German's Chocolate Cake

8 oz. German's Sweet or Semi-Sweet chocolate
1/2 cup (113 grams) water
2 cups (284 grams) all purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 cup (227 grams) butter room temperature
2 cups (397 grams) granulated sugar
4 egg yolks
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1 cup (227 grams) buttermilk
4 egg whites

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease and flour 3-8" round cake pans, or 2-9" cake pans. Line bottom of pans with parchment.

Chop chocolate and melt with water either in double boiler, or in microwave, in 30 second increments stirring until melted. It will look like it is separated, just whisk until smooth. Set aside to cool.

Combine flour, baking soda, and salt in a bowl and stir with a whisk to combine.

In a large bowl or in bowl of stand mixer, place the room temperature butter, and sugar. Cream, beating on high, for at least 5 minutes, scraping bowl as needed, until mixture is light and fluffy. Add egg yolks, one at a time beating well after each addition. Add vanilla, stir to combine. Mix in melted and cooled chocolate until combined.

With the mixer on low, add 1/3 of the flour mixture, mix to combine. With the mixture still running, add 1/2 of the buttermilk. Repeat this process, beginning and ending with flour, until all of the flour and buttermilk are incorporated. Set mixture aside.

Whip egg whites with an electric mixer (clean beaters, clean bowl), until stiff peaks form.

Fold, egg whites into batter gently until well combined and no white streaks show.

Divide batter among prepared pans and bake until toothpick inserted in the center comes out with just a few moist crumbs, not wet batter. This could take from 30-45 minutes depending on the size pan used and thickness of layers. Start checking around the 25 minute mark

Cool in pans for 10 minutes, loosen the cake from the pan by running a knife around the edge. Invert onto cooling rack, removing the pans and let cool completely.   Frost with coconut pecan icing.