

# Nanaimo River Watershed Roundtable

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

(2017-01-18)

### Overview

The Nanaimo River Watershed originates from the Island Range on central Vancouver Island, consisting of over a dozen major tributaries and four major lakes. From the headwaters to the estuary it encompasses 95,000 hectares with a mainstem river channel of 56 kilometres. The Nanaimo River Watershed and its estuary (the Watershed) are part of the traditional territories of the Snuneymuxw and the Stz'uminus First Nations.

### **The Nanaimo River Watershed supports many significant values, including:**

- Areas and features of historical and cultural significance to the Snuneymuxw and Stz'uminus First Nations
- Aquatic habitat for several species of salmon, trout, other fish species and amphibians
- Riparian, estuarine and terrestrial ecosystems
- Drinking water for the City of Nanaimo, plus groundwater that feeds the aquifers of Cassidy, Cedar, and South Wellington
- Water supply for industrial and agricultural uses
- Forestry, agriculture, aggregate and other industries
- Log storage in the estuary
- Residential living and rural farming
- Recreational opportunities such as hiking, hunting, fishing, picnicking, kayaking and rafting, summer swimming, bird-watching, mushroom and other harvesting, and gold panning.
- Educational and research opportunities.

### Background

Through the years, many diverse groups and agencies have been working for the betterment of the Nanaimo River Watershed.

In response to community concerns, the Board of the Nanaimo & Area Land Trust (NALT), passed motions that led to the creation of The Nanaimo River Watershed Baseline Report and the Nanaimo River Strategies Symposium, a meeting of many stakeholders with interests in the watershed. Stakeholders who participated in the Symposium included representatives of community groups, non-governmental agencies, industry, individuals and local, regional, provincial and federal government representatives.

From the September 2011 Symposium, a Working Group was formed and, in November 2011, four overarching themes were identified. They are:

- Funding
- Community Outreach
- Organizational Structure
- Land Acquisition.

In January 2012, an Organizational Structure Committee was formed and charged with developing Terms of Reference for a consensus-based watershed group. These Terms of Reference have been developed for the purpose of guiding a cooperative working group of interested individuals and organizations representing community groups, property owners, industry, user groups, government agencies, and non-government organizations.

**Mission Statement:** *To advise and develop strategies and initiatives for the long-term promotion, protection, sustainability and stewardship of the Watershed.*

### Purpose

The Roundtable participants will pool resources to gather and share information, advise agencies, and encourage actions for watershed health and protection.

### Guiding Principles

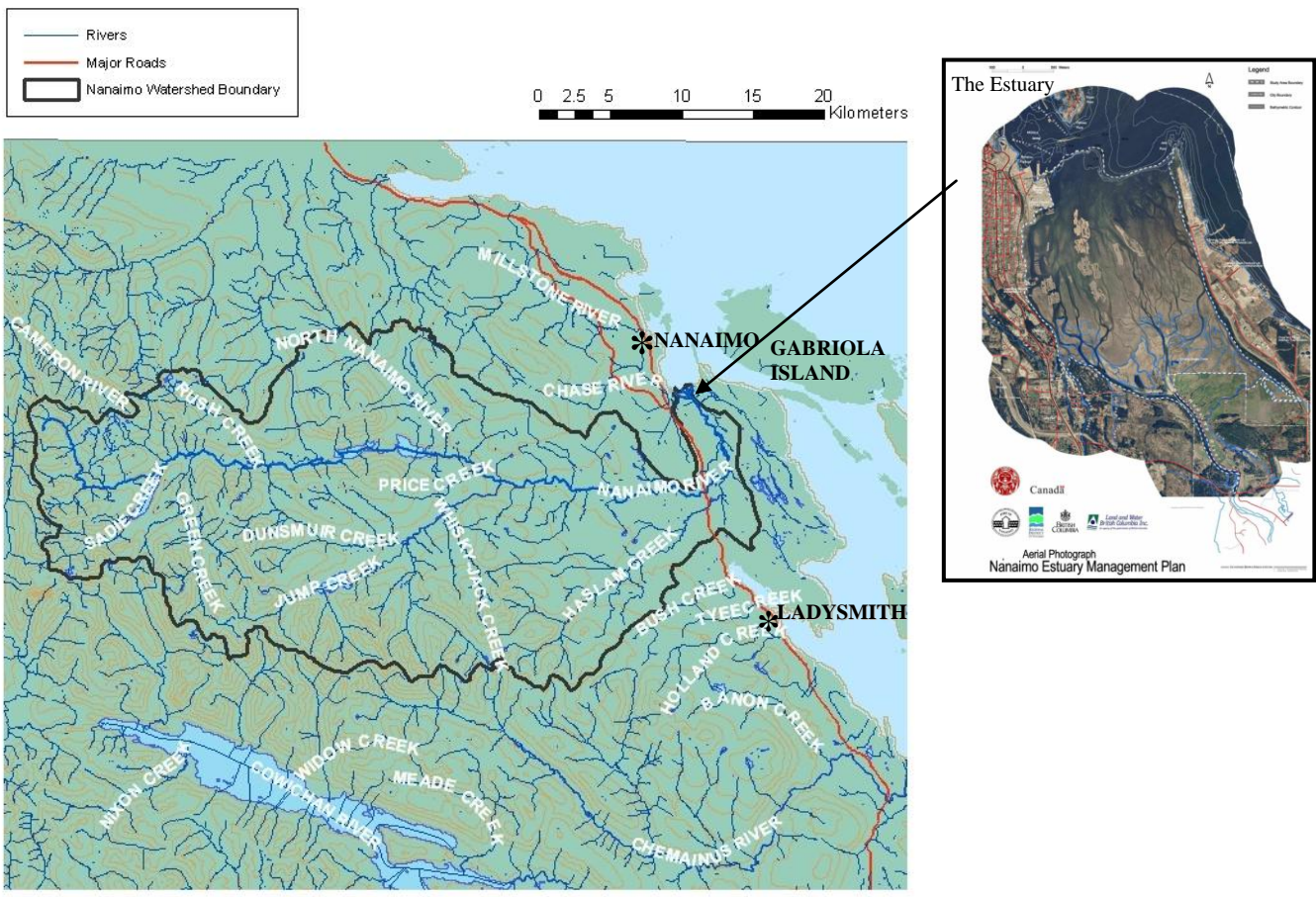
- Ensure that all discussions and dialogue promote a proactive, respectful and cooperative approach towards all issues
- Consult and engage the community in stewardship initiatives
- Include all stakeholders
- Respect each participant’s commitment to professional associations or responsibilities to individual employers or self
- Consider the interrelationships of the various values of the watershed towards maintaining a balance of the natural, cultural, social and economic values
- Decide by an agreed-upon consensus model as defined in these Terms of Reference.
- Decisions made by the Roundtable are non-binding on any participants.

**Objectives:**

- To identify and develop strategies and coordinate actions that will lead to the long-term protection and stewardship of the Watershed
- To develop methods of measurement for evaluating the degree of success in meeting the Purpose of the Roundtable
- To work with other agencies or and groups operating within the Watershed
- To provide advice to other agencies or groups where appropriate
- To create a shared resource/library of watershed data and information.

**Geographical Area**

The geographical area of interest for the Roundtable is the Nanaimo River Watershed.



**Participants**

Roundtable participants are representatives of community groups, government, non-governmental organizations, private sector businesses and other stakeholders with an interest in the Watershed. All participants volunteer their time without remuneration by the Roundtable and respect these Terms of Reference.

Participants of the Roundtable may include, but are not limited to, the groups and individuals listed below: (*in alphabetical order*)

- City of Nanaimo
- Community group representatives
- Individuals with a declared stake in the Watershed
- Independent consultants (habitat or fisheries)
- Island Timberlands
- Island Waters Fly Fishers
- Nanaimo & Area Land Trust
- Nanaimo Fish and Game Protective Association
- Nanaimo Forest Products
- Nanaimo River Estuary Committee
- Nanaimo River Estuary Log Storage Association
- Province of British Columbia (identified departments)
- Regional District of Nanaimo
- Federal Agencies (e.g. Dept. of Fisheries & Oceans)
- TimberWest Forest Corporation
- Vancouver Island & Coast Conservation Society
- Vancouver Island University
- Vancouver Island Water Watch

#### **Changes to Roundtable Participants List:**

The Roundtable will welcome requests for participation from interested parties

- Upon request, new groups and individuals will be considered for participation by the existing Roundtable (consideration will include assessing the function and balance of representation of the Roundtable, and whether the applicant is a vested stakeholder or if there is already a participant of the Roundtable representing the interests of the applicant)
- Participants will be asked to commit to at least one year of participation
- A list of participants will be maintained and updated annually
- Participants may be asked to leave the Roundtable for not respecting these Terms of Reference

The Roundtable will work to maintain lines of communication with First Nations.

The Roundtable may, from time to time, consider proposals or invite specific individuals, groups or agencies to attend meetings to make presentations on specific technical issues which will contribute to the deliberations on specific agenda items.

The Roundtable may establish the position of Coordinator, and, subject to funding, hire or contract a Coordinator or Coordinating Agency. The Coordinator may be tasked with organizing all meetings, preparing agendas, taking meeting notes, pursuing funding, or other activities as deemed appropriate.

#### **Guideline for Decision-making**

Decisions made by the Roundtable will support the Purpose of the Roundtable defined in these Terms of Reference.

Decision-making is by consensus. Consensus is defined as agreement by the designated representative or alternate of each member. There are 2 levels of consensus, Full and Working:

- Full consensus – all representatives agree and support the decision.
- Working consensus – not all representatives support the decision but all can agree to respect the decision.

Where consensus is not reached, issues may be tabled at least once, but no more than three times. A majority and a minority opinion statement will be recorded in writing in the meeting notes if a consensus cannot be achieved at the

third tabling. Every effort will be made to explore, understand and accommodate the interests of dissenting viewpoints.

Participants representing a group or agency may appoint one voting representative and one alternate.

### **Meetings**

An annual meeting of the Roundtable will report back to the community. Such meetings will be conducted with decorum, and generally follow Robert's Rules of Order as interpreted by the Chair. The annual Community Meeting of the Roundtable will be scheduled in September to coincide with World Rivers Day.

Working Meetings of the Roundtable will be held quarterly if required—with the date, time and location of each Working Meeting being agreed to at the preceding meeting. Any additional Working Meetings will be scheduled as required. Attendance as an observer will be open to all.

### ***Conduct:***

Participant representatives and observers will be expected to behave with due decorum. That is to say:

- Communications at all Meetings will be respectful, considerate, honest, and issue-focused. All viewpoints will be encouraged, respected, and considered
- Participants will make every effort to resolve issues at the table, and will avoid seeking alternative decisions outside this process
- Participants should have a common understanding of the mandate of the Roundtable, demonstrate mutual respect to other participants, and be accountable to share information to and from the group or agency they represent

***Chair:*** At the initial Working Meeting of the Roundtable (i.e. the first meeting following the Annual Community Meeting), a Chair and Note-taker will be recruited from the Roundtable. If needed, prior to adjournment of a Working Meeting, a new Chair and Note-taker may be recruited for the next meeting.

***Location:*** Working Meeting locations will be flexible and decided by the Roundtable. All participants will be encouraged to host meetings.

***Sharing of Information:*** After a Working Meeting, the Note-taker will be responsible for taking notes of each meeting and providing a draft to the Chair. The Chair will make an effort to circulate the draft meeting notes soon after the meeting. The Chair or designate is responsible for ensuring that an agenda will be circulated to all participants prior to the next meeting.

### ***Committees:***

The Roundtable may form an administrative committee—which will strive to achieve broad representation of all participants. The function of the administrative committee will be to ensure that the work of the Roundtable continues between meetings and will fill an oversight role if a Coordinator position is created.

From time to time, the Roundtable may form standing or ad hoc committees to research, assess and report on specific issues or opportunities as identified by the Roundtable. Both types of committees must be created by a resolution of the Roundtable. Any standing committee must be accompanied by a terms of reference defining the committees general purpose, structure and membership.

#### ***1. STANDING COMMITTEES***

The Chairperson of each standing committee shall be elected by the Members of the Committee at the first Committee meeting. If a Chairperson is not elected, the committee shall be the governing body until such time as a volunteer comes forward. The Chairperson and/or the Roundtable may, appoint other members to serve on a committee. Each committee will provide a verbal or written report at each regular meeting. Each committee shall be responsible for formulating the budget of their committee. Committees will have their own budgets. Committees will operate autonomously as well as carry out duties as directed by the Roundtable. Each Committee must develop a Terms of Reference and bring them to the Roundtable for approval.

## *2. AD HOC COMMITTEES*

Special Ad Hoc committees may be established for a specified purpose and period by the Roundtable participants at a meeting. The members shall be elected at the same meeting.

### **Communications**

The Roundtable will report to and consult with the community on issues and actions at least once a year.

A website, periodic public newsletters, brochures, other literature and/or media releases will be prepared as needed—resources permitting.

The Roundtable will designate responsibility for external communications to one or more spokesperson(s).

### **Funding**

All Roundtable participants will be encouraged to seek and, where possible, contribute funding or in-kind resources to meet the objectives of the Roundtable. Funding to engage a Coordinator or Coordinating Agency will be sought.

**These terms of reference will be reviewed at least every three years and updated as required.**