

**Cheakamus Ecosystem Restoration Stakeholder
Meeting #7
Thursday April 25, 2007
6:30 to 8:00 pm
Howe Sound Inn and Brewing Company
Meeting Summary**

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| Bev Cochrane | Independent |
| Victor Elderton | North Vancouver Outdoor School |
| Carl Halvorson | North Vancouver Outdoor School |
| Steve Hanson | BC Federation of Fly Fishers |
| Shaun Hollingsworth | BC Wildlife Federation |
| Brian Klassen | South Coast Steelhead Coalition (Squamish Chapter) |
| Roman Lehocky | Independent |
| Randy Marchant | Independent |
| Gil Sage | BC Federation of Fly Fishers |
| John Schleimer | BC Wildlife Federation |
| Gary Turner | Independent |

Regrets: Edith Tobe, Jack Cooley

Note: Eric Carlisle e-mailed the facilitator after the meeting with comments for the Ministry of Environment, which have been appended to this summary as a separate attachment.

Media: Ray Wangen – Squamish Chief

Cheakamus Ecosystem Restoration Technical Committee (CERTC)

- Chessy Knight – District of Squamish
- Randy Lewis – Squamish Nation
- Luanne Patterson – CN
- Greg Wilson – Ministry Of Environment

Other Resources

- Kellie Svendsen – CN
- Steve Rochetta – Ministry of Environment
- Peter Frederiksen – Triton Environmental

Meeting Facilitator: Tom Sadleir – Cornerstone Planning Group

Note-taker: Vikram Singh – Cornerstone Planning Group

The following information materials were provided to all meeting participants:

- February 28, 2006 Stakeholder Team meeting notes
- March 12, 2007 CERTC meeting summary
- Ministry of Environment Steelhead Culture update.

Requests to CERTC/CERTC Members

- Cheekye Bridge Abutment Project needs to be completed by August-September window.
- Minister of Environment should attend steelhead smolt release and meet with North Vancouver Outdoor School.
- Request for a count of number of adult steelhead returning to Brohm Creek.
- Comment requested from Ministry of Environment on slow 2007 steelhead returns.
- Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) should investigate reported black sludge in the estuary; request for DFO CERTC member to attend next Stakeholder Team meeting to deliver report at next.
- No retention of marked fish should occur in the Cheakamus and Squamish watersheds following 2007 steelhead return.
- Request report at next Stakeholder Team meeting (June 21, 2007) on fish monitoring results, and how they compared to targets.

Other Discussions

CN Cheakamus Ecosystem Recovery Fund

It was reported that the first application for project funding was approved. Mike Melnychuk, a Ph.D. student at U.B.C. will assess juvenile survival of hatchery-reared coho during their downstream migration in the Cheakamus and Squamish Rivers and early ocean life.

The Squamish River Watershed Society submitted two applications for the following projects:

- Squamish River Estuary Training Dyke Culvert Improvement Project
- Creel Survey of the Squamish River Watershed Recreation Fishery

These applications will be reviewed at the next CERTC meeting.

Large Woody Debris (LWD) Demonstration Project

The LWD Demonstration Project in the Cheakamus was discussed, specifically regarding from where the LWD would be collected. Members suggested collecting from other areas of the Cheakamus River, such as downstream of the Bailey Bridge. However, it was noted that removing wood from the river could damage possible fish habitats, and that such a proposal would be unlikely to obtain the necessary approval from the Ministry of Environment.

Cheekye Bridge Abutment Project

Members noted lack of further information on the Cheekye Bridge Abutment Project. It was reported that CN structural engineers are currently studying the stability of the bridge and that surveying is near completion.

Brohm Creek

Anecdotal evidence from members of the Stakeholder Team noted that juvenile density in Brohm Creek was much higher several years ago. Discussion ensued regarding the monitoring of adult steelhead returns. It was noted that counting the number of fish in Brohm Creek is a very difficult task. It was further noted that juvenile density in the Brohm is counted every Spring and Fall, and that, at last count, it was the same as previous years. Possible reasons for the reported low adult returns unrelated to the CN spill were discussed.

CERTC Activity

Stakeholder Team members requested information on recovery activities that will occur in the next six months. Response provided that the following is scheduled:

- Ongoing monitoring programs (Resident fish Abundance Monitoring Program (RAMP), Non-anadromous Reach monitoring)
- Report production for 2006 field projects
- Continued char enumeration studies
- Investigating project feasibility at KM 8 side channel, and at Swift Creek;
- LWD demonstration project
- Fish culture for steelhead, chinook and pink salmon
- Wilson Slough reconnection project
- Cheekye River bridge apron removal
- Amphibian monitoring surveys
- Recovery Plan review, and updating for 2007

Questions were also raised regarding whether or not any information on the number of steelhead in the upper Cheakamus existed. It was stated that a monitoring report in the next few months should contain that information. Questions arose regarding the availability of the char enumeration study. It was reported that the char survey should be completed in a few weeks, depending on the movement of the tagged fish. A question on the number of chinook released was raised. It was reported that 100,000 chinook were released in the upper Cheakamus during the previous week, and that the fish had quickly departed.

Electrofishing

The suitability of electrofishing was questioned as a monitoring tool. It was noted this was the only way to catch some fish, such as lamprey and steelhead; and is not used on any adults or in gravel areas where eggs may be present.

Birds and Frogs

Discussion ensued regarding the extent of studies on birds and frogs in the Cheakamus. Response provided that the Ecological Risk Assessment studied birds and frogs in and around the Cheakamus, and the number and species of bird observations during other studies along the river were being recorded. It was also noted that amphibian experts would soon be looking for frog egg masses.

Estuary Monitoring

The issue was raised that fry had been released and were going into the Squamish estuary, but that there was no monitoring program in place in the estuary. It was noted

that this is not typical practice for monitoring programs of this kind. However, it was noted that Department of Fisheries and Oceans has done work in the estuary and that Mike Melnychuk's project includes monitoring early ocean survival of coho.

Black Sludge

Discussion took place regarding a black sludge reported north of the sewage treatment line to the logging road; at the old sewage treatment outfall; and, in the entire area beside train tracks in the estuary. It has been observed that the substance has significantly increased over the past decades. Concern was expressed regarding the potential impact of this substance on estuary habitat. It was noted that District of Squamish studies have indicated the substance to be organic in nature. Further investigation by DFO was requested.

Open House

It was agreed that a community open house take place in the early Fall to coincide with the update of the Cheakamus Ecosystem Recovery Plan.

Next Meeting

The next Stakeholder Team meeting is scheduled for 6:30 pm, Thursday, June 21, 2007 at the Howe Sound Inn and Brew Pub.