

## COWICHAN STEWARDSHIP ROUNDTABLE AGENDA

**DATE: THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2020 : 9am to 12 pm**    **Location: Fish Health building, Freshwater Fisheries Society, 1080 Wharnclyffe Rd, Duncan**    [www.cowichanstewardship.ca](http://www.cowichanstewardship.ca)

We meet on the unceded lands of Cowichan Tribes. Everyone is always welcome. Please feel free to arrive and leave whenever is necessary. Please allow enough room in parking lot for Fish Hatchery vehicles and emergency vehicles, **no parking in yellow painted areas**. Please bring a coffee cup!

The Roundtable works together in a kind and respectful manner at all times. The Round the Table portion of the meeting consists of all attenders having a few minutes each of a report out time. Length of individual's speaking time is determined by how many people are in attendance. Longer presentations have to be booked in advance.

Time	Agenda Item
9:00am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Welcome and acknowledgement that our meeting is on Unceded Cowichan Tribes territory.</li> <li>● Appreciation to Freshwater Fisheries Society for hosting our meetings.</li> <li>● Regrets. Bob Crandall, Joy Wade, Genevieve Singleton, Tom Rutherford, Chris Steeger.</li> <li>● Attendance list to be circulated.  <div style="padding-left: 20px;">Parker Jefferson, Rick Bryan, Eric Marshall, Barry Hetschko, Christine Rikley, Ian Morrison, Sandy Cumming, Melissa Nottingham, Ken Clements, Geoff Strong, Karen Deck, Jim Deck, Don Hare, Chelsey Toth, Dave Preikshot, Pamela Williams, Danielle Paydli, Sheila Paul, Martha Lescher, Jacquie Taylor, Mira Ziolo, Stephanie Cottell, Brian Houle</div> </li> </ul>
9:10-9:30 CSRT Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Recording of meeting notes is done by members taking turns. Thank you to Pam for doing Dec. notes. Christine Rikley is taking February notes. Volunteers needed for next month.</li> <li>● Update re needing a new website manager, Emma Robson of Somenos Marsh Society will kindly fit this into her work schedule. Thanks to Somenos Marsh Society for this support. Big thanks to Edmond Duggan for doing this in the past.</li> <li>● Update re future speakers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ March 19 – John Stewart, Engagement Coordinator for Cowichan Tribes will be speaking on the proposed Southern Strait of Georgia National Marine Conservation Area Reserve</li> <li>○ April TBA</li> <li>○ May 21 – Cheri Ayers of Bioayers Consultants will be providing an update on the Coastal Restoration Fund Project</li> <li>○ June 18 – Kevin Pellett from DFO will be providing an update on his work with the South Coast Stock Assessment</li> <li>○ July 16 – Annual Field Day</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
9:45	<p><b>Round the Table</b>, check-ins and updates. Please remember if your report out more than three simple points it <b>must</b> be emailed to secretary or co-chairs if you expect it to be recorded in full in the meeting notes.</p>

**Sandy Cumming, Cowichan Lake Salmonid Enhancement Society (CLSES)** – Chum salmon starting to hatch. Coho haven't hatched yet, but have a significant number. Current focus on fundraising.

**Melissa Nottingham, Department of Fisheries and Oceans** – recognition of CLSES who have sent chum eggs to various classrooms. If anyone is interested in hosting a table at the Rosewell Creek Hatchery event "The River Never Sleeps" on May 3, 2020, please let Melissa know.

**Christine Rikley, BC Parks** – After consulting with local First Nations, proposal is now being put forward to the Legislature requesting the new Eagle Heights property acquired in 2018 be designated a Class A Park with the following new name "Hwsalu-utsum", meaning the place of fireweed. The name refers to the ridges north of the Koksilah River where the first man who fell from the sky landed.

BC Parks facilities in Cowichan River Park were impacted by the latest January 31, 2020 storm with extensive flooding and damage. Much of the restored site at Stoltz groupsite was washed away, and the Cowichan River footpath is now closed with several major washouts and the 2 bridges lost (Holt Creek and "Ricky Dicky"). In consideration of the cost and environmental impacts of rebuilding the Holt Creek bridge in an area that can sustain continued flood events, and the presence of an alternative crossing in the Holt Creek trestle, BC Parks is currently considering not rebuilding at Holt Creek and rerouting footpath users across the larger trestle (500m upstream). More info to come.

**Sheila Paul, Cowichan Estuary Restoration and Conservation Association (CERCA)** – CERCA is inviting estuary health professionals to attend an upcoming working on March 3<sup>rd</sup> on estuarine health protocol. CERCA has received funding through the Pacific Institute of Climate Solutions to hire a summer intern who will work on field testing estuarine health indicators as defined by the upcoming workshop as well as develop a google interactive platform for estuaries. Lastly, more swallow boxes to be installed this month.

**Martha Lescher, Volunteer** – No updates

**Jacque Taylor, Cowichan Bring Back the Bluebirds Project** – the first returned bluebird of the season was sighted. A reminder, please come out to the Beer and Burger fundraiser on April 19<sup>th</sup> at the Cowichan Bay Pub benefiting the Project.

**Mira Ziolo, Shawnigan Lake resident and veterinarian** – interested in wildlife/urban interfaces. Hoping to contribute to the Cowichan Valley in that area.

**Stephanie Cottell, Cowichan Community Land Trust** – reminder that Steph is now the alternate rep for the area on the Salmon Enhancement Advisory Board. Her role is to bring forward concerns/messages from the community for that board to consider. Invite members of the roundtable to send her notes if there's anything you wish to have raised at that Board. [Stephanie@cowichanlandtrust.ca](mailto:Stephanie@cowichanlandtrust.ca)

**Ian Morrison, CVRD Area Director** – an application has come before their committee that may result in some pieces of land adjacent to Little Beach becoming an amenity of CVRD. Honeymoon Bay and Mesachie Lake sewage system upgrade is in the midst of being installed this week.

**Rick Bryan, Paddlesport BC** – recent high water levels have made some incredible changes to our rivers for the paddle sport community. Access points changed, and new channels have been carved out. Floods have been good in one sense, cleaning out some logs/sweepers – still assessing impact.

**Geoff Strong, retired atmospheric and climate scientist** – has been organizing a series of public seminars and panel discussions in Chemainus on climate change. Upcoming sessions:

- February 22 – Garth Mihalcheon and Guy Dauncey
- March 7 – John Scull and Katia Bannister
- March 14 – Climate Change Panel with Guy Dauncey, Katia Bannister, Ken Denman, Neil Swart, Alistair MacGregor, Claire Hume, and Aaron Stone.

**Ken Clements, Sidney Anglers Association** – no updates

**Karen Deck, Save our Homes Society** – Has received a grant from Lush Cosmetics. Part of that grant will fund a day-long workshop where Cowichan Elders will present on the impacts of colonization on their society.

**Jim Deck, Save our Homes Society** – no additional updates

**Don Hare, Coastal Invasive Plant Committee** – CIPC has initiated knotweed surveys in the Cowichan Valley. Knotweed destabilizes the soil, so they'll be following up this spring to see how the scenarios change due to the flooding. Continuing to work on the northern end of the watershed, and engaging Ministry of Environment on works in the waterway

**Chelsey Toth, Mosaic Forest Management** – A report is now available on the results of Mosaic's knotweed control plots. Overall, the only effective control method found was chemical.

Chelsey is serving as chair of the Coastal Invasive Species Committee, and remains interested in the action items that came out of last year's knotweed workshop, as well as engaging partners on knotweed activities in the upper river. Recognize that chemical use in the riparian area is not popular, but is concerned the harm of not controlling knotweed is greater than the risk chemicals present.

Attended a workshop with Cowichan Tribes yesterday, attended presentation on various restoration and sediment control projects Cowichan Tribes has been working on in the lower reaches of the river.

**Barry Hetschko, Somenos Marsh Wildlife Society** – Winding up swan and goose count, and heading into bluebird season. Displayed a new mealworm mix prototype for the project that may be one of the reasons we had 100% hatch rate last season

	<p><b>Eric Marshall, Cowichan Valley Naturalists Society</b> – waterbird counts in the bay as of Feb 9<sup>th</sup>: Over 100 trumpeter swans &amp; 5 mutes. 200 bufflehead, 40 common goldeneye, 8 cormorants (4 pelagic &amp; 4 double crested – one leg band ER6 – banded near mouth of Columbia River in 2012 when too young to fly. Many gulls. Eric monitors the bay regularly for beached, dead birds; this last week found a dead mute swan, not able to determine cause of death.</p> <p>Swan &amp; goose counts: trumpeters going up now nearly 500, geese over 700.</p> <p><b>Dave Preikshot, Municipality of North Cowichan</b> – installing oxygen and temperature augers in Quamichan Lake to try to get a good picture of physical and chemical components of the lake and how that contributes to blue/green algae blooms. Phosphorus: installing filters in a couple of test creeks to look at the ability of using chemicals to treat phosphorus coming off the land. Helping the Somenos Marsh Society with data analysis of similar testing in Somenos.</p> <p>Hiring summer student – outreach with school kids and Quamichan monitoring work.</p> <p>Chemainus River- augmenting summer flows to stabilize river flow during low flows.</p> <p>Modelling Climate Change policies for North Cowichan – what sorts of policies could we adopt to get to our goal of 80% of 2007 levels. Stay tuned for public feedback period. Reviewing Municipality’s environmental policies, including considering new provincial and federal riparian laws/policies.</p> <p><b>Pamela Williams, Cowichan Estuary Nature Centre</b> – Alicia on parental leave. Restoration camp during spring break for youth. Plans to launch wildlife camera to monitor herons. Noticed: large sediment plume from Cowichan River in ocean, and curious about impact on fisheries and bottom-feeders. Parker expects may have had a major sediment event at Broadway Run, potential large calving off of the bluff.</p> <p><b>Parker Jefferson, Cowichan Lake and River Stewardship Society</b> – recent advertising of new tubing company that was going to transport tubes back to Cowichan Lake by towing with a jet ski. Town council had public meeting with Transport Canada advisor to educate public about TC regulations and restrictions – likely proposal is not feasible while staying within restrictions</p>
10:30-10:40	Break
10:45 11:05	Finishing up of Round the Table
11:05-11:45	<p>Brian Houle, Catalyst Paper</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flow control measures taken in 2019 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 2019 was the worst year ever for this system for drought on record – first year pumps were needed to sustain flow at 4.5 cms; pumps were on for 19</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>days. Purpose of pumping is to maintain flows for fish and fish habitat as well as industrial use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Rainfall: Except for January, 2019 had on average less rainfall per month of the last 5 years of data</li> <li>○ On February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019, the lake dropped below where they usually start control, but they didn't start control that early to balance fish habitat needs in the spring; needed to preserve flow when fry hatching. It's critically important to maintain 15-20 cms in spring when fry hatching to allow them to exit the system before being predated. So Catalyst allowed uncontrolled flows to maintain that minimum flow in spring</li> <li>● Efforts to raise the weir <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The CVRD is leading the application process. Currently tendering design of new weir. Also surveying natural boundary of the lake to determine July impact of higher water levels (0.7m increase in low water level)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Snow pack monitoring <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Heather Mountain: 2019 showed lowest snow pack of 5 years of data, well below 25<sup>th</sup> percentile. Early melt – fully melted by end of May before there was a chance to store that melt in the lake. This year, higher but still in the lowest 25<sup>th</sup> percentile</li> <li>○ Jump Creek Snow Pillow showed lowest snow pack in 34 years of data, as well as early melt of snow pack. This year, same results</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Lake pumping <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 20 pumps were installed in lake, but only 12 pumps were required to initially sustain the Cowichan River with 4.5 cms. By 19<sup>th</sup> day, 15 pumps were needed</li> <li>○ Vancouver Lamprey (SARA listed): monitoring revealed an area with previous confirmation of Lamprey was found to not have any Lamprey after area impacted by low lake level. Also found Lamprey stranded from the main stem of the lake that had to be rescued. Demonstrated that they had the ability to migrate but depended on geography – potential for isolation in drought conditions.</li> <li>○ No reported safety incidents related to pumping; significant precautionary measures taken (buoys deployed)</li> </ul> </li> <li>●</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Title:</b> Canadian Freshwater Alliance: Introducing the Our Water BC Network &amp; CodeBlue BC</p> <p><b>Description:</b> Danielle Paydli, BC Organizer for the Canadian Freshwater Alliance will be outlining the opportunity to join the Our Water BC Network, which is a collaboration of grassroots groups across the province who share knowledge and resources. In addition, she is introducing the launch of a new campaign called CodeBlue BC - a plan to secure and sustain waters in BC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Our Water BC: joint initiative of organizations and individuals working to make sure waters in BC are healthy and thriving for everyone who lives here. Purpose to unite freshwater stewards to advocate for healthy freshwater systems</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Priorities: Reconciliation, adapting to changing climate, and conservation and adequate funding for water management and monitoring</li> <li>• Governance: steering committee that runs day to day operations.</li> <li>• Members: organizations who engage in some or all OWBC activities</li> <li>• CodeBlue BC: public facing campaign. 3 parts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Get tough on water wasters and polluters</li> <li>○ Make big industrial users pay the true cost of using BC water</li> <li>○ Give local people the power and resources to restore and manage their local water sources</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Watershed Security Fund: formal budgetary committee recommendation to provincial government for dedicated annual funding source for FN, local government, local watershed protections agencies and community partnerships. For more information, position paper available on POLIS' website</li> </ul>
12:00 noon	Meeting ALWAYS ends promptly, thank you. Please help with cleanup of room

Meetings are the 3rd Thursday of the month, except August.