



MINUTES

DATE: 15th December, 2016.

9:00 Meeting called to order by Genevieve who provides welcome and acknowledgement that our meeting is on Cowichan Tribes territory

Regrets: Cherie Ayers, Bob Crandal, Leroy Van Wieran, Kai Reitzel, & Craig Wightman

Attendance: Eric Marshall (CVNS), Parker Jefferson (One Cowichan), Genevieve Singleton (Nature Interpreter), Lyn Pascoe, Patti Small, Bob Crandall (CLSES), Bruce Fraser (SBS/CLT), Ron James (Western Stevedoring), Tom Rutherford (CWB), Jim Cash (Cowichan Stewards), Carol Milo (CVNS), David Graves (Cowichan Stewards), Elizabeth Bailey (SMWS), Jennifer Hermary (MPs' Office), Dave Preikshot (Topologic), Dave Lindsay (Timberwest), Barry Hetschko (SMWS/CVNS), Kerry Davis (CVRD), Don Closson (BC Parks), Jean Atkinson (CLRSS), Diana Gunderson (CLRSS), Christine Brophy (CLRSS), Klaus Kuhn (CVRD), Jon Lefebure (CVRD), Chantal Nessman (DFO), Brad Eschelman (Western Stevedoring)

Kai sends regrets that minutes are not ready yet, but she is overloaded. Jennifer, Tim, Kai and Genevieve met to discuss ideas re minutes. It is suggested that groups/individuals reporting in at Around the Table portion of meeting think of three points that they could email to cowichanstewardshiproundtable@gmail.com before the meeting or by Friday, the day after the meeting to assist the person taking the minutes. It was also suggested that we ask if presenters can forward some content or powerpoint of their show. We agreed that minutes will be shorter. Unless another plan is put forward we will share minute taking around the table.

Genevieve and Parker dealt with request from Kate re letter of support from CSRT for proposal to fund a science-based study of water levels in the Cowichan River.

Roundtable Updates:

BC Parks: Don Closson

- Cowichan River Park Management Plan is now on work plan for 2017/18 – input from CSRT will be requested in due course. Broadway Run slope stability project study to be made in spring – may be a need to recharge planting. Gordon Bay Park is to get some of new camping funding.

Cowichan Land Trust: Kai Rietzel

- We completed the planting of the Mt Prevost Raingarden project last week. The week went very smoothly and we had every child from the school plant at least one plant or more. Over 400 children planted more than 500 plants!!
- We are planning to train the Cowichan Highschool Land Based Learning class to get their Stream keeping certificates in the beginning of December. Planning a community Streamkeeper's course open to anyone, on February 25th and 26th. Dave Clough will be the instructor for both courses.
- Thank you to Timberwest for funding the minute taking - we have received the cheque.
- Estuary Nature Centre – volunteer appreciation evening – also now can accept Debit Cards for purchases in Gift Shop.

Cowichan Lake and River Stewardship Society: Diana Gunderson, Jean Atkinson, Leroy Van Wieren, Mady Hobkirk, Christine Brophy

- Signs are up around the lake – year 4 of riparian work around lake and an riparian ethics course is planned at school

Cowichan Lake Salmon Enhancement Society: Bob Crandall

- We have collected eggs and many are already eyed.

Cowichan Tribes: Tracy Flemming

- Working with BC Parks. Studying log booms in Cowichan Bay on salmon including effects of seals which haul out on these booms.

Cowichan Valley Naturalists' Society: Eric Marshall, Carol Milo

- Numbers of trumpeter swans in the valley are lower than usual – just over 200 were counted two weeks ago. We usually have more than twice this number this time of the year. In Comox Valley they also report about half what they usually had at this time last year. Counts of waterbirds in Cowichan Bay made last Sunday - many buffleheads & goldeneye & 64 trumpeters.

Cowichan Valley Regional District: Keith Lawrence

- discussions to start soon on the role of CVRD in our watershed – input from CSRT will be wanted in New Year. The watershed atlas meeting was cancelled - to be rescheduled in New Year – airshed strategy also coming up in New Year

Cowichan Valley Regional District Area A: Kerry Davis

- CVRD passed budget quickly.
- Jon Lefebure re-elected as Chair

Cowichan Watershed Board: Tom Rutherford

- Modern local stewardship movement established with formation of Cowichan Stewardship Roundtable (CSRT) in 2003. CSRT formed as a result of summer water supply crisis. CSRT included Cowichan Tribes, Sr. government, Local Government, Industry and grassroots ENGO's. Originally Fish/Habitat focus with mandate of implementing "Cowichan River Restoration Plan", an extensive LGL document commissioned by Cowichan Tribes and provided to the CSRT. Agreement at table that fish allocation/management decisions and water management issues would not be discussed. This resulted in: 1) formation of Cowichan Harvest Roundtable – Co-chaired by Cowichan Tribes and DFO – to discuss allocation/harvest issues. 2) An extensive water planning process funded and lead by CVRD, Cowichan Tribes, BC Ministry of Environment, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Catalyst Paper Corp. and Pacific Salmon Commission. This process was initiated in 2004, cost approx. \$400,000.00, involved extensive public consultation and was completed in 2007 with the Cowichan Basin Water Management Plan (CBWMP) (which won a BC Planning Institute Award in 2008). The CBWMP called for the formation of a Cowichan Watershed Board (CWB) to implement the plan. Catalyst Paper took the initiative to implement weekly "ad hoc water calls" (2007?) that take place during the time period when weir is controlling water flows in Cowichan river (usually April through October) These calls are lead by Catalyst Crofton environmental manager, are open to everyone, and usually have participation from Cowichan Tribes, MOE, DFO and local ENGO's. Calls work towards consensus based decision on weekly adjustments to flows that are then recommended by Catalyst (license holder) to provincial water comptroller. Resources for hiring a coordinator to form the CWB were provided by a partnership group in 2010, with the partners including CVRD, Cowichan Tribes, Living Rivers Trust, British Columbia Conservation Foundation, Fisheries and Oceans Canada and others. The Cowichan Watershed board was formed in 2010 with a mandate to provide leadership for local water/watershed governance through implementation of the CBWMP resulting in a healthy watershed and a health community. Board ToR calls for Co-chairs being Chief, Cowichan Tribes and Chair, CVRD. Board members are community leaders, either elected or appointed by those who are elected. The CWB appointed a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) in 2010, composed of technical experts from all levels of government, Cowichan Tribes, industry and ENGO's. TAC creates "Watershed Targets" that reflect the actions identified in the CBWMB. Targets ratified by CWB in 2013. 5 "Target Working Groups" formed to implement targets.

DFO: Chantal Nessman

- Colin Levings new book 'Ecology of Salmonids' - giving talk to Victoria Nat. Hist. Soc. 7.30 pm on Feb. 27th – (He is potential VIU/CWB speaker). Ocean Protection Plan covers 5yrs – includes derelict &/abandoned vessels – studies at ecosystems level

Member of Parliaments Office: Jennifer Hermary

- Petitions re Shawnigan Lake dumping were presented in Ottawa.

Nature Interpreter: Genevieve Singleton

- Craig Wightman and I took Heritage Rivers Award of Merit canoe paddle to Caroline Thom, Gerald's widow, on Nov. 9 in Campbell River, where she has moved to. Caroline was most appreciative of Gerald being awarded posthumously this prestigious award. She sends her appreciation to all of us and hopes to attend the December meeting.
- Attending the Trumpeter Swan Conference evening on wildlife and agriculture, noticed how we do not have any farmers at the Roundtable, Can anyone do any outreach re this? Met Derrick Masselink, the new Regional Agrologist taking over from Wayne Haddow, Derek's area is not just CVRD, which is what Wayne had, but also CRD including the Gulf Islands, he will be interested to hear from anyone, email is Derek.Masselink@gov.bc.ca, phone 250-746-1212
- Progress is happening on the Eagle Heights front
- Requests for 4 salmon walks next week, two with Christy Wilson of DFO, one alone, and one Dave Cleough is coming down for it. I have more requests than I can handle and very difficult to get anyone to help me with DFO and Kai oversubscribed. Help appreciated. Homeless on river bank cause problems with taking groups of children there to view salmon spawning.
- Craigh Lauridson of Cowichan Secondary, who attended one of our meetings, says how much he has appreciated support from us. His class recently cleared broom with me at Stoltz Pool Provincial Park.
- Update from Koksilah

North Cowichan: Shaun Chadburn

- Working with SMWS – drone survey of creek – making general invasives survey – parrot feather quite extensive from lake to river – none in lake or Richards Creek – treatment options include suction dredger – either in creek or on banks – \$100K for treatment in NC budget

One Cowichan: Parker Jefferson, Rosalie Sawrie

- Dr Pascoe - dogs died at Quamichan L. from ingesting cyanobacteria.

Quamichan Stewardship – Jim Cosh

Outlined their actions – now algae are more active – Carol Milo spoke as former owner of Rainbow Is. – now a reserve – meeting sent message to Roger Hart to recover quickly from his accident.

Shawnigan Basin Soc. – Bruce Fraser

Expecting result of legal ruling on their application re dump.

Somenos Marsh Wildlife Society: Elizabeth Bailey, Barry Hetschko

- Sent letter to Quamichan Lake taskforce to include both lakes. Some swans in Somenos Marsh by Hwy #1.

Timber West: Dave Lindsay

- Logging being cutback – now pre-retirement phase

Western Stevedoring: Rob James, Alan Moore, Brad Eschelman

- Zoning is being realigning - meeting on site at 9 am Friday – CSRT members invited. Can visit anytime by appointment – no new activity planned – was zoned to include petrochemical storage – this is being removed - marine response equipment on site – may be more. Await response from CVRD.

Business

1. Dr Dave Preikshot. (Trophologic Aquatic Ecosystem Research) Blue-green Algae in Quamichan and Somenos Lakes Research Approaches and Management Options

Blooms of blue green algae have been occurring in both Quamichan and Somenos Lake for at least the last 30 years. These blooms have increased in both magnitude and duration in the last decade. Blue-green algae blooms have likely been the cause of fish die-offs in both lakes and have likely compromised the capacity of either to support salmonid fish during the summer. The bloom of toxic blue-green algae in the fall of 2016 has alerted the public and various governmental agencies about the degree to which Quamichan and Somenos lakes have become ecologically compromised. Blue green algae blooms severely lower oxygen concentration in deeper lake water when they die and are consumed by other bacteria. The lowered oxygen concentration creates a chemical environment that catalyses the release of phosphorous from the sediment in the lakes. The fuel for these blue-green algae bloom is phosphorous that has been stored up in the lakes over the last 100 years of run-off from lawns and farms. While we are getting control over the input of phosphorous we will need to manage phosphorous in the lake to manage blue-green algae blooms. The primary mechanism through which phosphorous supply can be controlled is rebinding it to metal ions in the water to send it to the bottom sediments and remove it as a fuel source. There are several management options we could use to limit or remove phosphorous from Quamichan lake. Their efficacy cost and time frames are very different. Water Quality monitoring on Somenos Lake demonstrates how we could develop a cost effective research program for Quamichan lake to establish baseline conditions, establish management targets for Blue green-algae control and select a cost effective management plan. Research is needed on the lake to establish likely ecosystem effects of available management options. Choosing a plan can only occur once a cost benefit analysis has been done that includes consideration of management and research costs vs social, ecologic and economic benefits, which may not be the same for different management options. A management plan will need to include explicit targets in ecologic, economic and social considerations. Enacting a management plan will need to include monitoring that tracks whether these goals are being achieved.

In discussion that followed it was suggested that removal of water lilies from lake would remove some nutrients from ecosystem. The removal of hay from fields does the same thing. Also suggested that any moves to reduce nutrients in lakes would also adversely affect growth of parrot feather.

2. Update on 150 Heritage River Celebration.

Don suggests CSRT to take over local planning – upto \$6K to spend in 2017 – day-long event at Native Cultural Centre – but this is now closed - could we have access to site? – Rotary may be interested – link event with river clean-ups? – could use Freshwater EcoCentre or Cowichan Estuary Nature Centre but parking problems at both places – Committee formed: Don, Barry, Dave Preikshot and Jennifer's successor – low river flows in September made this favoured time. Flows could be high in April. CVRD parks could be available. Not all river dikes open to public making walks there problematic. Jon will let us know about Cultural Centre. Schools could be involved if in September.

3. 12-1 pm - Fingerfood potluck social

Upcoming meetings:

Jan. 19 Cheri Ayers and Wilf Luedke, DFO, Cowichan Watershed Health and Chinook

Feb. 16, 2017 Brad Eschleman of Western Stevedore talking about rezoning application for their property (was previously booked for Jan.)

March 16, 2017 Kevin Pellett, BCCF updates on PIT tagging