



## NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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### **CVRD Applauds Provincial Decision to Increase Operational Flexibility of the Cowichan Lake Weir**

**Duncan, BC:** Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) Board Chair Rob Hutchins applauds the decision made on May 30, 2013 by Brian Symonds, British Columbia's Deputy Comptroller of Water Rights, to change the annual Cowichan Lake Weir Rule Curve Implementation Date from July 9th to July 31<sup>st</sup>. The CVRD Board had endorsed this proposed change in late 2012.

"While not adding any additional storage to Cowichan Lake or changing the weir in any way, this decision makes better use of the existing approved storage, adds flexibility and will improve late summer and early autumn water flows benefitting fish passage and many other concerns in the Cowichan River" said Chair Hutchins.

Chair Hutchins credits the work of federal and provincial agencies, Cowichan Tribes, local governments, Cowichan Watershed Board and local stewardship groups in working cooperatively with Catalyst Paper, the Cowichan Lake Weir license holder, to find solutions and raise the awareness of this issue. "So many involved parties in the Cowichan Basin have worked with Catalyst and the provincial government to arrive at this critical first step. After many years of effort, we finally have some real action on the low water flow problem in the Cowichan River."

However, Chair Hutchins also cautions that this decision, while a definite improvement, does not fully solve the issue and that there is more work to be done. "As a community we can celebrate this accomplishment, but we also must recognize that this decision reduces the likelihood, but does not eliminate the periodic repeat of detrimental low water flows, which with ongoing climate change, will progressively worsen. There's more work ahead of us to provide a lasting solution to the Cowichan River low water flow problem for the benefit of everyone in the Cowichan Basin".

For more information please contact:

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