

COWICHAN STEWARDSHIP ROUNDTABLE NOTES

DATE: THURSDAY, AUGUST 18, 2022: 9am to 12:00 pm Stoltz Pools, Cowichan River Park

Attending: Parker Jefferson (co-chair CSRT), Cheyenne Williams (Cowichan Tribes), John Stewart (Cowichan Tribes), Lisa Fox (ENGO policy analyst), Shalu Mehta (The Discourse), Dave Polster (retired plant ecologist), Joe Saysell (Friends of the Cowichan) Melissa Nottingham (DFO), Genevieve Singleton (CSRT co-chair)

Parker Jefferson presented information on the bat surveys being led by the Cowichan Estuary Restoration and Conservation Association. There were a number of red listed species identified. Parker is also involved in the salmon enhancement survey and recovery of fish from side streams and ponds. Interesting to note that Sockeye evolved to rear on Cowichan Lake tributaries.

Melissa Nottingham with DFO was the guest and spoke to the recovery of fish from side streams and ponds and the importance of volunteers being licensed with DFO to ensure that relocation efforts are sustainable.

Shalu Mehta, lead reporter with the Discourse, is interested in doing articles on issues and solutions in the watershed.

Cheyenne Williams, Cowichan Tribes staff is scoping a riparian guardian program with funding from Healthy Watersheds Initiative. This would include stewardship and technical training program. Eduardo Souza is looking at developing a list of designated protected areas and is seeking information on how to engage in private land management. Currently doing surveys and information gathering on ecological health and environmental flows. Potential to have Cowichan Tribes back on the land.

John Stewart, Cowichan Tribes (Parks Canada?) has been involved in doing tidal samples for climate resiliency with the Nature Trust and provided an update on the Fraser River Sockeye Return for the Food Fish Recovery. Also involved in the Dike Assessment and the Olympia Pacific Oyster Sampling Survey at Mafeo Park and Transfer Beach. The C4 Impact (anchorages) study is developing a baseline for informing the proposed National Marine Reserve being led by the Indigenous Management Board.

Joe Saysell, Friends of the Cowichan, spoke about Exeter Creek and Moosaic logging, and also his work in recovering fish from side streams in the upper watershed above Skutz Falls.

Thanks to Lisa Fox for notes.