



REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NORTH OKANAGAN

NOTES of a meeting of the Shuswap River Watershed Sustainability Plan LAND USE AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT WORKING GROUP held in the Board Room at the Regional District Office on April 3, 2012, 4:00 pm – 7:00 pm.

Members: Aline Piche
Bob Whitley
Dale Kerr
Doug Clark
Erika Davidson
~~Jim Davidson~~
Giles Shearing
Herman Gerrits
Neil Brooks
Ralph van Daltsen
Susan Everatt
Tom Minor

Staff: Anna Page Sustainability Coordinator
Laura Frank Sustainability Coordinator and Planning

PART 1 – CALL MEETING TO ORDER

1.1 Welcome by RDNO staff, Anna Page and Laura Frank

PART 2 – APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved as presented.

PART 3 – INTRODUCTIONS

3.1 Brief introduction by all participants.

Anna Page and Laura Frank introduced themselves, a round table introduction followed.

PART 4 – ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Some additional items were added to the list of existing initiatives within the watershed and the minutes of the March 6, 2012 meeting have been updated to reflect this. The updated list is also replicated at the end of these minutes.

PART 5 – BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

PART 6 – NEW & UNFINISHED BUSINESS

6.1 General Review of other Watershed Plan examples

Laura provided a brief overview of other watershed plan examples:

- **Kiskatinaw River Watershed Management plan** is very much focused on Drinking Water Quality as the river is the sole source of community water for the City of Dawson Creek. The plan revolves around how to best manage activities within the watershed to ensure water quality is not compromised.
 - Watershed activities that were focused on include:
 - Land ownership
 - Timber harvesting
 - Crop production
 - Cattle grazing
 - Oil and gas
 - Recreation
 - The plan has some good examples of tables which break out the specific issues, responsible agency, policies, and actions.
 - Section 4.3 Action and Implementation Plan outlines the action/goal statements, identifies the objective and strategies and presents tasks that need to be undertaken.

- **Nicola Water Use Management Plan**
 - **Section 6** outlines a total of 37 policies which fall into five categories:
 - Water quantity
 - Water quality
 - Environment
 - Learning
 - Management

Look here to find a number of good examples of specific strategies and actions.

- **Coquitlam River Watershed Roundtable**
 - Information on this site is focused on the process. It outlines the Vision, Values and Mission of the group. Under Library (Reports and Documents) Click on the Phase III- Governance Strategy and Development document for a full review of where they are at within the process.
 - To date they have established the following Vision “A healthy watershed supported and enjoyed by the community in a manner that respects our common values through:
 - Partnerships and collaboration;
 - Education, stewardship, and monitoring;
 - Conservation and green economics; and

- Responsible decision-making.

In perpetuity.”

- Their values for the watershed were developed in Phases II (Community Engagement and Visioning) and include:
 - Spiritual qualities;
 - Ecosystem integrity;
 - Natural beauty;
 - Native bio-diversity;
 - Natural resources;
 - Public access;
 - Home/Heritage/Culture;
 - Responsibility to protect;
 - Recreation;
 - Protected areas; and
 - Sustainability.
- **Shuswap Lakes Integrated Planning Process**
 - Provides a number of good overarching goal examples. Some examples include: “development that respects the environment, as well as economic and social interests”; “water quality that supports public and environmental health”; and “Desirable recreational experiences that are safe and sustainable”.
 - The remainder of the document outlines specific strategies and actions.
- **Nisqually Watershed Stewardship Plan**
 - Long Range Plan with a Vision looking towards 2055.
 - It outlines goals for 2030 and works back with objectives and actions that are to be achieved by 2020, 2015 & 2010.
- **Fraser Basin Council Rethinking Our Waterways**
 - **Section 4** “Who Does What in Water?” provides a good background and breakdown on the different areas of jurisdiction and which ministries and levels of government are responsible for what.

6.2 Review of Current Initiatives underway within the Watershed

Anna provided an up-date on the current initiatives underway within the watershed which are listed at the end of these minutes.

6.3 Discussion of Phase I Issue Identification

Riparian

- Need to be proactive when it comes to erosion. Tie in with water quality comments, erosion (increased turbidity) degrades water quality.
 - provincial agencies wait for the worse case scenario before any action is taken (a road being undercut by a river needs to fall into a waterway before any works are carried out (eg. on the way to Kingfisher)).
 - Works that are done seem to be temporary fixes and not long term solutions.
- Concern with cattle in the waterways and overgrazing of land down to the waters edge
 - Noted that as farms become more intensive livestock are generally housed (in the case of dairy farms).
 - Tree planting may assist with bank stability but not a high priority for farmers.
 - Tree planting is time intensive and costly
 - Rip Rap is expensive
 - Fencing is not always an option with high water
 - There are different fencing methods permanent vs. temporary
 - Volunteer groups could take on planting for those who can't
 - Use kids to help out (need willow branches) Kingfisher Interpretive centre has taken on projects like this.
 - Noted that banks need to be sloped and not just planted.
 - It is in the interest of farmers to retain banks (land).
- Riparian Restoration requires plan so work and planting is appropriate.
- Erosion impacts are highest when the water level is high and boat wakes wash away un-vegetated banks.
- Need to reference existing legislation so that if changed it is still in the Shuswap plan eg Fisheries Act potential changes.
- Education is important! Many people are not familiar with the Riparian Area's Regulations.
 - Eg people still burn grasslands down to the waters edge.
- Use inventory & mapping information to identify high value critical habitat areas that are high risk. Need to communicate this to landowners
 - Provide a notification of high value areas with an information brochure.
 - Kent example high number of species at risk. Giles will talk with those involved with the education campaign.
 - There needs to be a constant, concerted education campaign at the local level. Additional funding for local organizations to take on this work.
 - Work with existing organizations and community groups to help with education campaign.
 - Get people who will be impacted involved eg. Landowners/farmers (eg Salmon Safe) and those who are creating the disturbance.
- Info and signage at boat launches- some already exists at Enderby and Grindrod and sensitive habitat signs on side channels have helped.
 - Right language/wording is important

- Creative signs can be more effective
 - Engine size restrictions at launch sites. Noted that engine size is not necessarily going to eliminate bank erosion.
 - Real need for enforcement and monitoring at the boat launch.
- Legislation and standards should be applied to both private landowners and industry (Tolko can clear land 5-15 m away from a waterway)
 - Forest practices Act vs. Riparian Areas Regulations (RAR).
 - Following are exempt from RAR:
 - Farms
 - Parks
 - BC Hydro
 - Highways
 - Forestry

Water Quality

- Impacts from:
 - Logging
 - Manage clear-cuts (scale)
 - Follow up on tree planting
 - Community forest licenses
 - Need more Nature reserves, more protected areas
 - Impact of the pine beetle
 - Impact of forest fire areas
 - Eliminate clear-cuts along watercourses.
 - Septic systems
 - Effluent
 - Agriculture
 - Algae blooms Didymo
 - Boats impacting water quality
 - Refuelling
 - Boats with black and grey water (not disposing correctly)
 - Dog & wildlife fecal matter
 - Impact of hobby farms (not necessarily as educated on best management practices as commercial farmers)
 - Over grazing
 - Can't keep up with the work required
 - Livestock are often pet's, not a business, grounds can be trampled
 - Interested to look at the ratio of hobby farms to commercial farms
 - Pesticides golf courses
 - Runoff (urban and rural context)
 - Storm water run-off in municipal areas especially in Spring Time (potentially an underestimated issue)
 - Runoff from livestock areas
 - Two stroke engines

- Pharmaceuticals entering system through municipal effluent.
- Look at working with realtors or educating them on what is actually allowed on waterfront properties (RAR) they could hand out information to potential property owners
- Noted that a rep from the logging industry should be included when discussing logging recommendations.
- Public needs to be the “watch dogs”
- Enforcement officers
- Sustainable logging practices
- Education on reporting and launching complaints
 - (enforcement group)
- Look at changing Interior Health Authority regulations regarding composting toilets and grey water recycling systems so they are permitted

Watershed

- Believe that the upper Shuswap River is one of the most pristine rivers at that latitude.

6.4 Development of Land Use and Natural Environment Recommendations for Goals Objectives/ Strategies

- Noted that we need good information first on issues identified before moving forward with recommendations
- Possible Goal Statements:
 - With the recognition that all other goals in the Shuswap River Watershed *Sustainability Plan* are predicated on a supply of fresh, clean, potable water, therefore the primary goal of the SRWSP shall be:
 1. To preserve and protect water quality in order to ensure an adequate supply of such clean, potable water.
 - a. To protect all sources of water within the watershed from pollution and poor practices which could endanger the primary goal, including septic and sewage contamination, agricultural mispractices, industrial pollution, logging and other threats to the health of the watershed
 - b. To protect and restore riparian habitat
 - c. To preserve and protect spawning habitat of salmon and other fish as they are an integral part of this ecosystem and historically an important partner.
 - d. To educate the public, agriculture and industry (of all forms) in best practices management and how to work together to accomplish our goals of a healthy watershed ecosystem.
 - e. To inventory problem areas and develop sustainability plans to correct such problems.
 - f. To develop a set of environmental indicators by which to measure progress towards our goals as well as to pinpoint present and future problems.
 - Goal statement around eco-systems biodiversity

- Common understanding & appreciation of the watershed, sense of stewardship.
- Goal statement that addresses the need for education that will cross over all Working Groups.
 - Awareness / learning / engagement / communication partnership
 - Something that shows working together all take ownership
- Goal Statement around Quality of Life (maintaining preserving what we have for both ecosystems and humans)

PART 7 – WORKING GROUP MATTERS

7.1 Membership/Appointments

- Land Use and the Natural Environment Working Group Member & Contact Listing – updated February 2012

7.2 Mileage Reimbursement

Working group members will be reimbursed for mileage to meetings at \$0.52 per km. A mileage record sheet will be circulated at each meeting and members will be paid at the end of the meeting period.

7.3 Future Meeting Dates and Locations

Next meeting will be May 1st, 2012, 4:00 – 7:00 pm at the RDNO offices.

PART 8 - ADJOURNMENT

Existing initiatives and programs in the Watershed (updated list)

- Cherryville Water Stewards – water quality monitoring on Cherry Creek, Ferry Creek, Reiter Creek and the Shuswap main stem in the Cherryville area as well as riparian restoration projects on Cherry Creek
- Lower Shuswap Stewardship Society – Water quality monitoring on the Lower Shuswap from Mabel Lake to Mara Lake. Riparian restoration project on Blurton creek.
- Ministry for Environment water quality monitoring on Sugar and Mabel Lakes
- RDNO tests raw water for a limited suite of parameters at the water treatment facilities at both Grindrod and Mabel Lake.
- City of Enderby monitors Shuswap River water at the water treatment plant intake and they also monitor effluent quality.
- River Watch Program that spans the entire river from the Lower Shuswap to Sugar Lake. This initiative falls within the Safe Communities Program with the local RCMP. This program works on the basis that when citizens see a reckless boater they can copy down the vessels registration number and report the incident to the RCMP who will follow up on the complaint.
- Okanagan Conservation Collaboration Partnership – Mid Shuswap Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory – Sugar Lake to Wilsey Dam

- Modified sensitive habitat inventory and mapping has been completed on the Lower Shuswap and foreshore inventory and mapping has been carried out on Mabel Lake.
- River Ambassadors Program is run by the Enderby and District Chamber of Commerce on the Lower Shuswap River which entails educating recreational users on how to be respectful within the waterways.
- Environmental Farm Plans <http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/EnviroFarmPlanning/index.htm>
- Whitevalley Community Resource Centre has undertaken a number of projects on tributaries of the Shuswap River as listed below.

Ireland Side Channel	1999
Ireland Side Channel 2	2000
Smolt Pond	2001
Ireland Channel Planting	2002
Procter Channel	2002
Huwer Groundwater Channel Feasibility Study	2004
Wilsey Dam Fishway Feasibility Study	2004
Creighton Creek Stream Flow Recovery	2004
Creighton Creek Stream Flow Recovery 2	2005
Huwer Groundwater Complex	2005
Smolt Count	2005
Middle Shuswap SHIM and Preliminary SEI	2006
Bessette/Shuswap Riparian Planting & Protection	2006
Huwer Bank Stabilization	2006
Ruechel Weir	2007
Creighton Creek Pool Creation	2009
Bessette Creek Pool Creation, Phase 1	2010
Bessette Creek Pool Creation, Phase 2	2011
Bessette Creek Pool Creation, Phase 3	2012

- Salmon Safe
- Wilsey Dam Fish Passage Committee
- Coho Enhancement Projects on the Lower Shuswap River – Forest Renewal BC program
- Shuswap River Water Use Plan - BC Hydro (2005)
- Water Survey of Canada sites - www.wateroffice.ec.gc.ca
- Shuswap River Salmon Hatchery
- School District 83 riparian planting program – collaborative project with SD 83, Kingfisher Interpretive Centre, DFO – collection and planting of trees/shrubs for riparian planting projects on private land. Funded through RBC Blue Water Project.