

COWICHAN STEWARDSHIP ROUNDTABLE NOTES www.cowichanstewardship.ca

DATE: THURSDAY, MAY 20, 2021: 9am to 12:00 pm Zoom meeting, invite will be sent out prior to mtg.

Questions? Write to co-chairs at cowichanstewardshiproundtable@gmail.com

We host our Zoom meeting on Cowichan Tribes unceded territory. Everyone is always welcome. Please feel free to arrive and leave Zoom meeting whenever necessary. **The Roundtable works together in a collaborative, kind and respectful manner at all times. Please note the agenda timing is approximate only!**

- We welcomed everyone and acknowledge with gratitude that we host our meetings on Cowichan Tribes unceded territory.
- Appreciation to Tom Rutherford, Jill Thompson and the Cowichan Watershed Board for kindly donating the Zoom platform for our meeting.
- Regrets: **Jacque Taylor: Bring Back the Bluebirds Program.** Tim Kulchyski: Cowichan Tribes,
- Attendees: Jill Thompson: Cowichan Watershed Board (CWB) , Tom Rutherford: Cowichan Watershed Board (CWB), Genevieve Singleton: Co-Chair Cowichan Stewardship Round Table (CSRT), Parker Jefferson: Co-Chair Cowichan Stewardship Round Table (CSRT), Brian Houle: Paper Excellence, Rick Bryan: Paddle Sports, Nora Livingstone: Cowichan Watershed Board (CWB) communications, Richard Lake: Sidney Anglers, Jane Kilthei: Cowichan Estuary Nature Centre (CENC), Cole Smith: Sonia Furstenau's team, Gail Mitchell: Cowichan Valley Naturalists (CVNS), Bruce Coates: Cowichan Valley Naturalists (CVNS), Stephanie Lane: Researcher, Melissa Nottingham: Community Advisor at Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO), Elodie Roger: Cowichan Shore Stewardship Project (CSSP), Dee Watts: Save Our Holmes Society (SOH), Lyndon Keeping: Cowichan Lake and River Stewardship Society (CLRSS), Edmond Duggan: Paddle Sports, Pam Jorgenson: Mosaic Forestry, Joe Saysell: Friends of the Cowichan, Kristina Haime, Senior Park Ranger, Peter Woods: BC Parks, Area Supervisor, Dorothy Marshall, CVNS, Karen Deck: Save Our Holmes Society (SOH), Jim Deck: SOH

CSRT Business

- No updates re: website
- Mark Angelo began River Day celebrations 40 years ago and it is now celebrated around the world. CSRT and Cowichan Tribes have been observing this day every other year since 2017 on the last Saturday in September (Sept. 25 this year). Genevieve and Tim presented to Cowichan Tribes Chief and Council on May 11 with our request for CT to co-host again on the Black Bridge beach. CT was very pleased to receive our request and look forward to co-hosting. Since CSRT does not have a bank account, another group has to manage funds coming in and going out for River Day expenses. Cowichan Watershed did this last time and will consider doing so again.
- The consensus was that we would only plan for an in-person event, at the last few meetings we considered planning for both online and in person. Safety; measures might need to be put in place to comply with Covid protocols. Cowichan Valley Arts Council has planned events to

coincide with River Day celebrations. Elodie Roger has ideas for arts projects. Many Knowledge keepers and elders are already booked including John George, our Speaker/MC for the day.

- Upcoming events: Kevin Pellett speaking on Chinook and Coho at June meeting. July meeting will be held at Stoltz Pool on July 15. Activity suggestions welcomed. September meeting speaker has not been decided. In October BCCF will speak about the Salish Sea.
- Edmond Duggan spoke about the energy savings that come with turning off screens during Zoom meeting and changing how we send emails. discussion followed.
- Heather Pritchard is not able to speak today due to illness.
- TOR carried over

Round the Table

- Brian Houle reported Cowichan Lake is $\frac{3}{4}$ full, snowpack is at 80%, he's not expecting substantial rain until September. Lake levels are determined by climate, climate change and snow packs.
- Rick Bryan reported the fund raising done will cover costs of requesting the exploration of a paddle sport opportunity near the weir, including hiring an engineer.
- Nora Livingstone: The communications team at CWB has developed some ideas to educate and engage people about the twin watershed program; e.g., Chinook mascot, tic toc videos, roving reporters about Chinook, technicians in the field.
- Richard Lake spoke about the Sidney Anglers support of Joe Saysell's mission to close the upper river to protect spawning fish and redds. He said they would be willing to endorse Joe's letter or write one as directed.
- Jane Kiltnei described planned Low Tide Day (Saturday May 29) activities. Summer Science Nature Camps are going ahead; fish and ocean science based. She is grateful to Genevieve for training. The Drip Irrigation workshop in the Koksilah watershed will be on Jill's property. Contact Jane for more information about: Climate Hub, a group of groups concerned about climate change.
- Cole Smith outlined some of the issues that Sonia Furstenau is focusing on:
Anchorage in Coast Salish Sea- working with partners to see how best to advocate.
Hazardous Materials Dumping- lack of oversight on demolition sites (asbestos, vinyl tiles, burying wastes in residential lands. Ministry of Environment is committed to meeting with citizens to find ways to close gaps.
Budget estimates-opportunities to speak to each minister on issues.
FLNRORD-sanctuary sections and funding for protecting Old Growth, Conservation Lands, Fish Farm at Shawnigan Lake, Second Growth Logging and Private Managed Forest Lands Act reform
- Tom Rutherford explained progress on weir:
Engineering, planning and design is moving ahead.
There is redundancy for fish passage is built in; all life history phases of all fish will be able to flow back and forth all year.
Cold water input will cost \$20 million. Thermal modelling will cost around \$20-30 thousand to see if the down stream effects are noticeable or negligible and assess the shoreline impacts upstream. It will be done early next spring.
All information about lake shore levels will be available to every lake shore owner to see.

A “Made in Cowichan” solution to who will have the conservation license for weir is being facilitated by Cowichan Tribes.

Chemainus, Koksilah Rivers studies: A detailed look at the two river systems will be undertaken with Halalt people and Cowichan Tribes, measuring how flows affect fish habitat. Elders will be interviewed for a historic perspective. A riparian inventory will be taken in both rivers. Outreach programs are planned. The Koksilah/Chemainus water management project is a first in BC, with partners close to consensus on way forward. A partnership with Quw’utsun Forest Service technicians is ongoing to create watershed experts.

- Stephanie Lane told us about her research project. How do plants travel through the watershed to the estuary? She is studying shoreline resistance, habitat protection. The estuary is the last stop in the watershed. She wants to develop an understanding of how seeds disperse in autumn, but grow in spring. She wants to study the loss of diversity and decline in habitat. She wants to study how the seed bank changes over the winter and how grazing impacts a site’s ability to trap and retain seeds.
- Gail Mitchell will be stepping back from her role at CVNS at their AGM at Eves Park. CVNS’s programs are finished until September. Cutting of broom is being done in the estuary. She mentioned the gardens that the Cowichan Green Committee is taking care of. Barry Hetschko is updating the bird list.
- Bruce Coates talked about CVNS’s pollinator gardens project.
- Melissa Nottingham reported that the hatchery is releasing Chinook at Stoltz. Salmon in the classroom program went ahead. The Stewardship SEPS workshop is online May 29, 30 and is also on the Streamkeepers website.
- Elodie Roger has become the new coordinator of the Cowichan Shoreline Stewardship Project. Dave Polster and Genevieve Singleton will provide expertise along with Alex Werk, who has worked with the project for some years. The Project was not able to happen last year due to Covid. Craig Wightman and Cheri Ayers worked hard to get it back in place this year. .
- Parker Jefferson updated the group on the egregious riparian violation on Sa-Seen-Os Crescent. Though bylaw enforcement is rare, he hopes it may be different this time.
- Lyndon Keeping said that CLRSS is working with Elodie Roger the rest of CSSP staff.. CLRSS is engaged with the Decibel Coalition. There is no legislation about noise levels on the lake, therefore no enforcement. Tube Shack has offered to collaborate on River clean up. CLRSS AGM is on May 30.
- Edmond Duggan informed us that people are discovering paddling in Covid times. People are unaware of ecological values, though. The Nanaimo River has few access points to the river.
- Pam Jorgenson talked about illegal dumping and cleanup; she gets emails about garbage near logging roads 5 times a week. Mosaic and Trail Blazers have an agreement for hiking and biking. Kick off to happen in September. Don Hare will be retiring from the invasive species group and they are seeking a new executive director.
- Karen Deck notified the group that Save Our Holmes’ AGM is upcoming. SOH will be talking about ways to respond to Mosaic’s announcement of logging above Youbou/Meade Creek.

- Joe Saysell requested that individual members of CSRT write a letter regarding the damage that occurs from fishers anchoring in 100 cm water, creating trenches that destroy redds. He asks us to advocate for a closure of the upper river to prevent eggs from being killed. He once again voiced his great concern about the extensive logging of 2nd growth, causing the river levels to change drastically. Developments on Point Ideal and Stanley Creek are under a restraining order. He alerted us to the potential of the arrival of an invasive lizard, .
- Parker Jefferson gave good news about Chinook fry and smolt rescue. Parker saw good Caddisfly and May fly hatch.
- Genevieve expressed concern about the invasive lizard, the Common wall lizard. Please report this at <https://bcinvasives.ca/invasives/european-wall-lizard/>.
Cowichan Lake Lamprey Outreach Project: During the week of May 10 Joy Wade and Genevieve did a class together at Palsson on the lamprey, Genevieve then did the rest of the classes, a total of 140 students learned about this Species at Risk in their outdoor classroom. It was quite a success and they hope that we can be back again.
North Cowichan and Cowichan Tribes are doing interpretive signage on Somenos Marsh dike with Genevieve and Tim Kulchyski. Delighted that Cowichan Shoreline Stewardship Project has started up again, our founder Gerald Thom would be thrilled.

Meetings are the 3rd Thursday of the month, except August.