

Nanaimo River Watershed Roundtable

Zoom Meeting

September 17, 2020 1:00 pm.

Minutes

In attendance: Andrew McNaughton (Snuneymuxw), Paul Chapman (NALT), Kayla Harris (NRWR Coordinator), Bob Colclough (NR Estuary Log Storage Association), Rob Lawrance (City of Nanaimo), Pam Jorgenson (Mosaic Forest Management), Steven Baillie (DFO-Stock Assessment), Matt Kellow (VIU), Louise Shuker (Community), Julie Pisani (Regional District of Nanaimo, DWWP), Erica Blake (DFO-Community Involvement), Jean-Michel Hanssens (Community Stewardship Advocate), Jennifer Archer (Community), June Ross (VIWCC), Byron Nutton (DFO-Integrated Planning), Kristin Gravelle (DFO-Integrated Planning), Brian Banks (Nanaimo River Hatchery), Chrissy Czembor (DFO-Resource Restoration), Douglas Wood (Port of Nanaimo-Health, Safety, and Environmental Manager).

1) Meeting Chair – Bob Colclough

2) Brief Introductions

3) Approval of Agenda

- REIMAGINE Nanaimo added under new business
- Port Authority Update added under business arising from the notes
- Schnitzer Steel fire/groundwater communications update added under new business
- Agenda with additions approved

4) Approval of August 20, 2020 meeting minutes with amendments

- Two small changes: (1) under financial update a typo for "2"; (2) under Eelgrass Mapping Project, the name Chris Zamora updated.
- No further changes proposed to the minutes. Approved with edits to be made to the minutes

5) Business Arising from Notes

- **Approval of the Mission and Vision**– Kayla Harris

- i. The mission and vision statements were shared through the group via email after Kayla drafted a consolidated version of each statement. There was general positive feedback from the group with the addition of some minor changes.
- ii. During the meeting, clarification on the Terms of Reference was provided. The Terms of Reference will not be updated until the end of the strategic planning process. The mission and vision drafting process is the initial stage in the strategic planning process. The intention is that the new mission would be replacing the mission statement in the Terms of Reference once approved at the end of the strategic planning process. Nothing will be changed on the Terms of Reference until the end of the strategic planning process.
- iii. The word planning was discussed and explained to be related to the group *engaging* in a planning process. 'Engaging' is the active verb in this final sentence of the mission statement.
- iv. The mission and vision statements were approved and adopted.

Mission

The Nanaimo River Watershed Roundtable serves as a hub and connector between agencies, groups, and individuals to share resources, information, and knowledge while building and strengthening collaborative relationships in the community. The Roundtable fosters education, research, and monitoring of the health and well-being of the watershed while actively engaging in long-range visioning and planning for the watershed.

Vision

Our vision is for a healthy, functioning watershed that provides a diverse range of ecological, social, cultural, and economic values for our communities. We envision a watershed that is resilient to climate change and that can flourish through collaborative management and symbiotic relationships between land, water, and all forms of life.

- **Financial Update** – Paul Chapman
 1. The finances for the Roundtable remain the same as previous meeting with the addition of a few cents due to interest.
- **Nanaimo Estuary Geese Fencing Update** – Andrew McNaughton
 - i. Andrew shared a slideshow of the reasons and progress and plans for the Nanaimo Estuary Geese Fencing project.

- ii. Slides for Andrew's presentation has been provided.
- iii. The slides showed the vegetation change of carex beds in the estuary over time through aerial imagery.
- iv. The Living Forest Campground has a viewing platform that would be a good location for some signage.
- v. Sections of the fencing have been subdivided to further keep geese out
- vi. Rhizomes expected to sprout new carex in the future in areas that have been diminished within the fencing.
- vii. Further transplanting expected to occur in the future.
- viii. There are plans to replace the existing snow fencing with willow and alder.
- ix. Goal is to continue placing perimeter fencing around beds that are still in good shape.
- x. Will continue to monitor and maintain existing fencing to ensure it is functioning
- xi. The healthy beds are the priority over the beds that have been significantly degraded.
- xii. Nature's Trust is doing drone surveys of the estuary
- xiii. Looking for a less labour-intensive monitoring method
- xiv. Scale of the beds are vast, and the task is monumental.
- xv. This may be an opportunity for research through remote sensing of land use change detection. Vancouver Island University geography students may be interested in taking this on as a major project.
- xvi. Rob Lawrance suggested a photo monitoring program from Bellingham. The public was invited to take photos and update them to the website to gather data over time. The project: <https://cob.org/services/environment/restoration/Habitat-Photos>
- xvii. The City of Nanaimo may be interested in adding photo monitoring to some sites in Nanaimo. The Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) Drinking Water and Watershed Protection (DWWP) program is looking into adding photo monitoring into their watershed monitoring network to supplement the chemistry data that has been collected.

- **Port Authority Update** – Louise Shuker

- i. Louise is awaiting response from Darryl Jones regarding follow up with Captain Singh as per previous meeting minutes on Nanaimo Port Authority slick and spills.

6) New Business

- **Nanaimo Estuary Eelgrass Mapping Project** – Andrew McNaughton
 - i. No update on Eelgrass Mapping Project. Aquaparian is busy projects and will continue in the future. Field work is complete.
- **Schnitzer Steel Fire/Groundwater Communications Update** – Jennifer Archer and Julie Pisani
 - i. There has been some recent community concern regarding recent Schnitzer Steel fire incident. Community looking for communications contact and updates on potential risks of contamination to groundwater in the area.
 - ii. Jennifer offered to be connection for sharing information on the issue.
 - iii. Julie Pisani provided an update on the issue. Update to local authorities provided and shared with the group. Update attached to this document.
 - iv. Key authority on this issue is the Ministry of Environment (MoE) from a spill response and pollution response perspective. They have been onsite directing a response with Schnitzer steel through a hired environmental professional for monitoring of short and long-term monitoring plan and provide data to MoE and local authorities to share within the community.
 - v. Island Health's role as been communications. The RDN was awaiting Island Health's response to the issue. People have been directed to the Health and Environmental Protection phone line at Island Health.
 - vi. The location where the fire was is within the Cowichan Valley Regional District adjacent to the Regional District of Nanaimo.
- **REIMAGINE Nanaimo** – Rob Lawrance
 - i. Rob provided a slideshow on REIMAGINE Nanaimo.
 - ii. Participants are encouraged to visit the site and view the information. There will be significant policy changes to occur with the update of the Official Community Plan, Parks Master Plan, Climate Resiliency Strategy, Active Transportation Plan, and Water Strategic Plan. These changes are all occurring in one process. This is a unique opportunity to determine how a lot of these major documents speak to each other and integrate a lot of the important

issues that this group is involved in such as water supply and how that influences restoration work downstream and elsewhere in the City of Nanaimo.

- iii. Rob has proposed a special session, if the group is interested, to focus on the strategic water supply issue, climate change and some of the environmental policies that the city has. The group seemed interested in having a session to address these topics.
- iv. Rob will connect with Mike Squire, Manager of Water Resources, City of Nanaimo and provide an update to the group at a later date.
- v. REMAGINE Nanaimo: [https://www.nanaimo.ca/your-government/projects/projects-detail/reimagine-nanaimo-\(2020-2021\)](https://www.nanaimo.ca/your-government/projects/projects-detail/reimagine-nanaimo-(2020-2021))
- vi. Get Involved Page: getinvolvednanaimo.ca/reimagine-nanaimo
- vii. Engagement will be virtual
- viii. The process is the at the beginning stages of the conversation. There is a lot of work still to do about choices to be made.

7) Next Meeting:

- **Reminder that the third Thursday of each month will be earmarked for the regular monthly NRWR meetings.**
- Upcoming Strategic Planning meeting **September 22, 2020** 1:00 – 2:00pm via Zoom.
- Next regular NRWR Zoom meeting **October 22, 2020** 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm

8) Adjourned: 2:06 pm