



REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NORTH OKANAGAN

NOTES of a meeting of the Shuswap River Watershed Sustainability Plan RECREATION WORKING GROUP held in the Board Room at the Regional District Office on May 11, 2012
9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Members: Cathy MacPherson
Dale Fennell
Herman Bruns
Janice Lacko
Jean Clark
Jim Crichley
Judy Stewart
Madison Giesbrecht
Rick Smith
Shelley Verlaan
Terri Deuling

New Member: Debbie Smilar

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 and welcomed all attendees to the third meeting of the Recreation Working Group. A round table introduction followed.

PART 4 – ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Other than a date correction to the header of the meeting minutes they were approved as presented.

PART 5 – BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

PART 6 – NEW & UNFINISHED BUSINESS

6.1 Photos of the Watershed

Jim provided a range of photos capturing garbage problems raising the questions of what can be done about it and how can solutions be reflected in the SRWSP objectives? Similar to watershed management there are jurisdictional limitations, who is responsible? Need a culture change and this needs to be reflected in SRWSP goals/objectives.

Shelley provided photos of the 2011 no-wake flotilla which illustrated the close proximity of power boats to paddlers and the speed at which some boats were travelling close by.

Shelley also provided photos of the problematic activities of some boaters in the Islands area of the Lower Shuswap River. Concerns regarding the impact of wakes on the banks, noise pollution (can hear 5 kilometres away), boaters entering signed areas (important habitat).

Jean provided photos of power boats in the Skookumchuck rapids – class II – IV (depending on the season). Concern over potential for accidents in the rapids. Members of working group have recovered swamped boats from the river. Accidents this year on the Willow and Sth Thompson Rivers indicative of what can happen.

6.2 Review of the SRWSP Goal Formulation Document

General Discussion:

- Question was raised “how do we reach the people who feel they are invincible” (those that boat up the chucks etc)?
 - Noted that we should not alienate these people / user groups in our recommendations
- Need to start thinking about how we are going to formulate the plan, prioritize, assign value to objectives and different aspects of the plan.
 - Mentioned that there should be a well defined glossary including definitions of terms such as goals, objectives and strategies.
- LRMP (Okanagan Shuswap Land, Resource Management Plan).
 - Five year process developing this plan.
 - Recreation Section covers the entire Okanagan Timber Supply area.
 - Goals and strategies regarding access
 - Around conflicts
 - Recreationists and Private Property
 - Recreationists and Crown Land
 - Protection standards on lakes and trails
 - Winter and Summer no motorized vehicle areas.
 - The plan does not address water based recreation.
 - Staff to identify shortfalls in the LRMP
 - Provide link on website to LRMP

- Discussion that not all user groups should be accommodated throughout the watershed
 - Motorized craft on the river may be deemed “not appropriate”
- Needs to be an emphasis on the safety of motorized practices
 - Ensure safety of non motorized users
 - Impacts of actions on wildlife

Goal Formulation Discussion:

- There may be the need for a phased approach to setting objectives and achieving implementation.
- In regards to addressing boating concerns we shouldn't discredit the potential for self regulation. Hunting and fishing are largely self regulated, community pressure and feedback on what is acceptable helps to ensure people conform to the rules.

6.3 Development of Recommendations for Recreation Goals, Objectives and Strategies

Review of S. Verlaan, J. Clark, J. Lacko & R. Smith proposed objective for the SRWSP Recreation Working Group.

Discussion around the proposed Recreation goal: “that the Shuswap River Watershed is a model of sustainable recreational practices, providing diverse recreational opportunities that do not compromise the ecosystems and communities that the watershed supports” was positive but it was noted that the term **respect** for the watershed should be included.

Revised: “That the Shuswap River Watershed is a model of sustainable recreational practices, providing diverse recreational opportunities that **respect** and do not compromise the ecosystems and communities that the watershed supports”.

Proposed Objectives with revised wording based on working group discussion.

1. Maintain and/or provide a diverse range of quality outdoor recreational opportunities for all user groups.

Revised: Maintain and/or provide a diverse range of quality outdoor recreational opportunities for **a range of** user groups **within the watershed**.

2. Maintain the features that provide for the diverse range of recreational experiences.

Noted that the term features needs to be better defined. Features could include both infrastructure (boat launches, access points, trails etc) but also the natural features that make the area so unique and valued by recreationists.

Revised: Preserve, protect and maintain the **natural** features **as well as the recreational infrastructure** that provides for **a** diverse range of recreational experiences.

3. Prevent or resolve conflicts between recreation users.

4. Facilitate and promote more non-motorized recreational opportunities. *(there could be an attached 'intent statement' that notes that currently the only non-motorized, water-based recreation areas are 'default areas' that motorized recreationists do not want or currently cannot access. The statement could also speak to benefits such as reduced noise & water pollution; reduced impact on fish & wildlife; less safety risk to other recreationists; less stream-bank erosion; less siltation; healthier life-styles; etc.).*

Noted that we should focus on the safety aspect of existing uses

5. Reduce the impacts of recreational use on fish, wildlife, landowners and the environment.
6. Minimize the impacts of recreational use on all life stages of salmon. *(strategies could address: physical disturbance of spawning fish; impact of siltation on egg survival; disturbance of salmon in cold-water holding areas, etc. An intent statement could emphasize that salmon are particularly important in this watershed).*

Noted that this objective should extend to Salmon Habitat as well.

Revised: Minimize the impacts of recreational use on all life stages of salmon **and salmon habitat.**

7. Pursue recreational activities in a manner that are safe for the recreationist as well as others.
8. Ensure that archaeological and cultural values are protected.

Noted that this objective needs to be tied in with recreation; suggested wording: Ensure that recreational use is mindful of archaeological, cultural and heritage values and that practices associated with the Shuswap River watershed are protected.

Revised: Ensure that recreational users are mindful of the archaeological, cultural and heritage resources within the Shuswap River watershed and that these features are preserved and protected.

The group identified some potential new objectives including:

- **Ensure that recreational activities do not impact endangered species (species at risk) and ecosystems at risk**
- Develop an objective regarding Sport & Food fishing. **Ensure responsible sport and food fishing that allows for optimal numbers of fish to return to spawning grounds.** This could potentially fall under the Salmon Specific objective.
- **Educate the public on recreational impacts on fish, wildlife & the environment** (need for a culture change)
- **Minimize impacts of motorized vehicles on water quality.**

- Specific wording relating to the river: **Minimize the harmful impacts of irresponsible / improper boating on fish and water quality within the Shuswap River.**
 - **Strategies:**
 - Promote responsible boating
 - Educate users on what their actions / behaviours are doing (negative impacts)
 - Encourage recreational users to protect the habitat.
- Noted that we need to set a **Community Standard**. This process (SRWSP) should outline what responsible recreation on the river and within the watershed is. What types and levels of activity are the community willing to endorse (**Community Values**)?
 - Zoning of the foreshore and surface of water will help to enforce this community standard and outline what is acceptable
 - Zoning can be based on the impacts to riparian areas, erosion, disturbance to habitat etc (fall back on measurable impacts)
 - Look into creating no wake zones

6.4 Discussion on Proposed Field Trips

Working Group members were in agreeance with the proposed dates of June 16th and July 7th

- Suggested site in the Middle Shuswap: Salmon Enhancement Channels.

PART 7 – WORKING GROUP MATTERS

7.1 Membership/Appointments

Debbie Smilar has joined the Recreation working group

Brad Clements will not be able to participate due to work commitments

7.2 Mileage Reimbursement

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

7.3 Future Meeting Dates and Locations

Next meeting will be June 8, 2012 9:00am to 12:00pm at the RDNO offices.

7.4 Upcoming Community Events

Kingfisher Interpretive Centre – Month of May on weekdays, open for public to observe programs with school groups.

Cherryville Days and 150th celebration of Monashee Park, June 2nd, 2012

No Wake Flotilla (Lower Shuswap) – July 29th, 2012

Heritage Tea & Duck Race (Mara) 12:00 – 4:00 pm July 22nd, 2012

7.5 Working Group “Homework”

- Group is to decide if the Recreation goal is enough on its own or is there a need for another goal?
- Look at the SRWSP Goal Formulation Document and review the “Education and Awareness Goal” and think about possible wording for the “Quality of Life” & “Climate Change” Goals

PART 8 – ADJOURNMENT