

First, thank you for being here. It is my honour to acknowledge that we are meeting on the territory of the *shishalh* Nation.

Acknowledge elected officials in the attendance.

Acknowledge staff.

When it comes to Sunshine Coast water supply and climate change, right now is an extremely challenging time to be the chair of the board of the SCRD—

— to be any director or staff member of the SCRD —

—or we fully realize, to be any community member of the Sunshine Coast.

Stage 2 of water restrictions is being announced this week at the earliest date ever.

The snowpack right now is comparable with what it was last year in **early July**.

The long-range weather forecast for this summer is warmer and dryer than normal. **Again.**

Tighter water restrictions are again required to ensure we still have water running out of our taps in late summer and early fall.

We realize how frustrating this is for the community.

We're frustrated ourselves, on a daily basis, at every meeting, by this emergency situation we're trying to deal with.

We agree 100% with the expectation that in 2019, residents of the Sunshine Coast should have an adequate, year-round water supply.

I am addressing you this evening to tell you that I accept responsibility, we—the SCRD board—accept responsibility, for the fact that we don't.

Part of what we agreed to when we took on these roles was to embrace historic decisions, practices and expectations of past boards as our own.

You can point to us as your elected leaders, with the expectation that we provide leadership, and take direction from you to make important decisions with the best information we have available.

We've read your letters and emails, heard your phone calls, seen your social media posts, listened to your conversations in grocery store lineups from Garden Bay to Gibsons.

Whether you are thoughtful and constructive, or frustrated and angry, we are not ignoring you and we are not running away from you.

That is why we are initiating these public participation sessions to share information, listen to you and collaborate on solutions together.

The time for blame is over. We need to move forward. And we need your help.

The board is committed to putting an action plan in place that adequately supplies water to our community.

We want you tonight to provide input into this plan.

But by working together as a community, we also need to realize together that some of the best solutions are significant and expensive feats of engineering and negotiating, and will take several years to achieve even after we take action to put them in motion.

At the same time, we also need to get real about climate change. And One of the most detrimental effects of climate change to living things is to water supply.

It is true we have plenty of water for most of the year, we all know this.

We have no problem yet with water supply in December, or even in May.

In 2013 the SCRD wrote a regional water plan that we thought would serve growth on the Sunshine Coast for many years to come, but it assumed very little change in our climate.

Our climate is changing, changing significantly and changing fast.

We've noticed one of the most popular talking points about our water crisis is "We live in a rainforest." But last year we had no significant rain for 130 days in a row, and this Spring already is one of the driest on record.

Maybe we live in a rainforest for *part* of the year. But the science shows that our snowpacks will melt fast and we won't get rainfall when we need water the most.

So we need to adapt to climate change, quickly.

And who is taking the lead to adapt to climate change?

The current Board and staff are up for this challenge but won't be able to succeed alone. We all play a key role in achieving success for our community.

Citizens of the Sunshine Coast have already responded proactively to the changing water supply situation. You have become much more water aware and invested heavily in fixing leaks, saving and utilizing rainwater and grey water, using less water for flushing toilets and showering, irrigating efficiently, xeriscaping and finding other ways to conserve our most precious resource.

Together, we have reduced our average daily use during a summer's day by 15% compared to 2010.

However, our board recognizes that we can, and must, do more to support a "conservation culture" for the Sunshine Coast.

This includes promoting or requiring building measures to lower water usage in new developments, which is an action we've begun last month.

Climate Change is impacting everybody sooner and more powerfully than most of us had expected.

Communities around the world are challenged by diminishing water supply, wildfires, flooding... We've already seen an early wildfire season in BC and Alberta, and the declaration of a Drought Emergency in Washington State.

And the severity is upon us on the Sunshine Coast, too impacting our quality of life. It's only the beginning of June, but our snowpack is low, our forests are tinder dry and there's very little rain in sight.

We need to wake up to the crisis, stop pointing fingers at each other, and take another look at how we are going to manage our diminished water supply.

And we cannot allow this challenge to continue to divide our community.

In consideration of the past, I think one clear theme we can all agree on is that community division leads to poor decision-making—

On the other hand, by working together, we can become a more resilient, caring and stronger community.

So today our board is inviting you to move forward with us on a new, integrated approach to ensure we have an adequate water supply for the future of the Sunshine Coast.