

**Cheakamus Ecosystem Restoration Stakeholder Team
Meeting #5
Thursday December 6, 2006
6:30 to 8:30 pm
Howe Sound Inn & Brewing Co.
Meeting Summary**

Representative/Individual	Organization
Brian Klassen	South Coast Steelhead Coalition (Squamish Chapter)
Carl Halvorson	North Vancouver Outdoor School
Dag Meyer	
Dan O’Kane	Independent
Deb McBride	Independent
Gilbert Sage	BC Federation of Fly Fishers
Jack Cooley	Squamish Streamkeepers
Kristi Bane-Allen	Squamish Environmental Conservation Society
Park Soo	
Pete Plathan	Independent
Randy Marchant	Independent
Steve Hanson	BC Federation of Fly Fishers
Victor Elderton	North Vancouver Outdoor School

Meeting Facilitator: Tom Sadleir - Cornerstone Planning Group
Note-taker: Vikram Singh - Cornerstone Planning Group

Communications

The following communications materials were included in an information package provided to all participants:

- Meeting agenda
- November 26, 2006 Cheakaumus River Steelhead Fish Culture Program Update
- CERTC response to project suggestion forms

Request for Responses from CERTC or individual CERTC members

A number of comments, questions and requests surfaced during the meeting, to which, the Stakeholder Team would like responses by their requested next meeting, January 25, 2007.

1. Motion

The Cheakamus Ecosystem Restoration Stakeholder Team moves:

that, CN, in addition to all other obligations, establish a Community Legacy Fund toward the recovery of the Cheakamus River ecosystem of not less than 1.5 million dollars per annum over a minimum of 25 years.

(Moved by Edith Tobe; seconded by Jack Cooley; passed unanimously.)

2. Other Issues

The Stakeholder Team would also like responses to the following:

- CN should ensure that any impediments to the District of Squamish's participation at the Stakeholder Team meetings are removed.
- Permit collection should begin immediately to ensure the collection of broodstock in 2007 occurs within a more favourable window than in 2006.
- Regarding the Ministry of Environment November 2007 update on the steelhead culture program, the Stakeholder Team questions the calculations and assumptions underpinning the predicted hatchery adult returns of 110 – 5000+ fish.
- Representatives of CN, Ministry of Environment and Triton Environmental Consultants Ltd should be present at Stakeholder Team meetings (without their presence, Stakeholder Team members felt that their meetings are largely ineffectual).
- The Stakeholder Team requested their next meeting be held January 25, 2006. The Stakeholder Team has also requested meetings on the third Thursday of the four subsequent months. The Stakeholder Team feels the five meetings offered by CN for 2007 to be inadequate and would like to meet monthly.
- What is the status of the proposed application for recovery project funding.
- Why has the removal of the concrete apron to the rail bridge spanning the Cheekye River not yet happened as committed to for 2006?
- Why was proposed side-channel re-watering project at KM11 abandoned?

3. Project Proposals

The following recovery projects were suggested at the meeting:

Re-watering of Lower Reach 8 – at KM13 (underneath the suspension bridge) was suggested as a replacement to the abandoned re-watering project at KM11.

Re-watering of Evans Creek – using the Cheakamus River.

The following recovery projects were suggested by email from Brian Klassen after the meeting (each Project's background notes are his):

Swift Creek re-watering

This creek goes dry every year from July through November and is a notorious fish killer, as there is a significant amount of coho fry rearing in this stream. These are offspring of the adult coho that spawn there every fall. A simple solution would be to dig low water refuge pits as well as constructing several spawning riffles in the lower areas of this creek. This would improve spawning, as well as provide summer low flow refuge.

Tenderfoot Creek culvert replacement

The Tenderfoot Creek culvert under the CN Rail main line has been identified as a velocity barrier at various times each fall. This year, the velocity barrier occurred at the same time as the main chum migration into Tenderfoot Lake, preventing a significant amount of the chum from entering and spawning in the lake. A simple solution would be to replace the culvert with one of the following: a bridge (the best solution), a box culvert, or a twinning of the culvert.

Off-channel habitat construction across from the North Vancouver Outdoor School Bighouse on river left

There is a river swale that works its way through the trees and is perfectly situated to be turned into a river-fed side channel. There is also a small pond on this river bench that could be expanded and complexed to include excellent fish usage.

Side Channel conversion ½ km upstream from the Bailey Bridge on river left

This side channel could easily be turned into a fish habitat. This could also be incorporated into the Swift Creek restoration project.

Remove of the CN bridge abutment in the Cheekye River

This was scheduled to be done in the fall of 2006 but has not happened to date. This project was identified quite a while ago to be very important for Cheakamus/Brohmn steelhead and therefore needs to be completed with haste. It is a documented migration barrier for steelhead and thus, needs to be addressed.

Construct a river channel on the river left below the suspension bridge

This should be investigated for pink, coho, steelhead and chinook spawning and rearing.

Increase the quality of woody debris on the Cheakamus

There is a large amount of wood on the gravel bar on river right below the BC Hydro bridge. This wood should be cabled and anchored in place so it doesn't disappear in the event of an influx of a large amount of water. Hopefully, this area will return to fish habitat once water flows back into this area.

Other Discussions

Members felt that the August 17 Public Information Session was not promoted to the extent that it should have been. They also noted that it was a poor time of year to have a meeting.

It was noted that the Recovery Plan lacks deadlines or specific dates for the recovery efforts in the Cheakamus River.

The Stakeholder Team felt that more than 20,000 of the 37,000 available steelhead smolts should be released into the Cheakamus River as a result of recent habitat enhancement on the side channels of the Cheakamus.

The Stakeholder Team felt that quarterly reports at a minimum on recovery projects and activities should be provided.

Questions were raised as to why the Transportation Safety Board has still not revealed to the public the cause of the CN derailment and subsequent spill in the Cheakamus River.

The Stakeholder Team clearly related their frustration at the general lack of activity and progress regarding Cheakamus River recovery efforts.

Following the meeting, Victor Elderton of the North Vancouver Outdoor School emailed newspaper and radio articles emphasizing the value and state of outdoor education to the meeting facilitator. If you would like to have a look at these articles, send an email to comments@certc.ca.

Next Meeting

NOTE CHANGE OF DATE: The next meeting of the Stakeholder Team is scheduled for late February.