



MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by Paul Rickard at 9 am.

In attendance

Meg Loop & Kei Rietzel (Cowichan Land Trust), Nikki Wright (SEA Change), Don Closson (BC Parks), Yana Statemeyer-Trinczek (Jean Crowder, MP), Ray Demarchi, Frant Hunt-Jinnouchi (Green Party), Ian Morrison. Kerry Davis, Keith Lawrence (CVRD), Morgan Kennah (Island Timberlands), Rodger Hunter & Rob Hutchins (CWB), Elizabeth Bailey & Paul Fletcher (Somenos Marsh), Tom Rutherford & Shona Smith (DFO), Tim Kulchyski & Helen Reid (Cowichan Tribes), Jean Atkinson & Diana Gunderson (CLRSS), Claude Theriault & Ken Clements (Sidney Anglers), Rob James & Al Moore (Western Stevedoring), Dennis Popplestone (Catalyst), Carol Hartwig & Eric Marshall (CVNS), Peter Holmes & Paul Donahue (Cowichan Bay Ship Watch Society), James Craig & Kevit Pellett (BCCF), Cheri Ayers (Consultant), Genevieve Singleton (Nature Interpretert), Paul Rickard (BCWF), Parker Jefferson (One Cowichan), Brian martin (FFSBC), Derek Haupt (Western Forest Products)

Regrets:

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the November meeting were circulated and approved.

Roundtable updates

Genevieve - Housekeeping: At the back right of the parking please avoid the intake area as its emergency and avoid double parking.

Kai Rietzal - Coho are in spawning in Bings. Two applications to RFCPP, one for beach restoration work at Hecate Park and one to continue the work on Bings and Averill creeks with improving spawning/rearing habitat and bank stabilization.

Nikki Wright - Removing debris from Genoa Bay in February extending the eelgrass planting in that area. Put in an application for removal of invasive/replant of native species.

Don Closson - Recently had flooding problems at Stoltz pools with the high water within the river. Ask: If you are in the park and witness flooded areas, please take photo and let Don know so Parks can fix in the spring. Some replacement of two trestles at Holt Creek.

Yana Stratemeyer-Trinczek - Derelict vessels bill should be coming up for debate in February, ask for support outside of this riding.

Elizabeth Bailey - Working with north Cowichan to create a wetland in Somenos Marsh. Got permission to start water quality monitoring and wildlife surveys prior to construction.

Tom Rutherford - Working to secure a CA for the area in the next few months to hire full time permanent CAs.

Tim Kulchyski - Thanks to some funding from DFO, have a crew of two doing coho walks along many creeks. Weren't seeming many, found over 100 coho in Bings, 50 in Averill, 40 in the top of Richards.

Ray Demarchi - Sewage Outfall Committee, liquid waste management plan in the third amendment. Working with the Cowichan Land Trust to revitalize a streamkeeper program with Valerie Robinson.

Ian Morrison - Now have meters in the ground to read water consumption, going in to talk about water hogs etc. Still people who don't get the issues around water needs. Either Sutton or Ashburnem creek potentially has 3 logs forming a jam right next to an RV park. Staff at the CVRD are looking at the old Ashburnem dam, looking at potential removal for enhancement.

Diana Gunderson - Got in another RFCPP for the second year of shoreline restoration works.

Sidney Anglers - Asked by Vancouver Aquarium to submit several 12 pound chinooks for pcb and toxicity testing for the resident orca studies.

Al Moore - Causeway Breach, application to FLNRO on Dec 21, won't have an update until staff return in January. Do expect to make the March 21st deadline.

Dennis Popplestone - Testing on the effluent outflow every 4 years on crabs, oysters, etc. The fibre mat is dissolving quite well. Crabs still have dioxin issues as they dig around in the mud.

Eric Marshall - Mute swans have disappeared; last Sunday was the Christmas bird count for Saltspring (included Mill bay, mute swans). Sandhill crane spotted in Cowichan Bay with the trumpeter swans. Last year was very little juveniles. This year there were many more, about 35%. Number of bald eagles reached a maximum of 175 adult, 93 immature. Numbers have dropped since then.

Cowichan Bay Shipwatch Society - Intent to lobby to remove the freighters within Cowichan Bay. Gathering data.

Keith Lawrence - Task force of more than 60 organizations that have some management or governance over water, how can we function more cohesively and attract funding. Several workshops held over 2014, has been a process of engagement with key organizations, ie first nations, industry, agriculture, private forest land management council, and municipalities. Support has been encouraging, reports to come in 2015. Yellowpoint watershed study, exploring linkages between ecological and hydrological function, how can this apply to other watersheds throughout the region. Sandy Pools, all of the physical work has been completed, wrapping up the interpretive signage. Water quality monitoring for Cowichan and Koksilah report should be out soon.

James Craig - South Side Spur dyke, hundreds of multistage steelhead parr and plenty of some other kind of salmon at the brand new restoration that took place in the bay.

Shona Smith - Escapement numbers are out. Had a meeting with local organizations on RFCPP to discuss the projects and get feedback, plan to host another before the PSF funding and how to tie in within the 100 year plan.

Cheri Ayers - Looking at a juvenile and early run genetic testing project in the upper watershed.

Genevieve - Eagle Heights update, still amidst negotiation.

Parker Jefferson - (One Cowichan) Has a great resource of volunteers, about 3,000 people involved.

Paul Rickard - Oliver Creek, first time reported spawning chinook (which they don't even usually go into) with photos one year into a big restoration project. The Cowichan system is bucking the trend, most systems are barely replacing chinook, only one commercial fishery and one healthy chum stock on the island and that is Cowichan. Oak Bay Marine group may be stepping forward to support more small group work in the Cowichan. Avid Anglers program taking dna samples, completely above board supported and encouraged activity, on chinook caught in the area. Dick Beamish's book "The Sea Among Us" a very accessible book on the Georgia Strait.

Business

Early Life History and Critical Rearing Habitat Requirements of Cowichan River Chinook

Salmon: James Craig

See Presentation Slides.

- Figure that the ability for juvenile chinook to put on some size before marine dictates their survivability. Seems like riparian habitat in lower river is critical for these fish to put on that size prior to migration.
 - also would say that the entire river corridor is critical. The densities are there, excess fry are distributing along the whole length.
 - There is the most pressure and risk in the Lower river. This is where all the fish end up passing through.
- Cowichan Tribes has a map dating back to 1829 that shows the side channels.

Cowichan Juvenile Chinook PIT Tagging: Kevin Pellett

See Presentation Slides.

- A permanent array could potentially be identifying the spring run chinook. You can tag any fish anywhere in the system and they would pass over the array.

Watershed Board Updates: Rodger Hunter

See videos. One on stoltz bluff sedimentation prevention in action. Last installment of the Water Woman adventures.

The lake didn't make it much higher over the needed level, even in that significant rain event. The flow in the river is 180 cubic meters per second, which is also not that outrageous. No news from the

Environmental Appeal Board, Shawnigan same thing. The Cowichan Estuary Environmental Management Committee, CWB desire to assist the Ministry in this. Essentially the response was no help desired. I shoul

Watershed Health & Chinook Initiative - Cheri Ayers:

See Powerpoint presentation.

Ties into the 100 year Plan, in the 5 years since the plan has come out there has been a lot of action and movement. When there are specific action items to be tackled, perhaps that is where the CSRT can come together to identify which member groups are able to take on that item. CSRT can act as a feedback loop for the structure and implementation, especially in governance. It will be up to the individual institutions to appoint members to the Advisory Committee. Individual needs to be assigned. The tricky part is identifying the framework and then into the governance to not duplicate or add additional burdens. Framework documents to be completed by March. The purpose of the plan is to create linkages and increase the efficiency of the work to be done within the entire framework and watershed management. The guiding integration is chinook, working with existing groups with a focus on rebuilding chinook. Need people with political reality to work within the system. The plan itself is an integrating plan to make a cohesive whole.

- This started as a DFO initiative to rebuild chinook. It's not the right way to do business to do it unilaterally. We now have a wild salmon policy, looking at doing things in the Cowichan as how the Wild Salmon Policy should actually function. We have a group of people and institutions that historically don't work well together are, so could we create a working model on how do make this plan work. It is a difficult job to get to where we want to go, when it's so disparate and capacity based.

Next Meeting

January 14th

- **Rodger updates**
- **David Preschoct for Somenos**
- **Cheri may have an update**
- **Update on causeway**

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