

Nootka Sound Watershed Society

Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 26 January, 2005 in the Western Forest Products Meeting Room

Present:

Michel Rabu (P)- Gold River Fish Camp; Paul Smith (S)- G.R. Stream Keepers; Pat Dennison (T)- Gold River Resources Ltd.; Dick Dennison (D)- Gold River Rod and Gun; Deb Clemenson (D)- Village of Tahsis; Steve Shelly (D)- The Lodge Tahsis; Jamie James (D)- Mowachaht/Muchalaht Fisheries; Roger Dunlop- NTC Fisheries; Dave Davies- DFO Community Advisor; Jim Murphy- Grieg Seafood; Jim Davis- Moutcha Bay Resort; Ralph Osha- Chinootka Lodge; Bill Haggarty- G.R. Resident; Mike McCallum- G.R. Streamkeepers; Gary Foster- G.R. Rod and Gun; Jennifer Koch- Western Forest Products; Vaughn Michaud- Nootka Sound Sports Fishing Charters; Marc Charette- Fineline Graphics; Roger Bligh- CeePeeCee Lodge; Courtney Ogilvie- Ogilvies Sports Fishing; Randy Watson- Area D Gillnetters; Jon Banas- G.R. Resident; Maureen Ritter- Marine Harvest Canada; Paul Galiuski- John Duncan MP

1. Michel Rabu called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m.

Michel stated that the meeting will be taped to aid in the taking of minutes.

Anyone who objects may leave if they so choose. Michel asked everyone to sign the attendance sheet.

2. Introductions around the table

3. Changes/additions/approval of agenda

Michel Rabu asked for changes or additions to the agenda. Dick Dennison moved to accept agenda, seconded by Pat Dennison, called to question, all in favour, none opposed, so moved.

4. Changes or additions to minutes of the previous meeting

Michel Rabu asked everyone to read over the previous minutes. Pat Dennison stated that the time for the next meeting at the bottom of the minutes is wrong. It should read 6:30 pm instead of 7:00 pm.

5. Approval of Minutes

Dick Dennison moved to accept minutes, Jim Davis seconded, called to question, all in favour, none opposed, so moved

6. Old business arising from the minutes

Paul Smith updated everyone on the TOR and the changes that are necessary to encompass all of Nootka Sound. Paul asked everyone to take this home and look it over to provide comments or changes for the next meeting or so. Some discussion followed on the simple changes and whether we should just change Gold River to read Nootka Sound. Everyone agreed to table this until a further date so that the members can look it over. Paul Smith updated everyone on the website and that it should be up to date. The hatchery links are on the links page and new agenda and minutes are updated. Michel Rabu asked if anyone is having problems with the website. Pat Dennison commented that she noticed the minutes were missing from October 2004. Paul Smith commented that he just hasn't typed them up yet because of the series of meetings we had in September, October and November were more than just our regular meetings. We had discussed at one of the meetings about whether we should post all the meeting minutes. Everyone

agreed that we should post every meeting minutes on the site. Paul will type them up and load them onto the site. Paul Smith updated everyone on the Gold River Councils agenda for meetings. Paul had asked for council to email the agenda on a regular basis, but so far we have only received one agenda. Paul will look into this. Pat Dennison updated everyone on the membership form. She received comments and Paul Smith didn't agree with the goals on the form, as they don't match our Terms of Reference. Paul Smith commented that he feels that we should be consistent with our TOR. Jim Davis commented that at the time the TOR were draft only and he feels that we should continue to use this form until we change our TOR at which time we will amend the form. Everyone agreed. Paul Smith updated everyone on the logo contest and that we've only received five entries. Paul commented that he was hoping for more to choose from and would like to see an extension to allow for more. Some discussion followed on whether the students would provide more logos or if that was all the interest we would receive. Paul Smith commented that after talking to some of the teachers it was felt that because of Christmas holidays that maybe some students forgot or didn't have the time. One month should provide more time for those students who feel that they didn't have time. Dick Dennison moved to that we extend the logo contest for one month. Bill Haggarty seconded, called to question, all in favour, none opposed, so moved. Paul Smith asked everyone to look over the letters of thanks to provide any input or if there are errors. Grieg Seafood's letter should include the donation of fish food and vibrio vaccine to the Conuma Hatchery on behalf of the NSWS. We should also be sending a letter to Area D Gill-netters thanking them for their generous \$500 donation. Deb Clemenson moved to accept the letters as written with noted changes. Jim Davis seconded, called to question, all in favour, none opposed, so moved.

7. Correspondence

All correspondence has been forwarded to members via email. Contact Paul Smith if you haven't been receiving correspondence.

8. New Business

Under new business the transfer over of the office administration was discussed. There was some opposition to the NSWS paying for everything instead of sharing the costs with those who use the office. Paul Smith stated that he agrees, however for the last four years the Gold River Stream Keepers Society has been paying the way for the NSWS and that it wouldn't be very fair to the directors of the GRSK to make them pay immediately. One of the reasons for the change from a consensus based watershed committee to a registered watershed society was to alleviate the financial burden to the GRSK and become a self sustaining entity to provide the stewardship role to the local user groups in Nootka Sound. Dick Dennison moved that the NSWS cover the office administration costs like rent, telephone, internet etc., but that user groups who use the office must share in the cost of paper, printer ink, stationary, office supplies etc. Steve Shelly seconded, called to question, all in favour, none opposed, so moved. Up next was discussion on creating a petty cash fund or a maximum limit on cheque amounts that need to be approved by the directors. Pat Dennison commented that she feels we should get approval for every check we write. Discussion followed on the time it may take to cut a check for simple things like the phone bill or having to call special meetings to approve certain cheque amounts. Michel Rabu stated that we need a petty cash fund to pay for things like office supplies or utility bills so we don't waste time setting up directors meetings dealing with issues that are unnecessary.

Pat Dennison moved that we correspond through email or the private room on the forum with at least 4 directors for amounts over \$100. A petty cash fund of \$100 will be maintained with the treasurer. Deb Clemenson seconded, called to question, all in favour, none opposed, so moved. Paul Smith talked about the possibility of placing a donor button on our website to allow others to donate money to our society online. Some discussion followed on the pros and cons of this and it was agreed by all that it is unnecessary at this time. Paul Smith talked about our upcoming Annual General Meeting and when we should hold it. Our anniversary date of registration is February 26, 2005. Every society must hold an AGM at least once in a calendar year and not more than 15 months after the previous one. Dick Dennison moved that because of the timely issues at hand we would hold the AGM tentatively in March with further discussions at the next meeting. Seconded by Bill Haggarty, called to question, all in favour, none opposed, so moved. Dick Dennison talked about the Sports Fish Advisory Committee and that they should be also invited to attend this society. Paul Smith stated that the SFAC has always had a seat at this table and up until recently that was one of his many hats that he wore. We have to be careful that we don't get involved in the fisheries management process other than to provide support or direction. We have more than enough on our plate to deal with and the SFAC is fully recognized by DFO to provide the advice needed to manage the recreational fishery. Dick Dennison commented that he was just stating that they should be at this table. Paul Smith agreed that the Chair or Co-Chair once they are appointed should be invited to our table. Lengthy discussions followed as to the pros and cons of getting involved with fisheries management decisions on migratory species and it was agreed to table this discussion until another meeting. Michel Rabu talked about his meeting with the Conuma Hatchery Watershed Manager on the new production plans for 2005. It is imperative that we meet with DFO to discuss the cuts to production for this year before we get into a situation like last season where we were left out of the loop until it was too late. Michel feels that we should meet and develop criteria to define what we as a society representing all the user groups in Nootka Sound see as the direction the Conuma Hatchery production should take. We should hold this meeting in camera and present our final documentation to DFO and the Minister. Jim Mitchell commented that he finds the timeline quite interesting because last years decisions weren't made until October/November as to what production numbers were going to be. By then almost all of the brood stock had been collected. Bruce Adkins can speak to this. Jim feels that we should be getting data from the Conuma Hatchery like the total budget numbers, projected production costs and numbers for every stock not just the Conuma River. This way we can provide input into whether we feel a certain stock needs more enhancement than another that might be over enhanced. We also need to know how DFP defines conservation now as per the Wild Salmon Policy. Until we know these things we cannot provide a proper forum for input. An example is the previous DFO argument that capacity couldn't be met because of dealing with Burman/Gold Tahsis and Zeballos fish, when all of the hatchery employees tell us that is not the issue and there is more than enough capacity to deal with production numbers at the previous levels. There are empty cells as we speak that aren't being utilized and excess water is being diverted into the Conuma River. I think until these things are determined we cannot go forward to provide input if we don't have all the facts. Bruce Adkins commented that he would speak to this process of engaging the public in discussions during his

presentation. Roger Dunlop stated that everyone should be made aware of the new deadline for comments to the Wild Salmon Policy in early February. There is a website to provide these comments. Paul Smith commented that he has read the Wild Salmon Policy at least five times and still cannot get his head around it. Other members agreed and stated that it is difficult to provide input into a process where you have to have a science degree to understand the issues. Roger Dunlop added that we should be aligning ourselves with First Nations who are opposed to quota regime being proposed to the salmon fishery. The other issue is the privatization of the Rockfish industry by setting up a brokerage house to deal with by catch from the commercial and recreational fisheries. This will have major impacts to the commercial/sport allocations in the future. Randy Watson commented that the Pearce/McCrae report is the driving force behind this new direction of removing all common property resources from the people of Canada to the private sector. He went on to say that most commercial fisherman haven't been too receptive to this direction and the Area D turned it down at their AGM. Dick Dennison asked Roger Dunlap if he has a motion dealing with this issue. Roger replied that he didn't come here prepared to make a motion for support, just to give us a heads up on what is coming down the pipe. There was lots of discussion on whether we should propose a motion stating our objection to this new direction from DFO. A lot of members expressed concerns over not understanding the real issues here and maybe a briefing note by Roger might help to understand it better. Paul Smith will hook up with Roger and Randy/Les to try and research a little more. This is something we will table for now, but we shouldn't let this issue get away from us. Bruce Adkins talked about inviting the Aquatic Management Board to enlighten us on the facts behind this issue. Jim Mitchell stated that he has copies of all the AMB previous minutes if anyone wants a copy.

9. Presentations

Bruce Adkins gave his power point presentation and there is a draft copy available if anyone wants to go over it. Bruce started by stating that the future direction of the Salmon Enhancement Program (SEP) is currently facing some serious challenges because of budget restraint and other issues. The current SEP budget is set at \$20.62 million. There is no more money coming from Ottawa and SEP is currently costing around \$24.5 million to operate. Funding peaked at \$39 million in the early 1990's. The Wild Salmon Policy, Species at Risk Act (SARA), First Nation treaty negotiations, will also affect the future of SEP. The reality is that the production fisheries under the Wild Salmon Policy, likely will not be a part of DFO's core mandated responsibilities. Focus will be on conservation sustaining fisheries that aren't at optimum levels. SEP currently supports 80% of the fishing opportunities for aboriginal, sports, and commercial harvesters. DFO is seeking input and considering the possibility of cost sharing with the stakeholders who benefit from the production fisheries. This same presentation was given to the Sports Fish Advisory Board with mixed response; there will be lots more discussion on this. Jim Mitchell at this time asked if Bruce could find the time to provide this society with the data or report that DFO produced the 80% figure stated previously. Jim also commented that he keeps hearing about cost recovery and the information we have is that it cost about \$823 thousand dollars last year to run the Conuma Hatchery. So based on data that shows the sport recreational fishery in Nootka Sound is worth somewhere between 12-20 million dollars at 7% GST that equals 840-1.4 million dollars. In real terms the fish are already

recovering the cost of running the hatchery. Jim stated he agrees with communities getting involved and stakeholders helping to provide the fish to harvest, but where in the equation for cost recovery are tax dollars generated by the fishery or user fees etc. taken into account. Federal excise tax on mid grade marked fuel exclusively for the recreational fishery alone in this area is over 400 thousand dollars. There should be a percentage allocated back to the fishery that generated it. There is also a benefit to the people of Canada, because you aren't just managing the resource for the people of Nootka Sound. You are managing the resource for the people of Canada. Nowhere in any of the presentations or discussions do we see the reference that ultimately there is a value to the salmon resource in this area to the people of Canada. Bruce replied these are all valid points, but the reality is that the minister has said we have \$20 million dollars to distribute in the Pacific region. To put it into context no other region in Canada has a 25 million program so Ottawa perceives this to be an excellent deal and we are asking for more. That is how they view it. SEP is a big program and costs a lot to operate. It is unlikely we will receive additional resources. Question was asked about the recent 800 million bailout of farmers in three Prairie Provinces, doesn't that add up to more than 25 million? Bruce continued on with his presentation and Michel Rabu asked that we try and maintain order. Bruce finished his presentation and question was asked by Jim Davis on where the Conuma Hatchery sits as a surplus entity to be cut more than other hatcheries? Bruce replied that it is equitable with the other cuts in SEP where surplus production hatcheries don't really address any conservation needs. Paul Smith asked Bruce to define conservation as it applies to DFO and the Wild Salmon Policy. There was no reply. Lots of discussion followed on the process of public input and the lack of stakeholder representation at our society meetings. Bruce commented that up until now there has been no process in place in Nootka Sound to provide input. Paul Smith stated that is not fair as the NSWS has been in Nootka Sound since November 2002 when it was named the Gold River Watershed Committee. DFO just refused to accept us as a credible entity. Bruce stated that we need to have more representation by all of the stakeholders that benefit from the production fishery in Nootka Sound and that we are headed in the right direction. He went on to say that we must be patient and work with DFO to resolve the issues before us, as there are some tough challenges ahead of us. DFO is committed to work with groups to ensure that SEP works within the current budget provided by Ottawa and to look at alternatives to increase funding from stakeholders to sustain the fisheries. Michel Rabu thanked Bruce Adkins for his presentation and introduced Brian McIvor of Plastics Plus. Brian started off by saying he will be brief so everyone can go home. Brian talked about Plastic Plus and their products and how they would relate to businesses in Nootka Sound. He stated that he would be happy to answer questions after the meeting. Michel Rabu thanked Brian for his presentation.

10. Action Items

1. Paul Smith will add the October minutes to the archive on the website.
2. Paul Smith will ask Gold River Council to provide the regular agenda to be emailed out to members.
3. Paul Smith will send out letters of thanks to recipients.
4. Paul Smith will contact Roger Dunlop and/or Les Rombough/Randy Watson to research the implications of the newly proposed rockfish quota direction.
5. Bruce Adkins will provide the society with the document or data that shows

80% of SEP production supports fisheries by aboriginal, commercial and recreational user groups.

6. Bruce Adkins will contact Michel Rabu with a date in February to discuss the 2005-2006 production plans at the Conuma Hatchery.

11. Open Discussion

There wasn't much open discussion as most members left the meeting.

12. Adjournment

Deb Clemenson moved to adjourn at 10:00 pm. Next meeting is on Wednesday, February 23, 2005 same time, same place.