

Cowichan Roundtable Notes September 20, 2018

Call to order at 9am

Genevieve introduced some new faces and acknowledged that we are meeting on Cowichan Tribes territory. She reminded the group that this is a respectful and polite environment for us all to work together.

Regrets: Christine Rikley and Jessica Lines from BC Parks, Julia Newman CERCA, Edmond Duggan and Rick Bryan of Paddler groups

Attendance: Please let us know if your name is missing/spelt wrong, etc: Parker Jefferson, Melissa Nottingham, Ken Traynor, Ian Morrison, Genevieve Singleton, Jennifer Hermary, Klaus Kuhn, Martha Lescher, Tom Rutherford, Bob Crandall, Stephanie Cotell, Jillian Steward, Haley Guest, Ryan Frederickson, Christopher Justice, Ken Clements, Jacqueline Ronson, Jack MacNeil, Barry Hetschko, Don Hare, Kerry Davis and young MJ, Jean Atkinson, Kevin Pellett, Brian Houle, Loren Duncan.

Review and updates: No minutes yet from last time. There are notes, but have not been edited on. Will be done when the chairs have time. Last meeting was a field day and potluck at Stoltz Pool, Cowichan River Provincial Park. We were welcomed by Christine Rikley and Jessica Lines of BC Parks, had a tour with Craig Wightman to Stoltz bluff, and heard presentations by Joe Saysell, and Quw'utsun elders Philomena and Peter Williams. Peter told us stories ranging over one hundred years including memories of his father's stories. Parker showed us some tips on salvaging fry and Darin George, Cowichan Tribes councillor and river resident shared his perspectives. David Slade, Cowichan Watershed Board member supplied the barbecue. David and Jon Lefebure, Chair of CWB, cooked lunch for us. A great day was had by all. Of particular note was the number of summer students that attended. Great to have all that young energy.

Next month notes: Melissa Nottingham is taking today's notes. Jennifer Hermary (Alistair MacGregor office) will do November.

RoundTable business:

1. Fraser Basin Council is over seeing web project about Cowichan River
2. Update re. website: Website
 - the website continues to be used at the same recent rate - 100 pages per week served and 40 unique visitors in that same timeframe,
 - three new mailing list request have come in, and
 - minutes for May and June will to be posted when available.

3. GIS Storymap
 - Katie Youwe has transferred the project work to her assistant, Cherry Tam, due to increased workload in her primary job. The work continues and pictures of the river are needed to finish work that will be sent to Parks Canada/ Heritage Rivers organization, and Cherry will hopefully be visiting the Cowichan this weekend on a short trip; rumour has it that she may be at the Beer & Burger event.
4. River's Day not hosting this year, but interest for next year. Waiting for Cowichan Tribes before moving forward.
5. **5, Genevieve:** New concern. There are 2 conservation officers (soon 3) and 2 Natural Resource Officers (NRO) based in Duncan. The NROs will be moved to Nanaimo in the next three months. This is of concern because the ROs oversee river and lake water infractions. By moving them to Nanaimo they will not be able to be on the spot as easily. We need to consider as a group if we want to send a letter. Please write to MP and MLA.
6. **Comments:** We should make statement of concern. Polled who has had to call them. It is advantageous to have them within 24 hours. **Action** Genevieve and Parker to draft a letter.
7. Sidney Anglers has donated funds to help cover Genevieve's coffee expenses. Thanks Anglers!
8. Eric Marshall fronted the funds for insurance of meetings. Cowichan Watershed board then paid for it, Thanks to all concerned!
9. Genevieve read out report sent in from **Edmond Duggan on behalf of the Paddling Groups.**
 - the Summer Games went very well on Lake Cowichan and the river; thanks to all that helped make it happen, such as Barry Hetschko who did an amazing job with taking photos;
 - despite the low waters there have been trips on the river through the Summer; and
 - We've gained access to a couple of WW rafts. These vessels are a great way to see the river! We are trying to arrange a trip with the CWB, and are also willing to take CSRT people out on a tour.

Round the Table updates:

Parker Jefferson: One Cowichan campaign to get out and vote. Will canvass candidates and publicize responses to provide way to differentiate candidates. Try to raise awareness on referendums (water and housing).

Spent summer rescuing salmon fry. April until a few weeks ago. 1-2 days per week, following creeks drying. Have been doing it for a few years under Lake Cowichan Salmon Enhancement Society licence. Mostly Coho from rivers into lake. On south side move to Bear lake. Received grant for materials to create less visible net. Grey or black fine mesh pole seine. Low percent (3-4) chinook. Trying to do DNA counts. Usually 300 spring chinook return (June and July) Counted from Didson. Unique DNA from spring run fish

Klaus Kuhn, Youbou CVRD director: Spoke about the water referendum and why he voted against it. He does not like function, bylaw language and finds it is too ambiguous. Cannot see how board will be able to control funds if staff recommends something. Main concerns: is there enough water in the aquifers. We should set money aside to study that. Then when we have the results we will have a base for spending money and therefore control. Considers if it is fair for the people and tax payers that vote for him. Against political lobbying.

Comments: One Cowichan always has been concerned with water. Understands that we need to be aware of climate change projections and impacts on water. Want community to understand urgency of protecting our water.

Bob Crandall of Lake Cowichan Salmonid Enhancement Society: had surgery so was not working on salvage in field mostly on data. Last few days helped Cowichan Tribes on fry salvage. CLRSS works together with CLSES in field. Early spring run salmon: look through fry salvage to find chinook June 15 2015 found in tributaries as unique stocks in three streams. Over 4500 fry from 19 mile creek while removing log jam. 1000cubic metres.

Martha Lescher: citizen scientist, currently assisting One Cowichan

Stephanie Cottrell of Cowichan Land Trust: Cowichan Land Trust ED started mid-July. AGM next week Thursday at Cowichan Estuary Nature centre. Trying to get more high school participation. Want to develop roster of potential mentors that may be interested in talking to the high school students.

Jillian Steward: Introduction: Works for College of Applied Biology. Goldstream hatchery volunteer. Mentor Mark Angelo, founder of world rivers day. She has a vision to have more events on the island. Over 70 countries worldwide celebrate rivers day. Hope to establish more events on island and to increase celebration of the island. Last Sunday of September. Started planning group of Facebook to communicate about

upcoming ideas and events. Invited to join our committee for CT/CSRT River Day celebration.

Melissa Nottingham, CA for DFO: Returns to the Cowichan recorded at the fence as of yesterday afternoon: 287 adults, 132 jacks, 6 pit tags

Haley Guest: Nature Estuary centre. Lots of camps and kids visiting the centre. World Rivers Day fundraiser for Nature centre. Beer and Burger at Cow Bay pub 5-8. Jillian Steward putting together slide show with photos of local rivers. Inviting people with stories to share them with Hayley to be read at event. There will be a silent auction with funds raised going to support nature education.

One Cowichan: helping with campaigning. Thankful for dialogue today, which is an example of open conversation. One Cowichan is supporting housing and water referendum. Organize BC is doing a training Saturday for those interested.

Christopher Justice: Quamichan Stewardship Society and North Cowichan environmental committee: Supervising research on Quamichan Lake. H2O quality poor, phosphorous problems. Cyanobacteria blooms caused dog deaths last year. Look to determine phosphorous load and where it is coming from. Reporting biweekly accounts and posting on local Facebook pages.

Ryan Fredrickson, (on behalf of Pam Jorgenson): Timberwest, started last week. First Nations art showcase at Royal BC museum Oct 4, 6-8:30 opening, runs to Oct 22. Artists form three language groups. Sidoo Park opening ceremony. Land has conservation covenant. Donated by Timberwest and Sidoo family will be managed by Cowichan and Nanaimo land trusts. If anyone wants to RSVP to park opening RSVP Pam.

Last week toured 40 Youbou residents in TW lands.

Ken Clements: Sidney Anglers, our appreciation to the Anglers for the coffee donation and their commitment to attend our meetings, as they say, "we share the same waters."

Jaqueline Ronson: journalist, working for Discourse. Now reporting on referendum questions. Discourse is shifting approach to a community approach. Supporting in depth community reporting. If you want to receive her newsletters give her email address

Brian Houle of Catalyst: will talk later

Ian Morrison, CVRD: CVRD hosted dual referendum open house 40-50 attendees. UBCM: Good meeting included MoE and MoT discussions. Highlights include presentation by Dr. Andrew Weaver, discussions with Premier Horgan

Jennifer Hermary of Alistair McGregor, MP office: parliament resumed Alistair is agriculture critic. Will ask question on Anchorages today. 3 town halls in October 2 on housing, 1 on Trans mountain pipeline expansion.

Jack McNeil: sitting in for Kate McNeil. Director of Satlam neighbours. Talk about Vancouver Island Race Track, currently engaged in mitigation. Proposed expansion will have effect on Somenos watershed and will pave across Menzies creek in possibly seven crossings.

Barry Hetschko: Cowichan Valley Naturalist and Somenos Marsh. Wildwings events: October 4 art show and paint nights and kids day. Events will be listed in Valley Voice. Also interested in green way from top of Mount Prevost through Somenos Marsh and into the Bay. Saw a bull Elk on east side of Quamichan Lake.

Don Hare: ED of Coastal Invasive Species Committee. Focus on knotweed. Bullfrogs. Start securing permits to get into water and banks to control invasive sp..

Comment: is there a reason for ribbon on knotweed? MoTI will take care of roads. Flag means it is identified, but may not be actively controlling.

Ken Traynor, Cowichan Lake River Stewardship Society: CLRSS water sampling at 12 sites around lake 4 upper river and 3 tributaries. Upper river cleanup successful. 100-140 people come out annually. Fundraiser bottle drive. Trying to identify breeding areas of Cowichan Lamprey. Last summer spawning at bottom of Robertson River. Same sites this year did not have spawning lamprey. Not sure why change. SARA listed species. Sunscreen in river concern when there are lots of tubers in river. Local businesses in town receptive. Recommend that community support raising weir and new CVRD function.

Tom Rutherford, ED Cowichan Watershed Board: will meet with province to hold licence for water storage. This is what climate change mitigation looks like. Coastal restoration fund work Cowichan 2.57 million Estuary and Stoltz work being done. Fourth Thursday of each month speaker series. Will Duguid speaking on Cowichan chinook.
Next Thursday at 7 at VIU

Kerry Davis, CVRD Mill Bay Director and daughter: Blasé Salmon acclaimed in his place as Mill Bay Area Director.

Jean Atkinson: Cowichan Lake River Stewardship Society : riparian tour of areas worked on this summer around the lake will be held soon.

Eric Marshall, Cowichan Valley Naturalists' Society:

Water bird survey Sept 9:

South side: Very light rain and some beautiful rainbows as the following searched for birds: Manon Lafleur, Carol Smithson, Kathy Smithson, Linda Hill, John Scull, Laurie Vasey and Gail Mitchell.

1. Common Merganser 17
2. Glaucous-winged Gull 2
3. Gull sp 56
4. Double crested Cormorant 7
5. Osprey 1

North Side: On a rainy day at high tide, Kurlene Wenberg, Daryl Johnson and Carol Hartwig found the following winged creatures:

1. Mute Swan 11
2. Common Merganser 130
3. Bonaparte's Gull 35
4. Glaucous-winged Gull 17
5. Gull sp 305
6. Double-crested Cormorant 1
7. Great Blue Heron 3
8. Osprey 2
9. Common Raven 2

6 Sandhill cranes were seen on Tuesday,
Over 100 Great Blue Heron nests by Wessex Inn
Purple Martins did well at the boxes in the Bay
5 Osprey nests- good number of young raised (2 per nest)
Swallow boxes around Bay did well –CERCA
Great Blue Herons and Bald Eagles eat American Bullfrogs

Genevieve Singleton, nature interpreter: Was excited to pass around Western pearl shell. River mussel can grow to be 100 years old. Went with COSEWIC Team on field day looking at fresh water mollusks.

Bluebird project finishing up. Genevieve will be providing CWB/VIU talk October 25 on the Bring Back the Bluebird Project

Knock back knotweed Team: A group of Citizen Scientists worked hard all summer. Mechanically cutting on a two week schedule June to September knotweed. Problem with using herbicides in riparian areas. Looking for other solutions incl repeated cutting. Have applied to Heritage Rivers for funding for an experts conference on knotweed.

CSRT Business: December; meeting Dec 20 or 13th. Keeping it December 20th potluck.

Request for someone to add names to list serve. Jillian offered.

After the break Tom Rutherford provided a presentation:

Questions: What is the assessment of level of awareness of threat to water system. Ask for summary points to discuss and inform. Brainstormed with organizations and penned op ed piece to publish. Tom has messaging point that he can email around if anyone is interested.

If this goes through where should attention go first? Not about paying for weir. It is about managing water all over CVRD. Will allow CVRD to write grants and engage in planning., look for \$ elsewhere.

Brian Houle and Kevin Pellet presentation

If the weir is replaced what is included? Everything needs to be replaced in a new modern structure.

How many CuM used? licence 2.8 CUms use 1.8 and drive usage down.

What would complete replacement cost? CVRD said 10 million-14 a few years ago, but need study that will cost a million.

How will water service impact Catalyst? Hasn't thought much about it. Both benefit from water in river.

Kevin: looking at what lake will provide early in in season. Juvenile chinook in Cowichan river –what needed at what life stages. Higher spring flows beneficial to downstream migration. Increase survival with increase h2o. Aug. reduce to 4.5 after smolts had left and adults not yet returning. Now adults showing up. About 500 as of this am 2/3 adults. Less h2o now compared to last year. Had 38 detected last year 7 now. Less fish or less water. PIT tag is a microchip. 2-3\$each. 60 000 pit tags to date. Study survival and abundance. Once have tag ratio can expand to season not just while fence active.

Looking at Skutz for cameras and pit tag arrays – if we can use tag ratio at Skutz we can count at range of flows.

The optimal base flow varies; does it vary with water temperature? IE if we could get lower temp water from lake would that change base flow needed? There is some groundwater input from Lake. Low flow may end up with cooler water because higher percent of groundwater input. Release cold water from lake is tricky because need to get below thermocline up to 7m and may need to pump water. Average temp 24 degrees.

IF the proposal to raise the weir a meter, what does that do for fish? Provides the flows all year. If at full level we can use water throughout year. Without any inflows will be good for four months. Climate projections show driest past summers will be future wettest. Warm and windy lose to evaporation.

Finished at 12 sharp.

Minutes taken by Melissa Nottingham