


<p>DRAFT BOARD MEETING Minutes</p>	<p>Mon. November 29, 2021 9:30-11:30 am Online / Zoom / Phone</p>	
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Meeting Chair: Chief Seymour. **Participants:** Debra Toporowski, Tim Kulchyski, David Anderson, David Froese, Kristine Sandhu, Linda Higgins, Lori Iannidinardo, Shannon Waters. Alison Nicholson
Staff: Tom Rutherford, Jill Thompson, Heather Pritchard. **Guest Speakers:** Leroy Van Weiren, CVRD
Audience members: advisors, working group members, volunteers, interested public. (Kate, Ken, Karen, Genevieve, Edmond, Barry, Cole, Murray, Rick, Roger, Rosie, others). **Minutes:** Jill

All Meeting Materials can be found here:
<https://cowichanwatershedboard.ca/document/cwb-board-meeting-nov-29-2021/>

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

1.	Welcome.	Chief Seymour called the meeting to order, welcomed everyone, and invited Board members to provide reflections on recent flooding, and role of CWB. See discussion notes below.	Discussion
2.	Agenda Review / Revisions		No changes
3.	Review minutes of the October meeting	Debra moved to approve the minutes (Find here); 2nd by Tim.	Approved
4.	Announcements and Correspondence	<p>Tom reviewed correspondence received:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Letter from Save our Holmes. (Find here) - Email questions RE Shoreline assessment. <p>Announcements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Water reconciliation workshop (presented to the CWB in May) delayed to Jan 20; includes a showcase by Cowichan Land Trust. <p>Discussion: Chief Seymour asked how we should respond to the Save our Holmes letter and expressed that Cowichan Tribes has similar concerns in that area, and intentions to pursue those interests through treaty. Cowichan Tribes has been meeting with Conservation Officers about elk populations, but only getting 1 elk a year for their community food harvest. Chief Seymour expressed that Cowichan Tribes would like to support this group.</p>	Information
5.	Public Input	No requests received.	Information

<p>6.</p>	<p>CWB Target Review - Working Group Proposals for Updated Targets for Watershed Health.</p> <p>A. Flows Target B. Watershed Connections (Watershed IQ) target</p>	<p>A) Tom provided a presentation (Find here) regarding the proposed update to the Flows Target by the Working Group. There are four proposed changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Summer’ replaced by ‘seasonal’ to reflect spring low flows which are now under threat. • Include Koksilah. • ‘People’ changed to communities. • Replace ‘fish’ with aquatic ecosystems. People felt that our community is knowledgeable enough about watersheds that they would understand what that means. <p>Indicators – Original 7cms.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to Cowichan WUP • Refer to Koksilah WSP – placeholder for that process. • Science and indigenous knowledge based. <p>See discussion below.</p> <p>B) Heather and Jill provided a presentation (Find here) regarding the proposed update to the Watershed IQ Target by the Working Group (New name Watershed Connections). See discussion below.</p>	<p>Decision Tom to take feedback to the Flows Working Group.</p> <p>Both targets to be brought back to CWB table for approval later.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Cowichan Lake Shoreline Assessment Project update.</p>	<p>Leroy Van Wieren provided an update presentation. (Find here)</p> <p>Lori – thanked Leroy for the presentation and the shoreline tool and asked whether it is safe to say this is just about where you’re going to place your lawn chair? We haven’t done the assessment on 900 properties.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leroy replied that it’s not that simple. There is a spectrum from shallow bays to rock bluffs that mean water sits in different places. Also, lots of people built in the flood plain, below high-water mark, so those folks have different concerns that will need to be addressed. • Lori pointed out that this is not unique to Cowichan Lake or the weir situation. Historically we have put houses and people in the wrong places; in Cow Bay the clay soils are sloughing and people who have had property 50-60 years are losing their property. <p>Chief Seymour thanked Leroy for the presentation.</p>	<p>Information</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Other</p>	<p>Tom asked for further direction to complete the Watershed Connections target - any concerns? Chief replied that staff should bring finished Targets back to the table.</p>	<p>As above.</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Adjourn. No December Meeting. Next CWB meeting Monday January 31</p>	<p>Next meeting – January 2022 Chief welcomed Lori again as co-chair and new Chair of CVRD.</p>	<p>Meeting adjourned 11 am.</p>

Open conversation/visiting followed on zoom.

Detailed Discussion Notes

Discussion 1 - Roundtable RE flooding and CWB role.

Chief Seymour: Cowichan Tribes has been asking for Gov't to spend money to prevent this. Cowichan Tribes had 100 homes evacuated; 97 weren't home as of yesterday. Rapid Damage Assessment being done - don't know how much damage there will be yet. Collaboration has been improved. Thankful for everyone who is helping.

Tim: discussed the areas where he has been working on flood mitigation lately, and reported they are looking much better now. However, it feels like "teetering on the edge" and still vulnerable if rains continue. Tim reflected that in his time, community members were used to flooding, but not so many high-level floods. He cited uncertainty around dikes and that the overall river condition is worse so that if we have the same flood, we are likely to have worse conditions. However, he also pointed to river remediation projects that Cowichan Tribes has been able to accomplish lately with government funding, such as removing the old railway bridge/logging bridge and sediment, that were a significant liability. The flooding could have been much worse in the area by Old Farm Market without that.

Tim also reported back on request from CWB staff last week about whether CWB could be of any specific help to flooded Cowichan Tribes community members. Cowichan Tribes Flood Team indicated that the coordinated help from CVRD was working well, and thanked the CWB for offering. No specific equipment requests. Tim added that it has been an adjustment to see outside community coming in to help with sandbagging and the response. A big positive is our ability to come together and support each other at times like this.

Tom: These events are causing a lot of hardship in our community. It's impossible not to notice that impacts are disproportionate along the river, and under Indian Act, on reserve communities. Tom said he feels a bit ineffective with all our resources concentrating on summer drought, but of course flooding is also a climate change impact.

Chief welcomed Lori Iannidinardo as the CWB's new CVRD CoChair.

Lori: thanked everyone working on emergency service. Lori talked about needing to dig ditches and drains around her place but is thinking of others with worse impacts. She encouraged everyone to stay off the roads if we can so workers can repair the roads.

Shannon: reflected on the long-term implications of climate impacts, and that "we are so lean". We need time for the team to recover. How can we look for the bigger funding infrastructure opportunities to respond to drought and flooding? It's also important to keep building relationships. Shannon asked for more detail about the works that have been done that relieved the impacts (see Tim's comments). These things help build the buffer and resiliency that we need right now.

David F: commented that it is good to see everyone. He is listening to everyone else's experience this morning (his own wet basement is 'small potatoes').

Chief Seymour: added his appreciation for the work at the long house at ClemClem. The army was sent and he was glad to see that. We are getting some help.

Alison: commented that she is so glad we have a CWB and a whole of watershed approach in times like this. She recently heard a podcast about building in places where we shouldn't have and the need to think about 'unbuilding'. It's good that people are working together on the whole system and she is happy to be part of that this morning.

Debra: also cited being thankful for CWB, and how we have developed ways of not being reactionary. We're in the middle of a pandemic, trying to juggle all of the things, including staff shortages. She reported that there was less mud this time at Russell Farm and perhaps the removal of sediment in the river helped with that. Government needs to know that our work helps, and that we need more help to keep doing that. Debra visited residents on Modeste Rd and that was a heartache. There was a full bin of garbage with all their belongings soaked. One individual had been working all day on his own filling the bin with no help. She expressed feeling thankful for where we live and that people come together in these times of need. She encouraged everyone to take care of yourself and recognize that this is mentally draining. We have to look at how we're going to move our population away from being built right by the water. The Government put the reserve on floodplain which means it could be under water permanently in the future.

David A: commented that we knew all along this was coming. We can't control water systems or rainfall. We are learning again what we should have known before, that we need to plan intelligently, which is what the Board is meant to be doing. We need to recognize what can't be controlled. We never really discuss forestry but forests are obviously important. These problems are an indication of the importance of the work we are doing. We need to take the long-range position whenever there is a choice.

Linda: thanked the group for the opportunity to be here today. She is thinking about the human toll, already taxed by the pandemic, and appreciates everyone sharing. Linda agreed that the best way to move forward is to work together. Together we are stronger. She is thankful to have the opportunity to share with such a strong group that is so committed.

[Kristine – unavailable with apologies that she is monitoring two meetings this morning]

Discussion 6A: Flows Target.

Shannon -- the term "seasonal flows" seems to incorporate winter flooding. Is it possible to include the flooding season without an indicator to measure that? Would it need to be another target? The language in the Target now encompasses the whole year.

- Tom -- discussions at the Working Group table did not include flood mitigation. If a flood target were to be considered it might be a separate target.
- Tom --another message we are hearing loud and clear is that we are missing a 'whole of watershed' target. We don't have a target that addresses that.
- Heather -- there was a recognition from the beginning that flooding is missing. The Target could include flooding indicator, but it doesn't currently.
- Dave F -- since this is a "motherhood" target, a solution could be making the Target "flows throughout the Cowichan watershed to best support the needs of the communities and aquatic ecosystems." (Make 'seasonal' unnecessary). Part of the problem is that impacts aren't necessarily seasonal. Resources are limited by what we can do but he senses the Board is uncomfortable excluding it. We

are the water shed board – about how water sheds. Measurable indicators don't matter because we have failed miserably at 7cms and it hasn't mattered.

- Alison – agree we could drop 'seasonal' but wondering about the word 'needs'. Not sure communities understand the difference between 'needs' and 'wants' – maybe a better word is 'health'. Thinking about unchecked growth during drought situations and how people interpret their needs. This requires more thought.
- Tom/Heather – agreed with suggestion from Roger Wiles in chat that there is a need for a 'forest ecosystem health' or 'whole of watershed' target in the future.
- 2 changes – dropping 'seasonal' seems to be widely supported and possibly 'need' can be changed.
 - o Action -Tom will take this back to the working group.

Discussion 6B Watershed Connections Target

Jill explained that this Target was originally called Watershed IQ. The group decided their work is about building connections with the watershed and within the community and that "IQ" is too narrow.

Heather reviewed (see presentation) the original text and revised language, building in the Cowichan teaching that everything is connected. Building relationships. As people we are dependent on the well-being of the watershed.

This Target's indicators have changed as follows:

- Change of grade level – reflecting a change in BC curriculum.
 - o Curriculum changed to emphasize grade 2. Place based learning activity.
 - o Curriculum also emphasized grade 9.
- Hands-on was about wanting something physically active.
- The group proposed an annual tally to quantify and track progress on these to make them measurable. The intention is to use the annual tally to identify opportunities and gaps in connecting people to watersheds.
- Heather provided images as examples of what the incredible local stewardship community is already doing to meet this target.
 - o Estuary nature center
 - o Genevieve teaching about salmon
 - o River Day – families and inter cultural.
 - o Sharing of info between cultures- story circle
 - o Speakers Series – knowledge sharing
 - o Field Trips
 - o Tom teaching at River Day.
- Q: Shannon asked why "outdoor" isn't included in the grade 2 indicator
 - o Heather – the group articulated that sometimes the best learning wasn't possible outdoors, such as involving elders coming into the classroom. The educators feel that foundational knowledge (something to build on) is key. For some classes an outdoor activity might not be as relevant or meaningful as something else that helps them understand their place in the watershed.
 - o Jill – the issue of resources was also identified as a barrier and the educators wanted to make sure we weren't excluding classes for that reason.