

# Nanaimo River Watershed Roundtable

Harmac Pacific, 1000 Wave Place Nanaimo.

March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2014 – 1:00 pm

## MEETING NOTES

**Participants in Attendance:** Gail Adrienne (NALT), Rosie Barlak (MoE), David Bramley (Harmac), Rick Bryan (RCABC), Paul Chapman (NALT), Don Cohen (VIU), Bob Colclough (WRC & Assoc.), Deryck Cowling (NALT), Ken Epps (Island Timberlands), Molly Hudson (TimberWest), Bob Kissinger (IWFF), David O'Brien (DFO), Julie Pisani (RDN), Louise Shuker (Community), Bill Sims (CoN), Catherine Watson (NALT)

**Facilitator:** Marjorie Stewart

**1) Approval of Agenda** - approved by consensus with the addition of a letter in support of the Roundtable from the UVic Kayak Club under New Business

**2) Review of Notes from Last Meeting, Nov. 12<sup>th</sup>, 2013** - approved by consensus

### 3) Business Arising from Notes

#### Committee Updates:

- **Communications Committee – Scott Akenhead**

-Website update – No Report

- **Education and Awareness Committee – Deryck Cowling**

#### -Roundtable brochure

-The brochure was circulated and suggestions for edits were received

-Deryck proposes that the Roundtable authorize the use of the current brochure for promotion of the NRWR.

-Alternate wording suggested under heading “Challenges on the River”

-2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph ~~effected~~ should read affected.

-4<sup>th</sup> paragraph ...water quality ~~and quantity~~, ... Replace “~~Stands of old growth and mature Coastal Douglas fir continue to be harvested.~~” with “Forestry continues to be a major activity in the watershed.”

-5<sup>th</sup> paragraph should read “Planning should *continue to* consider...”

-By consensus, with suggested changes, the brochure will be used for NRWR promotion. A copy of the brochure will be distributed via email to participants for their use. Participants are asked to inform the committee of where, when and how many brochures are distributed.

-It was suggested that the committee develop guidelines for promotion of the Roundtable and NRWR activities.

-General consensus was that the committee should plan Rivers' Day activities for 2014 in conjunction with but not limited to City of Nanaimo Rivers' day activities and promotion.

- **Budget Committee – Gail Adrienne**

- Rob Lawrance is pursuing City of Nanaimo funding for Roundtable operations.

- In-kind use of meeting facilities, coffee and snacks is also appreciated (Harmac).

- To meet the funding needs of the lowest budget estimate more support from participants is needed.

- REW fundraising**

- Real Estate Webmasters has initiated a facebook based fundraising vehicle to support local charities. At the suggestion and with the help of REW employee Ayaka Nagata, NALT has prepared information for this fundraiser. If successful, the funds will go to Roundtable operations. When it is active, notice will be sent to NRWR participants about how to support this effort.

- The Smilecard funds mentioned in the draft budgets circulated at the last meeting are earmarked for a 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition of the watershed baseline report. This edition will include new information on Water (RDN), Fish Habitat and Coastal Douglas fir Biogeoclimatic values.

- Once the baseline is printed, a new round of Smilecard funding can be applied for.

- **Fish Habitat Update – Paul Chapman**

- Letter of Support**

- On behalf of the Roundtable, David O'Brien (DFO) wrote a letter of support for the Nanaimo Fish and Game Protective Association for a PSF – CSP funding application. In addition to the participants present at the January meeting, Island Timberlands was added to the LoS.

- Second Lake spawning gravel**

- A visit to the site of a proposed spawning gravel installation found the site unsuitable.

#### 4) New Business

- **Watersheds 2014 Report – Julie Pisani**

- 3 day forum on January on watershed governance and societal decision-making.

- The gold standard for watershed management is local governance, with recognition of FN as a Rights-holder in the watershed. Decision-making includes social, political and ecological input.

- It is important to develop clear, easily understood targets (e.g. good clean water, healthy fish populations), develop objectives, determine actions and decide on indicators of effectiveness.
- Currently, the RDN is inventorying existing management plans, regulations and data.
- A Water Region will become a pilot project for local governance.
- Some participants with the Roundtable also belong to Technical Advisory Committees for RDN Water Regions.
- Over time, the Roundtable could develop into a more formal advisory body in a local governance model.

- **Snow Pack and Water Quantity – David O’Brien and Dave Bramley**

- Since January, the snow pack level has improved and now sits at approximately 50% of normal accumulation.
- Typically, the Fourth Lake dam releases excess water as overflow into July. After that, snowmelt has little or no influence on the river.
- Water storage at Jump Lake (City of Nanaimo) and Fourth Lake (Harmac) allow for the management of flow to ensure sufficient water for fish spawning and rearing.
- In times of reduced recharge of the dams (reduced snowpack), the base flow required under the management agreement can be reduced.
- At this time it seems as if concerns about water flow in the river have been greatly reduced.

- **Water Quality – Rosie Barlak**

- For three years, data has been collected at sites on the lower Nanaimo River and lower Haslam Creek regarding water temperature, turbidity, dissolved oxygen and specific conductivity. These four parameters are general indicators for water quality; if any concerns are raised, then further investigation could be required.
- Occasionally there have been exceedances of the Provincial regulations for water quality, but none that are atypical for rivers on the east coast of Vancouver Island. The data indicates no significant concerns for water quality.
- The number of sampling sites is very limited. More sites would help develop a clearer picture of water quality in the River.
- The City of Nanaimo regularly tests water quality. Those tests have shown the water to be good water which is healthy to drink.
- Studies of water quality have also been carried out in the estuary.

- **SFN Rights Holder Contact – Gail Adrienne**

- At a presentation by Oliver Brandes (POLIS), he used the term Rights-holder instead of stakeholder to describe First Nations interests in watersheds. This echoed a message delivered by Snuneymuxw Councillor William Yoachim at the Nanaimo River Symposium in 2011.
- Different ways to renew engagement of the Roundtable with SFN were discussed. The idea of a NRWR delegation to present to SFN Council was suggested.

-Julie Pisani mentioned the idea of parallel processes, perhaps the FN and Roundtable would function separately for watershed stewardship but could check-in, share information and work toward common ground.

-Don Cohen is going to explore the possible participation of SFN in Rivers' Day activities.

- **Scheduling Meetings (Hatchery Conflict) – Paul Chapman**

-The NRWR should consider not scheduling its meetings on the last Wednesday of the month as it conflicts with Nanaimo River Stewardship Society Board meetings and prevents their participation in the NRWR.

- **Support from UVic Kayak Club**

-Rick Bryan (RCABC) forwarded a message in support of the Roundtable from this large paddling club at UVic.

-They have concerns about limited access to the river.

-Rick will keep them informed about the Roundtable.

**5) Next Meeting – June 11<sup>th</sup>, 1 – 3 pm at either Activity Room #1 or the Boardroom at Bowen Park.**

**6) Adjournment: 3:05 pm.**