

Shuswap watershed defined

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Chase is in the Shuswap -- at least half of it. And all of Lumby is on the map.

Organizers unveiled results Thursday of a two-year project to define and map the Shuswap watershed in a poster.

"I've been in land-use planning for 15 years and it's never been defined," said Jim Cooperman, a passionate Shuswap conservationist who headed the Shuswap Watershed Project.

He began two years ago with the idea of defining the watershed -- any areas where water drains to the Shuswap lakes. Results surprised him.

Noting Lumby, east of Vernon, is in the Shuswap watershed, Cooperman said "a lot of people down there think they live in the Okanagan."

Half of the village of Chase is in the watershed; the other half is in the Thompson watershed. (Both the Thompson and Shuswap watersheds are part of the Fraser Basin).

The Shuswap watershed includes everything from towering glaciers to low-elevation grasslands. Project collaborators include Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Ministry of Environment and a GIS class at Salmon Arm secondary. It is available at Valhalla Pure and At Second Glance Used Books in Kamloops.

Plans are to follow up distribution of the poster with a reference guide and public education plan. The Shuswap Watershed Project is sponsoring an essay contest for children as well as looking for a "Shuswap song."

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