

Cowichan Stewardship Roundtable  
Meeting Notes  
Thursday, October 18, 2018

**Attendance:** Tom Rutherford, Genevieve Singleton, Pam Jorgenson, Maeve Maguire, Martha Lescher, Isabelle Rimmer, Kate McNeil, Ken Traynor, Jennifer Hermary, Rick Bryan, Eric Marshall, Bob Crandall, Dave Preikshot, Ian Morrison, Tim Kulchyski, Jessica Lines, Melissa Nottingham, Michael Bards, Ken Clements, Geoff Strong, Parker Jefferson

**Regrets:** Edmond Duggan, Ted Brookman, Chris Morley, Joe Saysell, Julia Newman, Barry Hetschko, Cheri Ayers, Christine Rikley, Alistair McGregor

**9:00am Meeting Opening:**

**Tom Rutherford** - He is taking Hul'q'umi'num' Language lessons. In Hul'q'umi'num' he welcomed his esteem friends and colleagues and made reference to the fact we are meeting of Cowichan Tribes territory.

**Business:**

**Genevieve Singleton** – Thanks to the Freshwater Fishery Society for the use of the meeting venue. Thanks to Melissa Nottingham from DFO who did the September meeting minutes and to Jennifer Hermary for October minutes. Volunteers for the meeting notes for November is Eric Marshall and Melissa Nottingham for December.

River Celebration – Ready to set a meeting to go to Cowichan Tribes to ask if they can host it. There is a concern about the amount of work. Tom thinks that we should support it but we need to find some funding to hire a co-ordinator. It is too much to expect that everyone should organize it. Pam suggested Summer Students.

NRO being moved: There has been no response about letter of concern about the natural resources officers being moved. Maeve Maguire from Sonia Furstenau office commented – The move is under review.

Question: Martha Lescher had a question about the transfer of ownership of the Crofton mill. They expect no changes on the ground.

Website: Edmond Duggan Cold Kayak - Website - The newsletter signup form has been improved based on Haley's suggestions. Thanks! - usage is up, most likely due to the referendum - 406 unique visits in the last 30 days (+25%), 809 page views (+39%) - Agenda and minutes PDF'd and posted. Storymap - no update from Edmond

Report sent in by **Ted Brookman**: I will be sending a report on the current status of A- changes proposed to the new Fisheries regulations, which we hope will give more flexibility to the recreational fishers, B- changes to the Southern Killer Whale proposals, C-Changes to the current catch monitoring efforts by the guides, lodges and ordinary fishers. D-. continuing to seek clarification on the problems caused by expanding Seal and Sea lion populations and how we the community will deal with it.

**Report from Cheri Ayers** - My update is that work has begun on the 2nd breach with the deepening of the inlet channel on the north side of the railway grade - it is easy to see if people want to come down and have a look from the railway grade. The remainder of the project is scheduled for this winter during the fisheries work window for the Cowichan Estuary. Monitoring continues.

### **Round the Table:**

**Jennifer Hermary on behalf of MP Alistair MacGregor** – Alistair is in Ottawa. He hosted 3 town halls last time he was home. Two on the National Housing Strategy and one with MP Nathan Cullen on the Trans-mountain pipeline. He is planning one more Town Hall on Protecting Local Food and Supply Management Nov. 13<sup>th</sup>

**Isabelle Rimmer, Sahtlam Neighbourhood Association**– Racetrack expansion - Concerned about the Somenos Watershed.

**Kate McNeil Sahtlam Neighbourhood Association**, shares Isabelle's concerns

**Ken Traynor, Cowichan Lake River Stewardship Society** – They are engaged with election issues. Water referendum – there is a lack of information. People are supportive of water concerns but lack of information. They have put together the State of the Lake report and they are going to put this in every mailbox. CLRSS members are working on Water Quality monitoring. Hopes to work on the issue of the impact of sun screen on the water. The Vancouver Sun article has generated a lot of interest.

**Eric Marshall, Cowichan Valley Naturalists' Society**: Second bird count in October – in Mill Bay area there is a huge flock of Western Grebe, a few Trumpeter Swans have been seen. A few Sea Lions have already arrived in the Bay.

**Dave Preikshot, Somenos Marsh Wild Life Society** – they are hosting Wild Wings event to celebrate the trumpeter swans. Check out the web page for the events. Talk at the Estuary Nature Centre next week about local fish by Dave Preikshot. Renamed Somenos management area. There is a new program thanks to donations – Somenos Greenway Program. They are also bringing in a Parrot's Feather control program. A way to review techniques. Also participating with the meeting coming up next Friday to look at lake level in Somenos Lake. Water quality work is coming up. They

are putting a focus at Bings Creek. There is also a sponsorship plan for local businesses to sponsor some of the work. Their first sponsor is Co-op and will provide an address for expressing thanks.

**Tom Rutherford Cowichan Watershed Board** – the work plan is based around water supply, water quality and governance. Co-chairs were able to sit down with Ministers Donaldson and Hayman to talk about water storage and infrastructure. The outcome was the Ministers tasked the staff to come up with some options and they will be meeting again with the co-chairs next month.

Re water sampling: The Real Estate Foundation of BC and other partners are assisting with funding. Volunteers are taking 100s of samples to go into the data base and provide us with the information to see where we have a problem. Coastal Restoration Programing fund is funding through Cowichan Tribes \$2.7 million over 5 years from feds to protect and restore habitat in the watershed. They started making connections with other people in other watersheds. 9 NGO's meet about off times and 80% of issues are the same. They are looking at effective tool for watershed sustainability. Maeve Maguire said that Sonia would be interested in these meetings. Some of the same barriers in other watersheds but the lack of communication between activism, government and industry. Speaker Series, which is sponsored by VIU will host Genevieve Singleton speaking on the Bluebird Project.

**Genevieve Singleton, nature interpreter:** She writes a Cowichan Valley Voice Article every few months. Reminded us that the fishing and hunting licences that you buy funds many projects through the Habitat Conservation Trust Fund, including the Bring Back the Bluebirds Project. Make a donation or buy a licence, even if you don't hunt or fish. The Knockback Knotweed Committee: Dave Lindsay, Cheri Ayers, Dave Polster and Genevieve wish to thank Barry Hetschko, Gail and Steve Mitchell, Carol Milo, Gretchen Hartley, Bev Suderman and Brooke and Hanna Chapman for their hard work in pulling knotweed this summer at our trial plots. Special thanks to Graham Gidden and CVRD for their support. The Committee has applied for funding a meeting for knotweed specialists through Heritage Rivers Society and are waiting to see if the request will be accepted.

May 2 to 5, 2019 the Cowichan Valley Naturalists are holding an AGM with over 30 speakers and workshops for attendees across the province.

On October 26 Harold Joe is presenting at the Cowichan Theatre his movie Dust and Bones, this will an important presentation.

**Parker Jefferson One Cowichan** – they have been very active canvassing and getting out the vote, supporting both referenda. The candidate's stances are on their website. The push back of disrespectful comments is a little disheartening.

**Ian Morrison** CVRD's final meeting is on the 24<sup>th</sup>. Get everyone out to vote on the two referendums.

**Bob Crandall of Lake Cowichan Salmonid Enhancement Society** – Pointed out that Fish don't vote. It us up to us. Busy getting ready for next years projects and

cleaning hatchery. Timberwest has stepped up and are starting to remove gravel from salmon stream. Mid Island Co-op have been supplying funding for 2 years to help with projects.

**Tim Kulchyski Cowichan Tribes** – Counting fence for Cowichan has some controversy because of fish that are holding back. 21 hundred adults Chinook 11 hundred Jack, more than 600 Coho, 10 Chum – working with DFO to make sure that fish are comfortable moving through. Have had a number of projects gravel removal in the north arm and projects in the Koksilah – first year we have lost fish due to conditions in the river. Cowichan will not be interested in going below 5.3 cms, this year we went to 4.5. 1700 fish on the last swim in the Cowichan it was a short swim. In 1906 Cowichan leaders went to see the queen to speak to losing their rights and the settler people wanted to jail them when they came back. He appreciates everyone being here. Costal restoration fund consists of 3 pieces. Stoltz bluff is really complicated and there is a lot going on. Habitat restoration project has been going full stream. Estuary project is really interesting. The Breach has some of the initial stages. Cheri Ayers is the one to speak to this project. Sediment looks like a big issue for eel grass. We have lost numerous birds and species in the Gulf islands. Speaker Series. Will Duguid a fantastic talk.

**Maeve Maguire from MLA Sonia Furstenau's office** – Salmon Advisory committee came out with a report. Their first task was to write a report about what to do. Professional reliance reform legislation will be coming out soon. 200 recommendations. Environmental assessment revitalizations for decision making going forward. Meeting with association of forest professionals. Meeting with the Ministers – Good Work of the CWB and One Cowichan.

**Martha Lescher: Volunteer**– is busy as volunteer Canvassing and gathering data.

**Jessica Lines from BC Parks** – Stoltz Group site parking lot – we are losing it rapidly to the River. Most Park resources have been in Goldstream dealing with the homeless camp.

**Melissa Nottingham, CA for DFO** – the hatchery has done all their 209 males 251 females and 9 jacks. Did pit tagging on adults. 9.5 hatchery adults. 6.9 hatchery jacks. Side note - Spaghetti tags were released as black bridge –mark recapture rate.

**Michael Bards** – member of the community – has been involved with Ducks Unlimited, recently retired. Fly fisher and has interest in the Cowichan. Looking for volunteer opportunities.

**Rick Bryan** – Paddle sport community – bleak for Britain during the second world war – divert funding from the arts towards the war what are we fighting for. This Saturday he is going to jump into a boat. Take pictures and leave no footprints behind.

**Jeff Strong** Climate Scientist - environmental and social justice. His focus is on the impacts of Climate Change. First Monday of November at 9:30 he will be giving a talk to the Cowichan Naturalists at the Fish Health Building.

**Pam Jorgenson Timberwest** – Formal dedication of the Sidhoo Park – 8.4 hectare. Going to be managed under a conservation covenant.  
Formal opening of First Nations Showcase at the BC Museum. 3 beautiful displays – Free Show at the BC Museum.  
Carbon Neutrality work being done.

**Ken Clements: Sidney Anglers** – has donated \$30,000 to various projects.

Meeting note: looking for future speakers

### **Presentations:**

#### **Parker Jefferson and Bob Crandall, Fry Rescue and Monitoring**

- getting to know certain areas – all wild fish, stronger and robust than hatchery fish. It is very beneficial to try and save as many wild fish as we can. Streams around the lake are indicated with sedimentation and huge tracks run dry and there are just normal be cause of longing practices and erosion. Start in May and every week they go out there. Mead creek is very productive.
- Stoltz Park Side Channel 1,875 Coho 425 Chum rescued May 5-18
- Cowichan School bring their grade 6 &7 for a nature walk. Kids get excited about rescuing fry. The get excited about releasing the fish.
- Go and harvest under the rocks
- Show them and fin clip interesting for a DNA sample.
- Meade Creek May 17-June 12
- It dries up very fast. Compounded by high winter flows and droughts every summer.
- Ashburnham creek May 22- June 26
- Sutton Creek May 29 – July 31
- Robertson River Side Channel 2,000 coho rescued July 5-10
  - o Bear Lake Release temperature equalization
  - o Algae growth in pools during summer can be a challenge for pole seines
  - o Shaw Creek 500 coho rescued.
- Described the Pole Seine Design, construction consists of low visible net material with a heavy change leading edge.
- Horseshoe Bend Side channel Cowichan river 500 coho July 18
- Sutton Creek July 31 1,000 coho rescued
- Robertson River July 3- August 29
- Up to 1000 in a 5-gallon pale with bubbles.
- TimberWest 19-mile creek gravel and log jam removal September

2018-10-18  
36,927 fish rescued  
35,927 Coho  
307 trout  
1 chinook  
2016 total 80,961  
2017 total 80,350

work at 19-mile creek, is the public scrutiny – yes – through Water sustainability act, DFO and first nations.

Weir – there was a lot of discussion about what was going on. Let people know more about what is going on, that would be positive.

**Question for the table from Tom:**

To consider a communications plan or strategy to do a better job to reporting out on this topic to the community.