

Watershed Committee

Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 25th April 2001 in the Ridgeview Motel Hospitality Room

Present:

Paul Smith- R.A.M.S.; Steve Emmonds, DFO/Conuma Hatchery; Murray Watkinson, WFP; Allister McLean, BC Hydro; Doug Swift, FOC; Robert Ritter, G.R. Resident; Maureen Plecas, G.R. Smolt Co. Ltd.; Dick Dennison, G.R. Resident.

1.0 Paul called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

2.0 Introductions around the table

3.0 The agenda was approved by consensus

4.0 Minutes of the previous meeting

Steve asked that the sentence “although there will be subcommittees” be changed to “although there probably will be subcommittees”

5.0 Old business arising from the minutes

Paul stated that the “Blueprint for Living Salmon Habitat” identified Sucwoa River Chinook not Coho as being a concern. Paul will bring a copy of document to next meeting. Doug talked about taking the questions around the sea pen idea in Muchalaht Lake for the Gold River Chinook Project back to FOC and report to the committee. Paul will contact John and Dale to find out exactly what it is they’re looking for and how they will use it. Doug has concerns around the health of the adult Chinook in the sea pen (temp, etc.). Paul talked about working with Dale, Steve, Kevin, Roger and Doug to get all necessary details for net pen. Doug will ask around to determine feasibility. Doug talked about the culvert under the highway between Mainroad Contracting and Conuma Excavating yards and the difficulty with fixing it. Dick asked why we couldn’t put an apron at the end of the culvert to make the grade shorter. Paul asked about building up the pool or placing weirs below to build up the water level. Doug replied the problem with both ideas is the possibility of them being blown out during winter storm events. There was some discussion among the group on sending in the Stream Keepers to assess the winter and spawning habitat above the culvert. Steve talked about fertilizer used by FOC’s lake program. Muchalaht Lake was surveyed in 1986 for fertilizer, but Moelp opposed the project because of Steelhead concerns. Roger asked for it to be looked at again in 1993-1994. Maureen asked how lake fertilizer would affect Steelhead. Steve replied that once you increase the Sockeye population you increase the harvest rate thereby increasing by catch of Steelhead. Allister mentioned that not only Sockeye populations will increase but other species as well, so you need to assess the other species first.

6.0 Minutes of previous meeting approved by consensus

7.0 Correspondence

There was no new correspondence.

8.0 New Business

Doug talked about a dam (concrete) on Lord Creek in Esperanza Inlet and showed some pictures. The fisheries officer (Guy) reported that there was

Coho stacking up behind the dam trying to get to habitat above the barrier. What is the status? What licenses exist if any? Can it be removed? Who will fund and how much habitat is above the barrier? Paul will try and go there in May to check it out and report back to the committee. Paul talked about FsRBC proposals and projects ongoing in Nootka Sound. Paul discussed the mark-recapture project on Hutchinson Creek by the Stream Keepers to establish a base line for the restoration work to begin this summer. Maureen talked about last years Chinook food project at Conuma and the extra money that wasn't used for purchasing food. What's the status of that money? Apparently the money was used to purchase fish food and food that wasn't used last year was put in the freezer to be used this year. Maureen asked if the same problem would occur this year? Steve replied no this year they would only take the approved number of eggs. Steve talked about the "Tips Up" program at Critter Cove and the controversy from other lodges wondering about salmon holding in front of Critter Cove creating an unfair fishery. Paul talked about the fishery already being there as long before Critter Cove was there it was an exceptional spot to fish. Murray talked about Western's FRBC allocation being clawed back this year and the money being channelled into the North Coast (Rivers Inlet). Western will be partnering with Moelp on fish assessments (Ric Standards) again this year and asked the committee to identify some systems for assessment (one month deadline). Murray will compile a list of streams already completed. Allister stated that the data would be on Moelp's web site under circular #8 (level one stream inventory). Dick asked if B.C. Hydro had any projects to clean up stumps in Upper Campbell now that water levels are at their lowest in recent years. Allister will look into this and report back to the committee. He stated that B.C. Hydro wouldn't hit the recreation target for this year. Paul talked about Mike Miles' presentation on the Elk and Tahsis Rivers at the Habitat Conservation and Stewardship Program's Mid Term Meeting. Maureen asked about the Community Advisor's role now in our community. Steve replied that even though we're located in the South Coast area we get the Central Coast Community Advisor until restructuring within FOC is complete. Steve went on to say that money that used to go through the Community Advisor to local Pip projects will now go through the Conuma Hatchery and Community Advisors will concentrate on Education, etc.

9.0 Action Items

1. Paul will be writing letters of support on behalf of the watershed committee for FsRBC proposals.
2. Paul will coordinate a meeting for members to brainstorm net pen idea in Muchalaht Lake.
3. Paul will talk to Bob Craven on date for Nootka Island FDP presentation.
4. Paul will confirm with Roger Dunlop on fertilization projects ongoing in Nootka/Kyuquot Sounds.

10.0 Presentations

There were no presentations.

11.0 Open Discussion

Steve stated that his new boss is Kelly Francis for the next three months at which time it will be decided on. Maureen asked if there were still resident biologists for our area. Steve replied it is up in the air right now. Steve talked about his concerns over two cut blocks on the west side of Leigh Creek Lake.

He went down to WFP to look over the FDP. Steve is worried about building roads as opposed to heli logging and the potential for channelization into Leigh Creek. Doug will talk to Kevin about this, as he will see him shortly. Steve has emailed Kevin with these concerns.

12.0 Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm. Next meeting is on Wednesday May 30/01 same time, same place.