

Draft Board Meeting Minutes

Monday, January 27th, 2024 at Cowichan Cultural Centre – Comeakin Room

Meeting Chair: Chief Cindy Daniels

Participants: CVRD Chair Kate Segall, Alison Nicholson, Shannon Waters, David Slade, Tim Kulchyski, David Anderson Chris Alphonse

Advisor: Oliver Brandes

Regrets: Calvin Swustus Senior, David Froese, Arlette Malcolm, Kristine Sandhu, Jenna Sutherst, Mayor Michelle Staples

Staff/Project Leaders: Danielle Paydli, Heather Pritchard, Tom Rutherford, Jill Thompson

Guest Speakers: Lydia Hwitsum, Co-Chair First Nations Fisheries Council Water Caucus

Audience members: First Nations Fisheries Council Water Caucus members and staff, CWB Working group members, volunteers, interested public.

1. Welcome

Welcome Provided by Chief Daniels to Board members, FNFC Water Caucus and other guests

Opening Prayer by Chris Alphonse

2. Agenda Review / Revisions

Agenda adopted by consensus

3. Review November 25, 2024 Draft Minutes

Minutes adopted by consensus

4. Announcements & Correspondence

Materials referenced below can be found at: <https://cowichanwatershedboard.ca/meetings/>

Correspondence

- Invitation to the January 20th Quw'utsun Stseelthun (Salmon) Friendship Project celebration, welcoming the giant salmon puppet (Salmy!) to the Duncan library.

Announcements/Events

- Journey of our Generation workshop. Feb 24
- Pacific Salmon Foundation Knowledge Exchange Workshop Series - Large wood applications in River Restoration. Feb. 13.
- Process-Based Restoration of Riverscapes Winter Series. Online. Jan 7-Feb 18. Hosted by Waters Edge Biological
- Cowichan Estuary Nature Center is now open 11-3 on Saturdays and Sundays, including a gift shop. If you haven't been lately, go check it out. 1845 Cowichan Bay Rd
<https://www.cowichanestuary.ca/>
- Saturday March 22 - World Water Day. "Walk the Weir" tours. Details to follow at cowichanlakeweir.ca

5. Staff Presentation

- CWB Staff speak to 2024 “Top 10 of 2024 – Moments to Remember!”
 - <https://cowichanwatershedboard.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Top-10-of-2024-NO-TEXT.pdf>

6. Presentation by the First Nations Fisheries Council's Water Caucus and Water Table (10:05 am)

- Presentation by FNFC WC co-chair Lydia Hwitsum about the work of the FNFC’s Water Caucus and Water Table.
 - Link to presentation: <https://cowichanwatershedboard.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Water-Caucus-Presentation-for-Cowichan-Watershed-Board.pptx.pdf>
- 15 regional and technical FN delegates at table
- FNFC acts as secretariat
- BC Water table is a collaborative process with delegates from FNFC Water Caucus and multiple Provincial Ministries
- Broader aim is to lead to lasting policy, solutions and actions as opposed to ad hoc engagement
- Need to bring different Ministries to the Water Table in the context of DRIPA and several ministries (not just WLRS) engaged at tier 2 table
- Co-developed **Water Security Strategy** with Govt. of BC
 - Not a crown process – collaborative process resulting in an Intentions Paper 2023
 - Now working on co-developing an implementation plan
- **Water Security Fund** to be co-developed with First Nations – interim home is REFBC & Water Caucus/FNFC
- Minister Neill has expressed support for this collaborative approach
 - Need to continue to bring BC along
 - Giving voice to the natural world

Dialogue

- Lydia speaks to the importance of regular quarterly meetings
 - Face to face engagement important
 - Feels positive about this model’s effectiveness in bringing an Indigenous perspective to the table
- Lower Fraser WC representative
 - Speaks to the importance of CWB as a model demonstrating potential for nations to begin to act as “first responders” and how demonstration of a successful watershed scale model governance model is important...

7. Updates & Discussion on CWB Projects and Initiatives (10:30 am)

- Executive Director Danni Paydli provides key updates and questions for consideration and guidance to put before the Board. Please see the Staff Report in the meeting package.
- <https://cowichanwatershedboard.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Draft-Staff-Reporting-January-2025.pdf>
 - o Cowichan Weir
 - CWB (Jill) leading communications team with representation from all partners comms staff (Cowichan Tribes, CVRD, Domtar, BC WLRS)
 - CWB speakers night at VIU: current plan is to have March event dedicated to Weir
 - Danni requests board members to continue to be effective advocates for the weir project when the opportunity arises
 - o Xwulqw'selu Watershed Sustainability Planning process
 - o Our Role is ever changing – how do we step up?
 - o Request from ED to take on two additional supporting roles
 - Developing long term flow targets – Tom
 - Land use and restoration workstream – Heather
- **Motion**
 - o to provide additional support to WSP in the areas of flow targets and land use.
 - o Motion carried by consensus
- Speakers nights
 - Feb 24th next speaker night –
 - Heather and Kelly Loch on riparian zones
- 2025 – 15th anniversary of CWB
 - o Celebratory event
 - Internal (field trip picnic in the summer?) or larger public event?
 - o Direction from Chair to think about this & come to the next meeting with an idea
- Digging into our impact plan next meeting
 - Where to focus our capacity and energy over next 3 years

- Also, as we prepare for board meetings – what specific areas do we want to focus and learn from each other on

8. Presentation to Lydia Hwitsum by Chief Daniels

- Quw'utsun Canoe paddle acknowledging the leadership and passion Lydia brings to her work & the value of everyone paddling together towards common goals
- "We all pull together as one..."

9. Acknowledgement of David Anderson

- Original CWB member in 2010
- Leadership and Contribution acknowledged by entire board (and gallery) with comments by David Slade, and Tim Kulchyski

David Anderson has really helped to lead that way. It was really important to have people with his background and his expertise say to MLAs, say to Premiers, say to leadership across the country, "this is what's happening and this is how it's done here and this is what works for us here in Cowichan."

And I just want to take a moment to raise my hands and really thank David for all that time, all that energy, all that history for the Cowichan. That's what keeps the Watershed Board going. It's people's heart. That's what he's brought to us (hands up). Thank you

- Tim Kulychski
- David presented with a Cowichan Toque from CoChair, Kate Segall.

10. Meeting Adjourned at 11:00

- Estuary tour with FNFC Guests

Next CWB meeting Monday February 24 at Si'em Lelum dining hall