

# Cowichan Stewardship Roundtable



February 19,  
2015

## MINUTES

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

### **In attendance**

Meg Loop & Kai Rietzel (CLT), Shona Smith, Tom Rutherford & Willi Janson (DFO), Keith Lawrence, Emily Doyle-Yamaguchi & Hamid Hatami (CVRD), Paul Rickard & Ted Brookman (BCWF), Parker Jefferson (One Cowichan), Jennifer Hermary (Jean Crowder MP), Goetz Schuerholz (CERCA), Claude Theriault & Ken Clements (Sidney Anglers), Ian Morrison (CVRD Area F), Mike Stalberg (MLNRO – Fish & Wildlife), Eric Marshall & Carol Hartwig (CVNS), Helen Reid (Cowichan Tribes), Don Closson (BC Parks), Derek Haupt (Western Forest Products), Shaun Chadburn (North Cowichan), Nikki Wright (Sea Change), Elizabeth Bailey (Somenos), Genevieve Singleton (Nature interpreter), Rob James & Al Moore (Western Stevedoring), Jean Atkinson (CLRSS), Cam Williams (CES – Cowichan Bay Estates), Thomas Elliot (Madrone Environmental), Laurie Thomson, Chris Morley (Friends of the Cowichan), Bob Crandall (CLSES), Kerrie Talbot (Parks Commission), Ray Demarchi,

Regrets: Rodger Hunter, Diana Gunderson

### **Approval of Minutes**

The minutes from the January meeting were circulated and approved.

### **Roundtable updates**

Paul Rickard - Appears to be a major fish kill in Quamichan, no significant trout being found. PSF entered new 5 year agreement, monies after current funds have been spent, no longer will have to spend funds by March 31.

Nikki Wright - Near Shore Habitat Symposium at the end of this month. Eelgrass, kelp, and forage fish conservationists. Research gaps, restoration efforts. Removed 50 tonnes of intertidal and underwater debris, many large metals using a clam bucket crane. 2400 eelgrass shoots transplanted, all doing well except in the heavy debris area. Cost about \$15,000 for removal.

Parker Jefferson - Decided to take on alternative renewable energy systems. Cheri Ayers trying to put a dydson counter in at Parker's house to track early run chinook. CLRSS looking for chinook spawning in upper lake tributaries, fry traps set by volunteers in the evening with biologists checking in the morning.

Goetz Schuerholz - \$12,000 from Sidney Anglers towards the bridge. Waiting for the final approval from FLNRO. Putting up the sign with funders, hoping to move forward with the project on time. CERCA received Charitable Status. Mariner's Island restoration going ahead on schedule as permits and approvals gained within 3 weeks. Several thousand logs and woody debris, plant inventory followed by removal by Western Forest Products. Garbage clean up and vegetation survey in June and done periodically to monitor the recovery process. Presentation tonight on herring habitat enhancement.

Dave Preikshot - Somenos Wildlife Society report on the salmon summer habitat in the Somenos basin. Applying to have that funding extending to assess what habitat is available, etc, to provide a realistic look at management options and rebuilding populations. Looking at building serious of wetland ponds on dry side of the dyke to mitigate storm water.

Kai Reitzel - March 2 Film nights for World Wildlife Day, March of the Penguins at the Nature Centre. March 15th Beer & Burger Fundraising, \$25 per ticket and Jane's Way will be playing. Collecting silent auction

items. Cowichan Land Trust turns 20 this month, planning a birthday party for May. March 28th planning a scrap metal drive, we can pick up or you can drop off at Schnitzer.

Jean Atkinson - Shoreline restoration up to 9 properties, new one is a Strata by the bridge.

Emily Doyle-Yamaguchi - Public hearing tonight on the marine zoning bylaw, last opportunity for public engagement.

Kerrie Talbot - photos of development in Cowichan Bay with large amounts of sediment washing off the land and into Cowichan Bay.

Thomas - Cowichan Bay Estates brought in for sediment management. Groundwater is emerging and washing out sections. Installing sediment measures. DFO will be looking at impacts to the eelgrass beds located at the outflow and receiving body of all that sediment.

Cam - Civil Consultants representing Cowichan Bay Estates. Culvert collapse and washed out the silts further down. Since gone in and laid out poly and wood chips to prevent raindrop erosion. Temporary silt pond being established. Compound of the 4 hectares of development, plus 12 hectares of upland water.

Bob Crandall - Able to get all eggs this year. Put in PSF application for the Robertson River, excess amount of gravel acting as a barrier, 1 year plan with Craig Wightman and Ted Burns to provide engineering and hydrological side with barrier removed next fall.

Al Moore - FLNRO is last hold up on approval, have received the application but no confirmation of approval.

Mike Stalberg - There are 8 Nations required to have full scale consultation process within the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group with overlapping claims. Can talk to front counter to provide information to the client when they need to talk to First Nations directly.

- Hul'qumi'num treaty group has 4 Nations with claims left in the treaty process. Can call and ask them to defer to Cowichan Tribes. **Helen Reid offers to connect with other Nations on behalf of CERCA.**

Ted Brookman - Netting of steelhead within the River, which is a charter rights for First nations. Has always been a harvest of steelhead on the Cowichan Tribes from the River. It did not always use nets. This year it became very apparent to the wider community that nets were being used. Nobody really knew what was going on as there was no communication from FLNRO or Cowichan Tribes. The wider fishing community is at the point where they would like to be partners in reasonable access and sustainable action for the fishery. FLNRO meeting with Cowichan Tribes. BCWF would like to meet with and find common grounds with Tribes to work together keep calm and offer solutions.

Erica McClaren - March 10 Knotweed Workshop, that information will be available after for interested parties.

Jennifer Hermay - Derelict vessel bill C38 coming up for debate Feb 26h, write to the ministers of Environment, Ocean and Fisheries, or Transportation in support of the bill. Will send to Paul/Genevieve to send out to CSRT.

Eric Marshall - Weekly swan/goose count, 1 sandhill crane that hangs out with a certain flock of swans. Proportion of juveniles is way higher than last year, upwards of 20-30% compared to last year of 5%. Heron Rookeries are congregating much earlier.

John McKay - Happy to receive letter of support for the JUB outflow application.

Carol Hartwig - Extended Flows Meeting. 3 main issues. Brain Houle - Lake levels are lower than average at this time of year, very little snow pack. Cheri Ayers asked for review of the 4 volumes for chinook recovery, available online. Kate Millar - 30 years of reports, 6 options for increasing storage options and securing flows. Report to be prepared, PhD engineer as in house document to the board within the month. FLNRO gave Brian Houle new flow regime for this year, predicted to be as bad this year as last year.

Shaun Chadburn - Bonsai Creek meeting

Elizabeth Bailey - Report on coho habitat is available on the Somenos website, a lot of Dave's work was in-kind. Hoping to do another year of the project and searching for logs and rootwads for restoration project.

Derek Haupt - Providing land and access to log removal and management equipment. Able to provide logs to restoration projects.

Helen Reid - Working on the CSLWMP amendment planning. Interested in collaborative governance of the watershed.

Don Closson - Soliciting information for Heritage River Annual Report. Document was sent to CSRT, if you have done works in and around the river to send a few lines with the facts and information to collate for annual report to be sent to Ottawa. May soon have a different party responsible for the Heritage River reporting, is there another body within the region to take on the reporting?

Keith Lawrence - Snow Pillow to be installed Tuesday of next week. Regional Watershed Governance Study; the work is ongoing with the regional task force (CVRD is one participant of this task force). Since the October meeting with Urban Systems presentation of that committee, consultation process underway, present that study to 17 groups.

Area F - Contributed funds to administration of the CSRT.

Genevieve Singleton - Bluebirds are beginning to settle in. CVNS huge support of the project.

## Business

### Central Sector Liquid Waste Amendment – Emily Doyle-Yamaguchi

Put in a \$3M grant for this project to Build Canada to hopefully secure funding. Met with DFO to establish constraints map, areas that are no-go zones due to environmental sensitivity. Met with Cowichan Tribes Environment Committee, concerned with what dilution look like within Satellite Channel, but they did support the grant application. Met with Western Stevedoring to discuss routing options along the causeway to help inform design options. Next month officially rolling out the strategy. Trying to stick with the facts but also get accurate information across very clearly. Planning series of information sessions and regular newsletter every month with updates to the project. CSRT has been listed as a stakeholder for consultation. Working on informational presentation to additional Cowichan Tribes, ie Malahat, Saanich, and north into Crofton. Zinc Consultants, communications and consultation consultants have been hired to assist this project, with experience in similar projects in BC.

**- ACTION: CSRT as a stakeholder will have presentations from the Central Sector LWMP Amendment, upwards of 40 minutes.**

### CVRD, Water Storage and Flow Options – Hamid Hatami

Following a protocol with steps to address the water storage issues at Cowichan Lake. Since 1991 there have been studies and reports for this project. Gathered information together and provide a summary report for all of the background studies and created an evaluation matrix for 7 alternative solutions in policy areas according to themes. There is a ranking, but it is very subjective. What are potential solutions, what solutions are not acceptable, and any comments/feedback/changes? Next step to put together report for CVRD board to apply for gas tax grant on April 15th, takes about 6-8 months to hear back. Detail stage for planning, consultation, and engineering.

Asking for feedback by the end of the month.

Is there any concern in ranking.

Discussion:

- Paul: presented to Extended Flows Committee and many changes suggestion. Raising the weir will not raise temperate of the water, you can redesign draw to pull water from the bottom of the weir to use cool bottom water not warm surface water. Why is there a negative impact on water temperature from raising the weir as not accurate? Who came up with that?
  - Nobody has done a study of how ground water infiltration cools the river, no known effect of how changing the flow and temperature of the flow will be on impact.
  - this ranking is not based on science
- Ray: A lot of fear, ignorance and animosity of the weir and effects of raising the weir on lakefront owners. Has to be divided into two categories: People who want less water and people who want more water. The majority of the people based on a survey, most people wanted more water in mid-late summer. Accused of doing this for the Pulp Mill and not the fish. When the mill went bankrupt the taxes of that region went up 240% in one year, so yes the weir is for the mill which affects the entire community.
- Lori: GIS studies have been one to create LIDAR overlays of the projected impact at the 30cm level. Are there other GIS scenarios being run at the 56cm level? LIDAR maps allow people to draw a real line for the expanded lake height to say with decisive results for real impacts on land.
  - There are lots of other institutes that have run studies but for other purposes. Must run all the models for all the impacts down/upstream flora/fauna. Need extremely comprehensive modeling.
  - Paul, there are many landowners who do support but are often being lumped into the challengers. Not a lot of recognition for those doing it right. Where is the public consultation?
- Bob Crandall: Dredging? huh?
  - 3 pinch points in the river, could dredge it out. 1 is bedrock, and 2 are structures in the river that created a slope. Negative impact to fish? Not sure, but a biologist.
  - Ray. KPA Engineering Report. Discounted options ie headwater storage on the Robertson and pumps. Lots of ideas out there. Dr. Hitami has taken all these subjective ideas out there. No background to this table. What are the costs? This is a summary and then we can put it in to the grant.

- Groups can say which options are horrible and need to be removed as going for. The KPA is an old report with vastly improved science and understanding of the systems.
- Ted: Let's do this thing.
- Parker: Cowichan Lake and River Stewardship meetings, the dredging came up and heavily discussed at meetings for 3 or 4 years ago.
- Dave Preikshot: Siphon an option? Could we add this as an alternative?
  - If we get the money will start a planning, public consultation, and engineering. Verify and analyze all the alternatives.
  - One of the issues is flows, less rain and snow storage, but the effect is a deepening of the warm layer on top. Part of the science that needs to be done is what is the current state of affairs for temperature remediation and effects of the deepening of the warm layer of the lake.
- Carol: What is the process from here? Matrix is compiling of a lot of technical information. Challenging to interpret as there is no text for each option and rational to ranking. What will be done in terms of presenting to the board as an in house document? When does the public get a view over what is being presented?
  - This is the norm for Hamid to go to the board and apply for the grants to go ahead. Need to know if you have ideas at the high level what would be the rough cost estimate to put into the application to several project categories which Hamid needs to match to the project goals. Drinking water versus disaster mitigation? How much asking for, how to spend, when to spend it and timeline. Calling this process the High Level Consultation to get the best idea of how to go forward fitting within the above framework. Hence the feedback of which alternatives work, what need to be modified.
  - CVNS is interested in the largest amount able to store as possible, especially going forward with climate change projections.
- Paul: Thought we had a good process developed over the past 3 years. Huge impacts of climate change, every single expert is saying we are changing when and how much water we get, we need to find ways to store the water when we do get it. Water Survey over 2 years at every possible community level, resulted in the Watershed Objectives and Watershed Management Board. Feels that this issue has been studied and strong unanimous opinion for all issues. Ie Cheri Ayers as using Cowichan Chinook to talk about the health of the watershed. By April 15th must submitted infrastructure grant does not leave a lot of time for the studies and much research and data exists currently.
  - Is there a preferred solution that all stakeholders are on board with? Still much argument around how much to raise the weir? Try to answer what happens 32 versus 36 raise. Trying to get a concise answer to then go into the detail planning. Finalize once we get the money.
  - Ted. There have to be notes from Rob Hutchins meeting July 2014. Numbers cast during that time of \$3M to raise 30cm raise and \$5M for pumping. Only planned to 2031, planned out in that study. We are now 10 years from that study and climate change is galloping along. So yes, did not project for large storage options. Put in for \$12M, it will take 18 months to plan, 12 months for approval, and costs will have improved. Many studies showing so much information, there is a strong foundation of science.
- Ian: Hamid is brand new to the region. What we need is for input on this sheet to remove stuff that you won't consider, improve what is there. This exercise has to happen because this is tax payer dollars. On record for supporting more storage, people in the community are trying to undermine Ian's position. Help Hamid get the project focused into what he needs so the proposal can be written so we can get the funding so this happens in the next 4 years.
- Ray - Apply for 2 m storage, can work with the flows. Give yourself lots of room. 2m the mill will never right. Don't store that much, but have it as an option.
- **ACTION: A very clear, strong message from the CSRT and from members to have feedback on the project to give direction.**

### Next Meeting

March 19th, 2014.

### Possible Topics

- CERCA Nature walkway around the estuary, visual look
- Watershed Management Board to talk about the main targets that have been set,
- Request an update for the CVRD for options around the weir and put forward request for infrastructure funding.

