

Shuswap Watershed Project
Press Release
April 2, 2010

Shuswap Watershed Conference to Explore Solutions

The Shuswap Watershed Project has lined up an impressive list of speakers for its upcoming Watershed Conference to be held on April 23rd from 1 to 11 pm. at the Sullivan Campus of Salmon Arm Secondary School. Conference participants will have an opportunity to listen to and question speakers representing conservation organizations and all levels of government. The objective for this event will be to examine how best to conserve, protect and restore the Shuswap watershed.

The conference begins with a poster session, where participants have an opportunity to view the posters and displays set up by government agencies, conservation groups, and students, as well as meet with representatives from these groups. After the opening welcoming addresses by a local First Nation leader and Salmon Arm Mayor Marty Bootsma, students will read their winning essays about what they can do to help protect the watershed. Mayor Bootsma will also be speaking about the work of the Fraser Basin Council, which works to promote environmental and economic sustainability throughout the region.

The conference keynote speaker is Watershed Watch Salmon Society executive director, Dr. Craig Orr, who will speak about water, salmon and resilience: maintaining healthy watersheds in the face of climate change. "Interior watersheds like the Shuswap are the bedrooms for wild salmon," explained Craig Orr, "and at the conference I will be explaining the need for maintaining watershed resilience to better prepare for the impacts of climate change." Joining him will be Michelle Walsh, with the Secwepemc Fisheries Commission, who will talk about their work regarding the connections between groundwater and salmon.

Shuswap Trail Alliance Executive Director Phil McIntyre-Paul will also be speaking on the importance of experiencing the watershed first hand, either by hiking, biking, canoeing or kayaking.

Conference participants will then have an opportunity to pose questions to a panel comprised of staff from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, the Ministries of Environment and Forests, the CSRD and King Campbell with Ducks Unlimited Canada, who will provide their perspectives on what actions are needed to protect the watershed. The conference will end with a summary talk by Dr. Warren Bell about what was learned from the presentations and what needs to be done in the future.

A low cost dinner comprised mostly of food sourced locally from Shuswap farmers and prepared by Cookshack Creations will be served to conference participants after the talks. The event will finish with a concert that begins with the Song for the Shuswap

songwriting contest winners followed by an all-ages dance to Old Man's Beard sponsored by Askews.

The conference will be free thanks to the sponsorship of the Salmon Arm Savings and Credit Union, but early pre-registration is recommended as seating will be limited. Registration forms are available at Wickett Business Services and Buckingham Palace and participants can also register online at www.shuswapwatershed.ca.

For more information, contact:

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