



Nov 19, 2015

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by Genevieve Singleton at 9 am.

In attendance

Meg Loop (CLT), Keith Lawrence, Kerry Davis & Klaus Kuhn (CVRD), Paul Rickard (BCWF), Parker Jefferson (One Cowichan), Jeff Strong (CERCA), Claude Theriault & Ken Clements (Sidney Anglers), Dave Lindsay (Timberwest), Eric Marshall (CVNS), Helen Reid, Tim Kulchyski, Tracy Fleming (Cowichan Tribes), Don Closson (BC Parks), Brian Nielsen (Western Forest Products), Shaun Chadburn (North Cowichan), Genevieve Singleton (Nature Interpreter), Michelle Staples (Social Planning Cowichan), Diana Gunderson, Jean Atkinson & Christine Brophy (CLRSS), Loren Duncan, James Craig (BCCF), Dennis Popplestone & Brain Houle (Catalyst), Cheri Ayers.

Regrets: Bob Crandall, Swarn Leung, Tom Rutherford, **Chris**, Joe Saysell, Ted Brookman.

Approval of Minute

The minutes from the October meeting were circulated and approved.

Roundtable updates

Christine Brophy - Shoreline Stewards, completing monitoring report. Out of 16 restoration sites, success has been over 70%, which is good with the drought year.

Tim - Starting coho numeration walks on Monday, small pocket of funds for 2 guys to go out to Richard, Bings, Averill, probably struggling with the high flows. 200 cms in Cowichan. Didson counter (electronic counter that counts mostly chum), 106,000 chum, which is low. Dead pitch on the Koksilah. Really tough year for Coho and numbers are quite down, they haven't really shown up in the numbers expected.

- 3,000 chinook adults counted, 1,500 jacks. Coho universally were small, all sorts of runs all the coho were small (3lbs at sexually mature).

James Craig (BCCF) - South Side Spur dyke project year 3 post construction monitoring. Broadway run live staking monitoring stakes and slope stability, \$7500 in funding needing to be matched. MORE.

Denis Popplestone - Public and Private Workers of Canada, represent many different working professions union, still represent the pulp workers at Catalyst Mill. We are trialing water reduction projects, hopefully hitting reduction targets next summer.

Eric Marshall - Sea Lions in Cowichan Bay, at least 60 out there, 3/4 are stellar, all males. 1 week ago had 2 swans, yesterday had a total of 81 swans. Canada geese over 1000, almost 1300 yesterday. Over 200 bald eagles in the lower river. On the 8th had monthly shorebird count, quite large number of buffleheads (300 north side, 50 on the south).

Kerry Davis - Sulphur laden soil dumped in Shawnigan SIA site. Two breeches in retaining, first one came back ok. Second breach yesterday, caught on video. Nothing is allowed off site, but retaining ponds were dry in the big storm.

Meg Loop - Bioengineering course next week, full, will be running another in February. Beginning to plan the winter restorations under the FCPP funding, Hired Elizabeth Bailey.

Keith Lawrence - Potential for Sandy Pool funding match with Craig Wightman. Flood Management bylaw is still open until Dec 7th under the alternative approval process, managing and monitoring dykes, log jam removal and sediment removal, as well as alert systems. From there could go to referendum. Watershed Function Bylaw, have the authority to receive funding for work on the weir, water quality monitoring and other services, potentially coming out in the next few months. 98% on the way to complete State of the Environment Fish Section, status of fish and fish habitat in the region. Airshed Protection Strategy is receiving comments. Nov 25th, 1 pm information session. Meeting with local municipalities to discuss and incorporate ideas in the airshed strategy.

Genevieve - Putting together a meeting to look at the Koksilah some more, hopefully December 9th at 8:30am. Last night the Cowichan Watershed Board hosted a talk on "The Cougar" by Paula Wild, 95 people were out. No talk in December, another in January. Lots of salmon walks going on in the very rich area behind the Freshwater Fisheries location.

Cheri Ayers - January 29th, all day meeting to work collectively on the Chinook Initiative.

Business

Climate Change in our Community – Cowichan Climate Change Collaborative (Parker & Michelle)

See presentation.

Michelle. Social Planning Cowichan has been working on a regional social policy, 4 key areas, one of which is environmental. The environment is linked to climate change, and thus the environmental and social implications to our community. Developing a social policy for the region recognizing we are in a time of change, documents need to be adaptable.

Transition Cowichan received funding to address this intersectional issue for our community. Mark Lee from the Centre of Policy Alternatives was brought in to help start these conversations. Kara Pike how to communicate to all people in our community.

The coming decades will be challenging and offer an opportunity to prepare for the changes now and adapt early.

Catalyst Updates – Brain Houle

Without snow, there is simply not enough water in Cowichan Lake to sustain the valley through the dry summer season. Catalyst stepped forward to complete a section 8, thankfully ameliorated by unusual rainfall this late summer. Pumps were mobilized in the

Lower Mainland, would have cost \$1.2 million to get out of the impending crisis averted by rainfall (major cost is the diesel fuel to power the generators). Revised the Short Term Water Use (Section 8) application to carry forward next year. Catalyst plans to lease pumps and generators in preparation. There is no way we can make the weir save enough water, we can tweak it to the best we can do. 2015 was a huge improvement from 2014.

Raising the level of the storage is the most important part in mitigating water shortages looking ahead long term. Section 10 to add 12 inches of storage in a medium term solution, this would be 30 days at 7 cms, or 56 days at 4 cms. Can this physically happen though? Long term a new weir with increased storage capacity at the lake is an important focus. Have until Nov 29th to get in comments/questions.

Comments:

- Repairing watershed function to address forest/wetland additional storage.
- Any potential impact assessment around potential negative effects of drawing lake level down, such as lamprey/fish habitat. DFO raised this as a big issue.
- Does a 30cm increase insure 7cms in the river the whole season?
 - We assume we cannot maintain 7cms, if at the end of July we have full storage we would assume to maintain that throughout the whole season.

Invasive Japanese Knotweed – Genevieve, Dave Polster, Cheri Ayers, Dave Lindsay
See presentation.

This is a Report on experimental repeated cutting of knotweed on the Cowichan River.

3 species of knotweed, with a hybrid, and all spread from tiny fragments of stem or root. Spread throughout river action, and in contaminated soil movement. Knotweed can outcompete from blackberry

Traditional treatment involves herbicides, the only way (according to the Coastal Invasive Species Committee) to control is herbicides, but needs to be consistent and over a time. Cut down stand, wait for regrowth, and spray growth. Need to target treatments over the entire growing season to diminish energy reserves in the plant, don't let it build up its carbohydrates. Cuttings can be spread out to dry and bake in the sun, if left in a big pile it can stall moist enough for the plant to set.

Could be a good community project to preform repeated treatments, come together to apply for funds, source volunteers as it isn't highly technical or difficult physically to perform repeated removals.

Comments:

- After major first cut, can you use selective flaming (blow torch) on the regrowth? It means you're carrying a tiger torch and propane torch, which may not be as accessible for all sites. It wouldn't reduce your frequency of site visits, but perhaps speed up site treatment time at sites that could be appropriate to safe use during the dry season.

- Is it more effective to cut frequently and not allow much growth, or let them grow up quite a bit and cut again? You want to hit that point before the plant can photosynthesis and put storage back into the root system.
- Is there any point in trying to remove plants right now? Plant is dormant in the winter system, not effective to spend time, say now on treatments. Our trails began in June with fairly large growth in place.
- This is not yet evidence for the trial working permanently with one year. Assess if this is effective and how many years. What was the spread from the treatment site? Perhaps due to treatments? Many questions left.

Next Meeting

Dec 17th, 2015.

Next Thoughts:

-Austin Thomas and Ben Nelson on seals.

- **Christine Brophy for the update on Cowichan Stewardship Society's shoreline restoration**
- **Kai of Cowichan Land Trust updates on Cowichan Creeks project.**
- **Shawnigan focus next meeting**