



Media Release

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For immediate release

RDCK awards contract for Goat River Watershed hydraulic connectivity study

Nelson, BC: The Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK) has entered into an agreement with Western Water Associates Ltd. to complete a Preliminary Assessment of Hydraulic Connectivity in the Goat River Watershed, running from August 21, 2026 to March 31, 2028.

Water scarcity in the Goat River Watershed is a priority concern for the Province, yaqan nu?kiy, and the RDCK. Water allocation notations, which flag potential water availability concerns and factor into decisions on new water licence applications, are already in place on several streams and two shallow aquifers. A deeper bedrock aquifer, and how it connects to that surface water, remains poorly understood. This project will map that connection, using a 3D model of underground water layers and water sample testing to trace how water moves through the watershed.

This study is part of the RDCK's broader Goat River Watershed Water Sustainability Planning work, done in collaboration with yaqan nu?kiy and the Province of British Columbia.

"This next phase of technical work will build our understanding of how groundwater and surface water connect across the Goat River Watershed," said Paris Marshall Smith, RDCK Sustainability & Resilience Supervisor. "It adds an important layer to the lived experience of everyone who lives and farms here and together that understanding will help inform the ongoing collaborative work on the watershed's long-term water sustainability."

That work also includes the Collective Conversations Working Group, made up of RDCK, Province, and yaqan nu?kiy staff meeting between May and September 2026 to develop recommendations for water management in the watershed. The \$90,000 project is funded through a Shared Cost Agreement with the Province, covering consultant work, community outreach, and RDCK administration through March 2028.

Western Water Associates Ltd. was selected as the highest-scoring firm from five proposals received through a competitive Request For Proposal process, evaluated by an RDCK-provincial Project Team on experience, methodology, and cost. Work will include creating a 3D groundwater model, two seasons of field sampling, and a final report with a plain language summary, to be presented to the Creston Valley Services Committee in summer or fall of 2028.

For more information about the Goat River Watershed Water Sustainability Planning initiative, visit engage.rdck.ca/projects/goatwatershed.

Incorporated in 1965, the Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK) is a local government that serves 60,000 residents in 11 electoral areas and nine member municipalities. The RDCK provides more than 160 services, including

community facilities, fire protection and emergency services, grants, planning and land use, regional parks, resource recovery and handling, transit, water services and much more. For more information about the RDCK, visit www.rdck.ca.

-30-

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