

NORD (\$15,000)

**Project Title:** BX Creek SHIM Project

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**Project Start date:** May 2007



The Regional District North Okanagan received a WCQI grant in order to accurately map and delineate the ecological and man made features along the length of BX Creek, through both the City of Vernon and the regional district areas using the SHIM (Sensitive Habitat Inventory Mapping) methodology. The Regional District North Okanagan has identified that B.X. Creek is experiencing much development pressure along its 28 km length and recognizes that SHIM is a useful tool for planning purposes and to monitor changes over time. The Regional District of North Okanagan has retained Eco-Scape Environmental Consultants to complete the SHIM work

The projected results of the SHIM mapping project by the Regional District North Okanagan will consist of basic data such as accurate location of the watercourse, as current mapping is generally inaccurate. Inaccuracies in stream location have resulted in the stream appearing on incorrect properties on plans and maps used by the Regional District. The SHIM project will also identify all stream features, disturbances, habitat areas, fisheries values and assess riparian health associated with the water course. The mapping is completing using high resolution GPS units where the final data will be incorporated into RDNO's GIS system.

A site visit with Eco-Scape on September 6, 2007 took place along B.X. Creek just north of Swan Lake. The data gathering for SHIM is fully complete along the stream that extends from its outflow in Okanagan Lake, through the City of Vernon and up to the location north of Swan Lake at the time of reporting. Preliminary data and top of bank GPS points have been taken for the entire 28 km length of the stream.

The timeline is progressing along as outlined in the application and all raw GPS data should be assembled by the end of September 2007. Agencies in the community such as Ministry of Environment and the City of Vernon have submitted letters of support prior to the project commencing.

It is so vital to accurately map water courses within a community as their location can have many implications for development, conservation and property transactions. It is important to have accurate ecological information in order to make the most informed land use decisions possible.