

Nootka Sound Watershed Society

Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 25 February, 2004 in the Western Forest Products Meeting Room

Present:

Jim Mitchell- Village of Gold River/Stream Keepers; Paul Smith- Stream Keepers; Stewart Adams- Stream Keepers; Pat Dennison- Gold River; Dick Dennison- Gold River Rod and Gun; Jay McCool- Grieg Seafoods, Jim Murphy- Grieg Seafoods, John Frame- Gold River Chinook Project; Mike Wright- M.C. Wright & Associates; Stu Croft- Summit Power; Bruce Sellars- Summit Power; Domenico Iannidinardo- WFP

1.0 Paul called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

Paul asked everyone to sign the attendance sheet.

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

Jim Murphy stated that when two members with the same first name are in attendance that the last name should be used to allow other members to determine who said what. Pat pointed out some spelling errors.

5.0 Old business arising from the minutes

Jim Mitchell asked Domenico about the Hutchinson Creek final report. Domenico replied that it is almost completed. Discussion followed on the restoration and bedload problems with Hutchinson Creek. Paul talked about the correspondence from Dave Davies on a member of DFO attending one of our meetings to give a presentation on the IPP's in Nootka Sound and explain their take on them. Jim Mitchell talked about the difficulties in finding funding for the fry/smolt trap project on the Gold River. Mike Wright asked if we were looking at using a rotary screw trap. Jim Mitchell replied yes if we can find the funding for it, otherwise it will be a volunteer fry/mark recapture project instead. Stewart Adams added that there is no baseline for Gold River DNA and it is our hope to achieve this if it still exists. John Frame stated that the Gold River Chinook Project has been collecting DNA samples for the last 22 years and DFO should have them on file. Jim Mitchell wants to know where the DNA data on the Gold River is and why DFO won't provide it to us. Question was asked if any Robertson Creek fish were ever found in the Burman River watershed. John Frame replied that they've never encountered any. Stewart Adams explained how otolith marking is done and how it is read. Paul talked about that status of the society registration and that he has had to make a few changes to the bylaws (section 58) to read that members can receive notice by email and registered mail. Now we're waiting for the final documents for registration. Jim Mitchell talked about the NCN/WCVI Aquatic Management Board and their lack of funding from both governments. Jim went to say that for the smaller communities such as ours, this is a great vehicle to allow us to have a say in what goes on. Jim Mitchell updated everyone on the last education workshop at the high school put on by the Gold River Stream Keepers Society. The students were taught how to test water quality and given a power point presentation also. The next workshop will be

done by Jamie James on the cultural significance of salmon to the Mowachaht/Muchalaht First Nation. Jim Mitchell stated that the Gold River Scouts have planted most of the remaining plants on Big Bend Creek and that the directors of the Gold River Stream Keepers will be planting the rest.

6.0 Minutes of previous meeting approved by consensus

7.0 Correspondence

Paul talked about the correspondence from Sean Wong on the culvert and instream work for Big Bend Creek. Domenico asked that Murray Watkinson be made aware of this and a request be sent to him for three days of Domenico's help. Other correspondence came from Tom Pater on his comments for the IPP process. There was an email from Dave Davies on the spread of hogweed across Vancouver Island. Paul asked if anyone knows what hogweed looks like. Correspondence from Craig Whiteman of the Province on the poor Steelhead counts for their river swim in February. There were only 32 Steelhead counted over 8.1 km from the Hawk bridge down. Stewart Adams commented that the numbers in the Conuma River (2) were also down substantially. John Frame commented that 20 years ago Bob Hooten of the Province released 52 thousand Heber River Steelhead into the lower Gold River to help the dwindling stocks.

8.0 New Business

There was no new business to discuss.

9.0 Action Items

1. Paul will ask DFO about the status of the DNA data collected over the last 20 years by the Gold River Chinook Project and if we can see it.
2. Paul will draft up a letter to Murray Watkinson requesting Domenico's attendance for three days during the Big Bend Creek culvert project.

10.0 Presentations

Bruce Sellars, Stu Croft and Mike Wright entertained questions from the members on the Ucona River IPP. Jim Mitchell asked about the leachate possibilities from quantity of rock being removed during the drilling of the tunnel and other portions of the project. Mike Wright and Stu Croft stated that there will be a plan in place to manage this. As they move forward this plan will be revised and amended as necessary to address concerns and issues. Paul asked if the site for the bridge across the Gold River has been chosen yet. Stu Croft replied that three sites have been looked at and they're favouring the lower site by Cascade Creek. The only issue will be getting the equipment across the river. Paul asked about the archaeological site identified by the Mowachaht/Muchalaht. Bruce Sellars commented that they are currently working with the Mowachaht/Muchalaht to address their concerns and the study should start shortly. Jim Mitchell asked what will the tunnel be lined with. Stu Croft answered that they might have to use shot crete in some places. Dick Dennison asked if the tunnel would still be 5 km. Stu Croft stated that ideally it would be better if it was shorter i.e. 2km. A map was produced to show the members where the tunnel would be placed. This is still a work in progress to determine the best route and costs. Paul asked about the impacts to the riparian zone alongside of the Ucona River. Mike Wright commented that the footprint would be about 10 meters wide and 20 meters from the river so there should be no impacts to the riparian zone next to the river. Dick Dennison asked if there was still an interest in creating a spawning channel. Mike Wright stated that this is an idea that they're still looking at and will

solicit input from the public when or if the time comes. John Frame stated he would like to see some holding ponds incorporated into this channel to aid the Gold River Chinook Project in holding adults during brood stock collection in the fall. Mike Wright stated that this is possible. Mike also commented that they will not push forward with their plans without the communities support and input. Paul thanked the three representatives from the Summit Power group for their time and answering all members questions.

11.0 Open Discussion

Jim Mitchell talked about the need to have a hatchery again for the Gold and Burman River watersheds. He went on to say that we should also have a place to hold adults for spawning and a spot to rear the fry for release similar to the old hatchery site at the mill. John Frame stated that they have been assured by the new owners, of a spot on the old mill site and there is an agreement to run their hatchery there again. This is great news.

12.0 Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 9:28 pm. Next meeting is on Wednesday, March 23, 2004 same time, same place.