

COWICHAN STEWARDSHIP ROUNDTABLE

TEMPLATE FOR MINUTES

THURSDAY, NOV. 16 2017, 9-12 AM.

9:00 Welcome and acknowledgement that our meeting is on Cowichan Tribes territory.

- Attendance is now done with a pass-around sheet

Regrets:

- Chantal Nessman, DFO,
- Tom Rutherford, CWB,
- Bob Crandall, CLOSES
- Debra Toporowski, CT

Attendance: Haley Guest (Cowichan Estuary Nature Centre), Cameron Hepp (Cowichan Land Trust), Genevieve Singleton (nature interpreter), Parker Jefferson (One Cowichan), Eric Marshall (Cowichan Valley Naturalists), Ian Morrison (CVRD), Chloe Boyle (CVRD), Seamus Wolfe (Alistair MacGregor office), Barry Hetschko (Somenos Marsh Society), Chris Steeger (Wood Assoc/ CLRSS), Rick Bryan (VI Paddling Society), Cheri Ayers (Bioayer Consultants), Jessica Lines (BC Parks), Cheri Beaulieu (SMS/CVNS), Martha Lescher (SMS/ CVNS), Geoff Strong (Cowichan Estuary Restoration and Conservation Association), Klaus Kuhn (CVRD), Rob James (Western Stevedoring), Peter Holmes (Cowichan Bay Ship watch Society), Paul Rickard, Cate McNeill (Sahtlam Neighbourhood Assoc), Diana Gunderson/Ken Traynor/Heather Pritchard (Cowichan Lake River Stewardship Society), Pam Jorgenson and Dave Lindsay (Timberwest)

ACTION: November minutes are approved

9:10 CSRT business:

- Parker and Genevieve chaired the meeting.
- Recording of minutes rotation. Thank you, Don Closson of BC Parks, for doing October minutes. Thank you to Hailey Guest, Cowichan Estuary Nature Centre, for doing November minutes. Jessica Lines, BC Parks, will do December minutes. January minutes: Eric Marshall (Cowichan Valley Naturalists)
- Reminder that our December meeting is changed from Dec. 21 to Dec. 14, meeting will be followed by a finger food potluck social from 12 to 1. Family is welcome. Please bring your own mug.
- Follow-up from October meeting re GIS Story Map from BC Parks,

Don (BC Parks) pitched this last month and thought of it as a fundraising opportunity

It was noted that Tom Rutherford knew much about the initiative, and that Rick Bryan and Chloe Boyle were interested in being a part of the project (but not leading).

ACTION: We will refer this back to Tom Rutherford, and will contact Edmund, Rick, and Chloe re this project.

9:20 Round the table, check-ins and updates.

Please remember if your report out is more than three simple points the secretary will not record it, longer reports must be emailed to secretary or co-chairs.

Parker Jefferson (Stewardship Society, One Cowichan)

- Cowichan Water use plan now underway: public advisory committee has been formed. Many groups working together. Facilitator hired from Vancouver.
- Performance measures being established (as affected by water level and flow)
- Public Advisory Committee (industry, NGOs, citizens) will meet 4x this year and presenting on best possible options, considering changing climate

Klaus Kuhn (Area I Director)

- Wants group to know that he is not against changing things (weir level, etc.) in the watershed
- His concerns are: tax collection from CVRD. Once function is established, local taxpayer is 'on the hook' and taxes are hard to lower.

Haley Guest (Cowichan Estuary Nature Centre)

- Very successful Beer & Burger night
- Feel Good Fridays continues: this Friday Nov 24 in Somenos Marsh
- FREE Dec 2nd Dave Polster workshop on Sea Level Rise: [SEE EVENT HERE](#)

Chloe Boyle (Environmental Services, CVRD Co-op student)

- Regional watershed management strategy and environmental sensitivity kicking off now
- For more info CBoyle@cverd.bc.ca

Paul Rickard (Concerned citizen and self-proclaimed 'fish-centric')

- Has recently come across DFO report "History of Fish Hatcheries in the Province".
- E.g. 1850 there was Chinook hatchery on Cowichan Lake
- At time of counting fence removed, 10,000 fish had passed through
 - o Target: 6500 naturally spawning adults
- Suggested future speaker on Chinook salmon

Rob James (Deep Sea Berth in Cowichan Bay)

- Rezoning application continues to be with CVRD
- Has open offer to visit dock and operations in Cowichan Bay

Rick Bryan (Canoe BC)

- Heavy rains have been good for recreational canoe & kayaking (3 dozen trips!)
- Thankful for well-maintained facilities at parks etc.
- Question to Parker re: does recreation have a voice on recent discussions/decisions on changing water storage/flow

ACTION: Parker will find out by next meeting if recreation voice is on PAC. Genevieve suggests contacting Tom Rutherford re: recreation voice.

Jessica Lines (Acting Area Supervisor, BC Parks)

- Annual Management Plan Session next week: will bring forward issues with footpath in Cowichan River Park

Alistair McGregor (Member of Parliament Cowichan-Malahat-Langford)

- Derelict vessels: presentation in Parliament early Dec. Bill C-64 tackling the problem. Feels it is a good first step.

ACTION: Will notify this group when it is before Parliament

- Has corresponded with Min Leblanc re: weir. Wrote a letter to DFO to make sure they play a leading role, and Min Leblanc responded saying long-term solution **could** be raising the weir. Believes Fed Gov should be partner on this.
- Min Leblanc will introduce legislation to rectify 2012 changes to the Fisheries Act.

- All letters and responses to issues are posted on Alistair's website: <http://alistairmacgregor.ndp.ca/>
- Salmon Farming: Min Leblanc is being pressured by Finn Donnelly and Min Leblanc has acknowledged this is a problem.
- Proposed National Marine Conservation Area (NMCA) Open House last month. James Gordon (Parks Canada Lead) and Lisa Joe (former Penelekut First Nation chief and First Nations lead for this project).

Cameron Hepp (Cowichan Land Trust)

- Habitat Acquisition Trust conservation covenant signed
- 9 weeks of water quality sampling (Cowichan Bay, tributaries, Koksilah), now completed with help from many volunteers a report of which will be available soon (partner with Watershed Board, Cowichan Tribes, DFO, etc.).

Peter Holmes ([Cowichan Bay Ship Watch Society](#)) submitted the following:

- Community members subjected to the effects of noise, lights and smoke from freighters at anchor in Cowichan Bay have been regularly filing complaints with the shipping industry for 7 years.
- CBSWS formed in 2014 and has lobbied MPs, industry, govt. for answers to reasons for ships arriving since 2010
- We have met with industry and govt. officials on many occasions to illustrate the nuisance and risks of these ships. Some key officials have visited Cowichan Bay and other islands to see and hear the effect of these ships first hand and have agreed that they do not belong here.
- We have gained support from many including residents of Gabriola, Pender, Thetis and Valdes islands including first nations and have formed informal alliances with all as well as Georgia Strait Alliance.
- We were invited to participate at the first forum of the Ocean Protections Plan in Vancouver on Nov. 2nd. Where we met key policy makers on these issues. Transport Canada is running this and has allocated a TC official (Vija Poruks) to the anchorages file specifically. There were 120 participants of 8 at a table where discussions took place after each of 6 topics was presented of 50+ topics to review. This process is slated for a 5-year term. We are at the table for those that we are interested in.
- We must all have our say on this \$1.5 billion project at;

<https://letstalktransportation.ca/opp>

The interim protocol for anchorages has just been released for our review and we are in the process of analyzing this document.

Geoff Strong (CERCA)

- In October they had a number of groups visiting the nature trail/open air classroom (U Vic, Cowichan Elder College, Cowichan Secondary)
- Has given dozen talks on climate change talks this Fall. Sees raised interest in this area.
- Last week in Chemainus there was panel discussion on local impacts of climate change
- His message to the Roundtable: The Federal Gov't always balances economy and environment, which will come back to haunt us

Cate McNeil (Sahtlam Neighbourhood Assoc.)

- Non-profit group was created in response to Vancouver Island Motorsport Circuit -VIMC- (noise issue + additional 200 acre development up Mt Provost)

- Status: VIMC has applied for re-zoning application. SNA has 2 lawsuits against VIMC

Pam Jorgenson (Land-Use Forester with Timber West)

- Cowichan Water Use Plan: TW will participate in public group
- Recently completed paving 1.6km near Youbou
- Upgraded 7km of gravel road beyond that

Dave Lindsay (Biologist, Timber West)

- Somenos Lake/Marsh: Good ongoing relationship. Recently transferred ownership of Somenos Lake to Ducks Unlimited. There will be new pathway/viewing platform thanks to 25K donation to Somenos Marsh Society
- Sutton Creek: Helping facilitate & fund a hydrology study there. Bob Crandall leading.
- Tragic news: Logging Truck off road yesterday: contractor passed away.

Barry Hetschko (Board Member, Somenos Marsh Society)

- Viewing platform has finally been funded! Thanks for Timber West. Will be attractor to Marsh.
- Greenway vision from Paul Fletcher for Bings Creek, Menzies Creek, etc. leading to Somenos Marsh. Will work with Sahtlam Neighbourhood Assoc. on this.

Eric Marshall (Cowichan Valley Naturalists)

- Buffleheads and Common goldeneye are present. More birds on North than South side.
- Swan & Goose count: lots of geese (1800), which are more than last year. Comox is reporting more than last year as well.
- CVNS will be running conference in May 2019, hosting BC Nature AGM. This was last done 10 years ago. Expecting ~200 people.

Ken Traynor (Cowichan Laker & Rivers Stewardship Society)

- First meeting! He was chair of Water Board in Qualicum Bay, where they did a historical record of the inflationary value of water rates
- They found that people had been benefitting from the initial investment but not paying presently

Diana Gunderson (Cowichan Laker & Rivers Stewardship Society)

- Shoreline project, CSSP, Craig Wightman is leading/reporting (Admin of Shoreline work)
- Many sites to choose from. Project will likely expand.
- Outreach & Ed: goal of 75 shoreline property owner surveys by Spring 2018
- Lakeview Park proposed logging: issue has been dormant since last year until this week, when they heard it WILL go on by the end of the year.
 - o Area on south shore of Cowichan Lake.
 - o Will be logged soon if no intervention: have met with Sonia (MLA) but haven't heard back

Genevieve: complex situation. CVNS has taken strong opposition to this proposal, but appreciates the fact that Lake Cowichan First Nations has few places in Lake Cowichan available to log. Ted Burns (Fisheries biologist) examined this complex habitat and deemed it significant.

Heather Pritchard (Cowichan Laker & Rivers Stewardship Society)

- Legislation (under former BC Liberal Gov) prevents meaningful community conversation around topics like logging in Lakeview

Genevieve Singleton –

- Has taken over 100 toddlers and 30 adults on salmon walks near Freshwater Fisheries complex in past week
- Cowichan Valley Docents running nature programs in the Fall
- Bring Back the Bluebird project (under CVNS): not applying for HCTF this year. Looking for ways to raise money locally to hire staff for next summer.

- Eagle Heights: progressing slowly but Treasury Board has made a commitment to move ahead. Lost 400,000 in HSP Fed money for not meeting deadline.
- North Cowichan proposed walking bridge over Somenos Creek, Genevieve says that Cowichan Valley Naturalists and Cowichan Valley Docents have concern about increased traffic coming into Somenos Garry Oaks Protected Area, where there are many rare, vulnerable species.
- Budget 85k for bridge design and 1.7million for bridge, CVNS and Docents will be attending NC meeting to say they are opposed.

10:40 Chris Steeger, Lake Cowichan, wildlife biologist, presented "Wildlife in the Cowichan Valley: A Baseline for Stewardship and Conservation"

- 73 species at risk within CVRD (list available to anyone who is interested)
- There is a website (DCD Explorer website) where you can search for plants, animals and ecosystems in BC: <http://a100.gov.bc.ca/pub/eswp/>
- Work has been done in Oregon & Washington to identify Wildlife-Habitat relationships for Columbia River in a database
- Chris is hoping to bring this project to the Cowichan Valley in the future
- A Habitat-Wildlife database can help managers policy makers, and Environmental Assessments by identifying species, habitat types, and ecological functions specific to an area and its uses

Discussion:

- Barry Hetschko recommended including native pollinators in this data base.
- Chloe Boyle recommended CVRD Watershed map

11.45

River Celebration

- Thanks and PowerPoint of River Celebration was presented to Cowichan Tribes Council last week. Genevieve & Parker expressed gratitude and felt it was well received, with interest to repeat event next year.

ACTION: There needs to be decision (next month) about doing this next year. Speak to Genevieve or Parker if you are interested.

12:00 ended promptly.

Upcoming meetings:

Dec. 14, Rick Bryan and Edmund Duggan, Recreational Canoeing Assoc of BC Vancouver Island Whitewater Paddling Assoc., followed by potluck lunch till 1 pm.

Jan. TBA

Feb. 15 TBA

March 15, presentation from Knockback Knotweed committee and Chelsea Toth, Timberwest regarding Timberwest treatments of knotweed

Our meetings are always the third Thursday of the month, with the possible exception of December and summer months. Please remember to submit reports via email if longer than a few points.