


<p align="center"><b>Cowichan Watershed Board Meeting</b></p>		<p align="center"><b>DRAFT Minutes</b>            Mon. Feb. 29, 2016 / 9:15-11:30 am             Location: CVRD Boardroom,            2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 175 Ingram, Duncan, BC</p>	
<p><b>Participants:</b> Cowichan Watershed Board members and guests  <b>Co-Chair:</b> Chief William Seymour  <b>Minutes:</b> Jill Thompson</p>			
			<p align="center">Decision / Action</p>
<p>1) Welcome; Introductions, Opening Remarks.</p>	<p>Welcome to DFO interim representative, Dr. Laura Brown, Acting Director, South Coast Area Fisheries and Oceans Canada/Government of Canada.</p>	<p>Welcome Dr. Laura Brown</p>	
<p>2) Approval of Agenda</p>	<p>Moved by R. Forrest, 2<sup>nd</sup> D. Froese</p>	<p>Approved</p>	
<p>3) Approval of Minutes of Jan 25<sup>th</sup> 2015. Business Arising from Minutes</p>	<p>Moved by I. Morrison, 2<sup>nd</sup> D. Slade            No outstanding business.</p>	<p>Approved.</p>	
<p>4) Correspondence*</p>	<p>Natasha Overduin – updated POLIS workshop agenda was circulated to participants.            Koksilah Watershed study – request for letter of support – Moved by L. Iannidinardo, 2<sup>nd</sup> D. Toporowski</p>	<p>Letter to be prepared for Cowichan Station Area Association in support of Koksilah Watershed Study. (Jill/Co-Chairs)</p>	
<p>5) Weir update - next steps</p>	<p>Item deferred (see R. Forrest below)</p>		
<p>6) 2016 Drought Strategy, Low Flow Report conclusions, Steelhead, Chinook</p>	<p>Brian Houle (Catalyst) – <a href="#">See presentation</a> – reviewed plans for immediate, short-term and long-term water flow solutions. Snow pack is below average this year but better than last year - if it melts before weir is on control there is no net benefit. Mill used more sea water last year – slow progress year over year. Early April expected date to resume weir controls and weekly conference calls.</p> <p>Ross Forrest (Chair, Fish and Flows Cttee) – Critical situation. Need to work together to increase lake storage.            - Need an official conversation with DFO, FLNRO, Cowichan Tribes, CVRD, Catalyst (all parties) to find solution we can all get behind.</p> <p>James Craig (BC Conservation Foundation) – <a href="#">See presentation</a>.</p> <p>a) Progress on Fish Target: <i>Steelhead fry abundance should meet or exceed target densities.</i> Prov. Target is 80 fry per 100m<sup>2</sup>. Fry habitat saturation was 100% at many mid-upper river sites 1999-2015. (Need to determine the contribution of steelhead fry and resident rainbow fry to these densities)</p>		

	<p>b) Cowichan River Low Flow Mitigation Strategy, 2015. Highlights presented regarding temperature profiling and cold water refugia, Chinook, recommendations.</p> <p>Discussion: Target is a minimum –not necessarily indicator of full health; Steelhead fry flourish in dry conditions (more habitat) but par is the most important life stage and they do worse in drought; Kudos to salvage crews – discussion RE how to support volunteers better, particularly for Coho in coming year; DFO has purchased new video camera for Didson.</p> <p>Cheri Ayers – <a href="#">See presentation</a>.</p> <p>a) Update on Fish/Flows work plan process;</p> <p>b) Update on Chinook Target: <i>As time and resources permit support Chinook restoration initiative and development of Chinook target utilizing the Flows and Fish Working Group as a forum</i>. Presentation on The Cowichan Watershed Health and Chinook Initiative - Piloting Integrated Watershed Management using Chinook as a Key Indicator Species on the South Coast of BC. Project outline, prioritized Chinook risk factors, framework for working collaboratively, questions regarding new governance model.</p> <p>Discussion: appreciation from Fish and Flows Chair for Cheri's work and all the volunteers and agencies that assist the Working Group. Question RE which Chinook high risk factors could be solved with higher flows; clarification that predation issues will be addressed through action plans.</p>	
<p>7) One Cowichan – public engagement campaign</p>	<p>Parker Jefferson – One Cowichan survey of 3100 supporters. 425 replies indicated water is biggest concern. One Cowichan is planning a community engagement campaign to support the CWB proposal for local control of the watershed, targeting 3000 signatures on a letter, videos testimonials, and a promotional film to accompany CWB proposal to province.</p>	<p>Rodger to meet with One Cowichan regarding communications strategy.</p>
<p>8) Water Quality / Estuary update</p>	<p>Tom Rutherford – <a href="#">See presentation</a>. Working Group met this month to discuss Vehicle Operation Restriction Regulation success in Cowichan Bay, Dinsdale strategy to re-start dialogue with Cowichan Tribes leading, Watershed Governance. Koksilah Watershed – have to include the Koksilah to address this target. Core work of group to be discussed this month. Water quality sampling and agricultural partnerships; shellfish – looking at developing clam garden project in most likely area to recover; citizen sampling initiative with Saanich Inlet Protection Society. Conclusions; Citizen engagement is key and</p>	

	we're in it for the long-game. (This work will never be finished.)	
9) Draft 2016 Workplan	Rodger Hunter – circulated draft 2016 conceptual work plan. Will change if pilot is approved. Motion to refer plan to Society for further discussion regarding funding implications. Moved by D. Slade. 2 <sup>nd</sup> T. Kulchyski. CWB members to review this month and revisit next meeting to revise and/or ratify.	Revisit work plan next CWB meeting.
10) Update on Watershed Governance Pilot Proposal	Rodger Hunter. Draft proposal in hand. Important conversations ahead with MoE, FLNRO and DFO on logistics/funding, but first need to consult with Cowichan Tribes, CVRD. Will also meet with POLIS regarding scope of proposal. Premature to release draft until fully discussed with Cowichan Tribes and CVRD. Next step will be assessing costs for ~5 yr pilot including developing a State of the Watershed Report and a Water Sustainability Plan.	R. Hunter to discuss draft with Cowichan Tribes, CVRD, and other parties described.
11) Coordinator Recruitment – Update from Hiring Cttee	David Slade -excellent to see Rodger doing so well and able to mentor new Coordinator. Looking good with some well-qualified applicants. 17 applicants to date. Hoping to have recommendation for the Board by next meeting. Applicants are attracted to the partnership between Cowichan Tribes and CVRD and to the governance direction.	Society hoping to have a recommendation by next Board meeting.
12) Other	Motion by D. Froese that Cowichan Watershed Board will pursue raising the weir as our top priority. 2 <sup>nd</sup> by R. Forrest. Carried.	Decision: Cowichan Watershed Board will pursue raising the weir as our top priority.
13) Next meeting	Due to holiday last Monday of March, next meeting is Mon Apr 4, 9:15-11:30am	Next meeting: Mon Apr 4, 9:15am
Adjourn	Meeting adjourned at 11:40am	

**\*Correspondence received:**

Invitation to POLIS Workshop;  
Request for support Koksilah Watershed study