

# Cowichan Watershed Board Meeting

## DRAFT Minutes



May 10, 2012

**Location: Cowichan Bay Maritime Centre, 1761 Cowichan Bay Rd., Cowichan Bay, BC**

**Participants:** Cowichan Watershed Board

**Guests:** Bob Harding, Department of Fisheries and Oceans

**Meeting Chair:** Mayor Rob Hutchins

1. Welcome; Introductions, Invocation; Opening Remarks	Co-chair Mayor Rob Hutchins welcomed Board members, Special Advisors, Technical Advisory Committee members and guests and led a round of introductions.
2. Approval of Agenda	<b>The agenda was approved as presented.</b>
3. Approval of Minutes of March 7, 2012 meeting and update on Business Arising from Minutes	<b>The minutes were approved as presented.</b>  Unfortunately the Board's meeting with Cabinet Ministers in February regarding a provincial contribution to operating funding for the Watershed Board resulted in rejection letters from Ministers Terry Lake and Mary Polak.  It was noted though that in response to the Watershed Board's recommendation, the CVRD had approved \$5000 for maintenance of the Heather Mountain snow pillow.
4. Foreshore Inventory and Management in the Shuswap	Bob Harding of DFO Kamloops described activities to inventory and protect riparian habitat in the Shuswap. He stressed the importance of inventory, classification, mapping and documenting habitat condition and importance. Other key issues that he identified included: commitment and funding from various levels of government (particularly local government); public education at all levels; and a collaborative approach to compliance and enforcement. [ <a href="http://tinyurl.com/6ulrpmr">http://tinyurl.com/6ulrpmr</a> , <a href="http://tinyurl.com/823g92m">http://tinyurl.com/823g92m</a> ]

## 5. Watershed Targets

- Riparian -The Cowichan Lake and River Stewardship group is attempting to engage the realtor community to change values about riparian habitat and is considering establishing a riparian welcome wagon for new shoreline home buyers. There is a need to complete riparian inventory and mapping for the watershed and identify a source of funding.
- Shellfish/Water Quality -John Deniseger is preparing a comprehensive water quality monitoring program for review that links up funding acquired by Cowichan Tribes (tissue sampling), Gas Tax funding (non-point source monitoring) as well as Ministry and Living Rivers monitoring funding. An attempt will be made to arrange for a shellfish expert to make a presentation at the next meeting.
- Watershed IQ Discussions have begun regarding a program to engage Grade 5 teachers in developing a week long syllabus for student concerning watershed values and some field experience capped off with a celebration of the watershed later in the term. Although attempts will be made it may be difficult under current conditions to get this started before the end of the school year.
- Water Conservation -Ian Morrison noted that the water knowledge and conservation survey indicated a number of areas for improvement. He noted that there was a need to confirm Ladysmith's domestic water use figures before possibly adopting them as a base for conservation challenge and that further information was required from North Cowichan but that there was definitely opportunity for challenging communities to achieve conservation targets.  
**Decision: The coordinator is to confirm Ladysmith's average daily per capita domestic water use.**
- Summer Flows and Flood Protection –It was noted that these two issues have become joined as a result of the need for fish habitat compensation related to proposed construction of flood protection works and proposed gravel removal for flood prevention. It was reported that DFO was given very short notice of these works but identified a possible simple solution that could address a significant portion of the required compensation. That solution would involve reverting to past practices for managing the weir at Lake Cowichan so that the process was more like

	<p>a rule band model.</p> <p><b>Decision: The Board recommended that the CVRD consider a resolution whereby the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations would be requested to readopt its previous practice for operating the weir in order to reduce the risk of having to reduce flows in the river below 7 cubic metres per second during the summer and to ensure that flood protection/prevention measures can proceed in 2012.</b></p>
<p>6. Funding</p>	<p>The Coordinator noted that based on Honourable Ida Chong's recent announcement, the \$370,000 UBCM Gas Tax funding had now been formally approved. A formal agreement regarding the funds was now required between the UBCM and the CVRD. It was also noted that the CVRD had applied for the funds well before the targets had been developed and as a result no funding was included for some of the targets (in particular riparian). As a result there was a need to determine whether some of the funding should be re-profiled in order to accommodate target related funding needs. <b>The coordinator committed to re-profiling the budget for the Board's consideration at its next meeting.</b></p>
<p>7. General Information -Upcoming Meetings, events, time and date of next meeting etc.</p>	<p><b>The Coordinator noted that the Board is not eligible for certain types of funding because it has no legal status. He committed to investigate the pros and cons of Cowichan Watershed Board becoming a registered Society under the Society Act.</b></p> <p><b>Tentative date for next Board meeting was June 7, 2012.</b></p>