

## **Cowichan Stewardship Roundtable (CSRT) Jan. 20, 2026**

### **Attendance:**

Genevieve Singleton (Cowichan Stewardship Roundtable (CSRT))  
Jill Thompson (Cowichan Watershed Board)  
Barry Hetschko (Cowichan Estuary Nature Centre)  
David Munday (Shawnigan Basin Society)  
Galen McMenamin (CVRD)  
Katie Mosewich (CVRD)  
Joe Saysell (Friends of the Cowichan)  
Francis Guyver (Mosaic Forestry Management)  
Colleen Terlein (Somenos Marsh Wildlife Society)  
Eduardo Sousa (Cowichan Tribes)  
Bernie Juurlink (SBS)

### **Attending Online:**

Bruce Coates (Nature Cowichan)  
Julia Kidder (CWB)  
Parker Jefferson (CSRT)

### **Regrets:**

Tom Rutherford (Cowichan Watershed Board)

### **9:00-9:20 am**

1. We are hosted on Cowichan Tribes continuously occupied, unceded territory
2. Appreciation to Fish Health staff and Freshwater Fisheries Society for the use of their meeting room and for providing Zoom access.
3. Attendance list to be sent around. Regrets to be included.
4. Appreciation for help for the day
5. Review of notes. Thanks to Ellery for taking notes at the last meeting.
6. Website. Thanks to Sarah Mullock for keeping this updated. Shaw customer concerns, website etc.
7. Update re Quw'utsun Sta'lo' Skweyul Sept. 21, 2026 – Looking at September 20 or 27 as the preferable date, Genevieve passed around a sign-up sheet for this interested in participating in the planning of this year's event.
8. Letter received from a resident. The letter is looking at restoring and preserving private land – this was forwarded to the Cowichan Land Trust, who has responded.
9. Additions to agenda?

### **9:20-10:40 Round the Table**

Please update us on your activities. Everyone introduces themselves with name and affiliation (it is not necessary to have one) and provides an update of watershed related activities, if they wish. Please remember to be kind and respectful, negativity about other Roundtable members will not be tolerated. We are here to share information.  
**Everyone is welcome at our meetings.**

### **Genevieve Singleton (CSRT)**

- DFO has found funds for Genevieve to speak to all the classes at Pallson Elementary, Lake Cowichan about the importance of the rare Cowichan Lake Lamprey.
- Cowichan Tribes and Bring Back the Blue Bird Project are working together to put up boxes in the Cowichan Estuary. There have been several blue bird sightings this winter which are incredible.
- CVRD budget meeting where the Parks Acquisition Fund will be discussed this Thursday at 9:30am. Genevieve encouraged everyone to join.

### **Paul Gowland (SMWS)**

- Interested to hear Galen's presentation.
- SMWS is starting their new year with lots of projects on the go. Ironing out their relationship with various organizations like North Cowichan and CVRD.
- Following the fish kill that occurred in August 2024, they are looking at Somenos Lake to work on a nutrient budget. They launched a project with North Cowichan to sample the inflow of phosphorus into the lake from the creeks.
- Hoping to employ a graduate UVIC student this year. Work will hopefully focus on the area near Richards Creek.
- From the results of the first year of sampling of nutrients, it seems that the main source of phosphorus comes from Richards Creek, looking to figure out why this is occurring. Could it be because of the farming activity that occurs in that area?

### **Dave Munday (SBS)**

- Shawnigan Basin Society has put together a 5-year plan, outlining the objectives of the Basin Society. Their main strategy is 30 by 30, (the goal of preserving 30% of the watershed by 2030).
- SBS has been doing in-water milfoil removal using a venturi pump system and divers. They have put a paper together reporting on the removal process. They estimate taking about 3 years to get on top of the issue with a removal rate of about 25 kilograms of wet weight per hour.
- The Society has been doing lots of surveys in the watershed related to the 30 by 30 objective. They are in discussions with Malahat First Nation working towards preservation of forest areas for cultural use.
- They are also supporting the Koksilah Low Flow working group.

### **Katie Mosewich (CVRD)**

- Environmental Services is working on updating the climate projections for our region.

### **Galen McMenamain (CVRD)**

- Galen will be sharing an update on the CVRD's Drinking Water and Watershed Protection Strategy.

### **Joe Saysell (Friends of the Cowichan)**

- Joe wrote a letter to the Ministry of Fisheries; it is very important to write letters regarding the budget cuts for DFO.
- Not too much on the river with the rain we have received, the high water has saved the spawning reds for now.

### **Bernie Juurlink (SBS)**

- Trust for Living Forest has a forest tenure on 100 acres of the former Elkington Estate, the trust is wanting to transfer the forest tenure to the Basin Society.
- They want to convert the two community forests in Shawnigan lake (224 hectares) that are owned by the CVRD and turn into community forest trusts and allow them to drop into old growth in the coming century. Hoping to work with Malahat Nation to look at crown wood lots that are not part of treaty negotiations and turn them into Indigenous protected conservation areas or community forest trusts. Shane Sylvester from Malahat brought to chief and council, very interested in working with Cowichan Tribes.
- Cowichan Estuary Conservation Association (CERCA) has been doing a micro glass fibers study; through sampling they have determined that these fibres are present.

### **Colleen Terlein (SMWS)**

- Thanked Paul for the great update. Happy to be here and see everyone today.

### **Francis Guyver (Mosaic)**

- Mosaic is committed to sustainable forestry. Since being a part of the Koksilah Watershed Planning Process, Mosaic is reimagining themselves around access, natural capital, smart forestry (science that approaches hydrologic recovery of trees) in these areas and how they can help mitigate communities against some of the flooding issues that are being experienced, with a priority of being science focused to determine the best solution.

### **Bruce Coates (Nature Cowichan)**

- Volunteer work at the Garry Oak Reserve will begin on February 25, this is the only way to publicly enter the reserve.
- Nature Cowichan and CERCA have been working on removing broom from the Black Leaf farm dike, they are looking at planting along the dike and creating an adopt a shrub idea where you can buy a shrub, plant it and care for it until it is established.

### **Barry Hetschko (Cowichan Estuary Nature Centre)**

- There is a town hall meeting on January 24 from 10:00am to 1:00pm at the Cowichan Exhibition ground to advocate for the right to fish.

### **Jill Thompson (CWB)**

- No CWB board meeting this month, there will be a workshop for board members.
- February Speakers' Series will be a week early due to the stat holiday. It will be held on February 9.
- Working towards holding an open house for the Koksilah Watershed Planning process, the previous date had to be cancelled due to the provincial strike.
- People are working very hard behind the scenes on the weir and wants to reassure that it is going forward. There is a slide deck available on the Cowichan Watershed Boards website for more background information on the weir process.

### **Julia Kidder (CWB)**

- Julia hopes to attend the next meeting in person. Happy to hear from everyone today.

### **Parker Jefferson (CSRT)**

- Bat counters have been finding bats this winter. Will be back home in a week, so may have more to update on then.

### **10:40 – 11 Break**

### **11-12: Galen McMenamin presented Our Community's Water: The CVRD's Drinking Water and Watershed Protection Strategy. Presentation emailed out.**

*\*\*\*Joe sent a letter to the Minister of Fisheries regarding the 2026 budget cuts to Fisheries and Oceans Canada staff on behalf of Friends of the Cowichan. \*\*\**

**noon:** Meeting finishes

### **Next speakers:**

Feb. 17, Todd Carnahan, EMC FireSmart, how our Community is Preparing for Wildfire

March 17 Kevin Pellett DFO Chinook update