


<p>DRAFT</p> <h1>MEETING Minutes</h1>	<p><b>Mon. July 29, 2019</b>  <b>9:30-11:45 am</b>  <b>CVRD Boardroom</b>  <b>175 Ingram Street, Duncan</b></p>	 <p>Cowichan Watershed Board</p>
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**Co-Chair:** CVRD Chair Ian Morrison

**Participants** Shannon Waters, Alison Nicholson, Tim Kulchyski, Laura Brown, Lori Iannidinardo, David Froese, Kristine Sandhu, Tom Rutherford, Jill Thompson

**Regrets:** David Anderson, David Slade, Debra Toporowski, Chief William (Chip) Seymour (co-chair), Darin George,

**Guests:** Pat Lapcevic and Cali Melnechenko, Water Protection, Ministry FLNRORD West Coast Region; Heather Pritchard and Emily Doyle-Yamaguchi, Cowichan Station Area Association – Koksilah Working Group; Brian Houle, Paper Excellence; Ken Traynor, CLRSS; 16 audience members.

**Minutes:** Jill Thompson

1.	Welcome		Information
2.	Approve Agenda	Moved by Laura; seconded by Kristine; No comments; Carried.	Decision
3.	Review and approve Minutes of June 24, 2019	Moved by Kristine; seconded by Tim; No comments; Carried.	Decision
4.	Correspondence and Announcements - see agenda	Tom reviewed event announcements (see agenda). CWB will have a booth at Lake Cowichan 75 <sup>th</sup> anniversary. Thanks to Shannon, Lori, David Slade and Debra for help with organizing Lower River cleanup.  Tom reviewed correspondence (see agenda) and acknowledged Heather, Alison and Shannon for help with our PFML private forestry review submission.	Information
5.	Opportunity for public comment.	The co-Chair opened public comment with a reminder that while communication with stakeholders that come to these meetings is important and valued, this is a Board meeting and	Staff to schedule a break into

		<p>all interaction should be directed to the Board members via the Chair.</p> <p>A discussion followed about whether audience participation should be restricted to the public comment period, breaks, and after the meeting to keep focus on Board and presenters. Board members spoke to value of the input from the gallery, which includes members of our TAC and working groups, and that transparency and participation are important. The importance of respectful interaction and proper meeting process was also noted.</p> <p>The discussion concluded that all questions from the gallery should be directed through the Chair to ensure decorum is maintained. In some circumstances the Chair might limit public comment to keep to the agenda.</p> <p>No comments from the gallery.</p>	each meeting.
6.	Koksilah Drought Update	<p>Pat Lapcevic gave a presentation on water shortages in the Koksilah watershed. Pat also introduced Cali Melnechenko, the new FLNRO Nanaimo Section Head</p> <p>See presentation here, and details of the discussion below.</p>	Information/ Discussion
7.	<p>Lake Cowichan Water Storage Updates</p> <p>a) BC Salmon Restoration &amp; Innovation Fund Update</p> <p>b) 2019 flows and water management update</p>	<p>a) Ian attended a meeting with Minister Wilkinson. The \$4 million grant application was successful. A public event will be in a few weeks and we are asked not to speak to media until then. Both Ministers were very aware and supportive of Cowichan project so good work from all our partners in educating the political leaders about the need.</p> <p>Tom acknowledged CVRD and DFO staff for quick work to meet admin demands of contribution agreement. Next steps are to set up a governance system among the partners;</p>	Information

		<p>hire a project manager; do a Request for Proposals for engineering contract; and strike a technical group to assess and review impacts and structure.</p> <p>b) Brian Houle gave an update on current lake levels. See presentation here.</p> <p>Currently projecting to start pumping Aug 20<sup>th</sup>. Rain predicted in 6-7 days which would help push date out but unlikely to avoid pumping due to low levels.</p>	
8.	<p>Ecosystem-based assessment of the Koksilah Watershed</p>	<p>Emily Doyle Yamaguchi and Heather Pritchard, Consultants to Cowichan Station Area Association’s Koksilah Watershed Working Group, presented their work to date to provide information on the character, condition and function of the watershed.</p> <p>See presentation here, and details of the discussion below.</p> <p>Tim commented that this ecosystem-based process is absolutely crucial to try and network some of those processes back together. What we do in the Koksilah is going to exemplify what we should be doing elsewhere.</p> <p>Ian also acknowledged the plea for the Koksilah a few years ago and the good work that has been done in response.</p>	<p>Information/ Discussion</p>
9.	<p>Communications and Outreach: “Weir Ready” Update</p>	<p>Ken Traynor gave an update on the work of Cowichan Lake and River Stewardship Society</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ken has been visiting landowners with a tall marked stick and level to show what the Water Use Plan proposed water levels would mean on their beaches. See video of methodology and some of their findings <a href="#">here</a>. )</li> <li>• Website and facebook in place WeirReady.ca</li> <li>• Videos and FAQ pieces to come</li> <li>• Looking forward to being able to articulate</li> </ul>	<p>Information</p>

		<p>the plan for a solution soon (BCSRIF announcement).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In face to face outreach at Lake Cowichan Post Office, roughly 90% of people at were supportive of the Weir Ready handout, and many ask why it is taking so long; approximately 10% didn't want to talk about it. However these addresses are mostly not lakeshore residents who may have different views, so CLRSS is working to reach residents in other areas like Honeymoon Bay, Creekside, Miracle Way and Swordfern with the doorhangers.</li> <li>• Event outreach planned: Youbou Regatta Aug 10<sup>th</sup> ;75<sup>th</sup> anniversary Aug 17-18<sup>th</sup></li> </ul> <p>See below for discussion about concerns and feedback heard / observed by CLRSS.</p>	
10	Other	Joe Saysell asked the Board to read the report by BCCF about docks and riparian areas around the lake. It found that very few people have a permit for docks.	Tom to circulate this report.
10.	Adjourn.	Adjourned at noon. No August meeting. Next meeting Sept 30 <sup>th</sup>	Adjourned.

## Discussion Notes

### **6. Koksilah Drought Update (see presentation – link)**

[Pat Lapcevic]

- Koksilah and Chemainus Rivers are among 7 rivers on the West Coast Region's 2019 Stream Watch list.
- There are 170 surface water licenses; 77 ground water licenses/applications, and 1328 registered wells
- Cumulative impacts in Koksilah Basin
  - Climate change resulting in increased length of dry season, reduced snow pack
  - Forestry and change in land use (e.g. high road density affecting natural hydrologic function)
  - Urban development

- Industrial and commercial activities (quarries, pollution discharges)
  - Agricultural impacts on surface and groundwater quality (e.g. phosphorus, nitrate)
  - Significant declines in populations of salmonid species (steelhead, coho, chinook, rainbow trout)
- Concerns with low flow include reduced water depth over riffles, reduced channel width, and isolating pools.
  - There are 858 wells within 1 km of Koksilah and main tribs; 28 water systems (93% groundwater). Since 1980 new surface water licenses have been restricted but not new groundwater wells. FLNRO doesn't have actual volume use data - only licensed volumes. Metering would be required for actual use so they are estimating groundwater volumes.
  - There is interconnectivity in that some wells draw water that would otherwise go into the stream so it causes surface water impact.
  - Water Sustainability Act Section 86, 87, 88 are the legal tools to order curtailment. Curtailment estimates are complex. FLNRO is trying to predict what results in putting water back in the stream to benefit ecosystem. E.g. In some cases, by the time a well curtailment has an impact on the river, rains will have returned, so there would be no net benefit to the ecosystem. It's a balancing act.
  - Water Sustainability Plan – Pat has requested funding to start a process to scope what that would look like. Hopeful that would start soon.

## Discussion

Q: When will we have enough data?

A: (Cali) It is possible to force metering via WSP. (Pat) We can't wait until we have enough data. There could be a place-based regulation to require metering. (Cali) There are over 11000 users over 1km – lots of work to gather all that data. But we have good tools for estimating water use.

Q: There is significant expansion of agriculture and industrial water uses. How are we dealing with these?

A: (Cali). We need to work with local government. There is no guarantee that water licenses will be granted for expansion – in fact they probably won't. More communication with local government is needed.

Contacts:

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## **8. Ecosystem-based assessment of the Koksilah Watershed**

[Emily Doyle Yamaguchi and Heather Pritchard]

Some findings (see presentation for full information)

- Avg 4.5 km of road per square km with about 1km of that no longer in use. (Forest Practices Board recommends around 1.9km of road per square km.)
- Precipitation has increased 25% yet summer flows are in decline.
- Highest demand for water is when water is lowest.
- Land use, road density and water withdrawals all issues.
- Five species in watershed with provincially designated as critical habitat.

Next steps – similar to process in Shawnigan Lake lead by Shawnigan Basin Society with Silva Forest Foundation. This is an assessment with recommendations, but is not legally enforceable. It is meant to be a blueprint for discussion and to improve understanding.

Tom thanked Heather, Emily and Pat for their presentations, and spoke about the difference between the two watersheds - a technical “fix” is available to help the Cowichan that is not available in the Koksilah.

Tim also acknowledged the difference between the Cowichan and Koksilah. What happens in the Koksilah is crucial to creating an effective response to all those pressures. He spoke of the strengths and sensitivities of the Koksilah. For example, he observed no coho when he did a swim even though coho stay in system all year.

Tim commented that this ecosystem-based process is absolutely crucial to try and network some of those processes back together. What we do in the Koksilah is going to exemplify what we should be doing elsewhere.

Ian also acknowledged the plea for the Koksilah a few years ago and the good work that has been done in response.

## **9. “Weir Ready” Update**

{Ken Traynor – key concerns observed in conversations with lake residents}

- Concerns about sediment in lower water – especially near weir – need to think about management of disturbance during construction.
- In some places natural boundary is hard to see if there has been lots of renovation but can see it clearly in many places. Ken suggests it’s impractical to assess natural boundary property by property and should be based on the average.
- People are concerned about dock pilings being impacted by low water; water supports (floats) them now and they may not withstand the full weight.
- Water lots – some people believe they own property out into the lake.
- Many people believe they have a right to a dock.

- Many people see this as Catalyst's project – want to know where the money is coming from.

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#### Discussion

- Appreciation expressed for all the good work by CLRSS on this.

Q: Do you think there is more concern about water levels going up or down?

A: (Ken) Hard to say. People will be affected differently. This process should deal with legitimate concerns. People already can't get insurance for flooding and are needing to raise houses, rebuild docks, etc. anyway, so need to be clear about which concerns are tied to the weir at all.

- Town of Lake Cowichan facebook advertising brought in 200 people for meeting with Catalyst.
- It was noted that people change the natural boundary by bringing in sand etc to landscape their beach