

Watershed Committee

Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 28 January, 2004 in the Western Forest Products Meeting Room

Present:

Jim Mitchell- Village of Gold River/Stream Keepers; Paul Smith- Stream Keepers; Pat Dennison- Gold River; Dick Dennison- Gold River Rod and Gun; Jaime James- Mowachaht/Muchalaht Fisheries; Roger Dunlop- NTC Fisheries; Jay McCool- Gold River, Jim Murphy- Grieg Seafoods, John Frame- Gold River Chinook Project

1.0 Paul called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

2.0 Introductions around the table

3.0 Changes/additions/approval of agenda

Correspondence added.

4.0 Changes or additions to minutes of the previous meeting

Changes included spelling Jamie James name correctly, Pat stated that archaeological and congratulations are spelled incorrectly, Roger stated that “salvage” should be sampling, Jamie commented that First Nations should read First Nation, minutes approved by consensus.

5.0 Old business arising from the minutes

Roger stated that apparently a subdivision has been applied for on Nootka Island. Jim commented that he had a talk with Tom Pater on the tenure issues. Midnight adventures were issued tenure against all negative referrals. The Regional District has asked Water Air and Lands to hold all tenures in abeyance until a comprehensive plan is put in place. Paul talked about SARA and his discussions with the Sports Fish Advisory Board. Jim passed along Dave Davies apology for not attending tonight’s meeting. The Dfo presentation update will be tabled until the next meeting. Roger stated that the Mowachaht/Muchalaht have contacted Ed Thorburn of DFO to file a complaint about the Meares Creek issues. Apparently there was a blocked culvert. Roger talked about the lack of response to the fry/smolt trap migration project and that DFO has stated there is no funding available for the project. Roger still wants to do DNA sampling and collect fry to pickle for the Pacific Biological Station. Roger will be looking for volunteers sometime in March to help with this. Roger showed everyone the DNA Dendrogram on his laptop identifying the stocks in the Gold River Watershed. Jim asked how many volunteers Roger will be looking for. Roger replied, as many as are interested. Jim asked that this be put on the local groups agendas. Paul asked if there was a budget created to identify the total costs for the project and if so how much. Roger replied there was no budget. Paul updated everyone on the salmon enumeration for Hutchinson Creek. This year was tough because of the low water conditions and the volunteers missed some opportunities when it did start raining. Paul talked about his correspondence with Wilf Luedke on the potential to use volunteers to enumerate some of the priority systems that DFO doesn’t walk anymore. Wilf and Paul will coordinate a workshop in May to prepare the volunteers for this. Wilf stated there is limited funding available for gas costs etc. Jim commented that the enumeration by the

volunteers on the Gold River watershed is working well and that they too could benefit from this workshop. Paul replied that he hopes those same volunteers will be able to take on the extra workload.

6.0 Minutes of previous meeting approved by consensus

7.0 Correspondence

Paul talked about the correspondence from Bruce Sellars on the minutes of a tech meeting. There was correspondence on the Wetland Keepers training in Courtenay. The Hutchinson Creek final report progress correspondence from Dominico was next. There was an email from Dave Davies on some funding opportunities. Dave also sent an email on the new pesticide restriction implemented in the US. Another email from Dave providing a url to the website on watershed law and planning in BC. And last but not least, the final summary document from Steve Baillie on the indicator fence on Dunlop Creek.

8.0 New Business

Discussions on the future of the Conuma Hatchery and SEP followed and the possibility of DFO privatising the facility. John Frame stated that two years ago DFO asked the Gold River Chinook Project to put a proposal forward on taking over ownership of the Conuma Hatchery and it looks like they're interested in this direction again. Members wondered who would own the fish if this was to take place and what happens to our legal ownership of the common property resource. Discussion also took place on whether the hatchery should be run by a non-profit organization or a private business. There was some discussions on the difference between the hatchery and ocean ranching, which DFO has also expressed an interest in allowing. Jim discussed the need for the watershed society to partner with all local stewardship groups to coordinate stewardship in Nootka Sound. The plan is for this society to take over the administration, coordination and funding for the implementation of stewardship in Nootka Sound. For the time being Jim will continue to find funding to maintain the office and equipment, but we need to have a regular funding coordinator. Everyone agreed.

9.0 Action Items

1. Paul will ask Dave Davies about the status of the presentation on IPP's in our area.
2. Jim will research funding opportunities for the fry/smolt trap project.
3. Paul will look into the funding correspondence from Dave Davies

10.0 Presentations

There were no presentations.

11.0 Open Discussion

Roger talked about coded wire tagging the smolts from Dunlop Creek to provide more data. Dick talked about coordinating a summer long fishing derby/lottery to generate funding for the society. Paul stated he started looking into this a while back, but walked away when he realised he couldn't do it all himself. Discussion followed on how to coordinate such an event. Paul stated that Eugene Amos asked him to recommend that all members should try and find the video called "Saltwater People" and view it to learn more about the First Nation culture as it pertains to the aquatic resources. This will give us a little more background on the history of First Nation fisheries etc.

12.0 Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 9:04 pm. Next meeting is on Wednesday, February 25, 2004 same time, same place.