# Peachland Creek Watershed

## Outstanding Assessment and Follow-Up Review

**Prepared for: Peachland Watershed Alliance**
**Peachland, British Columbia**
**September 2026**

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## Executive Summary

Peachland's drinking-water watershed has been the subject of repeated hydrological, source-water, sediment and forestry assessments over several decades.

The purpose of this review is not to conclude that forestry is responsible for all watershed problems. Rather, it is to determine whether previous recommendations have been completed, whether promised monitoring and watershed-wide coordination occurred, and whether the principal forestry watershed assessment is now due for updating.

The most important finding is straightforward:

**The November 5, 2018 Peachland Creek Community Watershed Assessment recommended consideration of updating the watershed assessment every five years, or sooner where significant proposed forest development had not been considered in the assessment.**

Five years elapsed in **2023**.

As of September 2026, this review has not identified a publicly available comprehensive watershed assessment that clearly replaces the 2018 Peachland Creek Community Watershed Assessment.

This is particularly relevant because:

- Peachland Creek watershed currently supplies **all potable water to the District of Peachland**.
- The District reported in April 2026 that the watershed was departing from historic refill patterns and that upland lake levels were substantially below historic norms.
- In May 2026, Peachland Council received information about proposed forestry activity near Glen Lake and indicated that further discussions with provincial representatives would occur.
- The District's October 2025 strategic-plan update continued to describe establishment of a local watershed technical advisory group and regular meetings as work still underway.
- The Forest Practices Board reported in 2019 that the absence of watershed-specific monitoring made cumulative effects difficult to determine and observed that no single party was responsible for managing the cumulative effects of all activities in the watershed.

These facts do **not establish that current water-supply conditions are caused by forestry**. Drought, weather, climate, natural hydrology, roads, recreation, agriculture, mining and other land uses can also affect watershed conditions.

They do, however, provide a reasonable basis for requesting a current, transparent assessment of the Peachland Creek watershed and an accounting of previous recommendations.

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# 1. Why This Review Is Needed

Peachland's watershed assessments contain recommendations concerning:

- forest harvesting;
- roads;
- sediment and erosion;
- riparian areas;
- stream crossings;
- cumulative hydrological effects;
- monitoring;
- watershed governance;
- legacy roads;
- water-quality concerns; and
- coordination between the District, Province and forest licensees.

Some recommendations were acted upon.

The 2019 Forest Practices Board investigation concluded that the forestry activities it reviewed complied with applicable forestry requirements and that forest licensees were following recommendations from professional assessments at that time.

However, the Board also identified a broader problem: multiple activities occur in these watersheds, while no single organization was responsible for managing their combined cumulative effects.

The Board stated that the lack of watershed-specific monitoring data made determining cumulative effects difficult.

The question in 2026 is therefore not simply:

**“Were forestry practices compliant in 2019?”**

The broader questions are:

**What has happened since 2019?**

**Were the watershed-wide recommendations completed?**

**Was monitoring established?**

**Was the technical advisory structure established and maintained?**

**Were legacy erosion and road issues addressed?**

**And has the 2018 assessment been updated as contemplated by the report?**

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# 2. Timeline of Major Peachland Watershed Assessments and Events

| Year | Report / Event | Importance |
|---|---|---|
| **1998–1999** | Earlier Peachland Creek watershed and hydrological assessments | Established an early technical record concerning forestry, roads and watershed hydrology. |
| **2010** | Peachland Creek and Trepanier Creek Watershed Assessment for Drinking Water Source Protection | Established source-water risks and approximately 19 risk-management action plans. |
| **2014–2015** | Peachland Creek Habitat and Sediment Source Assessment | Examined erosion and sediment sources and identified road-related concerns, including areas associated with Munro and Peachland Main forest service roads. |
| **2017** | Major high-flow period and Munro-area landslide | Increased community concern about sediment, water quality and watershed activity. |
| **2017** | Complaint submitted to Forest Practices Board | Raised concerns about forestry, sediment, water quality and Peachland's community watersheds. |
| **2017–2018** | Field work for updated Peachland Creek watershed assessment | Examined forest development, roads, hydrology and watershed conditions. |
| **Nov. 5, 2018** | **Peachland Creek Community Watershed Assessment — Final Revised Report** | Principal modern forestry-related watershed assessment. Contains watershed-wide recommendations and recommends considering an update every five years or with significant new forest development. |
| **2019** | Forest Practices Board investigation | Found forestry practices examined were compliant, while identifying cumulative-effects, monitoring and coordination concerns. |

| Year | Report / Event | Importance |
|---|---|---|
| **2020** | Peachland Watershed Protection Alliance follow-up with licensees | Alliance sought answers concerning implementation of 2018 watershed-wide recommendations. |
| **2023** | Five years after 2018 assessment | Approximate reassessment point contemplated by the 2018 recommendation. |
| **2025** | District strategic-plan update | Watershed protection remained ongoing; District reported continued work toward establishing a local watershed technical advisory group and regular meetings. |
| **March–April 2026** | Drought-related water restrictions | District moved from Stage 2 to Stage 3 restrictions. |
| **April 14, 2026** | District reports altered refill conditions | Council was advised that the watershed was departing from historic refill patterns and upland lakes were substantially below historic norms. |
| **May 12, 2026** | Proposed forestry near Glen Lake discussed by Council | BCTS and Gorman Bros. representatives presented information; Council indicated further provincial discussions would occur. |
| **September 2026** | Current review | Publicly available records reviewed do not clearly identify a comprehensive replacement for the 2018 watershed assessment. |

# 3. The 2018 Assessment — Key Follow-Up Requirement

The November 5, 2018 **Peachland Creek Community Watershed Assessment** contains an especially important recommendation.

It states, in substance, that because of the level of previous forest development in the watershed:

**consideration should be given to updating the watershed assessment every five years, or at a frequency consistent with significant new proposed forest development that was not included in the assessment.**

That places particular importance on the period around **2023**.

The immediate question for the Province and forest licensees should therefore be:

**Has a comprehensive update to the 2018 Peachland Creek Community Watershed Assessment been completed?**

If yes:

- What is its title?
- Who prepared it?
- When was the field work undertaken?
- What forest-development proposals were incorporated?
- Was the District of Peachland consulted?
- Was the Peachland Watershed Alliance consulted?
- Where is the report publicly available?

If no:

- Why has it not been updated?
- Does the Province consider the 2018 assessment current enough to evaluate proposed 2026 forest development?
- What technical evidence supports that conclusion?

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# 4. Recommendation Follow-Up Matrix

| Issue | Earlier recommendation / concern | Evidence located | Current question |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Five-year watershed reassessment** | 2018 assessment recommended considering an update every five years or when significant new forest development was proposed that had not been assessed. | Recommendation verified in 2018 report. | **Was an update completed around or after 2023?** |
| **Legacy erosion and sediment** | 2018 assessment identified numerous legacy erosion and sediment-delivery issues affecting Greata Creek and Peachland Creek and recommended development of a mitigation plan. | PWPA was still asking about watershed-wide implementation in 2020. | **Where is the completed watershed-wide mitigation plan and implementation record?** |

| Issue | Earlier recommendation / concern | Evidence located | Current question |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Technical working group** | 2018 assessment recommended development of an integrated list of water-quality concerns through a watershed technical working group. | Forest Practices Board welcomed creation of a group in 2019. District's 2025 strategic update said it would continue working toward establishment of a local watershed technical advisory group and regular meetings. | **Was the original group formally established, how often did it meet, and what did it accomplish?** |
| **Integrated water-quality concerns list** | Working group was expected to develop an integrated list identifying issues, responsibility, funding and timelines. | No current publicly available implementation matrix identified in this review. | **Does this list exist? If so, request a copy and status update.** |
| **Road density** | 2018 assessment observed that ongoing forest development was increasing road density. | Assessment recommended strategic deactivation of moderate/ high-risk roads. | **What is today's road density and what roads have been deactivated since 2018?** |
| **Legacy roads** | Legacy roads were identified as potential erosion and sediment sources. | Forest Practices Board identified legacy roads as an area requiring continued attention. | **Which legacy roads have been assessed, remediated or deactivated?** |
| **Munro Forest Service Road** | Earlier reports identified sediment/erosion issues associated with the road corridor. | Subject of earlier assessment and community concern. | **What mitigation has occurred and what current monitoring exists?** |
| **Road crossings and drainage** | 2018 assessment emphasized adequate crossings and drainage to accommodate large peak-flow events and prevent erosion/ concentrated drainage. | Recommendation explicitly linked to climate-related extreme events. | **How are current and proposed roads being assessed against this recommendation?** |
| **Riparian areas** | Maintenance of healthy riparian areas was recommended. | Forest Practices Board observed operational riparian measures during its 2019 investigation. | **What common standards are now applied across licensees?** |

| Issue | Earlier recommendation / concern | Evidence located | Current question |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Cutblock-level assessment** | Certain proposed blocks and associated roads required further field assessment or planning. | Forest Practices Board found licensees were using professional assessments at the time of its investigation. | **Provide current assessments for blocks now proposed for harvest.** |
| **Sub-basin monitoring** | Forest Practices Board noted lack of monitoring stations capable of distinguishing effects in individual sub-basins. | 2019 investigation said watershed-specific data were insufficient to confidently identify cumulative effects. | **What monitoring network exists today?** |
| **Cumulative effects** | Board said numerous forestry and non-forestry activities created potential cumulative effects. | Board said no single party was responsible for cumulative impacts from all activities. | **Who is responsible for cumulative-effects assessment today?** |
| **Long-term access planning** | Board suggested examination of long-term road risks and an access plan identifying high-risk areas to avoid or deactivate. | Recommendation/ observation made in 2019. | **Was a long-term watershed road/ access plan produced?** |
| **Recommendation tracking** | Technical group could ensure recommendations from ongoing assessments were implemented. | No single current public recommendation-tracking document identified. | **Request a consolidated implementation register.** |

# 5. What the 2019 Forest Practices Board Actually Found

It is important that any request accurately represent the Forest Practices Board's findings.

The Board concluded that the forest practices it investigated were consistent with applicable forestry requirements.

It found that licensees had:

- undertaken watershed- and stand-level assessments;
- used qualified professionals;
- incorporated assessment recommendations;
- maintained natural drainage;
- undertaken road maintenance and deactivation;
- managed proximity to riparian features; and
- shared information with the District.

That finding should be acknowledged.

However, the Board also reported significant broader issues.

It stated that Peachland and Trepanier community watersheds contained many different activities and industries, producing the potential for **unmanaged or undetected cumulative effects**.

It also stated that:

- watershed-specific monitoring information was limited;
- cumulative effects were therefore difficult to determine;
- no single party was responsible for managing the combined impacts of all activities;
- a monitoring strategy could improve watershed management;
- a technical advisory group required clear roles and mandate;
- implementation of watershed recommendations should be tracked;
- legacy and non-forestry roads warranted attention; and
- long-term road planning could reduce future risks to water quality.

These observations remain highly relevant to a 2026 review.

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# 6. Current Conditions

The District of Peachland currently states that:

**Peachland Creek watershed supplies all potable water to the District.**

The District also operates an emergency Okanagan Lake source, but the upland Peachland Creek system is the current potable-water supply.

In April 2026, Peachland introduced **Stage 3 water restrictions**.

Council was advised that:

- drought conditions were continuing;
- upland lake levels were lower than optimal;

- the watershed was departing from historic refill patterns;
- lake levels were substantially below historical norms; and
- the water system remained dependent on annual snowmelt refill.

These observations concern **water quantity and drought**.

They should not be interpreted as proof that forestry caused current reservoir conditions.

Potential drivers include:

- drought;
- reduced snowpack;
- temperature;
- evaporation;
- climate variability;
- climate change;
- forest disturbance;
- wildfire;
- roads;
- water withdrawals;
- vegetation recovery;
- land uses; and
- interactions among these factors.

An updated watershed assessment would help clarify their relative importance.

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# 7. Forestry Activity in 2026

On May 12, 2026, Peachland Council received a presentation from representatives of **BC Timber Sales and Gorman Bros. Lumber Ltd.** concerning proposed forestry activity near Glen Lake.

The District reported that the discussion followed a meeting involving Peachland representatives and the provincial Forestry Minister concerning increased local control over watershed matters.

Council requested continuing information on the proposed forestry and indicated that the matter would be discussed further with provincial representatives.

This makes the 2018 reassessment recommendation particularly relevant.

A core question is:

**Does proposed forestry near Glen Lake constitute significant new forest development that should trigger an updated watershed assessment under the approach recommended in the 2018 report?**

That question should be answered by qualified professionals and the responsible provincial authorities.

# 8. Recommended Information Request

The Peachland Watershed Alliance could request the following information in writing.

### A. Updated watershed assessment

1. Has the 2018 Peachland Creek Community Watershed Assessment been updated?
2. If yes, provide the report and supporting technical documents.
3. If no, explain why an updated assessment has not been undertaken.
4. Confirm whether proposed 2026 forest development was assessed in the 2018 report.

### B. Recommendation implementation table

Provide a table identifying:

| Requested field | Information sought |
|---|---|
| Recommendation | Exact recommendation from relevant watershed assessment |
| Responsible organization | Province, licensee, District or other body |
| Action undertaken | What was actually completed |
| Completion date | When work occurred |
| Supporting evidence | Report, inspection, photographs, monitoring data, etc. |
| Current status | Complete / ongoing / outstanding |
| Monitoring | How effectiveness has been measured |
| Next action | Remaining work and timing |

### C. Roads and sediment

Request:

- current road inventory;
- roads constructed since 2018;
- roads deactivated since 2018;
- legacy-road remediation;
- erosion and sediment-risk inspections;
- Munro FSR mitigation status;
- stream-crossing assessments; and
- long-term watershed access planning.

### D. Monitoring

Request information identifying:

- hydrometric monitoring locations;
- turbidity monitoring locations;
- sub-basin monitoring;
- stream-flow records;
- sediment monitoring;
- road erosion inspections;
- riparian effectiveness monitoring; and
- Forest and Range Evaluation Program assessments undertaken in the watershed.

### E. Technical advisory group

Request:

- establishment date;
- terms of reference;
- membership;
- meeting dates;
- agendas;
- minutes;
- recommendations;
- implementation records; and
- explanation of the District's 2025 statement that establishment of a local watershed technical advisory group and regular meetings remained ongoing.

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# 9. Recommended First Provincial Contact

The first provincial request regarding forestry and implementation of the watershed assessment should be directed to:

## Okanagan Shuswap Natural Resource District

**B.C. Ministry responsible for provincial forest management**

**2501 – 14th Avenue**
Vernon, British Columbia
V1T 8Z1

**Email:** Forests.OkanaganShuswapDistrictOffice@gov.bc.ca
**Phone:** 250-558-1700

### Suggested subject line

**Request for Updated Peachland Creek Community Watershed Assessment and Implementation Status of 2010–2019 Watershed Recommendations**

The request should be addressed to:

**District Manager / Resource Management**
**Okanagan Shuswap Natural Resource District**

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# 10. Drinking-Water Follow-Up

A parallel copy should be provided to **Interior Health Environmental Public Health**, because the issues involve Peachland's drinking-water source.

Interior Health works with the District on drinking-water monitoring and has statutory responsibilities under British Columbia's drinking-water legislation.

A separate formal request under **section 29 of the Drinking Water Protection Act** may also be considered where a person believes that a threat to drinking water exists.

Such a request should be evidence-based and describe the facts supporting the alleged drinking-water threat.

## Interior Health Environmental Public Health

**Email:** EPHDirect@interiorhealth.ca
**Kelowna:** 250-469-7061
**Toll-free:** 1-855-744-6328

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# 11. Proposed Immediate Action

The Peachland Watershed Alliance could make the following request:

> We respectfully request confirmation as to whether the November 5, 2018 Peachland Creek Community Watershed Assessment has been updated in accordance with its recommendation that consideration be given to reassessment every five years, or when significant new forest development not included in the assessment is proposed.
>
> If an updated assessment has been completed, please provide the report and supporting technical documentation.

If no update has been completed, we request an explanation of the technical basis for relying on the 2018 assessment for current and proposed forest development.

We further request a recommendation-by-recommendation implementation accounting for the 2018 watershed assessment and relevant earlier source-water and sediment assessments, identifying completed, ongoing and outstanding measures.

This request is made in light of Peachland Creek watershed's current role as the District's potable-water source, continuing watershed-management concerns, current drought and reservoir conditions, and proposed forestry activity in the watershed.

We are not asserting that forestry alone is responsible for current watershed or water-supply conditions. We are requesting updated evidence capable of assessing the combined effects of forestry, roads, climate, drought, natural processes and other watershed activities.

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# 12. Key Questions for Government

The Alliance should seek written answers to these questions:

1. **Has the 2018 watershed assessment been updated?**
2. **If not, why not?**
3. **Does the Province consider the five-year update recommendation still applicable?**
4. **What significant forest development has occurred since the assessment's field work?**
5. **What forest development is currently proposed?**
6. **Was that proposed development included in the 2018 assessment?**
7. **What legacy erosion and sediment problems remain?**
8. **Was a watershed-wide legacy-road mitigation plan completed?**
9. **What roads have been deactivated?**
10. **What current watershed-specific monitoring exists?**
11. **Are individual tributaries or sub-basins monitored?**
12. **Who now coordinates cumulative-effects management?**
13. **Was the watershed technical advisory group formally established?**
14. **What recommendations has that group implemented?**
15. **What current technical evidence demonstrates that proposed forestry can proceed without unacceptable effects on drinking-water quantity, quality or flow timing?**

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# 13. Evidence Classification

To avoid overstating the available evidence, information in this brief should be read using the following categories.

### Verified official finding

A statement directly supported by a District of Peachland, Forest Practices Board or provincial record.

### Recommendation

An action proposed by a professional report but not necessarily a legal requirement.

### Outstanding verification question

A recommendation for which this review has not yet located sufficient public documentation to establish whether it has been completed.

### Community concern

A concern raised by the Peachland Watershed Protection Alliance or residents that still requires independent verification.

This distinction is important.

**Absence of a publicly located completion report does not itself prove that no work occurred.**

The appropriate next step is to require the responsible organizations to document what occurred.

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# 14. Principal Sources

### District of Peachland

**Water Sources**
District confirms that Peachland Creek watershed currently supplies all potable water to Peachland.

**Council Meeting Highlights — April 14, 2026**
District reported Stage 3 restrictions, ongoing drought, low upland lake levels and watershed refill patterns departing from historic conditions.

**Council Highlights — May 12, 2026**
Records discussion of proposed forestry activity near Glen Lake involving BC Timber Sales and Gorman Bros. Lumber Ltd.

**Strategic Plan 2022–2026 Update — October 22, 2025**
Reports watershed-protection activities as ongoing and continued work toward establishment of a local watershed technical advisory group and regular meetings.

## Peachland Creek Community Watershed Assessment

**Peachland Creek Community Watershed Assessment — Final Revised Report, November 5, 2018**

Key recommendations include:

- erosion and sediment mitigation;
- road and drainage controls;
- legacy-road management;
- technical working-group coordination;
- additional field assessment;
- riparian protection;
- strategic road deactivation; and
- consideration of updating the assessment every five years or when significant new forest development not previously assessed is proposed.

## Forest Practices Board

**Forestry Activities in the Peachland and Trepanier Creek Community Watersheds — Complaint Investigation #17046, September 2019**

The Board found the forest practices investigated complied with applicable legal requirements while separately identifying concerns involving:

- cumulative effects;
- lack of watershed-specific monitoring;
- governance and accountability;
- legacy roads;
- long-term road planning; and
- implementation tracking.

## Peachland Watershed Protection Alliance

**Letter to Logging Licensees — November 27, 2020**

Provides a useful record of community follow-up questions concerning:

- technical working group;
- legacy-road strategy;
- riparian buffers;
- cutblock assessments;
- Munro FSR;
- sediment mitigation; and
- implementation of the 2018 recommendations.

Because this is an Alliance source rather than an independent government finding, statements in it should be treated as documented concerns requiring verification.

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# Conclusion

The documentary record does **not support a simple conclusion that forestry alone is responsible for Peachland's watershed problems**.

It does support a strong case for transparency and updated assessment.

In particular:

**The 2018 watershed assessment contemplated reassessment after approximately five years or in response to significant new forest development.**

The 2019 Forest Practices Board subsequently identified limitations in watershed-specific monitoring and cumulative-effects governance.

The District's own 2025 planning record indicates that watershed governance work remained ongoing.

In 2026, Peachland Creek supplies the community's potable water, significant drought and reservoir concerns have been reported, and additional forestry activity is being discussed near Glen Lake.

Taken together, these facts support a reasonable request for:

1. an updated Peachland Creek watershed assessment;
2. a complete implementation accounting of earlier recommendations;
3. current cumulative-effects information;
4. documentation of legacy-road and erosion mitigation;
5. current watershed monitoring information; and
6. transparent review of proposed forest development against current watershed conditions.

The objective should be to obtain the evidence necessary for residents, governments, forest licensees and watershed professionals to evaluate current conditions using a shared and current factual record.