



SQUAMISH RIVER WATERSHED SOCIETY

Box 1791
Squamish, BC
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Registered Society: S-38039
Charities registration #87365 2861 RR0001

SRWS Regular Meeting for Board, Advisors, Staff, and Affiliate Members

Date: Thursday, February 23, 2017

Time: 6:00 pm – 8:30 pm

Location: Howe Sound Inn – Garibaldi Room

Meeting Minutes: DRAFT

(Meeting chair: Chessy Knight, Minutes: Shelagh Thompson)

In Attendance:

Ashley Oakes
Brad Bodnar
Caroline Melville (InStream)
Cathy Jenkins (Cheakamus Centre)
Clare Greenberg (SSISC)
Edith Tobe (SRWS ED)
Erin Roberts
Francesca Knight (SRWS Director)
Jhanelle Williams (SRWS research assistant)
Jordan U (SRWS Director)
Lora McAuley (SRWS Blue Carbon Coordinator)
Matt Kennedy (Innergex)
Rhonda O'Grady (SRWS Education Coordinator)
Shelagh Thompson (SRWS Treasurer)
Stephanie Lingard (InStream)
Steve Chappell (Cheakamus Centre)

Absent with regrets:

Randall Lewis (SRWS President)
Jennifer Buchanan (SRWS Secretary)
Josh Retallick (SRWS Director)
Bruce Wilson (SRWS Bookkeeper)
Jack Cooley (Streamkeepers)
Colin Bates (Quest U)
Brian Klassen
Steve Rochetta

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of October 26, 2016 Minutes; action Items from October 26, 2016 Meeting Meeting minutes reviewed. No action items.
4. Presentation from Innergex on Ashlu Off-Channel Habitat – Matt Kennedy
Overview of past 5 years (2011 – 2015) of fisheries monitoring conducted by EcoFish as part of plant operations and requirements.
5. Updates required to constitution as part of BC Societies Act
Under the current upgrades to the BC Societies Act the SRWS will need to implement changes to the constitution within a 2 year period. Revisions will be made for the October 2017 AGM.
6. SSISC Update – Clare
Clare provided an update on the Sea to Sky Invasive Species Council operations. In 2017 there will be an increase to staff and expanding out to include invasive fauna as well as flora. Workshops will continue for the landscape and horticulture communities (invasive species certification program). The new website will be launched (www.ssisc.info). “Plantwise” education program will be offered to the gardening community (i.e. “don’t let it loose” campaign). “Clean drain; dry watercraft” outreach program will continue for Whistler and hopefully be expanded to include Porteau Cove. Training programs will be provided to the municipalities to control Japanese Knotweed (JK), Hogweed, and other main invasive plants. SSISC will be working with the province to raise awareness through citizen science initiatives on painted turtles and spotting reptiles. Signage on Highway 99 (for works crews to avoid spreading JK) will continue and work on interpretive signage will also be underway. Promotion of information to schools and teachers on invasive species. Work will continue on invasive species management in association with IPP’s. Currently Invasive Species Council of BC (ISC) is undergoing a policy review that the public is welcome to comment on. Stem injection on JK is still prohibited by the province within the riparian zone (1 m of high water mark) which remains a challenge for the control of JK spreading. Potential for partnering with SRWS on eDNA sampling of wetland habitats to establish baseline data (i.e. check for bull frogs and other potential invasive species). SSISC AGM scheduled for April 18, 2017.
7. Education Outreach Program – Rhonda
This years program will be held in the Squamish Estuary (Training Dyke/Chelem Trail) on May 2-4 & 9-11. Volunteers are needed to help with each of the 4 stations (Plastics are Forever; Species at Risk; Save the Bats, Save the World; Mitus Detritus). Anyone interested in volunteering should e-mail srws@shaw.ca.
8. Blue Carbon Project – Lora
Securing funds so that on the ground sampling in the Squamish Estuary for this summer is the hope to establish the total amount of carbon being sequestered in the estuary sediments. Funding has been difficult to secure but the Sitka Foundation funding still

remains in use and hopefully in the coming weeks a positive response will be received regarding the NRCAN funding application through Squamish Nation.

9. Spring Strategic Planning Meeting for Board, Advisors, & Staff

The last SRWS strategic planning session was back in 2013 and a one-day workshop with SRWS Board, Advisors, and Affiliate Members may be of use as a follow-up to ensure the SRWS is on track with the society objectives and exploring new opportunities to lead into the next 5 years. Ashley Oakes will be working with the SRWS to assist with facilitating this workshop. Edith will circulate an invitation in the coming weeks to organize the workshop (which will likely be held in late June or early July).

10. Project Updates – Edith

Edith went over project updates including upgrades to culverts, channels, and structures in the Upper Squamish (Mile 22 Creek, Branch 100 Creek, High Falls Creek, and Ashlu River); Other upgrades include replacement of weirs and bridges at the Cheakamus Centre and construction of new off-channel habitat. The SRWS is continuing to work with students from Quest U, SFU, BCIT, and other institutes as part of our ongoing projects including monitoring, videography (currently underway with the focus on the Squamish Estuary and climate change impacts), wetlands monitoring, and so forth. Projects for the coming year include upgrades to the Kiwi Channel (Cheakamus Centre), eelgrass monitoring, examining the replacement of key culverts along the Squamish Training Dyke with clear span bridges, and ongoing education outreach initiatives and monitoring. The SRWS recently contributed to the Vancouver Aquarium Coastal Ocean Research Institutes Ocean Watch program (website: www.oceanwatch.ca) which provides a very comprehensive overview of Howe Sound.

Edith will be attending a meeting on the Wild Salmon Policy on February 27 in Richmond and will provide feedback to the SRWS on any new information or updates. Edith will also follow-up on updates on the Squamish River Strategic Salmon Recovery and perhaps look into a follow-up workshop with DFO.

11. Squamish Nations Elaho Rock Jam Removal Project

Squamish Nation is exploring the removal of the anadromous barrier in the Elaho (above Devil's Elbow) with the hope of opening up 63 km of prime habitat for salmonids again and restore the area to pre-1960 conditions. Base line data will include collection of eDNA to establish markers by which changes of water use can be detected.

12. Wetland and Estuary Wildlife Project Updates – Edith and Rhonda

This ongoing program includes monitoring and working on the Valleycliffe Wetland, including constructing a split-rail fence, constructing bat boxes and condos (bat box workshop on Saturday, February 25 at 1:00 pm), and continue with monitoring programs and student programming as part of the "living classroom"

13. Chinook Program – Edith and Stephanie

In 2011 the SRWS first started studying (in partnership with DFO and Tenderfoot Hatchery) how juvenile Chinook salmon migrated out from the Squamish watershed into Howe Sound. Two years of the study was spent on studying ocean dispersal of juvenile Chinook in Howe Sound and then an additional three years were spent on concentrating

on how juvenile Chinook were making use of the Squamish Estuary. The original purpose was to determine if hatchery released Chinook smolts were competing with wild stocks. The study discovered this was not much of an issue as the hatchery released smolts were significantly larger in size than wild smolts and headed out of the Howe Sound system fairly rapidly. However, the DNA analysis of juvenile Chinook sampled in Howe Sound and the Squamish Estuary revealed that there was a hodge podge of stocks making use of Howe Sound. This information resulted in changes to how Tenderfoot Hatchery obtained their brood stock which originally included capturing adult males and females in Howe Sound to collecting adult brood stock in the Ashlu River or upper Squamish watershed. InStream Fisheries is preparing the final report on the estuary sampling program from 2015 to the present which will include an update on DNA sampling and distribution of Chinook salmon.

14. Tenderfoot Hatchery Update – Jordan

Jordan provided an update on Tenderfoot Creek Hatchery (appended to the minutes).

15. Other initiatives – Round Table

- Shelagh talked about the Terra Cycle program (website www.terracycle.ca), a small business located in New Jersey that makes consumer products from pre-consumer and post-consumer waste by reusing other waste materials. Shelagh explained that she had been looking into options other than disposing of non-degradable produces (such as plastics, shoes, etc) into the land fill site.
- Shelagh also provided an update on the radiation impacts from the 2012 Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant failure. The research findings (out of Oregon) indicate a slight rise in background radiation levels in the ocean but still well below risk to human health or wildlife.
- Erin gave an update on her Master's research project in which she is studying invertebrate populations within the estuary sediments on disturbed, semi-disturbed, and relatively undisturbed sites.
- Cathy acknowledged the good working relationship the Cheakamus Centre has with the SRWS and how we are collectively working together to maintain the off-channel habitat at the school. She also gave a reminder that the Cheakamus Centre offers programming to more than just School District #44 (North Vancouver). The upcoming Open House is scheduled for May 7th and is always an exceptional event! Community groups are invited to set up at table with a kids activity to raise awareness.
- Brad provided an update on the Water Sustainability Act as part of the Forest Stewardship Guidelines.
- Colin (not in attendance but forwarded along after the meeting) is working on 3D aerial imagery and mapping in the Squamish Estuary and provided a link of one of the high resolution images:
<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/zeisvwe4swwvkek/AADuNp51g2HHFG5H3nDd2PLoa?dl=0>

16. Wrap-up

Meeting concluded at 8:30 pm. Thank you to Chessy on chairing the meeting and Shelagh on taking minutes.

Summary:

- Sea to Sky Invasive Species Council AGM: April 18, 2017
- Cheakamus Centre Open House: May 7, 2017 (groups welcome to set up tables)
- Education Outreach Program: May 2 – 4 & 9 – 11; volunteer support needed
- SRWS Strategic Planning Session: June or July 2017
- Ocean watch website: www.oceanwatch.ca provides information on Howe Sound
- Terra Cycle: www.terracylce.ca on options for disposal of non-degradable wastes
- Sea to Sky Invasive Species Council website updates: www.ssisc.info
- Squamish River Watershed Society website: www.squamishwatershed.com
- SRWS Next meeting: TBA (likely in conjunction with Strategic Planning Session)