

COWICHAN STEWARDSHIP ROUNDTABLE

minutes

DATE: March 15, 2018 Location: Fish Health building, Freshwater Fisheries Society, 1080 Wharnclyffe Rd, Duncan www.cowichanstewardship.ca

A reminder for new and returning members: Everyone is always welcome. Please feel free to arrive and leave whenever is necessary. Please allow enough room in parking lot for Fish Hatchery vehicles and emergency vehicles, no parking in yellow painted areas. Please bring your mug for tea or coffee!

The Roundtable works together in a kind and respectful manner.

Time	Agenda Item
Attendees	<p>Genevieve Singleton, nature interpreter, co-chair; Parker Jefferson co-chair; Rick Bryan, RCABC/Paddlers; Ken Clements, Bill Stringer and Richard Lake, Sidney Anglers; Ian Morrison, CVRD; Barry Hetschko, SMS; Eric Marshall, CVNS; Tom Rutherford, CWB; Ken Travnor, CLRSS; Lorne Duncan, Cowichan River resident; Jasmine Oberste; Marek Molozzi; Geoff Strong, CERCA; Cate MacNeill; Isabel Rimmer, Linda McDaniels; Pamela Williams; Chelsey Toth, TW; Leroy Van Wieren, CLRSS; Diana Gunderson, CLRSS; Jean Atkinson, CLRSS; Graham Gidden, CVRD; Cheri Ayers; Tim Kulchyski, CT; Dave Polster, plant ecologist, Graham Gidden, CVRD</p> <p>Common Acronyms: BCCF BC Conservation Foundation, BCWF BC Wildlife Federation, CERCA Cowichan Estuary Restoration and Conservation Association, CLSES Cowichan Lake Salmonid Enhancement Society, CLRSS Cowichan Lake River Stewardship Society, CT Cowichan Tribes, CVNS Cowichan Valley Naturalists' Society, CVRD Cowichan Valley Regional District, CWB Cowichan Watershed Board, DFO Department of Fisheries and Oceans, TW Timberwest, CKBC Canoe Kayak BC, VIWPS Vancouver Island Whitewater Paddling Society. RCABC Recreational Canoe Association of BC</p> <p>Regrets: Dave Lindsay, Melissa Nottingham, DFO, Alistair MacGregor, MP, Jennifer Hermary, MP asst., Pam Jorgenson, Edmond Duggan CKBC/VIWPS</p>
9:00am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome and acknowledgement that our meeting is on Cowichan Tribes territory. • Appreciation to Freshwater Fisheries Society for hosting our meetings. • Regrets as per above. • Attendance list to be circulated. Approval of Minutes for Feb Approved

9:10am	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CSRT business: Thanks for the Feb Minutes were extended to Pam Jorgenson. It was noted that minutes will be taken this month by Richard Lake on short notice, and that recording of minutes is done by members taking turns. For April 19th they will be taken by James Craig (BCCF).• Genevieve reported on the Vancouver meeting to protest the Trans Mountain pipeline extension and particularly noted that it was entirely organized by the First Nations, and that all the leading up-front participants were First Nations.• Participants were asked for contributions to cover money owed to Genevieve and Meg Loop for website annual costs. A bowl to collect them was on the coffee table.• A meeting on the Cowichan Story Project will be held Tuesday 27 March. Genevieve is organizing. Barry Hetschko, Rick Bryan, Edmond Duggan, Pam Williams and Dave Preikshot volunteered to help. Tim suggested that the Cowichan Tribes Youth Council might be engaged; Leon Johns, is the person to contact to start the discussion.• Update re Heritage River Report: reports are still being accepted. Please send to Genevieve.• future meetings: April; Ted/Jacqueline, Watershed Reporting Update and Feedback Session, May; Molly Hudson, Timberwest, Goshawks, June or July, outdoor field meeting. A show of hands indicates a preference for July.
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9:20am

Round-table

Round the table, check-ins and updates. Please remember if your report out more than three simple points is the secretary may not easily be able to record it, longer reports **must** be emailed to secretary or co-chairs

Parker Jefferson (CSRT co-chair) - On May 8, there will be a meeting of the Cowichan Water Board. It has excellent engineering support and he is part of the Advisory Group. Questions include: How much water is needed in the River and when? needs to store more water; raising the weir; pumping. There is no appetite to draw the Lake down more than one metre. One has to figure out ways to move or expropriate buildings that were constructed too close to the Lake.

Spring flows are critical. Flow is now 30 cms which is very low for this time of year. We need to maintain this through May and June. We must deal with property owners to achieve higher Lake levels; the situation is not pretty this Spring; must keep Spring flooding control while keeping enough water in the River for emerging fry.

Marek Molozzi (resident) - He was asked to speak here by a group of citizens concerned about access to Paradise Pools. Historically the Pools were accessed over private land but the property has been sold, logging is occurring and a fence is planned. He understands that there are issues with public access—garbage etc. N Cowichan is working on it. It is important that young people have access for swimming. His email address is on the list (marek@fairywood.com); email if interested.

Jasmine Oberste (resident) - Most of the Pools are on Cowichan Band land. A report was done that explained easements that could provide public access. Catalyst has an easement sign on the trail--CVRD agreement. There is a licensing agreement even though it is through private property.

Geoff Strong (CERCA) – He is giving public presentations on climate change impacts--traveling from Victoria to Campbell River. People understand but don't do anything about it. It is emotionally draining.

Rick Bryan (Paddlers) – The Cowichan is the only river in the area with enough water for kayaking. There are lots of paddling courses going on. April 14-15 will be CRYK Fest, and April 21-22 the RCABCannual festival will be in Hope, BC. He shares the concerns over river levels and recreational access.

Ken Clements (Sidney Anglers) – introduced Bill Stringer

Bill Stringer (Sidney Anglers [a Past-President]) has recently relocated to Duncan.

Richard Lake (Sidney Anglers) – Explained that Ken and he were visiting friends and establishing relationships to better respond to the threat of May to September closure of the Pender Bluffs fishing area to protect the food and feeding of the Southern Resident Orcas. If the August to October closure out to Moresby Island that was instituted in recent years to protect returning Cowichan chinook is fully maintained, this additional closure will hit many Sidney Anglers members hard. While SAA is also a conservation, restoration and enhancement organization, for some it remains a fishing club, and fishing is the glue that holds it together.

Lorne Duncan (concerned Cowichan River Resident) - noted that we are losing services that used to be free.

Tim Kulchyski (CT) – He is the biologist for the Cowichan Tribes and sits on the Water Board. Of the coastal restoration projects, there are lots on the Cowichan this year. Stoltz is a horrible situation this year. He shared some cautions. Despite improvement targets that we might come up with, access to the water is becoming more and more restricted. Some sites where access is sought are sacred. As for passage over band land, the trails from Mt Tzouhalem are heavily used by mountain bikers and hikers and there are liability issues. Tables like this are where we can share our concerns. We have a collective human target re our collective relationship with the watershed. In response to a question from Lorne Duncan “Is the door at Cowichan Tribes to open this issue Larry George?” Yes, but he’s a very busy person. The territory of his responsibility is very big. Try Larry and, if I can help, I will.

Brian Houle (Catalyst) Concerning the weir, water levels are now in balance and the Lake level is constant. Snow pack is good this year—better than last year. There is not a lot of rain expected—which is unusual for this time of year. Looks as if it is going to be very dry. We cannot begin to control at the weir until April 1. “Tim, will Cowichan Tribes support earlier control?” A: We should be storing now.

Parker noted that control before April 1 would require a change to the Water Use Plan. Answering a question, he said the April 1 date was established out of concern for a “rain on snow” event.

Cate MacNeil (Sahtlam Neighbourhood Association) concerned about rezoning of the racetrack

Ken Traynor (CORSS) – Building understanding of the dynamics of Lake storage requires landowner education. BC Conservation should work with landowners to restore their property. We have to project that we are doing this with landowners [not to them].

Re climate change impacts, we must get people to look ahead. There is concern with the new development at Honeymoon Bay.

Barry Hetschko, Somenos Marsh Society, The Somenos Restoration Society is continuing with planting and the viewing tower has been approved.

Eric Marshall (Naturalists) - Naturalists swan and goose count: Only two more weeks to go before most swans will have headed north. Numbers are down this week—less than 500 compared with 600-700 in recent weeks. Higher proportion of immatures this week than last. More adults have departed?

Coastal Waterbird Counts in Cowichan Bay on March 11: for once there were more ducks on the south side of the bay. Bufflehead and wigeon mostly. Some 23 Great blue heron on the south side. There had been higher numbers earlier in the week—reports of 90. They are getting ready to nest.

Jean Atkinson (CLRSS), **Diana Gunderson** (CLRSS) Hearing from others is an eye-opener, we have to realize that ultimately the Lake will be lower.

Tom Rutherford (CWB) – attended a Regional Planning Workshop, “visioning” planning for the future. Met Andrew Weaver and Sonia Fursteneau; we need provincial leadership. With the VIU, hosted an estuary restoration workshop. With Tim, met with other First Nations concerned about watersheds. The key “take home” from this was that Even raising the weir and storing from February, ultimately, we will not have enough water.

	<p>Ian Morrison (CVRD director) – Yesterday, \$5,000 was allocated to the bluebird’s project. Lamprey traps were deployed. Sent an email to the Deputy Minister of Transport and will be meeting; more than willing to take issues forward.</p> <p>Linda McDaniels – concerned that private property is blocking access to the River. Owners are cutting trees and damaging the ecosystem. With access being blocked, things will get nasty.</p> <p>Pamela Williams – Listed the programs that the Cowichan Estuary Nature Centre is mounting. There will be a birthday party on April 22nd with a birthday cake, and all are invited.</p> <p>Genevieve Singleton – Reported Ted Brookman's regrets but he is attending an SFAB meeting. Saturday there was a sedimentation event in the River that is very concerning. Bob Crandall sends his regrets. The North Cowichan lands and Mt Tzouhalem to be inventoried. Will be meeting with BC Parks. There were 80,000 visitors to the trails last year. The trails are labeled: bike only, bike and walking and walking only. We are requesting that the Cross trail be taken out of the ecological reserve and moved to go around the Reserve to lessen the amount of traffic in the Reserve. The Eagle Heights restoration is moving forward. The protection of Shaw Creek is moving forward. The Bringing Back the Bluebird project is proceeding.</p>
10:30am	BREAK

10:40 am

Knotweed Presentations

Chelsey Toth (Timberwest)

Questions/Comments:

Barry: Do you have to inject every stem? **A:** Yes

Rhizomes of knotweed spread up to 20 metres from the plant.

Geoff: We will be losing 30% of all species due to climate change. We need some invasives to replace them.

What is the criterion for riparian? **A:** We don't have one; we need an herbicide that can do that safely.

Knockback Knotweed Committee, Dave Lindsay, Dave Polster, Cheri Ayers, Genevieve Singleton

Questions/Comments:

Genevieve: For riparian areas, Roundup works but there are concerns. They are trying to find something.

Dave: Knotweed destroys riparian areas.

Tim: Even tiny pieces will root without soil.

Dave: Roots even go under the Island Highway. You have to be more persistent than the knotweed.

Tim: He is proud of the work that was done but it was really all for nothing. We need an overall strategy.

Tom: The Riparian Working Group has talked about the problem. We need a watershed approach that achieves control without too much work.

Dave: We should start by mapping.

Cheri: The question is: What is acceptable to the community? Perhaps we need to use herbicide.

Dave: He worked for CP Rail, spraying toxic herbicides on ballast and sent students out to map the problem. They collected a wealth of data. The right-of-ways were getting weedier and the root cause was the herbicide. They tried high temperature steam and it was effective.

Geoff: Even roundup is dangerous to asthmatics.

Conclusion: They are committed to cleaning Bright Angel Park and then expanding to the Koksilah; less of a problem than the Cowichan. Should start there first as it is more achievable. Perhaps a hybrid approach will work; you just can't win with mechanical treatment.

12:00	Chair Genevieve thanked the participants, hoped to see everybody next month, and adjourned the meeting at 12:00
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Meetings are always the 3rd Thursday of the month, except possibly summer months.

Upcoming meeting topics (suggestions always appreciated!)

April: Ted Brookman, The Role of BC Fish and Wildlife Federation in the Roundtable and Outside the Roundtable and Jacqueline Ronson, journalist who will be discussing Watershed reporting update with feedback session

May: Molly Hudson, Goshawks