

Nanaimo River Watershed Roundtable

Club House, Bowen Park Complex 500 Bowen Road, Nanaimo

November 25th, 2015 – 1:00 pm

Meeting Notes

In Attendance: Gail Adrienne (NALT), David Bramley (Harmac), Paul Chapman (NALT), Bob Colclough (WR Colclough & Assoc), Deryck Cowling (NALT), Lauren Fegan (RDN), Molly Hudson (TimberWest), Matt Kellow (VIU), Bob Kissinger (Island Waters Fly Fishers), Rob Lawrance (City of Nanaimo), Maria Ines Paes Ferrera (MABRRI – VIU/ IFF – Brazil), Julie Pisani (RDN), June Ross (VIWWC), Louise Shuker (Community), Marjorie Stewart (Community) and Nicolette Watson (DFO)

1) Approval of Agenda – Approved by consensus

2) Review of Notes from Last Meeting, September 16th, 2015 – Approved by consensus

3) Presentation – Watershed Survey, Maria Inês Paes Ferreira

-Maria Ines Paes Ferreira is doing a post-doctoral study of comparative watershed governance under the auspices of an academic partnership with VIU Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region Research Institute.

-Maria Ines described Brazil's model of watershed governance. Elected local Watershed Committees are mandated with watershed governance by the federal government. Those elected to the Watershed Committees are chosen equally from government agencies, user groups and Non-Governmental Organizations. Industrial users are encouraged to participate and pay for operations in order to ensure a suitable flow, in excess of the baseline requirements for human and natural uses, for their needs.

-The survey Maria Ines has developed seeks to compare Canadian and Brazilian models of watershed governance and to discover what if any role governance can contribute to alleviate poverty.

ACTION: Paul to circulate survey via email to NRWR participants.

4) Business Arising from Notes

- **VICCS Heritage and Beautification Project – Louise Shuker**

-Louise sought clarity on whether or not the VICCS project proposal was endorsed by the Roundtable.

-It was explained that there had been no endorsement of this project or any project, other than those undertaken by NRWR subcommittees, by the Roundtable.

-The presentation by VICCS, much the same as many previous presentations from various participants, was for information and was open to individual participants to become involved, or not, as they each choose to do so.

- **Eel Grass Restoration – Rob Lawrance**

-Rob circulated copies of the report prepared by Aquaparian Environmental Consulting for the City of Nanaimo regarding an eel grass installation off the southwest side of Protection Island.

ACTION: Rob to email the report to Bob Colclough to be linked to the NRWR website.

- **Coal Tenure Update – Bill Sims**
 - Tabled until February meeting
- **Haslam Creek Habitat Restoration – Dave Clough**
 - Tabled until February meeting
- **Committee Updates:**
 - **Communications Committee – Bob Colclough**
 - Bob circulated some statistics about NRWR website traffic thus far in 2015.
 - So far in 2015 there have been 1,024 visits by 935 unique visitors to the website with a considerable amount of bandwidth transfer from month to month.
 - **Budget Committee: 2014 Year End Report and 2015 Budget update – Gail Adrienne**
 - The Report has been revised for clarity and accuracy (ie the delineate funds available to operations vs funds restricted by donor allocation).
 - at the end of 2014 of a total of \$5,006 remaining in the Roundtable account, only \$1,275 was available to NRWR operations. As of the end of October 2015, of the \$5,066 in the account, less than half \$2,291 is available for operations.
 - Participant donors are encouraged to reconsider allocation of funds for the Roundtable if a significant portion remains unused and unlikely to be used in the near future.
 - Other participants are encouraged to donate cash or in-kind to operations or to identify other possible funding sources.
 - ACTION:** Nicolette to contact Paul re: possible funding.
 - **Education and Awareness Committee – Deryck Cowling**
 - The Committee has distributed an education resource sheet to participate to gather information on educational opportunities available for teachers and students of School District 68. This will be presented at the District Professional Development Day on February 23rd 2016.
 - The presentation will consist of an introduction to the Roundtable and participants as well as a powerpoint highlighting social, environmental and economic values, history, challenges, stewardship and building relationships.
 - Participants who have not already done so are encouraged to fill out the education resource sheet and return it to Deryck.
 - Louise suggested the Friends of Morden Mine may be interested.
 - Gail Adrienne and Bob Colclough offered assistance with preparing the powerpoint.

5) New Business

- **National Marine Conservation Area**
 - Indications are that is very unlikely there would be any extension of any existing NMCA and even more unlikely an extension which would include industrial areas and existing Port Authorities.
- **Watershed Governance – June Ross**
 - The questions was raised, that in light of the interest expressed by various community members and organizations and by elected officials and the City and RDN, does the Roundtable envision itself becoming a governance body, the Nanaimo River Watershed Board?
 - Vancouver Island Water Watch has written letters to elected officials and wants to begin a community discussion.

-The RDN Board has asked staff to begin a discussion with member municipalities, First Nations, regulators and stakeholders about how to improve our collective decision-making ability to protect our watersheds. Over the next few months, the RDN staff will be developing a strategy to engage with member municipalities, First Nations, regulators and stakeholders.

-It was mentioned that community *buy-in* to a process is stronger if the community is involved at the earliest stages of planning. Gail mentioned that community *build-in*, being involved in the planning and implementation from the very beginning is best. The Roundtable itself arose from community concern and its structure and operation is a product of participant *build-in*.

-At this point, the NRWR functions as an information sharing and disseminating body, it would be up to individual participants to determine if they were interested in participating in a governance body.

- **Team Watersmart**

-The RDN's Team WaterSmart is looking to try something new in 2016 to replace their annual individual spring water-related workshops in various locations at various times. Instead they going to organize full day Water Day celebrations in the north (Qualicum) and south (Nanaimo) of the region. These days will coincide with World Water Week in March. The day(s) are envisioned to include educational workshops, speakers, community display booths, kids activities and food vendors.

-A Steering Committee is being formed to plan the events in a collaborative way and input is welcome.

- **Groundwater Study**

-Deryck mentioned a groundwater study out of UVIC that drastically changes assumptions about the availability of groundwater for human use (6%) and the rate of recharge.

-This study was modeled on a global scale and more data would be needed to determine if it applies to local conditions.

-The RDN continues to have a focus on groundwater and more studies will be phased in as determined by needs and availability of funding.

- **Couverdon Signage**

-Matt Kellow mentioned some new signage near the Couverdon Properties on the Nanaimo River.

-NALT is aware of signage regarding the RDN park.

-Negotiations between NALT and Couverdon to purchase NR property continue.

6) Next Meeting – February 17th 2016, 1 – 3 pm at Harmac.

7) Adjournment 2:45 pm