

Cowichan Watershed Board Meeting

DRAFT Minutes



August 1, 2013
6:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Location: Cowichan Tribes Chief and Council Chambers

5760 Allenby Road, Duncan BC.

Participants: Cowichan Watershed Board

Co-chair: Co-chair Calvin Swustus

Guests: Krista Robertson and Estella Charleson JFK Law, Victoria, BC, Wilf Luedke Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Nanaimo, BC

1. Welcome; Introductions, Invocation; Opening Remarks

Co-chair Calvin Swustus welcomed everyone to the meeting including guests Krista Robertson and Estella Charleson and Wilf Luedke. The Co-chair noted that the Cowichan Watershed Board and concerned members of the community are making a difference. Had people not raised their voices there would have been no change to the rule curve and we could already have a serious problem with river flows this year.

It was noted Mayor Rob Hutchins and Andrew Thomson had sent their regrets. Mr. Thomson had asked that Wilf Luedke of Fisheries and Oceans Canada to attend.

2. Approval of Agenda

David Slade requested that emergency planning for provision of water in the lower watershed be added to the end of the agenda. The agenda was approved with that addition.

3. Approval of Minutes of June 6, 2013 meeting and Business Arising from Minutes

The minutes of the June 6, 2013 meeting were approved as presented and it was noted that the 'to dos' arising from them had been addressed.

4. Incorporation under the Society Act

Krista Robertson led a discussion the element of a draft constitution and bylaws that had been developed to accompany an application for the Watershed Board becoming a registered society under the BC Society Act.

Decision: After review and discussion the Board approved the amended constitution and bylaws and requested that JFK Law file for incorporation on the Board's behalf. (The Board acknowledged West Coast Environmental Law Krista Robertson, and Estella Charleson's contribution to this project.

5. Target Updates

- Summer Flows

The Coordinator noted that despite the fact that we had just experienced an extremely dry July, water levels in Cowichan Lake are the same as last year.

Six lakeshore property owners have appealed to the Environmental Appeal Board opposing the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource's Comptroller of Water Rights order regarding operation of the weir. The Board discussed how to it should proceed in light of the appeals.

Decision: The Board requested JFK Law to apply to be a party under the Environmental Appeal Board process regarding the Comptroller of Water Rights order that affected operation of the weir. The Board's appeal should be submitted as soon as the Cowichan Watershed Board is legally established.

- Riparian –Shaw Creek

David Slade noted that 4 properties totalling roughly 250 acres are for sale at Show Creek at the northwest end of Cowichan Lake. This area has been identified as an extremely important production area for amphibians, lamprey, salmon and trout and elk. Historically it was also a very important site for Cowichan Tribes a complete archaeological assessment has not been completed but it is known that there was a longhouse at the site. It was also noted that given the Watershed Board's target of protecting 50% of the 70% shoreline habitats at the lake that are relatively unimpacted, some form of protection of these parcels of this site should be considered.

Decision: The Coordinator was directed to contact the realtor for the purposes of setting up a visit. He will recommend that we visit the properties with the realtor and then consider next steps.

- Water Quality/Shellfish

Deb Epps was unable to attend the meeting so Rodger Hunter noted that the partners involved in the water quality assessment have now begun summer sampling and more sampling. In addition VIHA is continuing its sampling at a number of swimming sites and down at Cowichan Bay and Carol Hartwig is sampling at four marinas. Deb intends to provide a formal update at the Board's October meeting.

The Coordinator reported that the Board has conditional approval to work with lower Cowichan/Kolsilah dairy farmers on a Group/Area Based Environmental Farm Plan to help address water quality issues.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water Conservation 	<p>The first meetings with local governments to discuss participation in a water conservation challenge will be on August 6, and August 13, 2013 for Duncan and Lake Cowichan respectively. CVRD Director Ian Morrison and David Slade will represent the Board in relation to this water conservation target.</p>
<p>6. Watershed Governance -Cowichan Estuary Environmental Management Plan</p>	<p>Board members agreed to postpone discussion of this agenda item until the next meeting.</p>
<p>7. Upcoming events/issues</p>	<p>Board members were reminded of the Upper River and Lower River clean-ups that will take place on August 17 and 18 respectively this year. The Cowichan Lake and River Stewardship Society (CLRSS) is leading the former and Cowichan Tribes, the Watershed Board and CLRSS are jointly leading the latter. It was also noted that the Watershed Board is now represented on the Governance Forum Planning Committee.</p>