just under four hours, keeping all 113 participants thoroughly enthralled with their breadth of knowledge and polished delivery, plus they answered questions during breaks between the tours! Also, a big thank you to Tom for an interview he did on CBC radio that drew in folks from as far away as Victoria and Sydney.
- Domtar, for allowing us the access to the weir and for “supplying” Brian, whose experience in operating the weir is invaluable in understanding its impacts on the watershed.
- The two young folks who willingly donned the mascot costumes and entertained folks.
- The Town of Lake Cowichan for making the park available to us, and especially to councillor Kristine Sandhu, who was in attendance throughout the event.
- The CLRSS Board and other members who prepared for and helped out on the day of the event: selling memberships, swag, books, setting up the invasive species exhibits, engaging with folks on various topics, supplying tables and chairs, and general set up and take down – Maureen Quested, Judy Brayden, Rosemary Danaher, Jacqueline Sherk, Dave DePape, Jean Atkinson, Diana Gunderson, Rodger Hunter, Mike Patrick, Jim Deck, (and others who took the opportunity to do a little blackberry removal).

