

## COWICHAN STEWARDSHIP ROUNDTABLE NOTES

DATE: THURSDAY, MAY 21: **9am to 11:30 pm** Zoom meeting, invite sent by separate email

[www.cowichanstewardship.ca](http://www.cowichanstewardship.ca) questions? [cowichanstewardshiproundtable@gmail.com](mailto:cowichanstewardshiproundtable@gmail.com)

The Roundtable works together in a kind and respectful manner at all times. Please note the Agenda timing is approximate only!

Time	Agenda Item
9:00am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Welcome and acknowledgement that we meet on Coast Salish peoples' land</li> <li>● Appreciation to Tom Rutherford of CWB for hosting our meeting. Tom will explain rules and guidelines for using Zoom.</li> <li>● Regrets: <b>Danielle Paydli, Alistair MacGregor, Tim Kulchyski</b></li> <li>● Attendance: <b>Eric Marshall Cowichan Valley Naturalists' Society , Tom Rutherford Cowichan Watershed Board, Joe Saysell Friends of Cowichan, Barry Hetschko Cowichan Valley Naturalists and Somenos Marsh Society, Dale Desrochers DFO, Geoff Strong climate scientist, Carol Milo Cowichan Valley Naturalists, Pam Jorgenson Mosaic Forests, Melissa Nottingham DFO, Bruce Coates Cowichan Valley Naturalists, Edmond Duggan Paddler Community, Don Hare, Cheri Ayers environmental consultant, Jane Kilthei, John Stewart Cowichan Tribes, Karen Deck Save Our Holmes, Parker Jefferson co-chair and Cowichan Lake River Stewardship Society, Genevieve Singleton co-chair and Nature interpreter, Matthew Pereira, Leroy Van Wieren CVRD, Sandy Cummings Cowichan Lake Stewardship Society</b></li> </ul>
9:10-9:20 CSRT Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Recording of meeting notes is done by members taking turns. Thanks to Karen Deck for taking last month's notes and today's notes.</li> <li>● Update re website: no report available</li> <li>● Payment for Website, Genevieve made a request for reimbursement</li> <li>● Terms of Reference held over till in person meeting.</li> <li>● Future meeting plans, most likely Zoom again in June. Meet in person in July.</li> </ul>
9:20-10:15	<p><b>Round the Table: this part of the meeting will be done in a different format to keep the meeting shorter due to the fact that Zoom fatigue affects the co-chairs, host and participants. Please email or send a 'chat note' when you sign on if you wish to be on the speaker's list. For this meeting we will NOT all be checking in, only if you have something watershed related and have signed up. Speakers will be kept to a time limit. Please remember to be kind and respectful, negativity about other Roundtable members will not be tolerated. We are here to share information.</b></p>

	<p><b>CSRT May 21 Round the Table Notes:</b></p> <p><b>Joe Saysell, Friends of the Cowichan:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposal to close the upper river to drift fishers between January and March was well received by FWRM, and opposed by drift fishers. The decision will be handed down by December, 2020.</li> <li>• The river was flowing at 25 ccm and 80% full on Mon. May 4, went to 50ccm and 110% the following day, but by May 10 was down to 30ccm. All feeder creeks stopped running and will probably necessitate fry rescue within 2 weeks. Joe attributes this dramatic change to logging, noting that intact forests release water steadily. Due to physical distancing requirements, however, fry rescue methods will need to be revised. Dr. Dave Froese is in consultation with Joe on this issue.</li> <li>• Joe is concerned about the riparian zone along Stanley Creek being affected by clearing the surrounding area (near intersection of Highway 18 and South Shore Road). He has written a letter to the Minister of FLNROD. The area has feeder springs that are salmon bearing.</li> <li>• The Greendale trestle culvert under Early Bird Lumber to the river has an oil slick on it. It is unknown as yet where the oil is coming from.</li> <li>• The Trans Canada Trail clearing that was done between Skutz Falls and Greendale and Old Cowichan Road has destroyed the beauty of the trail, but also created hazards for dogs and wildlife. Joe contacted Ian Morrison. Genevieve referred Joe to Brian Farquhar of CVRD 250-746-2500.</li> </ul> <p><b>Coates, Cowichan Valley Naturalists:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The CVNS have also sent a letter to the CVRD re: mowing the Trans Canada Trail.</li> <li>• Review of Forestry Management in North Cowichan Municipal Forests: Lees and Associates have been hired to facilitate communication with the public. This process has been discontinued due to COVID. North Cowichan Municipal District may go ahead with surveys. Bruce is concerned that the lack of education will prevent residents and trail users from making informed comments on surveys.</li> <li>• Creatively United Wednesday webinar had Ian McAllister on Great Bear Rainforest, forestry research and policy.</li> </ul> <p><b>Genevieve Singleton, nature interpreter:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work on knotweed by the Knockback Knotweed Committee in 5 sites in the Koksilah watershed has seen improvement over five years. Persistence and time are key.</li> </ul>
<p><b>10:15-10:25</b></p>	<p>Break</p>
<p>10:25 -11:45</p>	<p><b><u>Leroy Van Wieren, Project Manager for the Weir and Natural Boundary Design and Shoreline Assessment Project Presentation:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funds from the BC Salmon Recovery and Innovation were provided for this project.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provincial and Federal funds targeted for sustainability, innovation and infrastructure also provided</li> <li>• Led by CVRD, co-sponsors are: Cowichan Tribes, Cowichan Watershed Board, Catalyst. \$4 million fund ends March 31, 2022.</li> <li>• The two components of the project (weir and shoreline assessment) will provide a future license holder with information. Finding a license holder and construction funding is managed by others.</li> <li>• Stantec Engineering has been awarded the tender. COVID has had little impact on their work thus far. The design, procurement and tender package will be ready by mid 2021.</li> <li>• Document review and Gap analysis-85% complete (except for geo-technical), Site Assessment Summary – 90% complete, Environmental Technical Data Report – 20% complete, Design Basis Memorandum – 40% complete, Concept Selection Report 10%, Site Geology Model – 10%, Preliminary Design Report 0% (Jan 2021), Final Design Report – 0% (May 2021)</li> <li>• Weir Design Public Engagement Phase 1 – softer engineering (aesthetics, artistry, recreation, fish ladders, boat lock etc.) June 2020 Phase 2 – Share Preliminary Design and address feedback received in May/June November 2020 Phase 3 – Share Final Design April/May 2021</li> <li>• The existing website is being refreshed to provide access to information and surveys: Cowichan Water Use Plan – <a href="http://www.cowichanwup.ca">www.cowichanwup.ca</a></li> <li>• There are 867 lots on 110 km of shoreline, including islands along around Cowichan Lake. The Shoreline Assessment (CLSA)’s purpose is to inform the future water license holder of how the new weir will affect the area between the low water mark and the high water mark, including the riparian area. It would be time and cost prohibitive to assess each property individually, so alternative methods like LIDAR and orthophotography would be used. Work has been done with the Surveyor General, LTSA and FLNROD to look for an acceptable approach. An RFP was issued, will close on May 29, work will start June 2020. The preliminary design will inform modelling and assessments Feb/22</li> <li>• Questions followed: new website collecting information? Yes. What is natural boundary? Leroy read definition. Who is license holder? Catalyst Tom said the logical choice for water license holder is senior government, but they show “extreme disinterest” in taking it on. Next steps? Once proponent is on board, need \$15 million for construction. Old weir needs to be decommissioned and removed.</li> </ul>
10:50-11:30	<p><b><u>Cheri Ayers BioAyers Consultants, Fisheries Biologist presentation on Cowichan Coastal Restoration Fund</u></b></p> <p>Habitat Improvement in the Cowichan/Koksilah Estuary project funded by Cowichan Restoration Fund and DFO grant provided in 2017 \$2.7 million. Purpose? How to restore eelgrass to the estuary</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partners- Cowichan Watershed Board, Cowichan Tribes, BCCF, Sea Change</li> <li>• Studied physical processes: tide and river induced currents, salt/fresh water interaction, wind generated waves, sediment and turbidity, sedimentation patterns</li> <li>• Cheri described methods used to restore flow across and into estuary</li> <li>• In the process of the project, contaminated sediment was found, removed and sent for remediation (molybdenum and hydrocarbons)</li> <li>• Also found historic fish weir posts (220 years old) Cowichan Tribes was involved in spotting, identifying and ensuring the artifacts were saved.</li> <li>• Salmonids were moving through the breach</li> <li>• Creosote ties in the slough were removed</li> <li>• Salt marsh restoration done in Fall 2019 too early to assess results</li> <li>• Riparian restoration with 500 students and others was done</li> <li>• Description of test plot locations of eelgrass planting (5000 shoots in 5 different quadra)</li> <li>• Looked at density in December, results positive, after big storm, less so</li> <li>• Questions that arose? What causes eelgrass loss; sediment or wave action.</li> <li>• Next steps: continue to plant eel grass on north side? wait and collect more data? complexing of long channel? monitor riparian survival-water plants during dry spells</li> <li>• Stoltz Bluff restoration: planting, monitor sediment and turbidity</li> <li>• Riparian: Instream and Riparian in Cowichan and Koksilah Rivers: in 2019,2020 around 4,500 square meters of potted plants and live staking were done.</li> <li>• Questions? More eelgrass planting this spring? Need to find a way to do it while physical distancing, but also need to look at data to find out if it's worth the effort. Riparian work will continue; BCCF is finding a way to travel to sites in a single vehicle and maintain distance.</li> </ul>
11:30	Meeting concluded

**June 18, Kevin Pellett, DFO, update on Cowichan Chinook research and Kate Miller – Drinking Water and Water Protection Plan**

**July 16, annual field day, outdoor location to be announced. Jane Kilthei, of Cowichan Estuary Nature Centre speaking on update of Ecoaction Project. Other speakers to be announced. There will be no barbecue and COVID spacing will occur.**

**Meetings are normally third Thursday of the month, except August.**