


<b>MEETING</b> <b>Minutes</b> (approved)	<b>Mon. May 25<sup>th</sup> 2020</b> <b>9:30-11:00 am</b> <b>Online / Phone Zoom Link</b>	 Cowichan Watershed Board
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**Co-Chair:** Chief William Seymour. **Participants:** CVRD Chair Aaron Stone (co-Chair), Alison Nicholson, David Anderson, David Slade, Debra Toporowski, Tim Kulchyski, Lori Iannidinardo, David Froese, Kristine Sandhu, Dale Derocher, Tom Rutherford, Jill Thompson. **Guest Speakers:** MLA Sonia Furstenau; MP Alistair MacGregor; Leroy Van Wieren (CVRD); John Stewart (Cowichan Tribes). **Other Guests:** Joe Saysell (phone). **Regrets:** Stuart Pagaduan, Shannon Waters, Brian Houle. **Minutes:** Jill

1	Welcome.	Co-Chair Chief Seymour welcomed everyone and spoke to the importance of continuing to gather online to stay up to date.	Information
2	Approve Agenda	Debra moved to approve the agenda; 2 <sup>nd</sup> by Lori. No changes. Approved.	Agenda approved.
3	Review and approve the <a href="#">Minutes of April meeting</a> .	Debra moved to approve the agenda; 2 <sup>nd</sup> by Alison. No changes. Approved	Minutes approved.
4	Correspondence (see below)	Tom reviewed correspondence from Somenos Marsh Wildlife Society.	Information.
5	Comments from the provincial and federal Government representatives for Cowichan Valley.	<p>MLA Sonia Furstenau and MP Alistair MacGregor each provided updates on their work to pursue progress on environmental and watershed health issues during the CoVid pandemic situation, including opportunities for a green recovery strategy. Alistair spoke to a specific opportunity to pursue infrastructure funding for the weir with several Federal ministers in the months ahead.</p> <p>Chief Seymour thanked Sonia and Alistair for their advocacy in Victoria and Ottawa and welcomed them both to attend CWB meetings anytime.</p>	Information

6	Update on Weir (BCSRIF projects)	Leroy Van Wieren provided an update from CVRD. See presentation <a href="#">here</a> .  See discussion notes below.	Information
7	Current Flow Updates a) Cowichan b) Koksilah	a) Brian Houle sent regrets that he was unable to join us. b) Tom provided an update on Cowichan and Koksilah flows. He highlighted the contrast between the two rivers. See discussion notes below.	Information
8	Update on Koksilah projects	See presentations from Tom. Similar to the Cowichan, we are working on both short and long term strategies. <a href="#">-Drought response group</a> <a href="#">-Water Sustainability Plan Scoping</a>	Information
9	Update on Sustainable Funding -Co-Chairs to present to BC Budget Standing Committee -Watershed Security Coalition - stimulus funding initiative	Jill provided an update on the CWB's work to advocate for provincial funding for watershed health and co-governance entities like the CWB. - prepared examples of 'shovel ready' job creation projects that could meet provincial economic stimulus goals while supporting watersheds and co-governance. Watersheds BC will present a selection of such examples to Premier's office. CWB submitted four examples and Cowichan Tribes submitted another eight. - Co-chairs are registered to present to 2021 Budget Standing Committee to support get committee.	Jill to send details of CWB stimulus project examples to Dale
10	Presentation on the Strait of Georgia National Marine Conservation Area Reserve	See <a href="#">presentation by John Stewart</a> . John introduced himself: working for Cowichan Tribes; role is to listen carefully, assess whether it's doable; connect with Cowichan community, public, groups interested in the file, and neighboring nations; ongoing process to consider establishment of this protected area which would allow most uses but would exclude oil and gas extraction and mining. See discussion notes below.	Information
	Adjourn	Chief Seymour adjourned the meeting at 11am. Next meeting June 29th 9:30am	Adjourned.

\*All presentations are available here. <https://cowichanwatershedboard.ca/meetings/>

## Further Details/Discussion on Agenda Items

### Agenda Item 6 - Leroy Van Wieren

Q: This work is modelling the new rule curve but that has not been approved by DFO or the provincial regulator. How do we know that the engineering is based on a scenario that will be accepted by government?

A: WUP recommended this new flow regime, including start date and proposed height, and DFO and provincial representatives were involved in that.

Q: Frustration was expressed that these were never approved by DFO and FLNRO, meaning we still lack a solid foundation. Given the history of lack of support from senior levels of government, this causes concern.

A: WUP had participation and alignment from the province and FLNRO is in agreement with putting these steps in motion. Until we have a license holder putting forward an application, no endorsement is possible.

Dale added that DFO isn't able to do assessment work until a license is proposed. There is an understanding that there will be positive and negative impacts of this work.

Sonia added that this has taken a long time and there is a lot of work on the ground, and that Dave's concern is not misplaced, but that the CWB has very strong advocates in its Fed and BC reps. The investment in BCSRIF is a good sign but we are not taking our foot off the gas pedal.

Alistair confirmed agreement with Sonia.

### Agenda Item 7 – Tom Rutherford

- Cowichan Flows up to 50cms in May; ramping down to target flow of 15cms currently. Snow is still melting. We are in good shape. Last May we were down to 4.5 cms. Can maintain 15cms till mid-June as we like to do.

- Koksilah flows by contrast. Koksilah is much smaller with no large lakes and lower elevation resulting in higher floods; lower lows.

- Cowichan in mid-May was about 60% Mean Annual Discharge (MAD) which is very good; Koksilah was at 9% MAD prior to the agricultural irrigation season, and already lower than we would want to see at END of summer.

-Dale commented that 20% MAD is more comfortable than 10%.

- Tom agreed, and reminds everyone that last year on Koksilah- flows went down to 2% MAD.
- Dave F added that temperatures were also low in Koksilah – 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest of rivers listed.

- Tim added that Cowichan Tribes is in discussion with province over low flow minimal values. Not entirely happy with how environmental flows are being defined.

### Agenda Item 10 – John Stewart

Discussion:

Chief spoke about the accord between First Nations in support of this.

Q: Debra asked about the [new management plan](#) in Haida Gwaii and what we could learn from that.

A: Yes we are looking at that and how in Haida Gwaii they were able to pursue common goals while setting aside differences.

Q: (poor audio) David A asked whether there was a comparable reserve with such a complex marine environment

A: John referenced the Saguenay St. Lawrence as the closest comparison.