

# SPRING NEWS

## Advocacy | Art | Action

### Advocacy

We are seeking clarification and action regarding a non-compliance report issued last year concerning pollution from KT Ranches. Despite the report, there appears to have been no visible follow-up or enforcement.

Community concerns include ongoing pollution and reported water diversion from local creeks, which could further warm the river and threaten the ecosystem.

### Art: Lecture Series

This exhibition features original oil paintings by Huguette Allen and a compelling Lecture Series.

So far, five well-attended FREE events have highlighted the importance of water in our lives and ecosystems. Three more Free Lectures to come.

### Actions

Numerous partnership Activities might help gain protection at source for the Middle Shuswap River.



## The Hidden Language of Water

### Upcoming Events:

- **May 14, 4 PM** – *How Wolves Keep Watersheds Healthy* with Sadie Parr
- **May 15, 7 PM** – *Understanding Water Quality* with Adrianna Johnson, MoE
- **May 22, 7 PM** – *Logging, Drought & Flooding* with Dr. Eli Pivnick

### **Don't miss "Understanding Water Quality"**

Thursday May 15 - 7 PM at the Lumby Library, by MoE senior Environmental Impact biologist Adrianna Johnson who will explain the basics of water quality and discuss how land use and climate change affect the health of our waterways. We will also explore what we can do to improve the quality of water in our river and streams.

## **Advocacy - Email sent to MoE**

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I am writing on behalf of our community to seek clarification and action regarding a non-compliance report issued last year concerning pollution from a local business raising cattle. Despite this report, there appears to have been no follow-up or enforcement, and the situation continues to be a serious concern for residents.

The pollution originating from this operation has long impacted our community, and we remain in the dark about whether any improvements have been made. Of particular concern now is that the business owner is reportedly diverting large quantities of water from local creeks to fill irrigation ponds. This has alarmed nearby landowners, already struggling with limited water access. They fear that excessive withdrawal of cold creek water will further warm the river, potentially harming the watershed and threatening the health of the entire ecosystem.

**There is growing concern in the community about the lack of updates - please provide updates as soon as possible on:**

- Any actions taken in response to the original non-compliance report
- Any current monitoring or enforcement regarding water use from local creeks;
- What measures, if any, exist to protect the watershed and ensure fair water access for all users.

### **Timeline of Events**

#### **1. February 20, 2024**

Extreme bacterial pollution was observed discharging from the KT Ranches property in Cherryville. Incident was promptly reported to the (RAPP) hotline.

#### **2. May 27, 2024**

Environmental Protection Officer Rebecca Benham, from the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy, conducted an on-site inspection of Carson Farm.

#### **3. July 24, 2024**

A Non-Compliance Report (#225523) was issued by the Ministry, identifying numerous serious breaches related to the inspected property.

#### **4. February 12, 2025**

After hearing no updates, the following email was sent to Ms. Benham: Next week, on February 20th, will be the one-year 'anniversary' of finding the bacterial pollution coming out of KT Ranches property. Yet, the community is still waiting to hear whether anything has been corrected. As the author of the non-compliance report, can you please advise us as to what has been done since the issuance of your report? If you are not the person to advise us, can you please let us know who is responsible to make sure that non-compliance agricultural issues are fixed?

#### **5. February 14, 2025**

A response was received from the Ministry of Environment:

"I am writing to inform you that we have received your email regarding KT Ranches. The inspection conducted in 2024 is publicly available through the Natural Resources Compliance and Enforcement Database. The outcome from the inspection included a Warning. As a result of the Warning Letter issued in July 2024, KT Ranches will be prioritized for a follow-up inspection. The Ministry will implement enforcement policies and procedures consistent with its Compliance and Enforcement Policy and Procedure. If there are additional issues with the operation of this Facility, please report information through the (RAPP) hotline so the activity can be tracked and followed up by Ministry compliance and enforcement personnel.

*In closing, we want to reiterate how important it is for the community to get updates as to what can be expected from the Ministry on this file. Not receiving anything is equivalent to making RAPP irrelevant and this is not at all what we are all working towards,*

## Art: Lecture Series

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**All events are free and held at the Lumby Library.**

### Highlights from lectures held in April:

- **Alexandra Morton** - Protecting wild salmon - for more info see: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bvIMr5WdlAM>
- **Eveline Wolterson** - Watershed governance refers to the collaborative processes and structures that communities, governments and stakeholders can use to manage water so that it benefits everyone. Eveline is a Senior Scientist involved in watershed governance, particularly within the North Okanagan region of British Columbia, where she is known for her work with organizations like the Silver Hills Watershed Watch.
- **Dr. Mary Stockdale** - Community resilience and personal resilience are linked and are powerful sources that help particularly in times of stresses, be they environmental, economical or personal. Dr. Stockdale is co-founder and Chair of Land to Table (L2T) food system network and member of Vernon's Climate Action Now! (CAN!)
- **Charles Ruechel** - Public river access - Charles Ruechel, president of The Chucks Whitewater Society and owner of Elements Adventure introduced The Chucks Whitewater Society and it's mission.

**Spotlight:** Did you know that outdoor recreation can help protect our waterways? Right here in Lumby, Charles Ruechel and his company Elements Adventure attract people from all over the world with guided adventures, connecting them to the natural beauty of the Shuswap River. In Quebec, The Magpie River was granted legal personhood by the Innu Council and the Minganie Regional County Municipality who recognized the river's intrinsic value and its ecosystems, traditional uses, and recreational importance.

- **Trina Antoine** - Water is Life: Historian and storyteller Trina Antoine, from Splatkin, shared traditional wisdom and stories about the importance of water. Trina also led meaningful conversations about the deep significance of water to the land, people, and all living beings.

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Three paintings have sold and one commission ordered. Exposition goes until July.

**Thank you to all presenters for generously sharing your time, wisdom, and inspiration.**

## Actions

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### Partnership Activities related to gaining protection at source for the Middle Shuswap River

**1. We've held meetings with the Okanagan Nation Alliance and Splat sin community** to align efforts toward source protection for the Middle Shuswap River. We continue to include the Okanagan Indian Band in our outreach, though we have yet to receive a response.

Read more: <https://www.castanet.net/news/Vernon/549520/Okanagan-Indian-Band-asserting-territorial-rights-to-area-of-Wilsey-Dam-near-Lumby>

Our meetings so far have been with Okanagan Nation Alliance and Splat sin. We include Okanagan Indian Band in our communications but have not received any responses yet from them.

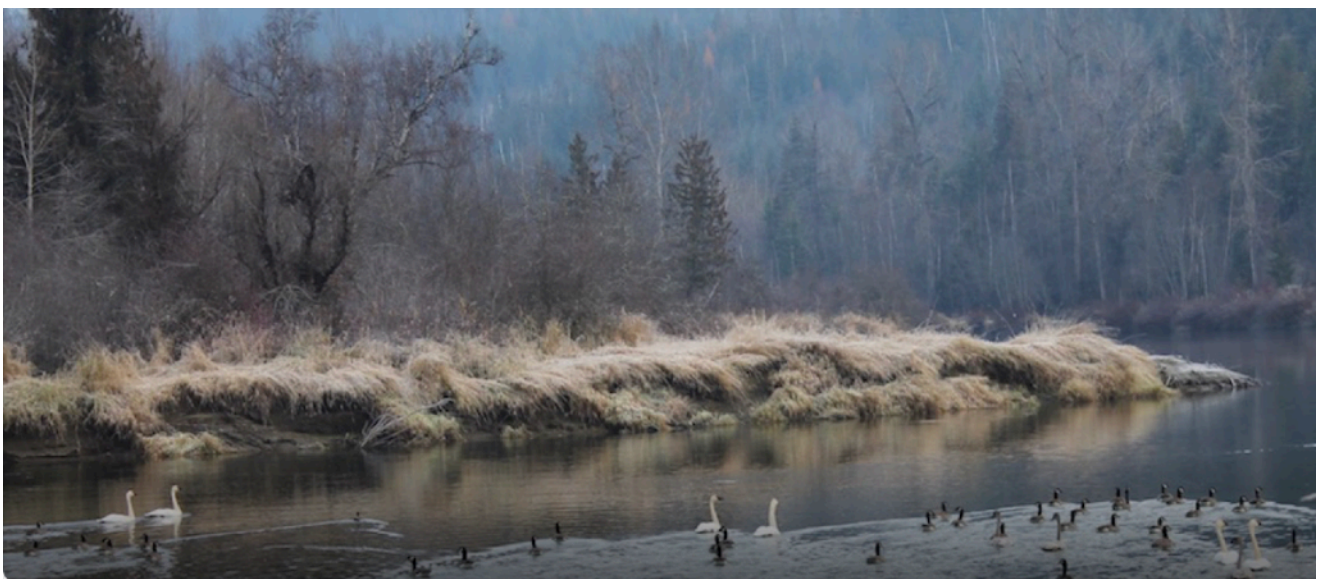
**2 - We had a productive meeting with Holly Pattison and Deborah Curran from UVic's Environmental Law Centre.** They encouraged us to submit a proposal for the fall term that might help them help us gain legal protection for the river, and we've received a promise of support from the Okanagan Nation Alliance.

### 3- Local Stewardship and Provincial Collaboration

The Cherryville and Lumby Water Stewards met with Diane Sutherland of the Ministry of Environment. The result? A shift from passive mapping to active pollution source tracking—energizing volunteers and aligning our efforts with MoE.

Adrianna Johnson's upcoming talk on May 15 is a sign of this strengthened collaboration.

Stay updated on Facebook with Stewards events and results here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1087598450077368>



## Lumby Mid-Shuswap Water Stewards