

COWICHAN STEWARDSHIP ROUNDTABLE AGENDA

DATE: THURSDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2018: 9am to 12 pm, followed by festive lunch gathering, 12 to 1:30. Location: Fish Health building, Freshwater Fisheries Society, 1080 Wharncliffe Rd, Duncan www.cowichanstewardship.ca

A reminder for new and returning members: Everyone is always welcome. Please feel free to arrive and leave whenever is necessary. Please allow enough room in parking lot for Fish Hatchery vehicles and emergency vehicles, **no parking in yellow painted areas.**

The Roundtable works together in a kind and respectful manner at all times. The first half of the meeting consists of all attenders having a few minutes each of a report out time. Length of individual's speaking time is determined by how many people are in attendance. Longer presentations have to be booked in advance. Our agenda is usually prebooked for several months.

Time	Agenda Item
9:00am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome and acknowledgement that our meeting is on Cowichan Tribes territory. Appreciation to Freshwater Fisheries Society for hosting our meetings. Regrets. Attendance list to be circulated.
9:10am CSRT Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recording of meeting notes is done by members taking turns. Thanks to Eric Marshall for doing November and to Melissa Nottingham for Dec. Update re GIS Story Map, Update re CSRT website, Genevieve Update re Quw'utsun River Celebration, which is being held over to 2019 co-chair positions
9:20am Round Table	Round-table , Round the table, check-ins and updates. Please remember if your report out more than three simple points it must be emailed to secretary or co-chairs
10.30	BREAK
10.40	Matthew Ashdown, Ecodrone Solutions , Underwater Applications of Drones for Stewardship Work
11:05	Rosie Simms, POLIS, Unpacking the Water Sustainability Act: Tools and Opportunities
11:30	Knock Back Knotweed Committee Annual Report Out , Dave Polster, Cheri Ayers, Dave Lindsay, Genevieve Singleton
11:50	Catch up on any items missed.
12	Meeting ends promptly, thank you. Please stay on for lunch, details in email attached.

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

January 17, Kevin Pellett, of DFO, speaking on Cowichan Chinook and other fishy topics.
February 21, Shaun Mason, North Cowichan Forester speaking on NC Forests, other speakers to be confirmed

Meeting Notes

Attendance: Parker Jefferson, Kelly Musselwhite, Bruce Fraser, Jillian Stewart, Jessica Lines, Rick Bryan, Mellissa Nottingham, Brenna Colebank, Edmond Duggan, Bob Crandall, Dave Lindsay, Jack MacNeill, Barry Hetschko, Eric Marshall, Maury Ball, Ryan Hetschko, Dave Preikshot, Genevieve Singleton, Jane Kilthei

Regrets: Cheri Ayers, Tim Kulchyski, Tom Rutherford, Alistair MacGregor, Alicia Hall, Jill Thomson

Regarding CSRT meeting notes: Melissa will take the meeting notes for January 2019 meeting. Need a volunteer for February 2019. Thanks to Pam for doing December notes so promptly!

A. CSRT Business:

GIS story map: Rick/Edmond will be looking at the work, but still some things to evaluate. Project related to Heritage Rivers Society. It is an information about the river that will help identify key aspects about it, places to go, The deadline for feedback is Mid-January. Current map is draft, and not available for wide distribution. **ACTION:** If you are interested, and want to provide feedback, speak to Edmond, Genevieve or Eric to request a copy. Cowichan Tribes is involved too. Not all river sites are appropriate for public sharing.

Website: 159 unique visitors in the past week. >6000 people visited the website in the year. Getting a fair bit of traffic given small group and low levels of publicity. Gillian is willing to help with website in future.

Quw'utsun River Celebration: Agree to hold this fall. Genevieve will go to Cowichan Tribes Council meeting – would like to show the video. Need a discussion about safety etc., around the site. Roughly scheduled for the last weekend of September (28/29). Was held on Saturday last time (10-2). Sunday better? Is Sunday 29 the Orange T-Shirt day? If so, that might be a good theme. Feedback was that there is no preference for Saturday/Sunday.

Co-Chair Positions for CSRT: Up for review. Parker/Genevieve are happy to continue. There is consensus that Parker/Genevieve are doing an excellent job, and the group supports their continuing in their current roles.

B. Roundtable Introductions & Updates:

Parker Jefferson: Meeting at N Cowichan Council yesterday. Motion to pause logging in N Cowichan Municipal Forests. Standing room only! Arguments that intact forests are good for ecotourism; also, ecological services that are provided to community/ecosystem from trees. Continued for 3 hours... Most were opposed to logging in municipally held forests. Councilor also raised that logging is important for the local community economy as well. Second motion to get more information before any decisions are made.

Christine Rikley (BC Parks): In process of designating new property (known as Eagle Heights) as a park. Consulting with Cowichan Tribes first. Management plan for Cowichan River is ongoing – developing TOR with Cowichan Tribes first. Capacity in Cowichan goes down in the winter (Jess will be back in April).

Kelly Musselwhite (Shawnigan Basin Society): First meeting! Put forward a budget/business proposal to get funds reinstated for 2019. Working to change the face of Shawnigan (away from the SIA fight), and into a more proactive/collaborative strategy. Looking at milfoil – alive and thriving! Determine through observation that there is 100% coverage around perimeter of lake (except for where conditions prevent it). Using this to spur public involvement/recognition of the invasive species. CRD is using a special system in Beaver Lake to address eutrophic systems. Think it might be beneficial to control milfoil in Shawnigan. Want to do a proper field trial in the New Year.

Dave Preikshot – fisheries biologist identified a few challenges with such a system related to chemistry/conditions in the system.

Bruce Fraser (SBS): Also working on some partnerships with TW. Looking at long-term consequences of climate change/population pressures, etc. TW plans on a rotational basis (>50 years). Perhaps communities need to think about rotation-length planning, and how things shift and change over longer time periods. Want to establish a conversation with local governments with these types of timeframes in mind. How to address jurisdictional/legislative/scientific challenges over these broader timeframes. Calling for the group to encourage the CVRD/provincial govt take this broader view and move it forward.

Brennan Colebank (Steelhead Distillery): First meeting! Very interested in the fishing community. Has been involved with stream keepers in past. Is an owner of a new business in the Valley (just over a year old). Wants to find a project in the community that they can donate some funds/time to. Interested in habitat restoration, boots on the ground work, etc. Chaster Road (location of business).

Jillian Stewart (Rivers Day): Interested in being more involved in Rivers Day in 2019.

Jessica Lines (BC Parks): Cowichan River footpath is getting an assessment done – looking at facilities. Hoping it will be replaced in next couple of years. The TCT had a washout area; currently closed and highly unstable. Engineers are studying the bank and for erosion (1km west of Holt Creek Trestle).

Rick Bryan (Paddlesport Community): River-wide log jammed at the top of Burnt Bridge drop. Keeping an eye on it. Hoping it will wash out. Paddling community has been advised.

Melissa Nottingham (DFO): Chum 181,151 (target was 160,000); coho 3,052 (prelim – not forecast), Chinook 14,460. Pink 24, 0 sockeye. Hatchery has taken brood for year. Has lots of eggs. Returns were 8.1% hatchery returns; 5% hatchery for jacks. Want to see higher numbers in future. Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson is making an announcement re clean, economic growth in fisheries industry. He will be touring Cowichan and Coastal Rest Fund project here today. In last 10 years coho good run would be ~20,000.

Edmond Duggan (Paddling): provided an update on the website and GIS story (see above). [Group is thankful for his contributions.]

Bob Crandall (CLSES): Recently removed river-wide logs in Cowichan River at 222 Greendale Road (just below trestle walk over bridge). Preparing eggs for delivery to classrooms for incubation programs. January 8 -10 will be delivery dates working with Christy and Melissa (DFO) on these deliveries. Planning stages for stream enhancement on Beadnall Creek and Sutton Creek. Removing gravel/logs jams and reconnecting flows/habitat (19-mile Creek). Have a 5-year licence/plan (Sutton Creek) from Crown Lands Tenure for gravel (mineral extraction) and CVRD is now involved as lead partner. Plans for gravel and log jam extractions on other streams are underway. - Cowichan Lake Salmonid Enhancement Society & Hatchery (CLSES) 250-715-7074

Dave Lindsay (retired Forester): Doing some volunteer work on knotweed and is sitting on advisory committee for North Cowichan forest. Since there is a new council in N Cowichan and a high level of public interest regarding NC municipal forests he is expecting that the forestry staff and forestry advisory committee will be engaged heavily in upcoming discussions around harvest in the N Cowichan Municipal forests. TEK knowledge needs to be involved in upcoming decisions. Not a great deal of public understanding around how forestry is practiced in the municipal lands – need to do a better job of communicating. (Shaun Mason – (manager of NC forests) will be coming to speak at the February meeting.) Recreation specialists/visual assessments will be completed along with ecological inventories by local consultants.

Jack MacNeill (Sahtlam Neighborhood Assoc): Litigation against Van Island Motorsport Circuit is continuing. Community is concerned about Phase 2 expansion. Serves as alternate area director for Area E. Will see if Allison Nicholson can attend next meeting.

Pam Jorgenson (TimberWest): TimberWest and Island Timberlands affiliation will be formally rolling out in 2018. Still lots of work and alignment to take place. If you have any questions about activities on the lands under the new model, contact Pam for help to direct questions.

Barry Hetschko (Somenos Marsh): Thanks to those at the Roundtable. Volunteers for Bring Back the Bluebird project – finding bluebirds up until late last week. Got some band id's and will be sending them in.

Dave Preikshot (SMWS): Reports for N Cowichan (parrotfeather in Somenos Creek) – available to public in January. Will be public meetings to Council on work to get a handle on it – some strategies for managing. Report for CWB on water quality monitoring work – 2017 available to public soon. Water quality function of CVRD will allow more of this good work to continue. Can likely scale up the number of sites that are a part of the project. Somenos Marsh undergoing some structural changes. Greenway Project – how do corridors in the Somenos Basin deliver ecosystem/human services? Coming up with a plan that examines tradeoffs (first looking at Bing's Creek – expansion of development and racetrack – how they impact water flow/quality). Need to address coho/steelhead/rainbow habitat – how has development affected water movement and storage. Hoping to fold this type of project to other creeks as well.

Genevieve Singleton CSRT co-chair): Genevieve/Christy/Dave did salmon walks with toddlers. Bright Angel Park was a good place to go with school groups (but must be cautious with high water). Hope for more interpretation walks in the Cowichan River in future (piggyback on Goldstream type programs?) Thanks to Barry H for helping to set up each meeting. April 7 for Beer and Burger Fundraiser (Bring Back the Bluebird). Cowichan Valley Naturalists are hosting BC Nature AGM at Ramada, May 2 to 5. This event will be bringing Naturalists from all over the province. We are actively looking for special donations for the Silent Auction. City of Duncan is taking a review of MacAdam Park (where these meetings are held) – many things being considered. Habitat here is important for salmon. Survey is available – deadline of Dec 17 – but not a hard stop. **Please participate.** Could be good to raise awareness of value of habitat. Become an interpretive area? Duncan planner will potentially come and speak at the meeting in future. [Handout/survey circulated].

Eric Marshall (CVNS) - Big flock of Western Grebe's – well over 300 (in Cowichan Bay). Flock extended well beyond the shore. Swan count: 250 – lower than anticipated (relatively small proportion are immature ~ 10%) Goose count: 1000 (expected numbers). Involved in the GIS Story map and is continuing the work.

Murray Ball (Grad Student/UVIC) – hoping to volunteer/research work for CWB. Also developing a project around governance/Indigenous Law in the Cowichan.

Ryan Hetschko (Bluebird Project (past staff perons): Pleased to check in.

Jane Kilthei (Cowichan Estuary Nature Center): Said farewells to Hailey. They have a new coordinator (Alicia Taylor) – she may be present at the next meeting. They also have an expanded team of educators. Doing more bird walks and bird related programming in the estuary – they may reach out to some of the CSRT members on this. Hoping to offer more programming to kids (doing more in schools, etc., and in collaboration with CWB). One Cowichan – keeping an eye on new Council and the new Drinking Water Service: Is there a risk of taking away existing funding for bodies like the CWB? Want to ensure those good things that are underway don't disappear.

Jill Thompson (CWB)

I am sorry not to attend but a last-minute visit by the Minister of Fisheries with Cowichan Tribes has come up.

Updates from Cowichan Watershed Board: The meeting with BC Ministers and CWB co-chairs re weir and licensing did not happen. MLA Fursteneau to work at rescheduling for January. Chief Seymour met with Nicola Nation Chief about their water governance pilot project with BC. Good meeting...lots to share. They will come here in spring to visit Cowichan territory. New CWB members will be announced early Jan (following CVRD elections) Watershed service.

Kate is working on a first-year budget to present to council in Jan. The first year will include process for consultation and planning for long term.

Alistair MacGregor/Jennifer Hermary (by email): Alistair hand delivered a letter to New Minister of Oceans and Fisheries asking for direct federal funding for the raising of Lake Cowichan weir. Alistair will be holding a series of public meetings regarding a National Clean Energy Plan in March and is looking for panelist to discuss their expertise on the issue. If anyone is interested, please have them contact the office: 250-746-4896

C. Presentation: Underwater Drones Matthew Ashdown – EcoDrone Solutions

- done lots of aerial mapping using drones. Interested in working with the conservation community/projects.
- Lots of potential application with underwater drones.
- tethered submarine can operate up to 100m depth in lakes/ivers. No delay in remote controls (unit can be 100m away (horiz) from operator. Has a powerful light that can be adjusted for dark conditions. Works alongside divers effectively. Costs around \$3000 for the unit, including the tether, but not including the iPad. (Unit: Gladius from Chasing Innovations)
- takes photos/video. Get auto playback (livestream) if desired, and can send to others in other locations live. Fairly steady video imagery. Can also use the images to make underwater maps (development still ongoing on this application).
- heavy flow/currents can limit operability. Can reverse if needed – not too many situations they haven't been successful in.
- works in salt water (has buoyancy controls) too.
- no GPS capability yet. Expect fast evolution of technology.
- becoming more common, even in recreational community. Ministry of Env and Transport Canada are important in the conversations (right now they aren't heavily involved in regulating the underwater technology).
- rate: \$100/hour (2 operators plus drone)
- three hour run time on the 'on board' battery. The tether also gets charged.
- potential application with Cowichan Tribes (Tim K) to help with fish counts. (Contact Genevieve for details)
- could also support floating homes/insurance applications
- possibility for sensors on the unit to measure water properties (temp/chemistry...)

D. Presentation: State of Play for Fresh Water in BC: trends and opportunities Rosie Simms – Polis Water Sustainability Project

Trends/Opportunities/Barriers

- Province has a role to protect water on behalf of the public
- water isn't a specific line item in any mandate letters – modest commitments to water
- Policy recently released report: Taking the Pulse: BC Freshwater Policy Monitor. How well has the province implements its fresh water commitments over the past 10 years? Living Water Smart – made in 2008. Is province's commitment for fresh water. Came from Premier's office (not just a single dept issue)

-did an anonymous review: 8/45 commitments can be considered achieved: Big achievement = new Water Sustainability Act; groundwater licensing; critical flows. 11/45 In progress (see slide).
-14/45 = minimal progress. State of water reporting; measuring and reporting of water use; drinking water protection (not broadly improved across province although some regional improvements).
-12/45 = not enough info. Improvements in water use efficiency; success of conservation technology.

-indirect links to improving targets: salmon/reconciliation/drinking/source protection/land use planning/...

-Act has promising new tools, but haven't really seen them put into effect yet. Essentially still just a framework.

-Current groundwater users are getting transitioned into the new regulatory regime for licensing. Slow uptake. But regulatory amendments are in place for some big items like livestock watering and pacer mining water use.

-Hullcar aquifer pilot – review was done to assess situation and come up with recommendations

-Watershed Governance Pilot – Nicola Valley. Co-governance by Province + 5 Nicola First Nations. MOU signed spring 2018. Chance to test new WSA provisions.

-Recent response to VIWWC pointed to: professional reliance regs; collaborative stewardship framework and environmental Stewardship initiatives: vehicle for collab with Indigenous government and communities.

-WSA = phased approach. 'several years at a minimum'.

-Key to continue good local works in the near term as things evolve.

Local govt and watershed groups –

9 UBCM resolutions related to water/waterway: province to support local watershed governance

Watershed Services –

CVRD achievement. RDN has a 10-year review of its program – make a case for what they've achieved.

Reconciliation in Action. CWB is an excellent example.

Indigenous groups are taking a lead in many communities; at the forefront of water stewardship.

Public Opinion Poll on Water –

9/10 respondents = water is BC most precious resource & a public resource

Pride in water as living and thriving

Needs of communities should take precedence

87% = we will face a serious problem if things don't improve re water resource

management

What is needed: stronger leaders; stricter laws; better land use planning

Key water asks for 2019 and beyond:

-advance reconciliation for freshwater planning and decision-making

-place water at the center of a modern strategic land use planning regime

-build a BC Water and Climate Resiliency Strategy

-Provide resources to implement the innovative policy/mgmt. tools need to protect freshwater

-Develop a provincial strategy for water monitoring, data, compliance and enforcement (including industry use – Oil & gas?)

*Groups like CSRT can help advance these asks, for ex:

-look into Canadian Freshwater Alliance

-anything to elevate Asks to government

*Rosie will send link on West Coast Env Law – regarding how federal legislation has been revived under current government

E. Presentation: Addressing Knotweed in the Cowichan Valley
Knockback Knotweed Committee: Cheri Ayers/Dave Lindsay/Dave Polster/Genevieve Singleton

- knotweed is a threat in Cowichan – will outcompete riparian veg resulting in bank erosion.
- tried repeated pulling by a team of committed volunteers to see if it could make a difference. This does, but takes years and lots of hands on labour. CVRD supported some new projects in Bright Angel Park (helped with a grant).
- seeds can stay viable in water for up to 1 month, and lots of seed floating around.
- experts say (if no herbicide), should be cutting and following up with hand pulling (no digging). Regularly pulling every few weeks over a number of years. Cautiously optimistic that this works.
- debris gets double bagged and out to Bings for disposal
- how to handle bigger patches?
- received a grant from Heritage Rivers to host a small expert led workshop (30 people max) in January. By end of the day, plan to come up with a collaborative 'made in Cowichan plan' – looking at all the options. Cowichan Tribes will be highly involved, and solutions would go back through their government for approval.