

Who are we?

The Cowichan Lake & River Stewardship Society (CLRSS) is a volunteer group of caring neighbours dedicated to the protection and enhancement of the Cowichan Lake Watershed. The CLRSS Riparian Education Project promotes a “stewardship first” culture, and acts in cooperation with landowners to protect and enhance riparian areas on private land.

Did you know?

- **92% of the lake shoreline (including forest land) is privately owned.** Owners of ecologically important habitat are responsible to preserve publicly owned resources -- the fish and the water -- now and for future generations.
- **70% of the shoreline of Cowichan Lake is still in an undisturbed state and needs protection.** This land and vegetation adjacent to watercourses (the riparian zone) is essential for water quality, fish stocks and wildlife, as well as flood and erosion control.
- **The shoreline of Cowichan Lake is a nursery for up to 300,000 wild coho salmon annually.** It also contains self-sustaining populations of cutthroat, rainbow, dolly varden & kokanee.

How can CLRSS support you?

- Visit our **riparian webpage** to learn more about the importance, protection, enhancement and regulation of riparian areas.
- Request a **site visit** to evaluate your riparian area.
- Visit **healthy riparian shorelines** that are recreation friendly.
- **Become a member!** Meetings are held locally in Lake Cowichan for details, call us or visit our website:

Gerald Thom
(250) 749-7203

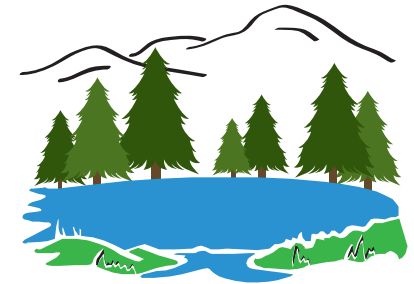
www.cowichan-lake-stewards.ca



Join us as we work together for the healthy future of Cowichan Lake.



This brochure has been supported by the Pacific Salmon Foundation.



**Cowichan Lake & River
Stewardship Society**

Riparian Insights



Oxford says: *“The healthy future of Cowichan Lake is in our hands!”*

www.cowichan-lake-stewards.ca/riparian.htm

What can we do?

1. Leave our riparian areas intact.

Prevention is easier than restoration.

Common changes that can damage riparian health include:

- Clearing vegetation to create beaches, lawns or enhanced views;
- Adding fill, rock, or sand to create beaches and extend property;
- Building docks and boat launches for recreation;
- Building retaining walls for erosion control or landscaping;
- Introducing non-native plants for aesthetics;
- Removing woody debris and aquatic “weeds” for water sports.

2. Minimize impact when accessing the water.

Use only one point of access, build fish-friendly docks, frame views and use gravel pathways.



3. Restore damaged riparian areas.

Let natural re-vegetation take its course or re-establish native plants.

A native plant is one that occurs naturally in a particular region, ecosystem or habitat -- and occurred prior to European contact.

Native plants:

- Are beautiful & low maintenance;
- Provide wildlife with food, shelter, and places to reproduce;
- Help regulate climate, prevent erosion, improve water quality and much, much more.



Do **NOT** collect native plants from the wild; propagated native plants are readily available.

To learn more about native plants and local sources, visit our riparian webpage:

www.cowichan-lake-stewards.ca/riparian.htm

4. Respect riparian area regulations (RAR) and avoid fines.

Leave riparian areas intact for erosion control, water quality, habitat protection, coho production and flood prevention.

Any disturbance within 30 metres of the high water mark of lakes and streams requires contact with local government:

Riparian Habitat Contacts

CVRD Development Services

(250) 746-2620

Town of Lake Cowichan

(250) 749-6681

Provincial Government (Environment)

(250) 751-3100

Fisheries and Oceans Canada

(Habitat Enquiries)

1-866-845-6776

For online contacts or more riparian habitat information, visit our riparian webpage.

