

RDN Continues Stewardship Seed Funding Program for Watershed Projects

The Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) is accepting applications for community-level projects that monitor, restore or enhance regional watercourses. The Drinking Water & Watershed Protection's (DWWP) Stewardship Seed Funding grants range from \$1,000 to \$5,000 per project and multi-year projects can apply annually for up to three consecutive years. Due to growing interest from community groups, the RDN has increased funding for this program from \$24,750 in 2022 to \$28,875 in 2023. While grants will still top out at \$5,000 per project per year, the additional funds ensure more projects that are eligible for funding can be supported. There is no deadline to apply as funding is first come, first served based on project merit until the year's end or the available funding is exhausted.

To be eligible for Stewardship Seed Funding, projects must:

- be led by a non-profit organization and involve community volunteers,
- be jointly funded by other partners, donors or with in-kind contributions,
- acquire all the necessary permissions and permits for work to be carried out,
- and actively enhance or monitor stream, river, lake, estuary or wetland health, hydrology or function.

Projects that pursue recommendations from RDN supported stream assessments or water quality monitoring, such as the Community Watershed Monitoring Network (rdn.bc.ca/community-watershed-monitoring), will be prioritized.

"These volunteer-led initiatives are a vital part of our efforts to help protect, maintain and restore our region's vulnerable watercourses," said Vanessa Craig, RDN Chair. "We greatly appreciate the commitment and time invested by these community groups. They have a direct, positive impact and also encourage others with project ideas to submit applications for funding consideration."

Since 2016, the RDN's DWWP program has supported 26 watershed enhancement projects throughout the region, with projects ranging from stream habitat assessments and monitoring efforts to wetland restoration and bank stabilization projects. Through the Stewardship Seed Funding program, over \$56,000 has been granted to support watershed restoration projects in the RDN.

For program details, how to apply for funding and application forms, visit rdn.bc.ca/stewardship-seed-funding. For application questions or to connect with stewardship organizations in your area, please email waterstewardship@rdn.bc.ca. For more information about the Drinking Water and Watershed Protection program, visit rdn.bc.ca/drinking-water-and-watershed-protection.

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