


<p>DRAFT BOARD MEETING notes</p>	<p>Mon. March 29 2021 9:30-11:30 am Online / Phone Zoom Link (see invitation)</p>	
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Meeting Chair: CWB Co-Chair Aaron Stone

Expected Participants: David Anderson, David Slade, Tim Kulchyski, David Froese, Kristine Sandhu, Linda Higgins (10am) Alison Nicholson, Shannon Waters, Tom Rutherford, Jill Thompson

Absent: Debra Toporowski (holiday), Stuart Pagaduan, Chief Seymour, Lori Iannidinardo

Guest Speakers: Stephanie Cottell and Heather Pritchard, Cowichan Land Trust

Audience members: Barry Hetschko, Bruce Coates, Carol Milo, Cheri Ayers, Cole Smith, Dave DePape, Dave Preikshot, Edmond Duggan, Elodie Roger, Jim ?, Ken Traynor, Bob Day, Murray Ball, Paul Fletcher, Rick Bryan, Roger Wiles, Rosie Simms.

9:00-9:30am – Open conversation/visiting.

1.	Welcome.	Chair Stone opened the meeting.	
2.	Agenda Review.	Motion to accept the agenda by Kristine. Alison seconded. Approved.	Agenda approved.
3.	Review minutes of the February meeting.	Minutes from February meeting not available yet.	Deferred
4.	Announcements and Correspondence.	Tom presented the announcements and correspondence as per the agenda package.	Information
5.	Public Input	No requests for public input today.	None
6.	Updates from Executive Director	Tom provided updates. See presentation. Aaron added that the CVRD Committee passed 3 year funding for CWB after the presentation by Tim and Tom to the Board last week.	Information
7.	Presentation from Cowichan Community Land	Stephanie Cottell Steph gave an overview of the history and focus on the CCLT. They seek to partner on everything, and the focus is on	Information

	Trust. (CCLT)	<p>stewardship of private land.</p> <p>Heather Pritchard gave an overview of the situation and the shortfall of forest protection in this area. Landowners are often willing to protect but there are no incentives.</p> <p>Steph suggested ways that CWB can support CLT work.</p> <p>See presentation here.</p> <p>Detailed discussion notes below.</p>	
8.	Request for CWB input from Municipality of North Cowichan (MNC) RE Official Community Plan (OCP)	<p>Tom introduced the letter of request for input from MNC regarding protecting waterbodies and biodiversity in their new OCP. Tom suggested potential approaches, and asked for Board input, and also flagged that there is a question about whether to seek a collaborative input with other groups, or submit a CWB opinion. Possible approaches:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Reference existing bodies of work for MNC to draw from (research, plans, etc). 2) Recommend overarching principles. E.g. whole of watershed; indigenous partnerships. 3) Provide more specific recommendations. <p>See discussion below and letter in meeting package.</p>	Tom and Jill to consider the Board's recommendation and bring back draft input to the MNC at next meeting.
9.	Other	None.	
10.	Adjourn. Next meeting April 26th	Chair adjourned the meeting at 11:20	Adjourned

Open conversation/visiting after meeting.

Meeting materials can be found at <https://cowichanwatershedboard.ca/meetings/>

Discussion Notes

8) CCLT presentation

Aaron asked what amount of protected land were municipal parks;

Heather - that was not included because it was not possible to tell the difference between natural area and altered parks (e.g. baseball field, playground).

David S asked about the percentage of CVRD land protected compared to Nanaimo and CRD. He understands it is far less. CVRD has a great number of parks but most are <1 acre neighborhood playgrounds. David would like to have this comparison to inform the CVRD Parks Acquisition Function discussion.

Heather - that would need to be another study. Many ecosystem types could be benefited that way.

David asked whether CVRD could answer this question for us.

Aaron - Ladysmith protected areas are 90% forest; there are trails but otherwise natural. There are also many small parks but those make up a small percentage. It would be a valuable exercise for CVRD even if not precise.

Tim referenced the example of the Nisqually study on the value of old growth when trying to maintain the resilience of a system during drought, raising flows from 6 m³/sec to 11 m³/sec. Tim is appreciative of that type of work and of this presentation. The weir isn't our only solution; it is an immediate driver but we haven't tied these various bits and pieces together yet. Cowichan Tribes spends \$1.2 million on instream works in the lower river some years. Even at 60 m³/sec there is a section of river that is dry because of sedimentation. There is also a need for consideration of elk use and habitat that connects to all these bits and pieces. He noted the loss of connectivity even in his short life time, and how he really appreciates this discussion. Chum was once valueless but now \$2million /yr is derived from Cowichan stock. Tim expressed that if CCLT has other works, papers, ways to integrate, he is interested.

Heather - there is a lot of information out there; it's a matter of pulling it together. She would be interested in taking these tools in the land trust project and seeing how to knit those together with the findings in the [Koksilah Ecosystem-Based Analysis and Protected Networks Report](#). A big question is "Who is going to make sure we keep on track and pull us together – all the ENGOs, residents, governments?"

David A asked how many covenants or land is held by the CCLT

Steph - covenants are a new direction for CCLT. Their only owned parcel is Rainbow Island in Quamichan Lake. Normally they help raise funds for other organizations to purchase important pieces. They are a small grassroots group and their goal isn't to own land.

Tom added that CWB has been reviewing its targets over the last year, and in three of five working groups, members have identified a need for a "whole of watershed" target. There is a great opportunity to work together in upcoming years on that.

Steph - recognizes that we are already working on this together and here today to identify areas of focus for CCLT ahead.

Alison thanked the presenters; interested in financial incentives for protection.

Shannon expressed appreciation for the maps; trying to find a way to show us connectivity. Corridors are important for specific animals, such as elk; just as important as salmon and their flow for water. We need to think collectively and individually: What can we do on our land? Many of us don't have water-side homes but can help on the land.

Heather replied excitedly about toads! Amphibians are not as cute as an elk but help to connect water to land. Everybody can do something on their land to improve connectivity – it's not just corridors but also stepping stones.

Tim added that connectivity is in jeopardy when one piece is missing because of jurisdictions. We continually miss how we [humans] connect to the watershed. Trails are inundated due to CoVid and they are being impacted. We have parks but how do we "fit" in these parks when we have access issues and unhealthy ecosystems? We have a necessity to have these areas to go to. We need to think about where to have more densified use and where we don't want that. Our health and well-being are tied to the health of the watershed. We are the biggest part of that equation and we don't pay enough attention to it.

9) North Cowichan Official Community Plan Request for Input. Roundtable.

Shannon – sits on advisory committee for OCP. Suggests Tom and Jill sketch together a response. Bring forward how it affects human health and other living things. Connectivity, water and its influence on how we are able to be a community weren't front and center when the OCP was created so it would be good to hear about that.

David A – asked how technical or specific they are expecting. Adopt a broad approach.

David F – holistic broad based approach. Easier to send our own response rather than coordinate. Connectivity and corridor approaches are common; the river is an obvious and important pathway/corridor. Everything gathers at the water's edge from Africa to here. The River is extremely important and all the creatures in it.

Kristine – as a politician, I trust Tom and Jill to research what they need to and report back to us.

Alison – suggests the framework of the targets really helpful. We could develop a similar approach including aquifers and connectivity. Set a conservation target for protecting areas on private lands.

Aaron - the advice we provide could be expanded to other local governments, it will not likely be unique to MNC.

Linda – DFO might have something around working around water that might be useful but otherwise would need to defer to local technicians. Coordinated responses can be good but this need to be timely so might not be possible.

Tim - echoed what others brought forward. Suggests breaking down the silos; connecting.

David S – focus on watershed health. Enforce and improve riparian area regulations that already exist to prevent further degradation. Enforcement has been abysmal. It was a downloaded power, and not their fault, but it needs to be strengthened. “When you’re in a hole, stop digging.” (Unless you are a well-driller!) He would like to pressure FLNRO to provide support for the download to Regional Districts for RAR enforcement.

Shannon – suggested using indicators. Include water as an indicator in OCP.

Aaron - would like more local governments to hear the presentation from Heather and Steph. There is not enough conversation about ecological connectivity. It would be good to bring that presentation to Municipalities or OCP groups. It opens minds to opportunities and responsibilities. Focus on foundational elements of good communities.