

COWICHAN STEWARDSHIP ROUNDTABLE AGENDA

DATE: THURSDAY, MAY 16, 2019: 9am to 12 pm Location: Fish Health building,
Freshwater Fisheries Society, 1080 Wharncliffe Rd, Duncan
www.cowichanstewardship.ca

We meet on the unceded lands of Cowichan Tribes. 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**. Please bring a coffee cup.

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 Unceded 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. Thank you to Ken Clements for doing April notes. Hannah Hall of CVNS, Bring Back the Bluebird Project will do May Looking for a volunteer for June. Update re CSRT website, etc. Edmond Duggan Update re Quw'utsun River Day Celebration, Saturday, September 28, 10-3, Tim and Genevieve
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	Richard Lake of Sidney Anglers Assoc. speaking on New Information on the Movement and Importance of Cowichan Chinook in the Salish Sea
11:15	Hannah Hall and Braden Judson, Cowichan Valley Naturalists Bring Back the Bluebirds Project update
11:50	Catch up of missed items.
12	Meeting ALWAYS ends promptly, thank you. Please help with cleanup of room.

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

June 20: Kenzie Cuthbert, river fishing guide, one other speaker TBA

July 18, Roundtable annual field meeting, 9 -2, Stolz Pool, Cowichan River Provincial Park, picnic barbecue, please be in touch if you have presentation ideas

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Time	Agenda Item
9:00am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Welcome and acknowledgement that our meeting is on Unceded Cowichan Tribes territory. ● Appreciation to Freshwater Fisheries Society for hosting our meetings. ● Attendees: Parker Jefferson (One Cowichan); Hannah Hall and Braden Judson (Bring Back the Bluebird Project, CVNS); Christine Rikley (BC Parks); Bob Crandall (CLSES); Richard Lake, Grant MacPherson and Ken Clements (Sidney Anglers); Rick Bryan (paddlesports); Joe Saysell (Friends of the Cowichan); Ken Traynor (CLRSS); Jennifer Hermary (MP Alistair MacGregor); Ian Morrison (CVRD); Jack MacNeill (Sahtlam N. Association) Barry Hetschko (SMWS); Geoff Strong (Atmospheric Scientist); Eric Marshall (CVNS); Cheri Ayers (BioAyer Consultants); Genevieve Singleton (nature interpreter); Tracy Fleming (Cowichan Tribes); Edmond Duggan (Paddlers) ; Jane Kilthei (Cowichan Estuary Nature Centre); Jim and Karen Deck – (Youbou Save our homes society); Martha Lescher (One Cowichan) ● Regrets. Pam Jorgenson (Mosiatic), Stephanie Cottrell (Cowichan Land Trust), Tom Rutherford (CWB) Melissa Nottingham (DFO); Tim Kulchyski (Cowichan Tribes); Christopher Justice; Dave Priekshot <p>Common Acronyms: BCCF BC Conservation Foundation, BCWF BC Wildlife Federation, CERCA Cowichan Estuary Restoration and Conservation Association, CLSES Cowichan Lake Salmonid Enhancement Society, CLRSS Cowichan Lake River Stewardship Society, CT Cowichan Tribes, CVNS Cowichan Valley Naturalists' Society, CVRD Cowichan Valley Regional District, CWB Cowichan Watershed Board, DFO Department of Fisheries and Oceans, TW Timberwest</p> <p>Please let us know of other ones that are missing.</p>

<p>9:10am CSRT Business</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recording of meeting notes is done by members taking turns. Thank you to Ken and Robin Clements of Sidney Anglers for April. Cheri Ayers will do May and Hannah Hall will do June. We will need someone to take notes of highlights at July Field Day.• Update re Quw'utsun River Day Celebration, Saturday, September 28, 10-3, Genevieve
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**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

- **Pam Jorgenson, Mosaic** (read out due to Pam being unable to attend) We are grateful for the rain! Last weekend a forest fire started adjacent to our lands in Sayward, and spread into our forest. We ended up deploying two helicopters to address the fire, and by Monday morning it was fully under control. Though this group is well aware, we would like to remind everyone to remember the dry conditions in the forests. We had crossover conditions (where temperature is equal to or above relative humidity) many times throughout the past week, which tell us that forest fire behaviour could be quite severe, were things to flash up. Because of this we closed many of our gates last weekend. We hope to have many of those gates open again this weekend, thanks to the rain in recent days.
Thanks to everyone for respecting these dry conditions and being cautious while recreating in the woods.
- **Stephanie Cottell, Cowichan Land Trust** (read out due to Stephanie being unable to attend)- Best Water Ways Watershed Literacy, Stewardship, and Restoration Place-based learning project resources (piloting in schools this fall); our partner project with the Somenos Marsh Wildlife Society: Somenos and Quamichan Clean Water Action Project (Lakekeepers workshop will be happening in late July, final dates To be determined\ Rack cards to be distributed around the region); Covenant monitoring and land acquisition initiatives; Grant writing to fund new and exciting ideas around networking with Youth to engage active restoration; I should mention we are in the midst of a May Membership drive. If you subscribe to our e-newsletter, The Steward, you are probably already aware of this! If you wish to renew or become a CLT member, please visit <http://www.cowichanlandtrust.ca/help/>; Always happy to provide more info for those keen to know more about what we are up to! 250-46-0227 | stephanie@cowichanlandtrust.ca
- **Tom Rutherford, CWG** (read out due to Tom being unable to attend) I have meetings in the morning with Chief Seymour and Chair Morrison and then a noon meeting at the legislature in Victoria so I won't be able to make the CSRT meeting. Please pass my regrets on to those in attendance and let them know that representatives from Cowichan Tribes, CVRD, CWB and Paper Excellence are working hard on a proposal for next steps on Cowichan Weir. Deadline end of next week so that's my focus for the next few days.....
- **Joy Wade ,Fundy Aqua Services** (read out due to Joy not being able to attend) There will not be any Cowichan Lamprey spawning work this summer as the water is too low. As of May 15th, the alluvial fans are approx. 15% covered at best and the water that is there is shallow. Spawning surveys would be to stressful for the fish already and they do not want to get data that are hard to interpret.

- **Parker Jefferson (One Cowichan)**– committee for river flows – Catalyst is very confirmed, currently scheduled to run late August to 0cms and pumping needed. Looking at going to 4.5cm by the end of May but most sensitive time of the year for salmon health. Spending our bank account at 15cms to help salmon fry get safely out of the river and into the ocean. Catalyst is very concern about pumping due to costs and other factors. Pumping also will bring lake levels down. CT still needs to agree and consent to flow going down to 4.5cms. If we go down now we will lock in the mortality that will happen. We are holding hopefully until the end of May.
- **Joe Saysell (Friends of the Cowichan)** - DFO would like to go down to 10 potentially as a compromise. Decision will happen around the 22nd. Once we are past the 20th of May less concern for smolts. Should be very minimal 10 to June and then to 7 as a minimum.
- **Hannah Hall (CVNS)** – Bring back the bluebird project – so far we have at least 9 individuals (less than last year) 6 nesting pairs (3 nests) so far all nests are doing well. 2 have 6 eggs, hoping to hatch by end of week-end. 3rd nest still laying. Hoping that more will show up or to have reports from other areas of sightings. Beer and Burger made about \$4000. , thank you to all who supported us! August 12th volunteer appreciation day.
- **Braden Judson (CVNS)** – first month with project. Presented at Garry Oak symposium in Victoria. Where Genevieve won the Golden Acorn award for volunteerism in assisting with protecting Eagle Heights and working on the Bluebird Project. Presented to grade 4 students that looked at blue birds and Garry oak ecosystem.
- **Christine Rikley – BC Parks** – full swing getting ready for the long week-end. Ranger has started. Provincial parks enhancement funds offers regional funds to partner groups - \$40K max of \$5K for stewardship activities in Parks. Update on Stoltz – wells in park will mean a boil water in the park. Group site, bank eroded so new parking area will be built this month. Existing disturbed area will be used. There has been the addition of the indigenous name to the name of John Dean park with the word LAU,WELNU on the initiative of local indigenous students. BC Parks going smoke free except for designated sites all year round (tobacco, vapes and cannabis)
- **Jane Kilthei– Cowichan Estuary Nature Centre** – school programs in full swing. Bringing a team of youth to work in the estuary. Also getting organized for summer camps. Will have a youth leadership and training on the 2nd of July. Focus is to give skills for working in the watershed, and climate change actions along with hands one in the watershed. Still have one position for a summer camp leader. Last month became their own charitable non-profit. Looking for volunteers to assist our educators. Low Tide day June 7th in Cowichan Bay at Kilpahlas Beach, lots of hands on citizen science etc. Hair cutting fundraiser by Jim to allow for more scholarships, web-cam etc. Raised over \$7.5K.

- **Martha Lescher – volunteer for One Cowichan** – End of Ice – Darh Jamal – 7-9:30PM Thursday June 6th at ISC. Charge up festival held this year to showcase businesses etc. that are forging a fossil fuel future likely in September to co-inside with Cowichan Climate Summit.
- **Sheila Paul – CERCA** – nothing to report this week.
- **Jim Deck – Youbou Save our homes society**
- **Karen Deck – Youbou Save our homes society** – haven't heard a lake referred to as a storage system before. We are worried about the impact of logging on freshwater and watersheds. Forests are storage systems for lakes
- **Bob Crandall – CLSES and hatchery** – releasing fish and colonizing. Our water supply only lasts until the June so hopefully will have fish out. Also do lots of fry salvage. Back in March, Meades Creek dried completely. Brian Riddell – low flow in March can mean up to 80% of fry wiped out. When wet years we will see almost down to 20% mortality. Finding what they think are spring run fry in particular pools, sending DNA samples to DFO. 11-12cm fish which are very large compared to what they are usually seeing. This could be the early run that may stay in one year.
- **Rick Bryan – paddlers** – leave no trace when paddling. When river is flowing at 15cms tandem boats still can go down river, after that declining opportunities. Disturbed that lakes and rivers are being thought of as a resource rather than for themselves. Rivers and Lakes are part of our heritage. Canada has more lakes and rivers than any other on the planet. Rivers were extremely important to First Nations and road and highways. Canoes and kayaks perfected the design of these. Exciting to hear about re-constructing a weir on the river. Paddle society is fully behind this. Also supported CVRD function for watershed management. River management has started to include white water paddlers and that has helped planning. Public advisory Group didn't include white water paddlers nor from broad recreation sector. Still no opportunity to be involved in the engineered plans and planning for weir. Would like to have some input into that. Would like to see inclusion of a play feature in the weir design.
- **Grant McPherson – Sidney Anglers** – Anglers are participating in outreach programs and have been partners on the Cowichan for many years. To see now that there is a weir project going ahead is great news. Have \$20K for DNA samples from Sidney Anglers
- **Ken Clements – Sidney Anglers** – samples being completed for DNA

- **Joe Saysell -Friends of the Cowichan**– working on the weir, meetings with Ministers, can't assume weir project is going ahead until it is done. Also working on gathering fry, we have not found that early March low water results in high mortality rates. Finding chinook smolts that are very big at least 200 fry from one pocket. Fry are in very good shape at the moment, contributing it to high water in the river in April. Once flow goes down to 15cms insect life is affected. If we ever do get the weir, we have to try to keep the water as high as we can in the spring. A lot of people don't realize that above 70.2 mile trestle to the weir is where the majority of the salmon spawn. But that part of the river is open for fishing, fly fishing only area. New fly fisherman want to wade into the river and disturb the redds. They are then walking on the redds. Indicator redds where steelhead were spawning but now for 5 years no pairs spawning due to fisherman walking on them. Looking at getting 5 signs made to educate the fishers about the redds and not fishing for dark fish.
- **Tracy Fleming – Cowichan Tribes** – attended at Tim's request since he is working on a funding proposal this morning so couldn't be here. CT working on Koksilah issues such as seasonal summer drought on the Koksilah River. Working with CVRD on drainage issues in Koksilah Industrial Park. Climate Action Fund and BC Salmon Restoration Fund application. Applying for 4.5M to help build the new weir. For over a year now have had an engagement coordinator hired for the National Marine Conservation Areas Reserve with Parks Canada. First Nations are working together to lead the discussion. The NMCAR is still at the Feasibility Stages. Work with BCCF in Cowichan Bay and estuary to look at log boom tenures to look at seal predation on chinook from log booms. Researchers from UVIC also involved. Cowichan River Park Management Planning has started. Working on TUS and economic studies. Marine territory foreshore rights and title related to marine foreshore tenure applications. Trying to work with Province to come up with accommodation measures.
- **Ken Traynor – CLRSS** – 20mm of rain in Lake Cowichan over last 2 days. Cowichan Stewardship Shoreline project – 12 projects riparian restoration, Upper river clean-up schedule for August 18th co-insides with Lake Cowichan 75th birthday. Paper Excellence has sponsored that weekend and will offer tours and discussion on the weir. Calling it watershed day.
- **Jennifer Hermary – MP Alister MacGregor** – did meet with Min Wilkinson about the Cowichan River and pressed him to commit federal funding to raise the weir and feds taking out the licence. Ministered referred him to the Salmon Innovation Fund. Increasing protections to our wild pacific salmon. Next Tuesday welcoming Nathan Cullen to the riding, drop in at Serious Coffee to talk about the zero waste act (packaging rules)

- **Ian Morrison – CVRD** – heading to the Federation of Municipalities meeting – lots of cabinet ministers in attendance – will take initiatives to UBM – deadline for resolutions coming up for consideration in the fall; Met with Chief Seymour etc. re: weir – sending \$4.5 M – have been invited to submit a proposal after the letter of intent. Engineering work, determination of natural boundary and public consultation. Western Stevedoring going to CVRD board on the 22nd. Also an active rezoning file for Little Beach if it goes forward it will provide some additional lands to allow better access. Honeymoon Bay well 2 proceeding. Sprinkler protection unit for wildfire has now been purchased by the CVRD.
- **Jack McNeil – Satlam** – neighbourhood plan, working on clean-up of hydro lines and Mosaic; Vancouver Island Race Track – they are now doubling down on the existing facility to re-zone to allow tripling of the track size. North Cowichan has conducted their own environmental study. Hoping that DNC has learned from the mistakes of the past. Will be decided this summer.
- **Barry Hetschko - SMWS**– 3 weeks ago Braden, Derek and Barry checked Somenos bird boxes. 18 swallow nests, also doing water monitoring on the lake. Dave Preikshot – breach into Bings Creek wall of water went down the creek. High flows and turbidity on the 10th of May early afternoon. Time series of flow data on Bings Creek. Temp and discharge increases. Upper reaches of Bings appeared to have cleared by Saturday morning. Provincial authorities were contacted but no samples taken. No evidence of dead fish found.
- **Jeff Strong** – Been away so listening today
- **Eric Marshall CVNS** - Osprey nesting, purple martins flying around, 20-30 herons on mudflats, BC Nature Conference was a success.
- **Edmond Duggan** - Taking care of web-site can see the last 5 posts from the CSRT, need to get all partners on web-site. Youth paddling in April was a success. May is invasive species month, clean drain dry program for paddlers last year, presenting this month.
- **Cheri Ayers – BioAyer Consultants** – breach of WesCan Road and historic railway grade completed end of Feb/first week of March. Lots of delays but in the end the project worked out well. Large school of Chum fry seen swimming through. Monitoring for fish usage starting this week coming; eelgrass suitability mapping done and pilot sites identified; will be ground truthing pilot sites in June and hopefully planting some eelgrass in late June, also continuing to monitor flows under Pimbury and Clemclem bridges as well as monitoring of sediment in the estuary.
- **Mauve McGuire – MLA Sonja Furstenau**. Push on stop to old growth logging, and Shawnigan Contaminated Sediments issue.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genevieve Singleton (CVNS) Brought forward concern re reduction in budget for CVRD parks funding this year. Alarmed that this will be difficult to increase funds in future years. She is very busy with providing nature walks around the valley.
<p>10.30</p>	<p>BREAK</p>
<p>10.40</p>	<p>Richard Lake of Sidney Anglers Assoc. speaking on New Information on the Movement and Importance of Cowichan Chinook in the Salish Sea.</p> <p>Richard Lake, Grant and Ken that have come up from Sidney to be part of the CSRT. Avid Anglers program – 40 fishers in the St of Georgia since 2012. 9 or 10 from Sidney Anglers – catch fish that are recorded and sample taken for DNA analysis. 2018 caught 100 chinook for sampling and kept 4. One of the things we have as a condition of participating there is full public access of the data for the program. Analysis by Richard has not been reviewed by DFO. Today’s discussion doesn’t include 2018 data that has been reviewed by DFO. The most important stock in the S of G are the Cowichan stocks. Mostly the Cowichan fish stay in the Strait. These are the fish that are the basic mainstay of the northern Strait. It is the Cowichans which is the largest stock that the recreational fishers harvest. Derby data is specific to one day with certain number of boats. 37 of the fish were from Puget Sound, one from Columbia and only one from the Cowichan (small hatchery fish). Prediction for coming year 2019 might not be quite as high a run size as 2016-2017. Exploitation rate is approx. 60% on the Cowichan. Large number caught during closure period so if closure this year then this could increase the amount of fish returning. Projecting if exploitation rate drops by a third would mean an escapement increase to 21K. May be an angler opening this year in area 18 for fishing.</p> <p>Within sample more recently getting a higher number of clipped Cowichan fish. Question about why hatchery returns are increasing 4-5% of hatchery fish returning. Richard provided graphs that analyzed the percentage of Cowichan Fish by size and year.</p>

<p>11:15</p>	<p>Hannah Hall, Braden Judson, Bring Back the Bluebirds Project update</p> <p>Blue birds are secondary cavity nester – can’t excavate their own holes. High competition for the hole. Nesting holes are sparsely distributed, bluebirds being out competed by invasive species or tree loss.</p> <p>Insectivorous, primarily eat ground dwelling invertebrates. In winter supplement with berries, such as juniper or here arbutus berries.</p> <p>Weave cup shaped nests from grasses. Nests are much smaller than robins. Nests are tidy and tight with just grasses.</p> <p>Declines began by the 1950s, blue bird habitats were being lost, invasives and development. On VI bluebirds were gone by 1990s. Syd Watts and Trudy Chatwin were believed to see the last pair of bluebirds on Mt. Tzouhalem – he started nest boxes. Loss of habitat, introduced house cat pose a significant threat as well as European house sparrow.</p> <p>Loss of Garry Oak habitat due to human development.</p> <p>Project goal = restoring a self-sustaining, breeding population of Western bluebirds to their former range in the Salish Sea.</p> <p>Cowichan project is in the center of the Garry Oak range, close to other San Juan project and in the center of the traditional range.</p> <p>Nest box program – put up 250 boxes installed in the valley in suitable areas.</p> <p>Translocated birds for 4 years from San Juans to Cowichan Valley. Put in large aviary with lots of nest boxes and feed them, release and hope they will stay and nest.</p> <p>Band nestlings with colour combo of bands to monitor population.</p> <p>Trail monitoring community – adopt trail, maintain boxes, check on species nesting in the boxes.</p> <p>Blue birds will likely always be conservation dependent because they are relying on boxes so will need volunteers. Also have training workshops and year end appreciation event. The naturalists donated 2500 hours at least of time.</p> <p>House sparrows are an issue – working on deterrents.</p> <p>Meal worms are also provided – this is a huge amount of work. Ted Leischner growing meal worms for the flock. Helps to decrease time females wait before starting a new clutch.</p> <p>Declines started after translocations were stopped. More translocations are needed.</p> <p>Gary Slater, Eco-studies institute in Washington reviewing long-term data. Will need to have a critical mass of birds to be sustainable.</p> <p>Community Engagement is amazing – helps increase the wider knowledge of the ecosystem and blue bird habitats.</p> <p>Future – continue long-term success of project including engagement, expanding if project starts to look successful.</p>
<p>11:50</p>	<p>Catch up. Some arrangements re River day last Friday in September</p>
<p>12</p>	<p>Meeting ALWAYS ends promptly, thank you. Please help with cleanup of room.</p>

June 20: Kenzie Cuthbert, river fishing guide and Clay Reitsma, NC

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