

Cowichan Watershed Board Meeting

Minutes



April 4, 2013
6:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Location: CVRD Boardroom
175 Ingram, Duncan, BC

Participants: Cowichan Watershed Board

Co-chair: Co-chair Rob Hutchins

Guests: Tom Rutherford, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Gerald Thom, Cowichan Lake and River Stewardship Society

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| 1. Welcome; Introductions, Invocation; Opening Remarks | Co-chair Rob Hutchins welcomed the members and guests. |
| 2. Approval of Agenda | The agenda was approved as presented. |
| 3. Approval of Minutes of February 7, 2013 meeting and Business Arising from Minutes | <p>The minutes were approved with a revision clarifying that the upcoming riparian workshop would take place on April 24 and 25, 2013.</p> <p>It was noted that a letter had been written to the Chair of the Central Sector Liquid Waste Management Plan regarding incorporation of stormwater within the plan.</p> <p>The Polis Project has agreed to co-host the January 2014 water governance forum with the Watershed Board at the Quw'utsun Cultural and Conference Centre. The Coordinator is also to ensure that any display material that the Watershed Board is associated with includes First Nation input.</p> |
| 4. Viewing of Video –Troubled Waters | <p>Gerald Thom introduced this video which was produced by Manly Media of Nanaimo. The media considered a variety of issues including: public water systems and watersheds on Vancouver Island; watershed ownership, privatization of water utilities, groundwater contamination, trade agreements and the right to clean drinking water. It was noted that there were some factual issues with the video. However, given the strength of the overall message wider showings of the video were encouraged.</p> <p>The Coordinator was directed to prepare a letter objecting to SIA's request for a permit regarding contaminated materials in the Shawinigan watershed.</p> |

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| <p>5. Target Updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Summer Flows (Update) • Public Health Webinar • Water Quality/Shellfish • Others | <p>Ross Forrest Chair of the Summer Flows Working Group and Rob Hutchins updated the Board on the status of the Ministry of Forest, Lands and Natural Resource Operation's upcoming decision on whether to extend that date that water could be maintained at full supply behind the weir at Lake Cowichan from July 9th to July 31st. It was noted that Cowichan Tribes wrote two strong letters to the Minister regarding concerns about the March 9th meeting at Lake Cowichan and the legal ramifications of not approving extension of the full supply period. The Coordinator is seeking volunteers to assist with Heather Mountain snow monitoring and is to contact Catalyst about the feasibility of establishing a web-cam showing lake levels at the weir.</p> <p>Dr. Lorna Medd reported on a teleconference on public health targets for watersheds convened by a group that is interested in public health and watershed indicators. Lorna was encouraged by the expertise available and is optimistic that progress can be made regarding targets that reflect the well-being of the watershed. She will continue to work with the group. The TAC will discuss possible swimming safety target.</p> <p>Tom Rutherford summarized actions to date and next steps regarding water quality/shellfish LINK Actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finalizing analysis and identifying gaps;• Preparing for next year's sampling,• Farm visits and manure runoff workshop• Pursuing Broadway run initiative –possible shovel ready for new DFO program ;• Continue to pursue shellfish related analysis;• Work with NESH and others on targets. <p>Gerald Thom noted progress on the upcoming riparian workshop at Lake Cowichan.</p> |
| <p>6. Future Responsibilities</p> | <p>Board members had a preliminary discussion of federal, provincial and local responsibilities with respect to the optimal degree of influence that the Watershed Board would have over them. A list of the responsibilities considered for greater local influence or possible responsibility can be found at INSERT LINK.</p> <p>The Coordinator noted that there may be an opportunity to obtain West Coast Environmental Law support to obtain legal advice and support for establishing the Watershed Board as a legal entity that could receive funding, take on responsibilities and possibly obtain charitable status.</p> <p>Decision: The coordinator is to contact West Coast Environmental Law for support.</p> |