

First watershed map created for Shuswap

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A project to raise awareness and improve understanding of the Shuswap watershed was launched Thursday in Salmon Arm, with the release of a large format poster that includes the first map ever made of the entire Shuswap region.

"Finally Shuswap citizens can see and understand the full extent of their watershed, thanks to the co-operative efforts of so many governmental and non-governmental organizations and local businesses," explained project leader Jim Cooperman, president of the Shuswap Environmental Action Society.

Ted Bacigalupo, Area C director and vice-chair of the CSRD board, said he is pleased to support the project. "The poster and this project will help residents to better understand how we are all inter-connected and the need to commit to collective improvements in managing this vital Shuswap Watershed as recommended by the Shuswap Lake Integrated Planning Process (SLIPP).

Chair Ron Oszust agreed: "This project will add to the knowledge base of the people. Through knowledge comes empowerment, engagement and respect for each other and the environment they share."

Three thousand copies of the poster have been printed for free distribution in school classrooms throughout the Shuswap and for sale to the public in local stores. As well, the project includes the production of a Resource Guide that will provide teachers and students with ideas and information that will support their use of the poster.

The Resource Guide is being developed by retired educator Kim Fulton who is also the watershed project educational co-ordinator. As Fulton explained, "The overall educational goal is to help protect, preserve and restore the Shuswap watershed and ecosystems."

With the release of the posters, the Shuswap Watershed Project team also announced plans for Celebrate the Shuswap week, April 18-24. The week of activities will include displays, tree planting, litter cleanup, storm-drain marking, talks, hikes, and two major public events.