

# Cowichan Watershed Board Meeting

## DRAFT Minutes

Mon. Sept 24 2018  
9:30-11:30

Location: CVRD Board Room, Ingram St, Duncan



**Chair:** Chief Chip Seymour

**Members Present:** Ian Morrison, Debra Toporowski, David Anderson, David Froese, Klaus Kuhn, Laura Brown, Tim Kulichyski, David Slade, Tom Rutherford (E.D.)

**Absent:** Co-Chair Jon Lefebure, Lori Iannidinardo, Ross Forrest, Darrin George

**Guests:** Brian Houle (Catalyst), TAC and Working Group members, public

**Minutes:** Jill Thompson

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| 1. | Welcome                           | 9:30 (late start due to change in bus schedule from Victoria)  |  |
| 2. | Approval of Agenda                | Ian moved approval of agenda, David S seconded   | Approved   |
| 3. | Approval of Minutes of July 30    | Debra moved approval of minutes, Laura seconded  | Approved   |
| 4. | Correspondence and Announcements  | See agenda. Tom reviewed correspondence and announcements.<br><br>RE sport fishery closure – Tom will talk to FLNRO staff later this fall and aim for next summer.<br><br>Q: RE CVRD elections, when do appointments to CWB get made?<br>A: Late November / Early December. New CVRD directors take oath in November. October CWB meeting will be with current members. Any changes would be in November.  | Tom to discuss sport fishery closure with FLNRO staff before next season.  |
| 5. | Public Comment                    | Genevieve Singleton for Stewardship Roundtable and Naturalists. Bringing CWB's attention to imminent loss of 2 natural resource officers who are being moved from Duncan to Nanaimo. Decreases ability to enforce conservation laws.<br><br>Jim O Donnell, Sahtlam resident. Sited concerns about lead in soil in Cowichan River park due to shooting ranges. Toxicity in soil documented in Trillium report. Seeking opportunity to ask Parks whether soil will be moved. Trillium report recommended soil not be moved.  | Deferred to "Other" section of agenda -<br><br>Deferred to BC Parks presentation later in agenda.  |
| 6. | CW Society Report – fiscal update | Tom presented chart (link) summarizing the Society's fiscal situation and sought input on level of detail CWB prefers.<br><br>Discussion followed about the appropriate level of operational detail for this table to consider. See below for details.<br>There is a need to be assured of accountability, but Society was created to protect elected officials from conflict.<br>Clarification was provided about what fiscal information is considered monthly and annually by Society members.<br>Seeking transparency to ensure the Board is aware of the amount of money being spent on various projects. | Decision to include fiscal update quarterly as an email distribution; Board members will raise concerns for discussion at meetings only if needed. |

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|     |   |   | Board members are welcome to request details or CWS minutes from Tom.   |
| 7.  | Governance                              | <p>Tom updated that there will be a meeting coming with Co Chairs and Ministers Heyman and Donaldson, hosted by MLA, MP will call in. Oct 2. Full hour meeting is unusual. We will keep pushing for license and funding</p> <p>Q: David A – understood Sonia was not putting this forward as a major initiative of hers.<br/>A: Tom – she has been a strong advocate for the weir and has facilitated this meeting.</p> <p>Governance manual - working on revising spelling of Hul'qumi'num sections at request of Chief and Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Motion by Ian to adopt the revised Governance Manual, subject to spelling corrections. 2<sup>nd</sup> by David Slade. Approved.</li> <li>- Clarification was made that the revised Manual and policies are now in effect.</li> </ul>   | <p>Revised Governance Manual adopted, subject to spelling corrections.</p> <p>Revised Governance Manual is now in effect.</p> |
| 8.  | Water and Watershed services referendum | <p>Tom reviewed prior discussion about CWB's role in supporting the CVRD watershed service proposal which concluded that Tom was to circulate workplan to Board, circulate budget to Society, and ensure no core funding would be used for this. Tom confirmed that these conditions were met and all feedback was incorporated and supported. Activities are focussed on networking. CWB hosted meetings with other stewardship organizations to listen to perspectives. Many concerns raised but consensus reached that the service is needed. Key opportunities are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- land use planning that includes water consideration</li> <li>- support for water stewardship NGOs</li> <li>- staff to support and coordinate NGOs</li> </ul> <p>Watershed stewardship coalition has emerged, which is a positive outcome already.<br/>CWB needs to stay focussed on our priorities, regardless of referendum or service.<br/>Discussion- see below.</p> | Information   |
| 9   | 2018 River Cleanup Review               | <p>Ken Traynor, CLRSS president, and Tom Rutherford gave reports on this year's two River Cleanup events.<br/>See below for details. Thanks to all sponsors and volunteers!</p>   | Information   |
| 10a | Fish / Flows                            | <p>Tim Kulchyski, Cowichan Tribes, gave an update on the North Arm gravel removal situation. See details below.</p> <p>Brian Houle, Catalyst, gave an update on river flows. (<a href="#">LINK</a>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- no risk of needing to pump this year.</li> <li>- still have dry weather ahead so will hold it around 7 cms</li> <li>- lesson learned - even when there is good snow, we're dependant on early fall rain to get by with the current weir.</li> </ul>  | Chief Seymour recommended a partnership to remove 100,000m <sup>3</sup> every 5 years instead of annual                       |

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|    |                              | <p>- 4/5 past years – didn't have enough water to support 7cms<br/> - 5/5 past years – projections saying we didn't have enough – but got early rain so we made it. Need to deal with this.</p> <p>Q: will we be able to do a pulse flow?<br/> A: Brian will ask Kevin - doubts lake level could currently support pulse flows</p> <p>Q: was 10 yr license to pump down granted?<br/> A: yes. In 2016, over \$1million spent, Electrical system to pump was about ½ of that. 7 pumps.</p> <p>Pipeline leaks/condition was studied – in pretty good shape.</p>  | <p>emergency.<br/> Renew partnership with CVRD, North Cowichan and City of Duncan.</p>                    |
| B  | Riparian                     | Deferred.  |   |
| C  | Water Quality                | <p>Ken Trainor, Cowichan Lake and River Stewardship Society, provided an update on water quality testing program at the lake this summer. This project was coordinated by CWB WQ Working Group, funded by REFBC, run by CLRSS</p> <p>a) Aug 7-Sept 4 – volunteers took samples along Meade, McKay and Shaw creek; 4 upper river sites- weir, little beach, below effluent, Stoltz pool</p> <p>b) late October-November – 2<sup>nd</sup> set</p> <p>Tom added that we are working with Deb Epps (MoE) on Oxybenzoane issue (sunscreen). Hoping to do sampling next year. \$600/sample. Will need \$10,000. Also Intend to do outreach/educational signage about sunscreen but need solid research first. We don't want to recommend something that fixes one problem but creates another.</p> | Information   |
| 11 | Guest Presentation: BC Parks | <p>Catherine Jacobsen (see contact info below) gave an update on the management planning process for Cowichan River Park.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- distributed <a href="#">diagram from website</a> about the process.</li> <li>- current purpose statement for this park is outdated. More lands were added; high levels of use and interest; therefore they re-started the process to create a MP (effort in 2013-16 didn't conclude in a MP)</li> <li>- met with Cowichan Tribes and CVRD about issues of interest and how they would like to be involved</li> <li>- received over 300 responses to public input questionnaire.</li> <li>- next year will be focussed on engaging partners.</li> <li>- see Q&amp;A notes below.</li> </ul>                            | Tom/Catherine to follow up via TAC.   |
| 12 | Other                        | <p>Genevieve Singleton - CSRT shared concern of the ongoing problem that there is not enough natural resource enforcement capacity here currently, and moving 2 Natural Resource officers to Nanaimo is likely to result in worse damage to streams, fisheries habitat,</p> <p>Tom – over 50 individuals have written letter on the weir over the summer. Thanks to the citizens of the valley for taking the time. Makes a difference.</p> <p>Tim – salmon run is actually behind the numbers last year at same time. Hoping it's just because of reduced flows.</p>  | Ian moved, David 2 <sup>nd</sup> - that a letter be sent above co-chairs signature on the issue. Carried. |
|    | Adjourn                      | Adjourned 11:35. Next meeting Oct 29   | Adjourned by the Chair.   |

## Detailed Discussion Notes

### 8. Water and Watershed services referendum

#### Discussion

- Klaus raised concerns about volunteer organizations getting involved in politics. “Uncomfortable with these groups trying to sway voting.”
- Tim – Chief was speaking to CBC – one of our communities was out of drinking water for 20 years and that’s not the only place. Referenced a number of family members that have to have bottled water; concerns about children bathing in water. It’s in our community but it’s not isolated. Part of reason this Board is here is to communicate out what is happening and try to find most effective solutions possible – bring data forward, help find funding. Feels we should be supportive of anyone getting info out, like One Cowichan. If we are not going to stand up for issues here in our watershed, there is no hope.
- Klaus – responded that he sees a difference between giving information and telling people how to vote.

### 9. River Clean up reports

#### Presentation Details:

Ken Traynor, CLRSS president, and Tom Rutherford gave reports on this year’s 2 River Cleanup events.

- upper river cleanup Aug. 10<sup>th</sup> – consistent core of 120-140 people show up; clearly something see as important. There has been a change. Less garbage – mostly historic stuff. About ½ tonne (<1pickup). Culture – increasing discussion about tubing companies taking responsibilities as numbers of tubers rise. Intend to take forward conversations with tubing companies and town. People surprised by volume of tubers now. Discussion about whether to keep going if we’re not getting garbage – decision yes - involvement is important. Need a conversation about how the river is used. Not easy but need to have that.

- WQ sampling – impacts of sunscreens; people want to know more and see more and take ownership. Includes tubing companies. Targeting next spring to get out there with education.

David S – thanks for leadership; surprising that tubing companies aren’t advertising the responsible types. Ken – they did respond after article came out. Will work with them more this winter.

David A – congrats on success RE public attitudes. Concern was based on salt water research and request was made for freshwater research. Response?

Klaus – notices less refuge being recovered. Divers taking big things like bedframes. Would it be better to leave it there? Can we combine river cleanup with other things to keep interest?

Ken – lots of opportunity to do more to build on interactions and riparian education that happen at event. Tricky otherwise for newcomers to learn issues.

Ian – big thanks and good work. Keep it up!

Tom – lower river cleanup – about 80 volunteers. Nature of lower river now includes a lot of work on approaching safe and respectful cleanup through areas of homeless camps.

- excellent team leaders / organizers

- other than sections between bridges – almost no garbage – way down from before.

- between bridges 1.6 metric tonnes of garbage – very significant and need to reconsider how we do this. No longer a nice family event. Reaches easily accessible are not family friendly due to sharps etc. Might have shuttle busses to have families do beach cleanups. In the area between the bridges – needs to be lead by health care professionals and organizations. Important to keep going and helping people connect with river. Wasp attack too!

- Thanks to all volunteers.

### 10a Fish / Flows

#### Presentation Details and Discussion

Report from Tim: CT was looking to remove about 17-18,000 cu meters. It's an issue every year at CR6, just below St. Anne's church. Log jam on top where the rivers split protects flow of south arm. High flows in winter (560 cms this year) moved a lot of gravel and now 70 % of flow went into South arm. Thankful we had removed gravel previously to reduce impact. As north arm fills with gravel it increases flow into south arm.

Q: should we let river evolve naturally?

A: Nothing is natural anymore – dykes, bridges, etc have changed the natural course; protections for Klem Klem village and longhouse.

Coastal Restoration Fund project will provide insights into how big a problem gravel removal is. Tough getting funding for CR6 project.

Proposed works for north end likely no longer necessary.

Koksilah log jam removal is complete.

Chief Seymour commented that gravel removal of 17,000m<sup>3</sup> would just be enough to open up until more comes down the next year. This is an annual thing. CT had a partnership for flood management with CVRD, Duncan, and N. Cowichan but for the 3 years CT has had to fund this on our own. Proposed working on removing 100,000 every 5 years instead of annual emergency.

Ian Morrison added that UBCM passed a request for more streamlined process to request support for this sort of project. Another resolution was passed about flood infrastructure.

## 11. BC Parks Presentation

### Discussion

- Q for group – what is important to CWB about the park to be considered in this process and how might that happen?
- Tom – ecological integrity of the river and watershed. Park is very important to the river. TAC represents First Nations, ENGOs, governments – could use that committee to engage.
- David S – knotweed issue throughout the park. Important to have that in conversation – inside and beyond park
  - o A: invasive mgmt plan will be included – Christine will be the lead there.
- Klaus – favourite place to hike; complement on how it is maintained; fine balance between getting it developed for everywhere and leaving it in natural state – like leaving fallen trees in place.
- Tom – Christine sits on TAC. Suggests that is the best mechanism to provide input to this process.
- Chief called on Jim O'Donnell to raise his concern / question directly
  - o Jim asked about soil remediation
    - A: that is a question for Christine or Don Catton. Will take Jim's name and pass that on.
  - o Tom – will things like that be incorporated in the process. Park Use permits – is that captured in the process?
    - A: A Mgmt plan describes appropriate use, strategies related to that use. At the same time, because there is a permit – terms of that permit will continue operationally
  - o Is knotweed too fine a detail to be included in plan?
    - How, where and when will be left to operational decision making but plan will speak to overall goals, approach and strategy.

Tom – plan would create a framework that would let operational staff engage at that level.

### **BC Parks Contacts:**

Catherine Jacobsen, Planning Section Head - South Island/Haida Gwaii, West Coast Region, BC Parks, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy, 250 337-2404, Catherine.Jacobsen@gov.bc.ca

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