

Cowichan Stewardship Roundtable



October 16,
2014

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by Paul Rickard at 9 am.

In attendance

Meg Loop, Kai Rietzal (CLT), Keith Lawrence & Kate Miller (CVRD), Paul Rickard (BCWF), Geoff Strong (CERCA), Claude Theriault, Doug Ellison, Grant MacPherson, Richard Lake & Ken Clements (Sidney Anglers), Morgan Kennah (Island Timberlands) Ian Morrison (CVRD Area F), Dave Lindsay (Timberwest), Eric Marshall (CVNS), Tim Kulchyski (Cowichan Tribes), Derek Haupt (Western Forest Products), Shaun Chadburn (North Cowichan), Elizabeth Bailey (Somenos), Genevieve Singleton (Nature interpreter), Ted Brookeman (BCWF), Derek Haupt (WFP), Brian Tutty (Retired RP Bio), Brian Houle & Dennis Popplestone (Catalyst Paper), Chris Morley (Friends of the Cowichan),
Regrets: Rodger Hunter, Don Closson,

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the September meeting were circulated and approved.

Roundtable updates

Genevieve Singleton - Things are looking promising in regards to Eagle Heights.

Tim Kulchyski - Attended a 2 day workshop put on by a group from University of Washington on herring. Because of the technology that has hugely advanced in genetics, we can do 3000-4000 genetic coding. In Europe they were able to tell all the genetic stocks 100 years ago. Just in Puget Sound they have proven that there are 21 genetically distinct stock of herring, where previously there was believed to be 3 or 4 across the whole region. DFO manages the herring as one whole stock (partial time on West Coast and partial time in the Sound), and DFO did attend this meeting.

Dave Lindsey - Still working on the riparian works, trying to determine ownership around Lake Cowichan, hopefully start to outline this for future shoreline protection. Beaver Creek, the Province will accept a lease from Beaver Lake Resort to accept the water license so TimberWest is working in the legal aspect.

- Timberwest is buying and then donating rock towards the lease.

Keith Lawrence - Water Governance Study, draft report presented late September with recommendations based on the feedback from the 3 workshops. Sandy Pools work should be complete soon, next to come is replacement planting for failed plants and interpretive signage.

Geoff Strong - Bridge project been delayed into the January/February window, some of the funding operates on the Fiscal Year. As of now it looks like it's going ahead. Engineering plans available from Goetz for those wanting to know more. Spawning habitat project for Cowichan Bay is for January/February as well.

Beginning trail construction and clearing for a Cowichan Estuary Nature Trail.

Sidney Anglers - Bob Crandall & Ted Burns wanted a new tank at the hatchery and Sidney is putting \$1800 towards that tank. Cowichan Lake Tributaries Chinook project, \$2700 towards that. Ted Brookman/Mill Bay \$500 to help the trucking project. \$12,000 towards the Cowichan Estuary Breech Project. \$1500 towards the herring project in Cowichan Bay. \$2000 towards Sea Change for eelgrass planting.

Ian Morrison - Nov 15 municipal election, there will be new boards, new councils, and new mayors. Dec 10th will be the first meeting at the CVRD, committees etc announced in Jan and budget will done by March. Cowichan Lake and River Stewardship AGM is this weekend, Saturday at 9 am, electing a new board. \$19,000 has to be raised. Still have the illegal trash dumping going on, hoping to raise funds for wildlife

cameras to catch people redhanded. Honeymoon log sort property, developers are looking to rezone/develop. It is a very important trout habitat site and they are committed to rehabilitating the waterfront. Craig Whightman - Key project over the past 2 years is chinook juvenile behaviour and habitat preference studies. Weekly night snorkels with up to 9 people from March to June, all that data has been collected. Completed year 1 of 2 PIT tagging project of survival rates, DFO and Uvic ES/Bio, and data is being written up. PIT array is up at the counting fence to account for returning jacks. Poked a hole into the South Spur dyke behind John Charlie's property, major compensation for the dyke work by the Cowichan Flood Management Partners, and close project with Cowichan Tribes. Cowichan Tribes now has a water license in their own name, a first for the province. Working with Tribes & DFO for water temperature at loggers along the river course funded by CVRD/DFO, probably pull the loggers at the end of the chinook season. FLNRO assessment downstream of the pumphouse, two crews on the river doing miso habitat monitoring (depth and velocity) and transect analysis at 21 different sites from Greendale to the Catalyst pumphouse, report available by draft at the end of the year. Assessing the merits of the Broadway Run stabilization restoration project. Project will take roughly \$500,000. Regulatory approval and a good plan is a challenge. 2014 park permit for the site assessment, but need another assessment on river flow dynamics but will take another \$8000-9000 to complete.

- The federal gov has a significant environmental concern and glass sponge reefs of which we have one in the Saanich inlet. One of the chief concerns is sediment; if you can link the project to reducing sediment output you may be able to make a case.
- Emergency listing for the COSEWIC Cowichan chinook, lots of funds there, so if you can link the sediment to the chinook there is more funding.

The 3-year project at the lake, working on year 2 going forward.

Knotweed control project to see if we can do something, need Tribes and CVRD on board. Knotweed needs an intense amount of work for many years and thick amounts of it means bad things for Cowichan chinook. Knotweed takes out overhanging veg and is devastating for chinook, need consistent effort.

- Salish Sea Salmon Research Project. James Craig put together a great powerpoint that demonstrated what they are finding out about the Cowichan chinook at various life stages and the differences in behaviour between hatchery and wild fish and highlights the critical elements for where they want to be. Thick stem in water biotics and second large woody debris in higher water flows that we thought, they don't want the calm pools like coho. Studied the blind channels in the estuary and found 4-5 smolts per meter in these channels where there is no cover, and James may possibly be able to present to us at a later meeting.

Catalyst - this summer went on some pretty serious water restrictions which created another problem: dust. Very dangerous for explosions and contains a fungus that gets into the sinuses and 4 people off work due to this. Not able to hose down these dusty areas, had to purchase vacuums etc. What is going to happen next year?

Houle - The lake popped up over the rule curve (the lake is empty, we need a lot of rain), we are at 7.7cms. 5.5 controlled, 4.5 on Aug 7th because it puts the river in a bad situation but it helped Catalyst get through. After 7-8 flow levels completed today, putting the river up to 12-15 cms. Above 25 cms the fish counting fence can be damaged.

Shawn Chadburn - Working on knotweed, trying to get a prioritized list and some plan for species to treat going forward. Spent about \$5000 on knotweed treatments this summer, treating all the known sites on North Cowichan, and did some public awareness on private land knotweed sites. Hopefully will have continual treatment on all North Cowichan sites, based off of Saanich's information sheet. Coastal Invasive Species to present to the new council, just to give a heads up to the invasive plants and which ones to look at in the future. Hopefully in winter/spring have the presentation, look at budgeting and inventorying all the sites. The Provincial noxious weeds schedule 1 (outdated list) gives some basis for work needing to happen on private land. We can tell them to have it cleaned up by a certain date, if they don't we treat it and send them a bill, hence why North Cowichan wanted to have own locations taken care of as well. We can tell them to treat it, but can't really get them to treat it a certain way (stem injections). Stage 3 water restrictions were pulled, back to stage 1.

Eric Marshall - Shorebird count every Sunday, numbers were high due to great visibility. Participated in water quality sampling on Bings, Busy Place, etc.

Kate Miller - Reorganization of the Environmental department, now only 2 staff so Kate will be less at the table. Third phase of the flood protection program, North Cowichan is doing continuation of the Lakes Rd through Somenos Marsh dyke work. Funding is in a very tight timeline. CVRD is leading the flood program along the river with Cowichan Tribes and City of Duncan for the completion of dkying from the highway to Allanby Rd. In a non-climate change scenario there are two potential spill areas for flood events (log jams or ongoing sediment deposition) through the industrial area or through the core of downtown. Finishing completion of the sediment management for Cowichan and Koksilah, objective is to develop a long-term sediment management plan, which includes baseline of sediment, best for fish, storm events and gravel

movement, frequency of maintenance. Project should be complete this weekend. Pacific Climate Impacts consortium, looking at sea level rise, hydrology, impact to human health for the Cowichan. Finished sea level rise projections for the area, will be having conversation with Industry for their impacted properties and protective measures. Water Quality program, in partnership with MoE Deb Epps to do summer low flow and fall flush water quality in the Cowichan and Koksilah program. 3 years of tracking, this will be the last year. Deb has been assigned to the Mt Polley site, so CVRD has had to take on the organization and coordination. May need additional partners for the Koksilah, Secondary School at the Lake taking on that section, Cowichan Land Trust for the lower. Cowichan Watershed Board, asked CVRD to lead the immediate drought response and to take on the long term strategy. Many partners step forward for this work, fairly successful general campaign for water conservation and water related issues. The river needs more than people turning their tap off, long term we need to look at water storage and capacity. We were very close to declaration of a class 4 drought, agricultural production would have been unable to use water. A lot of work trying to inform folks on how aquifer/wells work with the water table which connects with the lake. We have a lot of info on water flow work, need a form to put all the data together and enable people to access it. In the process to prepare for an application to the province for raising the weir. Right now the infrastructure is owned privately, but if the structure is required for public use then what does that look like? The Federal Government application for major infrastructure project, call for applications is opening at the end of this month and will only be open for 30 days. Need to have all the engineering, forecasting, and legal components answered. Province cannot fund the analysis of writing of the application, but the Provincial money is to reinstate the Heather Mountain snow pillow that would be part of the provincial network. In the long run want to make sure this is as neutral a station as possible as it will be used for management processes. This funding is in hand, need to establish the snowcourse, Timberwest has given permission for access, need to link it with the province and need to establish maintenance. Water Governance study, depending on this, long term mechanism to fund the large structure water governance for monitoring of river flow, snowpack, ground water flows. Public communication is community management of public resources. Photo point monitoring of infrastructure of the Lake raise. Two incumbents at the lake without political issues to this issue going forward. Not heard from the Environmental Appeal Board on the raising the issue. DFO and Tribes ramped up the plan for trap and truck, development of the pools to seine the fish otherwise there would be no pools to catch the fish. Last Friday was a test of the trap and truck. Good trial run, DNA sampling of the fish prior to dumping in the ring.

Kai Rietzal - Finishing up year 2 of the RFCPP projects, spawning bed additions at Avril creek and securing a log jam. On Bings removed a culvert that was a fish barrier. Now we are going on to planting with the return of the rain, organizing work parties. Over the summer the Quamichan stewards installed a fine bubbler aeration system to establish a trout refuge. There is now an area for fish to go in the warm water and get the higher oxygen content from the bubbler.

Brian Tutty - Asked to be an expert witness at the rule curve change at the Environmental Appeal Board this spring. Gave them a historical prospective, this is not a rule curve cannot be sustained, with climate change etc we need more storage.

Elizabeth Bailey - Wrapping up water quality sampling season, weekly monitoring. minnow trapping in Richards, Bings, and Avril, once last week and once next week. Report on that data will be available in November. Wild Wings festival has started, and an event tonight art show opening at Just Jakes - Jazz and live auction. Oct 25th there will be an open day with birding tours. Cowichan Land Trust & Naturalists to lead walks at the marsh, Garry oak preserve and the estuary.

Meg Loop - Minutes/website funding needs to be re-secured.

Paul Rickard - Attended a 2 day DFO workshop where many presentations were put forward: Plankton, temperature profiles over water column, salinity, microbes study, fish distribution, PIT tagging, predator study (don't have DNA back from bird poop), best prepared and delivered paper was James Craig and talked about the team. Trawl and purse seine and stomach analysis, a lot of the brackish lower water fish diet was terrestrial insects, of those the majority were ants and termites. Big indicator for overhanging veg importance. In the marine environment over 60% of diet was crab larvae, maybe should be looking at crab management. Now we have the feedback from studies as to why certain actions are important. Al Lil, BCWF, Mary Pollack. Ian Graham, following up on phone call regarding alternative watershed governance and estuary water management plan, asking for updated information and scheduling a meeting. Spoke with Wilf Ludki about the roundtable and rebuilding salmon plan, told him some of his expectations for the CSRT was a downloading of the DFO. Get more involvement of staff with this roundtable. Beaver Creek weir of how the roundtable works in terms of supporting individual concerns and projects and showed a real pooling of the groups to come forward and work on the project, and think we are just about there. Part of a regulation advisory committee, access to Mike Stalberg, approved the reconstruction work. Multi-sectoral meeting on prawn management, and a big rec/com fishery in cow bay and surrounding areas. trying to find better

access for rec use, 40 people with 5 or 6 DFO folk, up to 12 commercial reps and paid lobbyist with exec director and 3 or 4 rec people.

Business

Terms of Reference –

Co-chair Positions: Not just showing up to the meeting, a lot of work behind the scenes to build a reflective agenda of the interested groups and achievable time lines. Paul is content to carry on as chair, if others wish to come forward at the November meeting. Supposed to review every two years.

Format: Regarding the general ToR, CERCA's suggestions have been circulated and suggest the CSRT take on more of a societal role, and would exclude government and industry partners. Many of the changes suggestions by CERCA are already acted upon by the Cowichan Watershed Board.

Brain Tutty - Was brought in as an expert witness on behalf of the crown to persecute Catalyst for water draw. Catalyst was as desperate for water as the fish. Met with Don McKendric and you'll see me in court, or we could look at storage for the fish and a different regime to the issues of climate change and adaptation in 2002. People existed in silos, no collaboration or talking. Suggested to create a Water Plan, took years and large funding to make it happen, and we are still working on implementation. These ad-hoc meetings were speaking to the water, collective experiences, but little collective experiences in the whole watershed. Tours to the sewage lagoons to have the manager show us how it work, the weir and how it work. We wanted to understand water and how all the facilities use water. Everyone understand how everyone else used water. Catalyst showed the huge amounts of clay they had to filter out, others showed how Stoltz bluff was the major source of these fine sediments, red tape was taken out of the way, and a massive restoration plan took place. Our job is to reference, collectively educate and pool resources and understand how resource management must work going forward. The ToR were to establish an understood foundation for us to collectively come forward cohesively. We are not a decision making model but a council for collaboration. Closer to Conservation Authorities model, the BC version will start here with local watershed management. The decisions made and influence in a democratic process is to take place at the Watershed Board.

Geoff Strong -

Major Differences Include: Changes mainly take place in the objectives section. Looking at the Stewardship term.

- Environmental Stewardship, identify problems/threats. To identify threats should then be quantified and validated. Once you quantify then establish a work plan to identify appropriate parties to take on the issues. Next step would be reporting out, evaluations, etc.
- Suggest removing the pooling of funds, instead to suggest identifying funding sources and support with letters to the applying bodies.
- Decision making: identify a process for making motions or voting, and identifying who is able to vote (ie one vote from all stakeholders).

Consensus is you get a sense of the group and we work together. We don't do motions or voting. There is a major shift from switching for a consensus model to a voting model.

- Ray Demarchi wishes the ToR to remain with the updates.
- Dave Polster - please do not change.
- Tom Rutherford - our roundtable is a model for other groups across Canada. Not broke don't fix.
- Tim - The uniqueness is the kind of unbiased platform, open platform that allows for and promotes open discussion. There is an intrinsic value in the way things are and have formed as it pulls us all together to create the strongest understanding and consensus.
- Timerlands prefer same format
- Timberwest long time member, attends many on the Island.
 - this is the model for roundtables, these ToR have gone verbatim to assist fresh roundtables.
- Sidney anglers are able to participate as outside residents concerned about the fish that move outside of the region.
- Ted - This is a safe place because we don't vote, we try to arrive at consensus, we all report out. This is an interconnection. This board is a body to help inform other groups to take on tasks outside of this group.

- BCCF values the neutrality, open exchanges, personal relationships, community sounding board. Use feedback
- Catalyst does not have the mandate to vote on processes.
- WFP, education from the table invaluable and welcoming to industry rather than intimidating.
- Kate. Consensus model is efficient and open, time for the issue to be teased out and make better informed decisions. This is an organic group and shouldn't hold money, with ever reducing funding sources this groups provide a vision and to work together to share limited resources to not compete but rather collaborate.
- Kai. CERCA work planning is the targets of the watershed board, which is where the work takes place.
- Meg – look at defining some specific terms to clarify intent. Such as stewards or partners versus members as there is no membership in the table.

ACTION ITEM: ToR to be brought forward for consensus next meeting with review of the chairs.

Next Meeting

November 20th, 2014