



# MINUTES

DATE: June 15, 2017

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

## **Attendance:**

Parker Jefferson, CLRSS/One Cowichan; Martha Lescher; Jill Thompson, CWB; Loren Duncan; Ken Clements, Sidney Anglers; Claude Theriault, Sidney Anglers; Logan Swain; Hannah Torok-Both; Ryan Hetschko; Jessica Chomyn; Geoff Strong; Eric Marshall, CVNS; Barry Hetschko, SMWS; Don Closson, BC Parks; Chantal Nessman, DFO; Genevieve Singleton, nature interpreter/Bring Back the Bluebirds Project

**Regrets:** Keith Lawrence, CVRD, Cheri Ayers, Tim Kulchyski, Cowichan Tribes

## **CSRT business:**

- Recording of minutes rotation; Thanks to everyone sharing in this important task.: Thanks to Leroy Van Wieran, Cowichan Lake River Stewardship Society, for kindly doing the May minutes. Chantal Nessman, of DFO, is doing the June minutes. Thanks Chantal! Jill Thompson, of Cowichan Watershed Board will do September minutes.
- Not a large turn out today – question regarding reminder notice and timing to encourage greater participation. Suggestion to send out meeting reminder on Monday before Thursday meeting.
- Discussion of whether to hold field meeting in July, taking August off. Neither Parker or Genevieve are available in July. It was decided that there will be no meeting in July or August. Meeting planned for September 21, Rivers Day celebration September 30. Suggestion for field meeting in September, more discussion about this will take place over emails.
- June 28 (Wed) – Student field trip organized by Jill, CWB and opened up for participation, Stoltz will be one of the sites visited.
- Suggestion of Coastal Invasive Plants and CVRD involvement in October.

9:20 Round the table, check-ins and update. Parker and Genevieve will present some guidelines to streamline this.

Claude Theriault, Sidney Anglers – annual derby May 6, over 200 participants, 7<sup>th</sup> year, DNA samples are being collected for fish caught (5 years), 98.5% of catch are Puget Sound origin (hatchery origin), low numbers from Fraser River; this year – more of catch were not marked (20%) and was unusual compared to previous years; Treasurer is determining funds available and will be making available to groups involved in salmon stewardship,

Parker Jefferson – Parker provided a review of a number of things he is following” Cowichan life cycle, migration pattern and stock status for Spring run chinook populations, chinook located in Ashburnam, Sutton, Robertson creeks in Lake Cowichan, water management is critical to survival of chinook, river restoration

Ken Clements, Sidney Anglers – chinook life history differences, stream-type and ocean-type differences, and migration; raised approximately \$27k (\$5k already distributed) from the annual derby.

Ryan Hetschko, “Garry Oak – Bring back the Bluebirds”, 5 years with Garry Oak Ecosystem Recovery Team, now in the sixth year Cowichan Valley Naturalists are taking over the reins of reintroducing birds, returns are low this year (environmental conditions abnormal) – 20 adults, 14 fledglings, 2 active nests, a couple additional pairs with second clutch; outreach activities at Raptor Centre with display, surveys for birds and nest boxes. This is the first year that there are translocations/ Up to three clutches for pairs. Approximately 250 nestboxes in total – 80 boxes are highly monitored by volunteers (15) with oversight from staff. Swallows and chickadees are doing well, and enjoying many of the nest boxes! Supplement juvenile food source with mealworms - this year they decided to raise their own mealworms and Genevieve is housing a mealworm farm in the family’s garage!

Loren Duncan, local resident – Japanese knotweed below winter HWM on Cowichan River, how do you deal with it and who is responsible for it? Loren would like to encourage decision for herbicide application in riparian areas if more effective.

Parker - Invasive plants are becoming a substantial issue on Cowichan and Koksilah and control mechanisms, direct injection of glucose phosphate (round-up) to kill each plant, Caycuse is pilot area for control mechanisms. Landowners are supporting removal through cutting where identified and supportive, CWB committees are discussing resources and support for an approach, significant problem that requires effort. Round-up is not allowed in riparian areas and requires more than one application.

Genevieve - CVRD is supporting ad hoc project at Bright Angel park with Cheri Ayers, Dave Lindsay, Dave Polster, Genevieve Singleton. Repeated cutting

late May, early June – every 2 weeks after plants are full size; cautiously optimistic progress is being made based on clump size. To do a full watershed with be a big commitment with lots of money. Genevieve is willing to support others interested in starting to address knotweed clumps and disposal (dumps need to be advised of knotweed before dumping).

Don – FLRNO is reluctant to engage in spot treatments, potential herbicide that can be used below the HWM being investigated, invasive species committee includes Provincial participants and questions should be directed to the committee in October at the Round Table meeting. Provincial and Federal legislation with species identification, treatment and funding to support would be most effective mechanism to address.

Geoff Strong, CERCA – Blue Carbon study is ongoing. Recent trip to Tanzania and comparison of Cowichan Valley to Tanzania and need for climate change resilience as focus in Cowichan.

Barry Hetschko, SMWS - North Cowichan storm water management project, new roundabout at the Home Hardware; swallow box program – Brentwood school and North Cowichan are involved – construction and monitoring; viewing tower – test screw pilings for depth, engineering is complete; new dyke – outdoor classroom with drug paraphernalia is difficult to manage and anticipation of additional activity/camps with warmer weather; request for support to avoid footbridge construction until difficult social issues can be addressed by local governments for protection of sensitive areas such as Garry Oak Ecosystem; water monitoring on Somenos Lake – red listed plant located, Tall wooly heads; Wild Wings - October 4 – November 5

Eric Marshall, Naturalists – concerned about bridge at York Street – foot traffic in sensitive areas (rare plants) and Garry Oak Preserve; pelicans in Cowichan Bay (last year and this year) – 17 counted; Nature Centre fundraiser on June 18 5-8pm – beer and burger and silent auction at Cowichan Bay Pub.

Don Closson, Provincial Parks – CLRSS and BCCF – riparian planting at Gordon Bay, planting riparian at boat launch to enhance existing riparian and shoreline stabilization and erosion, planting areas with high traffic locations in combination with split rail fences to discourage additional impacts; new improvements at Gordon Bay – playground, cycle track, first loop improvements, second loop next year, walk-in tent proposed for 3<sup>rd</sup> year; assisting at ecological reserve where Genevieve is warden – tree cutting from windfall – signage for education and for dumping areas; access on Riverbottom Rd – next couple of months; starting July 11 will be on leave for a couple of months and Jessica Lines will be attending on Don's behalf; projects proposed in parks – recreational and conservation improvements through funding program – funding is \$4-5k (avg \$2500) – Don

will forward announcements when information is available; BC Parks license plate program – funds go directly into Parks.

Chantal Nessman, DFO – Reinstatement of RRU, support contracts to assist the delivery of Stream to Sea and biotechnical support associated with Community Involvement Program, and production of steelhead and cutthroat at DFO facilities announced publicly today at a Parliamentary Committee by Mr. Terry Beech, parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Canada and Canadian Coast Guard. Official letters anticipated to be sent to CIP groups and organizations next week. Two recent funding announcements: Coastal Restoration Fund (DFO, July 15), Abandoned Boats Program (Transport Canada, September 30 and October 30).

Genevieve Singleton – Stoltz nature programming was done with Cowichan Lake secondary students. Parker and Bob took students to visit spawning side channels (4 years), fry salvage was not required but demonstrated (techniques/tools), Genevieve took students on nature walks. Cowichan Valley docent program is overwhelmed – large demand and would appreciate any additional support.

Jill Thompson re: Coastal Restoration Fund – Cowichan Tribes is the applicant and several groups and individuals are working on the various chapters for the application.

10:30 break

10:40 Bob Crandall and Parker Jefferson presentation on **Shaw Creek. The need for protection**

### **Parker Jefferson – Shaw Creek**

Citizen Science project on Shaw Creek. Minnow traps were set at Shaw Creek and Meade Creek to determine fish species and utilization; Shaw Creek is prime habitat for Cowichan Lamprey – lamprey spend time in the alluvial fan substrate feeding, water pumping from lake to mitigate river flows may have impacts on functionality of alluvial fan of Shaw Creek.

70% of lake shore is undeveloped, private individuals own a large portion of the shoreline, Shaw Creek is privately owned and proposal before CVRD to develop lots (26) and donate land. OCP does not allow for development past Youbou. CLRSS has been looking for mechanisms to purchase land.

Elk Gardens – supports large Roosevelt elk herd.

Three main parts of Shaw Creek – Middle Fork, East Shaw and West Shaw. West Shaw Creek drains Heather Mountain – snow pillow. Good snow pillow for this year and considerably better than last year.

Spawning beds were constructed for trout at outlet of Shaw Lake historically.

Reach 1 – cold water refuge, large pools. Reach 2 – spawning gravel – salmon and trout, year round flows including Summer.

Elk garden Side Channel – floodplain area with 2-3 main channels heavily utilized by coho, spawning habitat for salmon and trout, will dry out in Summer, rearing habitat for fry; evidence of elk beds in the area. Fry salvage efforts with numerous coho captured. Steelhead redds identified in Elk Gardens.

Juveniles primarily identified: coho, cutthroat, and rainbow. Potential chinook fry were sampled for DNA. DNA samples from Shaw Creek were identified as coho not chinook.

Hidden Creek – coho trapped.

Emeralds Pools – steelhead observed.

Bedrock/canyon moving upstream beyond Emerald Pools. In right condition, coho and steelhead may be able to make it to Shaw Creek but may be barriers during lower flows. Logging around Shaw Lake – 10 ha, was stocked historically and self-sustaining population in the lake.

Key comments: Shaw Creek is largest and most important tributary to Cowichan Lake. Only tributary that never stops flowing and maintains cool temperatures and provides refuge in summer months. Estuary and entire riparian area provides important habitat for many birds, amphibians, and other species.

Cowichan Lake and River Stewardship Society is working with others to maintain the ecosystem integrity and values of Shaw Creek. CLRSS opposed to the development of the lands.

11:30 Celebrate Our River September 30 event planning. Location continues to be in discussion with Cowichan Tribes, Debra Toporowski and Tim Kulchyski are our contacts. Amanda Marchand has been hired to be our event coordinator. Amanda is well known in the Valley for her work with the House of Friendship, Community Kitchens and many other groups. We have 30 hours of budgeting for Amanda's help. Amanda went through what was in place so far. We need everyone to jump on board for this event and help out.

11:50 Emails will be sent regarding what activities we will be having at future meetings.

12:00 Meeting ended promptly.