



MINUTES

DATE: April 20, 2017

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

Attendance: Parker Jefferson, CLRSS/One Cowichan; Klaus Kuhn, CVRD; Bob Crandall, CLSES, Harvey Livingstone, Lake Cowichan First Nation; Chantall Nessman, DFO; Ray Demarchi, public at large; Joe Saysall, Friends of Cowichan; Alistair MacGregor, MP; Loren Duncan; Ken Clements, Sidney Anglers; Claude Theriault, Sidney Anglers; Rob James, Western Stevedoring; Ken Norton, Falt Towing; Jane Kiltie, CLT and Cowichan Estuary Nature Centre; Rosalie Sawrie, One Cowichan; Tom Rutherford, CWB; Don Closson, BC Parks; Eric Marshall, CVNS; Barry Hetschko, SMWS; Dave Lindsay, Timberwest; Ted Brookman, BCWF; Jock Hildebrand, CERCA; Ian Morrison, CVRD; Tim Kulchyski, Cowichan Tribes; Genevieve Singleton, nature interpreter/Bring Back the Bluebirds Project

Regrets: Christine Brophy, Dianna Gunderson and Jean Atkinson of Cowichan Lake River Stewardship Society; Kerry Davis; Sonia Fursteneau; Lori Iannidinardo, all of CVRD

Minutes approved. Thanks to Ted for March minute taking

Dave Lindsay is taking today's minutes. Thank you, Dave. LeRoy for May, Chantal for June

Ground rules for good behaviour, reminder to be respectful and kind

CSRT business: (this might come at end of meeting)

Sept. 30 – 150 plus celebration. \$5600 grant received for Heritage river celebration – to be hopefully organized with Cowichan Tribes. -

9:20 Round the table, check-ins and update

BC Parks: Don Closson, Jessica Lines-Wikkerink

- Cowichan heritage River report submitted

BC Wild Life Federation: Ted Brookman,

- Mill Bay Enhancement Society partially funded by Sydney Anglers (thankyou Ken and Claude).
- New website – MBDCS.com
- BCWF frustrated with DFO non-decision on fishing season for ling cod. Also need to justify catch reduction for yellow-eyed rockfish.
- Buy hunting and fishing licenses – this contributes to habitat enhancement (HCTF).

Catalyst Paper: Brian Houle

Presentation given later in meeting

Cowichan Land Trust:

- Presented by Jane Kiltnei
- Estuary Nature Centre holding classes for school groups.
- Working on Green Shore Certification (with CVRD).

Cowichan Estuary Restoration and Conservation Association:

- Presented by Jock Hildebrand.
- CERCA met with Chinese group and signed information sharing agreement on estuary conservation.
- Completed drone survey for habitat mapping with DFO and DU.
- Blue carbon study started, substrate sampling for carbon storage determination.
- Completed success symposium – 230 participants, another one planned for young entrepreneurs.
- Swallow nest box program started.

Cowichan Lake Salmon Enhancement Society: Bob Crandall

- Management of emerging fry at hatchery – including tours for school kids.

Cowichan Tribes: Tim Kulchyski

- Cowichan completed juvenile chinook inventory, very few in lake feeder streams, some found in mainstem.
- Mid-river DIDSON may be at risk this year, no funding from species at risk program or Habitat stewardship fund.
- Trout predation study is on-going.
- Tim's group back in old lands, fish and governance building.

Cowichan Valley Naturalists' Society: Eric Marshall

- Maximum weekly counts for trumpeters at 550, down from 700 last year.
- Canada Geese also down (~1100).
- Ospreys back nesting at Cow Bay
- Purple martin and great blue heron also back nesting.

Cowichan Valley Regional District: Keith Lawrence sent his regrets, but sent in the following report.

A couple updates to share:

- CVRD Regional grants in aid awarded for the CLRSS shoreline stewardship project and the CV naturalists bluebird project
- Level 1 greenshores training was done on April 1st with a full class. Level 2 training being explored for the fall.
- we are lining up technicians to repair the river level sensor on the black bridge over the Cowichan river. The solar panel was stolen
- we are making fine adjustments to the display of the online watershed atlas for the region. It is expected to be done in the coming days.
- 3D drone analysis of Stoltz bluff was done last week

Cowichan Valley Regional District Area F: Ian Morrison

- Currently campaigning for MLA.
- Mesachie Lake community received grant for \$1.66 million for sewer upgrade – benefits to bear lake.

Cowichan Watershed Board: Tom Rutherford

- Stoltz bluffs actively sloughing again. Freeze/Thaw event in March initiated Clearwater Creek to calve and overwhelm containment basins. Need a maintenance program but no budget. Current plans – engineer to assess stability; 3D model drone flight with CVRD, loose materials need to be removed or stabilized. Long term plans would involve re-alignment of Clearwater Creek.

DFO: Chantal Nessman

- Starting releases from Cowichan Hatchery

Federal MP Office, Alistair McGregor

- Alistair met with Cheri Ayers to gain more information on river flow issues. Happy to help with Cowichan River Day

Nature Interpreter: Genevieve Singleton

- Blue bird fundraiser April 30 at Cow Bay pub.
- 2017 Blue bird project underway.
- CVNS oppose bridge over Somenos Creek, increased access will impact sensitive habitats in Garry Oak forests.
- N. Cowichan trail plan – need full species at risk inventory in order to assess impacts.
- Saanich Inlet roundtable, Tsaycum FN oppose Bamberton LNG.
- Koksilah knotweed program. Work day at Bright Angel Park, Sunday, May 28 From 0900-1:00 in field for cutting – “adopt a patch’ program for regular snipping. The objective is to remove and eventually eradicate knotweed from the riparian areas of the Koksilah River.
- Dave Polster to receive a fellowship from the Association of Professional biologists this week at AGM.

One Cowichan: Parker Jefferson, Rosalie Sawrie

- Cowichan River still cement coloured although short periods of clearing up.
- One Cowichan is canvassing public regarding getting out and voting..."HOW"
- Rick Bryan, recreation paddling group wants to help out at river conservation projects.

Sidney Anglers: Ken Clements, Claude Theirault

- 7th annual derby coming up May 5-6, they have raised and distributed \$112,000 including Cowichan.

Somenos Marsh Wildlife Society: Barry Hetschko, Paul Fletcher, Elizabeth Bailey

- April 22, Earth day – Somenos Creek riparian planting.
- Invasive species mapping project, pamphlet distributed.
- AGM on May 9, 7:00.
- Issues – N. Cowichan water line going up highway across from Somenos Lake; foot bridge crossing Somenos Creek has potential to impact species at risk.

Timber West: Dave Lindsay

- Working on CWB and TimberWest forestry tour.
- Assisting in Koksilah River knotweed cutting program at Bright Angel park

Western Stevedoring: Rob James. Alan Moore

- Working on re-zoning application.
- Available for tours at terminal.

Lauren Duncan

- Some history on the Stoltz Bluff area. Historic beaver dam caused blowout of Clearwater Creek. Memory says that erosion has increased after upslope logging – increase in hydraulic pressure?

Ray Demarchi

- Returned from extensive tour of US National Parks.
- Will continue to put pressure on Dinsdale Farm issue.

10:30 break

10:40 Brian Houle - Presentation regarding weir operation and river flow issues. In 2016, lake levels were put under control in early April – much storage water had already been released. It was recognized that it had the potential to be the worst year on record (it was) so contingency plans for pumping were put into place. 20 pumps were installed and it was found that 15 pumps could sustain

flows at 4.5 CMS. More than 1.5 million spent on flow issues last year by Catalyst.

Have received \$200K funding for an engineering study, applying for \$1.25 million for implementation (Feds, province and Catalyst).

The good news is that 2017 looks like a wet year with higher than normal (barely) snow pack. Flow control can start in mid-May and water levels can continue at adequate levels well into the summer.

11:00 Tom Rutherford – update on Stoltz Bluff situation. Lots of discussion: Joe Saysell-perhaps steelhead have evolved for fluctuating sediment levels, some believe that increased fishing pressure in clear water has a detrimental effect on stocks. Also, silt settles out in estuary and adds productive substrate. Tom response – fishing can be managed. Silt may not be good for juvenile survival, BCCF (Kevin Pellet) has 2 years of survival data in clear conditions, compare with this years to answer juvenile survival question.

Lauren – all sediments at Stoltz must be removed or eventually it will enter river. Need budget and regular maintenance.

Ray – need institutional support.

Don Closson – There is a park lease permit and maintenance has been signed off by the province (now FLNRO and MoE) and BCCF.

Tom – CWB presentation – when he started the Executive Director's job he asked the 13 members of the Board 6 questions (to be answered individually).

- 1 – Priorities of CWB
- 2 – Accomplishments to date.
- 3 – Why are you a member?
- 4 – What are your main concerns?
- 5 – What should we be doing?
- 6 – What should Tom do?

Answers:

- 1 – Summer flows/weir. "To make things right".
- 2 – Partnerships.
- 3 – Concern for river...2nd- responsibilities of job.
- 4 – Need to accomplish more...2nd-political agendas...3rd-not focused on weir.
- 5 – More outreach...2nd-partnerships...3rd-protect habitat.
- 6 – Leadership / strategic planning.

Tom's plan:

Focus on water storage; determine how much water is needed and when (model).

Who holds license?

Process for application; funding; then implementation (see, it's easy).

Secondarily – develop partnerships and relationships.

11:30 terms of reference – received consensus on changes, Genevieve to send out corrected version.

11:50 next meeting, Dave Preikshot, Ecological monitoring of Lake Cowichan during pumping operations at the weir

Future meetings?

Field trip, July Stoltz

Meeting ended at 12