

Guardians of Nicola Lake and Watershed (GONL)

Annual General Meeting

July 9, 2026

Best Western Hotel Board Room, 7pm.

Attendance (42 members)

Arnold Barb QUILCHENA ON THE LAKE

Arnold John QUILCHENA ON THE LAKE

Blackmon Elaine NICOLA BAY RV RESORT

Blackmon Ray NICOLA BAY RV RESORT

Cane David QUILCHENA ON THE LAKE

Craig Robert LAKESHORE

Dove Donna QUILCHENA ON THE LAKE

Dove Rick QUILCHENA ON THE LAKE

Dyck Robert LAKESHORE

Emerson Dan NICOLA BAY RV RESORT

Gaukel Claudette QUILCHENA ON THE LAKE

Gaukel Marvin QUILCHENA ON THE LAKE

Gilpin Richard LAKESHORE

Hamson Ian QUILCHENA ON THE LAKE

Jarvos Diane BEAVER POINT ESTATES

Jarvos Don BEAVER POINT ESTATES

Klassen Herta LAKESHORE

Klassen Ken LAKESHORE

Laird David LAKESHORE

Marshall Stephanie QUILCHENA ON THE LAKE

Marshall Steve QUILCHENA ON THE LAKE

Marshall Stewart HARMON ESTATES

Marshall Sunny HARMON ESTATES

Matson Jeanette QUILCHENA ON THE LAKE

McDermid Bob NICOLA BAY RV RESORT

Pascall Brent HARMON ESTATES

Pickering Pat LAKESHORE

Pickering Rick LAKESHORE

Rinke Chris NICOLA BAY RV RESORT

Rizzardo Almerina LAKESHORE

Rizzardo Frank LAKESHORE

Sahaydak Grant LAKESHORE

Sahaydak Shelley LAKESHORE

Saxelby John LAKESHORE

Schlagintweit Lisa LAKESHORE

Squeo Gail QUILCHENA ON THE LAKE

Stoneson Doug LAKESHORE

Strom Vicki LAKESHORE

Tomlinson Dawne NICOLA BAY RV RESORT

Van der Pauw Karen LAKESHORE

Van der Pauw Tom LAKESHORE

Walton Chris LAKESHORE

Walton Dana LAKESHORE

Guests: Julie Pollard, Almerina Rizzardo, Brian Holmes

Call to Order, John Arnold, 7.00pm

John reviewed the notice of meeting requirements as outlined by our bylaws. These requirements were met through the June 10th email that was sent to all members. Our bylaws establish 15 members as quorum. Attendance of 42 members as listed above meets this quorum threshold.

Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the AGM agenda as presented. Moved - Frank Rizzardo, Seconded - Gail Squeo, All in Favour.

President, John Arnold welcomed members to the Society's first Annual General Meeting. John introduced the Board of Directors and reflected on the tremendous volunteer effort that has gone into building the Society over its first year.

Vice President, Dawne Tomlinson delivered a land acknowledgement recognizing that this meeting was being held on the traditional, unceded territories of the Nlaka'pamux and Syilx peoples and acknowledged their longstanding stewardship of Nicola Lake and its watershed.

John reflected on how quickly the Society came together following the severe cyanobacteria blooms experienced in 2025. Within weeks of the initial public meeting, volunteers established the Society, developed bylaws, elected a Board of Directors, registered as a BC Society and began working toward protecting Nicola Lake through science, education and advocacy. He noted that, in less than one year, the Society has earned credibility with government agencies and partner organizations by demonstrating that Nicola Lake

residents are committed to finding science-based solutions. The collaborative relationships developed over the past year have positioned the Society as an important partner in protecting the watershed.

Vice President, Dawne Tomlinson provided an overview of the Society's achievements in its first year.

- ☐ Registration as a BC Society in August 2025
- ☐ Seven volunteer Board members leading the organization.
- ☐ Membership growth to more than 250 members, with significant increases in recent weeks.
- ☐ A communication network reaching more than 500 contacts through newsletters, email updates and social media.
- ☐ Growing corporate support through bronze, silver and gold memberships.
- ☐ Numerous individual donations ranging from \$100 to \$1,000.
- ☐ Best Western Merritt generously donating the meeting space and refreshments for the AGM.

Membership is about far more than financial support. Strong membership numbers demonstrate to governments and decision-makers that Nicola Lake residents care deeply about protecting the lake and expect meaningful action.

Building the Organization

During its first year, the Society focused on building a strong organizational foundation.

Major accomplishments included:

- ☐ developing governance and bylaws
- ☐ creating the Society website

- ☐ establishing the Guardians Facebook page
- ☐ producing regular newsletters
- ☐ building extensive member and community email lists
- ☐ strengthening communication with lake residents
- ☐ coordinating efforts with other organizations to avoid duplication and improve collaboration. While many agencies had already been conducting work related to Nicola Lake, much of it occurred independently. One of the Society's greatest achievements has been bringing those organizations together, encouraging collaboration and sharing scientific information.

Scientific Monitoring

Scientific monitoring remains the Society's highest priority. Four volunteer monitoring teams now conduct water sampling every two weeks at the Ministry's long-term monitoring site located at one of the deepest points in Nicola Lake.

Monitoring includes:

- ☐ Secchi disk water clarity
- ☐ dissolved oxygen profiles
- ☐ temperature profiles
- ☐ nutrient sampling
- ☐ cyanobacteria sampling
- ☐ Level 3 provincial monitoring protocols.

GONL is working directly with the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship (WLRS), collecting cyanobacteria samples every two weeks that are analyzed through provincial laboratories.

Volunteers now manage extensive scientific equipment and coordinate samples to 2 laboratories, making this the most comprehensive volunteer lake monitoring program Nicola Lake has ever seen.

Nutrient Budget Project

2026 Represents the most intensive scientific study ever undertaken on Nicola Lake. Working alongside Larratt Aquatic Consulting and multiple government agencies, the goal is to develop a comprehensive nutrient budget that will determine whether nutrients fuelling blooms are primarily:

- ☐ released from sediments already within the lake (internal loading), or
- ☐ entering from outside sources (external loading).

Tributaries, freshet flows and lake sampling locations throughout the watershed are all being monitored. Larratt Aquatic Consulting continues to advise the Society on sampling priorities, interpretation of scientific results, evaluation of restoration technologies and assessment of proposals submitted by companies claiming to have solutions. Future restoration decisions will be based on scientific evidence rather than assumptions.

Grants and Stewardship

The Society successfully secured two \$5,000 TNRD grants.

One grant supports advanced scientific testing.

The second funded stewardship signage that is installed around Nicola Lake.

The QR-code signs provide:

- ☐ current water quality updates
- ☐ stewardship information
- ☐ bloom reporting instructions

☐ pollution reporting information

☐ educational resources for visitors.

Because the information is web-based, updates can be made immediately whenever new water quality information becomes available. Members were encouraged to continue submitting photographs of blooms and pollution concerns to assist provincial monitoring efforts.

Current Water Conditions

There are encouraging preliminary observations from the Society's most recent sampling.

Although laboratory analysis was still pending:

☐ water clarity was noticeably better than at the same time last year

☐ dissolved oxygen levels in the upper water column were healthy

☐ the deepest waters remained anoxic.

Low oxygen levels near the lake bottom allow nutrients to be released from sediments, potentially fuelling cyanobacteria blooms when those nutrients mix upward into sunlit water.

Collaboration with Organizations/Government

Our Society continues to strengthen partnerships with:

☐ Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

☐ Ministry of Environment and Parks

☐ Upper Nicola Band

☐ Nicola Watershed Governance Partnership

☐ Fisheries and Oceans Canada

☐ Interior Health

☐ Dam operators

☐ Larratt Aquatic Consulting.

Members also learned about a new provincial satellite pilot project that will use satellite imagery to identify conditions favourable for cyanobacteria blooms. The Guardians will assist by comparing satellite observations with on-the-water monitoring results.

What We Are Learning

Current scientific evidence suggests Nicola Lake contains approximately 150 years of accumulated nutrient-rich sediments resulting from many contributing factors including:

☐ historic agriculture

☐ forestry practices

☐ mining

☐ shoreline development

☐ wildfire impacts

☐ climate change.

The Board emphasized that no single cause has been identified and that continued scientific work is essential before recommending restoration strategies.

Working Hypothesis

The Society reviewed its working hypothesis identifying potential high, moderate, and lower impact nutrient sources.

The Board emphasized that the hypothesis is not intended to assign blame, but rather to guide scientific investigation. Once the nutrient budget is complete, efforts can focus on addressing the most significant contributors first.

Path Forward

Priorities for the coming year include:

- ☐ continuing intensive scientific monitoring
- ☐ completing the nutrient budget
- ☐ growing membership
- ☐ strengthening watershed partnerships
- ☐ expanding public education
- ☐ advocating for improved watershed protection
- ☐ addressing high-priority nutrient sources as science identifies them.

Dawne noted that a single cyanobacteria laboratory test currently costs over \$400, equivalent to approximately 16 annual memberships, highlighting the importance of continued community support.

Stewardship

Members were reminded that everyone can contribute to improving lake health by:

- ☐ maintaining natural shoreline vegetation
- ☐ planting native shrubs and willows
- ☐ using lake-friendly household products
- ☐ minimizing fertilizer use

- ☐ maintaining septic systems
- ☐ practicing responsible boating in water deeper than 20 feet
- ☐ reporting blooms and pollution concerns
- ☐ encouraging neighbours and friends to become members.

The Board also highlighted its new recreation map identifying deeper-water areas where wake boating and other high-energy water sports can be enjoyed while reducing disturbance of nutrient-rich sediments.

Member Questions

Members asked questions regarding:

- ☐ the effects of reduced winter ice on cyanobacteria
- ☐ whether dredging could improve lake health
- ☐ sediment accumulation behind the dam
- ☐ why provincial monitoring focuses on one long-term sampling location
- ☐ possible future restoration methods.

The Board explained that scientific evidence increasingly suggests warmer winters and reduced ice cover may contribute to earlier and more severe blooms. Dredging remains extremely costly, could release additional nutrients into the water and would likely require ongoing maintenance. The Society reiterated that restoration options will only be considered once scientific evidence clearly identifies the primary nutrient sources.

Financial Report

Treasurer Brent Pascall presented the Society's financial statements for the fiscal period ending May 31, 2026.

Highlights included:

☐ approximately \$20,000 in total revenue

- o \$10,000 in TNRD grants

- o approximately \$5,000 from memberships

- o approximately \$5,000 from donations and sponsorships

☐ approximately \$3,000 in operating expenses

☐ approximately \$16,000 in assets, most of which has already been committed to contracted scientific testing and consulting.

Members were advised that while the Society currently maintains a healthy bank balance, much of those funds are already allocated toward laboratory testing and scientific work throughout the remainder of the monitoring season.

Motion to Accept the Financial Statement ending May 31, 2026

Moved – Barb Arnold, Seconded, Jeanette Matson, All in Favour

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION A – Bylaw Change

Bylaw Amendment re Membership Acceptance and Expiry

Executive Summary

The Board has spent considerable time discussing the merits and advantages of establishing a consistent membership renewal and expiry timeline. This proposal is driven by two primary considerations. First, the Society relies on membership fees as its primary source of reliable revenue. While grants and donations have been substantial and greatly appreciated, they are not predictable or within the Society's control. Second, the Society must preserve the voting rights of members in good standing. Although memberships are typically valid for one year, the timing of memberships and voting has created challenges during the Society's first year of operation, particularly as several

matters are connected to the scheduling of the mandatory Annual General Meeting (AGM). The Society was established on August 2, 2025, with the majority of memberships obtained during the autumn of that year. While Board members work year-round on behalf of the Society, we recognize that the summer months are when lake use is at its highest, algae risks are greatest, and member engagement is strongest.

With these considerations in mind, the Board believes members will support an annual membership expiry date tied to the AGM, with membership renewals occurring during the summer months. We are especially grateful to our founding members whose memberships will be shortened under this proposed bylaw amendment.

Proposed Amendment

WHEREAS the members of the Guardians of Nicola Lake and Watershed Society wish to amend Society Bylaw 3.5, Admission and Resignation of Members;

BE IT RESOLVED by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of eligible members present at this Annual General Meeting that Bylaw 3.5 be amended as follows:

3.5 Admission and Resignation

- a. Membership begins upon Board approval of an application.
- b. Members may resign in writing at any time.
- c. Memberships are annual and expire 10 days after each Annual General Meeting.

Notwithstanding this expiry rule, the Board, in its discretion, may accept new or renewal memberships for the forthcoming membership year up to one month prior to an Annual General Meeting. Such memberships shall be entitled to vote at both the upcoming Annual General Meeting and the following year's Annual General Meeting.

Moved – Stephanie Marshall, Seconded - Claudette Gaukel, All in Favour

RESOLUTION B – One-Time Membership Transition Provision (Only necessary if Resolution A passes – Ordinary Resolution requiring 50% majority vote)

Discussion

The purpose of Resolution A is to establish a consistent membership renewal and expiry schedule, reduce unnecessary administrative work, and align membership renewals with the Annual General Meeting (AGM) so membership revenue is received at the most effective time of year.

To ensure fairness for more recent members, the Board is requesting authority to grant new and renewed memberships received after January 1, 2026, an expiry date tied to the 2027 AGM. This is intended as a one-time transition measure for 2026 only, allowing memberships to be integrated fairly and seamlessly into the revised bylaw structure.

Proposed Resolution

WHEREAS the members of the Guardians of Nicola Lake and Watershed Society wish to encourage new members to join the Society and ensure they are not disadvantaged by the implementation of amended Bylaw 3.5(c);

BE IT RESOLVED by a majority (50%) of eligible members present at this Annual General Meeting that the Board of Directors is authorized to assign an expiry date of 10 days after the 2027 Annual General Meeting for all new and renewed memberships received between January 1, 2026, and July 9, 2026. This is a one-time exception under revised Bylaw 3.5.

Moved – Donna Dove, Seconded - Ray Blackmon, All in Favour.

RESOLUTION C – Bylaw Change

Bylaw Amendment to Alter the Number of Directors in the Society Discussion

Following nearly one year of operation, the Board has developed a better understanding of the range of contributions needed to advance the Society's work and the time and effort required to achieve its goals. To strengthen capacity and broaden participation, the Board recommends amending the Society's bylaws to increase the number of Directors from 5–7 to 7–9.

Proposed Amendment

WHEREAS the members of the Guardians of Nicola Lake and Watershed Society wish to amend Bylaw 4.2, Board of Directors – Composition and; Terms;

BE IT RESOLVED by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of eligible members present at this Annual General Meeting that Bylaw 4.2 be amended as follows:

4.2 Composition and Terms: The Board shall consist of 7 to 9 Directors, including a President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Directors-at-Large. All Directors shall serve one-year terms and may be re-elected.

Moved- Barb Arnold, Seconded - Stephanie Marshall, All in Favour.

RESOLUTION D – Ordinary Resolution

(50% Majority Vote)

Discussion

Section 17 of the BC Societies Act states that bylaw amendments take effect only once filed with the Registrar. While there are sound reasons for this requirement, it creates practical limitations for the intended implementation of Resolutions A and C. The Directors undertake to file any approved bylaw

amendments arising from Resolutions A and C as soon as practicable following the Annual General Meeting.

Proposed Resolution

WHEREAS the members of the Guardians of Nicola Lake and Watershed Society wish to authorize the Directors to begin implementing the intent of Resolutions A, B, and C immediately following their approval;

BE IT RESOLVED by a majority (50%) vote of eligible members present at this Annual General Meeting that the Board of Directors be authorized and instructed to act in accordance with the directions contained in Resolutions A, B, and C immediately upon their passage, with such authority remaining in effect until any required bylaw amendments are formally filed with the Registrar.

Moved – David Cane, Seconded – Gail Squeo, All in Favour

Election of Directors

The seven incumbent directors stood for re-election: John Arnold, Dawne Tomlinson, Brent Pascall, Lisa Schlagintweit, Doug Stoneson, Dan Emerson, Peter Schmid.

Julie Pollard accepted a nomination from the floor, bringing the total number of nominees to eight.

As the newly approved bylaws now permit up to nine directors and only eight nominations were received, all nominees were elected by acclamation.

Board members explained that directors typically meet monthly online using Microsoft Teams and contribute according to their interests, skills and availability. Volunteers are also welcome to assist with Society projects without serving as directors.

Community Announcements

Members were reminded that Vicky Strom is coordinating a Lakeshore Estates Garage Sale on July 25, with proceeds supporting the Guardians of Nicola Lake and Watershed Society. The Board also acknowledged the generosity of members who have made additional donations beyond their annual memberships, noting that these contributions are helping fund the Society's expanding scientific work.

Closing

The meeting concluded with members expressing appreciation for the Board's dedication and the remarkable amount of work accomplished during the Society's first year. The Board thanked members for their continued support, emphasizing that the progress achieved over the past year would not have been possible without the commitment of volunteers, members, community partners and supporters.

Motion to Adjourn Meeting 8.30pm

Moved- Stephanie Marshall, Seconded – Chris Walton, All in Favour.