



Town of Lake Cowichan

Municipal office: PO Box 860, 39 South Shore Road, Lake Cowichan B.C. V0R 2G0
Phone: 250-749-6681 Fax: 250-749-0281 www.lakecowichan.bc.ca

Tuesday December 9, 2025

Dear Chiefs, Colleagues, Directors, Ministers, and MLAs,

Re: Crofton Mill Closure - Urgent Concerns Regarding Operation of Weir in Lake Cowichan

I am writing today to bring forward a matter of significant regional importance concerning the recently announced closure of the Crofton Mill and the anticipated impacts this may have on the continued operation and management of the Lake Cowichan Weir.

As we all know, the Cowichan River is a Canadian Heritage River and a defining ecological, cultural, and economic asset for our communities. The Weir plays a critical role in stabilizing flows, supporting salmon/steelhead populations, mitigating drought conditions, and sustaining regional ecosystems. Any disruption in its operation will be felt well beyond the boundaries of the Town of Lake Cowichan.

A Regional Issue Requiring a Regional Response

With the Crofton Mill scheduled for closure, there is a real possibility of a governance and operational gap for the Weir beginning in 2026. This situation raises serious concerns regarding:

- ✓ Environmental protection and fish habitat, particularly for already vulnerable salmon/steelhead runs;
- ✓ Water security and drought resilience across the Cowichan Valley;
- ✓ Recreational, cultural, and economic impacts for all user groups along the river corridor;
- ✓ Responsibility for maintenance, monitoring, and seasonal operations if the current operator withdraws.

Given the interconnected nature of the Cowichan watershed, this cannot be viewed as solely a local challenge. It is a regional and provincial matter that warrants collective attention and coordinated advocacy.

Call for Collaborative Engagement with the Province

The Town of Lake Cowichan has formally requested the Province convene a multi-party meeting—including representatives from Cowichan Tribes, CVRD, the Town, Domtar, other communities, and relevant ministries—to ensure there is a clear and uninterrupted plan for Weir operations in 2026 and beyond.

I am writing to request your support in advocating for this meeting and participating in the dialogue. A united regional voice will be essential to securing a stable long-term governance and funding model that protects the Cowichan River for future generations.



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Working Together for the Cowichan River

Our communities share a profound connection to the river and its watershed. I am confident that by working together—elected officials, Indigenous partners, provincial ministries, and industry—we can ensure that the Cowichan River remains healthy, resilient, and well-managed during this transition period.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further or coordinate advocacy, please feel welcome to reach out to my office directly at trlm@lakecowichan.ca or 250-749-6681.

Thank you for your attention and partnership.

Sincerely,

Tim McGonigle
Mayor



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Cc:

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