


<p><b>DRAFT BOARD MEETING Minutes</b></p>	<p><b>Mon. June 27, 2022</b>  <b>9:30-11:30 am</b>  <b>Online by Zoom Webinar</b></p>	
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**Meeting Chair:** CWB Co-Chair Lori Iannidinardo **Board Members:** Tim Kulchyski, Shannon Waters, David Anderson, David Slade, David Froese, Kristine Sandhu, Stuart Pagaduan, Debra Toporowski, Alison Nicholson, Linda Higgins. **Staff:** Tom Rutherford, Jill Thompson.

**Absent:** CWB co-chair Chief Lydia Hwitsum, Cindy Williams

**Guests:** Jeramy Dramborg, BC Conservation Foundation; Leroy Van Wieren, CVRD weir engineering project; Natasha Overduin, Compass Resource Management - weir licensing process; Genevieve Singleton, Cowichan Stewardship Roundtable.

**Audience members:** advisors, working group members, volunteers, interested public.

**Minutes/Tech support:** Jill 250-709-0492

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

1	Welcome from Co-Chairs	Chair Lori Iannidinardo welcomed everyone and started the meeting at 9:30am.	Information
2	Agenda Review / Revisions	No changes.	Carried.
3	Review minutes of the May Board meeting.	No changes.	Carried.
4	Announcements and Correspondence	Tom reviewed the announcements and correspondence.	Information
5	Public Input	Genevieve Singleton, Cowichan Stewardship Roundtable Co-Chair, invited everyone to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Roundtable’s annual field meeting. Thurs July 21, 10-1, Stoltz Pool, Cowichan River Park.</li> <li>• Quw’utsun River Day – details below. Sept 25th 10-3.</li> </ul>	Information
6	Staff updates	- Tom provided updates about the Koksilah Watershed Sustainability Planning process	Information

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tom introduced a plan to conduct internal CWB planning workshops, called “Setting the Course” in the fall to reflect on the significant changes that have occurred (or been accomplished) in the CWB’s field of work.</li> <li>- Details below.</li> </ul>	
7	Executive Director recruitment update	<p>Jill and David Slade provided an update on the recruitment process to replace Tom Rutherford as Executive Director upon his retirement, planned for this summer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The committee has updated the process and templates from the last E.D. recruitment process.</li> <li>- The committee reflected on how much has changed under Tom’s leadership.</li> <li>- Hope to have a decision by next week and provide an opportunity to meet the candidate at a picnic at the estuary.</li> </ul>	Information
8	Presentation: Update on the conservation water license (weir)	<p>Tom provided an introduction.</p> <p>Facilitator Natasha Overduin provided an update, acknowledging that there is broad agreement that replacing the weir is critical to maintaining the Cowichan River’s cultural and salmon resources by using the lake to store winter high water to let it go in the summer. This idea of additional storage is simple, but complicated to implement. See presentation <a href="#">here</a>, and discussion details below.</p>	Information
	BREAK		
9	Presentation: BC Conservation Foundation riparian habitat updates.	<p>Jeramy Dramborg provided a summary of some of BCCF-lead projects on the Cowichan River. See presentation <a href="#">here</a>, and discussion details below.</p>	Information

10	Presentation: Weir - shoreline assessment update	Leroy Van Wieren provided an update on the Shoreline Assessment for the Cowichan Lake weir project. A public meeting had been planned for June 17th, but the technology failed. They will try again July 14th. See presentation <a href="#">here</a> .  Lori acknowledged the quality of data provided, and that all the questions have been answered, and thanked Leroy for his work.	Information
11	Other	Lori expressed appreciation for all Tom has done as Executive Director and wished him well. “He’s not just a fish guy – he’s been a most amazing leader.” Tom will be taking a well-deserved break over the summer.	Information
12	Adjourn. Next meeting July 25 or Aug 29?	Next meeting - social on the beach. Date mid-July TBD. Next meeting Sept 26th.	Adjourned

Meeting materials are available at <https://cowichanwatershedboard.ca/meetings/>

### Discussion Details

5. Public Input. Genevieve Singleton introduced this year’s Sta’lo’ Skweyul and explained that this event has been a Cowichan Tribes co-sponsored event at Black Bridge but this year will be a watershed wide event with involvement from many of the Stewardship Roundtable organizations. Events and education will be offered at Lakeview, Saywell, Stoltz, Bright Angel, and Hecate Parks to celebrate the health of the river. More groups may join to offer their events/booths at any of those locations. There will be First Nations presence at each place. A Commemorate Canada grant was applied for but we won’t hear about that until too late so we are looking for Heritage River funds. Genevieve acknowledged David Anderson for his work to dedicate the Cowichan River a Federal Heritage River.

### 6. Staff updates.

- Tom provided a Koksilah WSP update. There is a transitional steering committee in place. BC Ministry changes unfortunately mean that BC gov’t staff people we have been working with are now in Min of Forests, whereas watershed planning is in the new Ministry of Land Waters and Resource Stewardship. The WSP partners are working through the changes.
- Setting the Course workshops are planned to examine some key questions about the direction of the CWB for the decade ahead. BC Freshwater Legacy Initiative has dedicated funds for this. We plan to start in the fall. There are a lot of changes right now, including staffing and Board members, as well as changes to the context we work in, and progress made.

## 8. Weir – Conservation Water License.

Natasha reviewed the process to date: Cowichan Tribes has convened a process with its partners about the water license that resulted in a consensus to take a local partnership approach. An MOU was signed in June with CVRD taking the lead as applicant on behalf of CVRD, Cowichan Tribes and Paper Excellence.

Natasha outlined next steps:

- We need to submit an application for a license to initiate some of the next steps. A work stream is underway to do that.
- We need to develop a Joint Works Agreement about how the two water licensees (Catalyst's existing industrial water license) will work together, how to manage dam safety, etc.
- Need to develop our approach to community engagement.
- The Province has agreed to resource, enable and empower a local partnership.

Natasha added additional context.

- The MOU established a Coordination Committee and Decision-making Committee. CWB (Tom) is part of both.
- The timeline is important, not only for annual salmon impacts but because the Federal funding that Cowichan Tribes secured has a time limit. 2022-2028. (See slide)
- Funding gap estimated at approximately \$14mil.

Key questions:

- Is further technical analysis needed?
- Will senior gov'ts fund the capital costs? (Expected)
- What challenges might arise? E.g. providing clarity around roles of local partners vs province.
- What is the strategy between local partners to negotiate Joint Works Agreement.

Discussion

- Lori - CVRD watching nervously for what will happen next.
- David S asked whether the province is a signatory to MOU.
- Natasha confirmed that it is not and that there was consensus on that.
- Water conservation is responsibility of the province. Clarification that Province is able to take a water conservation license but is unwilling to.
- David S repeated his perspective that the Province should be taking ownership of weir and license.
  - Natasha pointed to a possible future here where everyone has a role and responsibility that matches their jurisdictional and stewardship capacities. This would hopefully include the province taking appropriate responsibilities, while respecting the need for local decision making as well.
- Kate complemented Natasha on her summary and added that the Province has not done anything like this in the past. Site C is an example of a comparable project, but there are only 20 impacted property owners. It is very challenging for the Ministry as they reorganize. This is novel policy development with local partners. It's an exciting time. Kate characterized this as being at the 80% mark after 20 years of work and said that the CVRD Board is watching carefully.

- Tom added that this won't be a consensus-based process – it will be a negotiation. He added that he has tremendous respect for the people engaged in the process. Optimistic that hard work is beginning.
- David A (hearing issues on zoom) asked for clarification on whether there was any movement since last time. He reiterated that running water is a provincial responsibility other than navigation and asked what the prospects are there for province signing an MOU to take on the liability.
  - Natasha – confirmed that the MOU is about the local partners role, and we need to advocate to the province to take their responsibility, make this a high priority and ensure it is internally well-resourced within the province. We're ready as local partners.

## 9. BC Conservation Foundation Projects Summary

- Tim suggested he coordinate with Jeremy RE Cowichan Tribes' tire contaminant testing with DFO.
- David S asked whether it is coincidence that mortality is 100% for fish with tags? Is it possible that all the steelhead that are tagged died?
  - Jeremy replied that is possible, but also typically only 1/10 returns home anyway. Tag burden is being considered. It could be an issue with smaller fish - monitoring that.
- Lori said many tags have been found under the herring rookery at Cow Bay.
  - Jeremy - Yes over 100,000 tags have been used since 2014 and 700-800 have been found there - coho, chinook etc. Some tagged in bay, some river.
- Debra asked why BCCF decreased from 10 - 8 fish to tag?
  - Jeremy - just couldn't catch enough. It was a short spawning period this year (couple days) to catch kelts. We only take females. Tags are \$5000 each so they only use them on a fish they hope will survive.
- Debra – wondered whether flashiness of tags attracts predators?
- David F asked about the size of chinook out-migrating compared to inbound?
  - Jeremy - fish that entered the ocean smaller returned as jacks. If they were larger at outmigration, they returned older. Fry group that went downstream in March were smaller. They spent last month tagging larger smolts 65-85mm. This fry group is more likely to return as jacks than smolt group.
- David F asked whether the larger 5 year fish that Joe found are significant?
  - Jeremy replied that they don't know.
- David A asked about the number of times adult steelhead are caught by an angler on average.
  - Jeremy - 1-3 per year get caught more than once a year. On average they are caught one time. They use the total catch as the total run size.
- Jeremy provided his email for any follow up questions. [jdamborg@bccf.com](mailto:jdamborg@bccf.com)