

# Watershed Committee

## Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> May 2001 in the Ridgeview Motel Hospitality Room

### **Present:**

Paul Smith- R.A.M.S.; Steve Emmonds, DFO/Conuma Hatchery; Chris Erikson DFO/Conuma Hatchery; Norm Johnson, G.R. Smolt Co.Ltd.; Maureen Plecas, G.R. Smolt Co. Ltd.; Dick Dennison, G.R. Resident; Trudy Annand, G. R. Resident/Nootka Resource Board; Bruce Annand, G.R. Resident.

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

**2.0 Introductions around the table**

**3.0 The agenda was approved by consensus**

**4.0 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The word “as” should be removed from the sentence “ already being there as long before Critter Cove was there”

**5.0 Old business arising from the minutes**

Steve gave an update on his comments at the last meeting concerning the transfer of hatchery programs from the Community Advisor. Apparently there has been a delay in the transfer. Maureen asked if this means the transfer has been scrapped. Steve replied that it would be in Vancouver for review. Everything here stays the same. Steve commented that he would have liked to hear Roger’s report on the fertilization workshop he attended in Oregon. Steve stated that he would like to see the concrete dam at Lord Creek be left in place to be used as a water supply to enhance the smaller systems in that area and build a fish ladder to allow salmonids to escape to the upper habitat. Bruce added that it used to be a water line for the old cannery. Paul added that he hasn’t had the time to go to Lord Creek and photo the dam, etc. Paul also commented on Bob Craven’s presentation on Nootka Island’s Forest Development Plan will be postponed until July and since we don’t meet over the summer months, it will have to be in Aug. Trudy mentioned that there is a meeting in Campbell River between the Ministry of Forests and the companies who want to log Nootka Island. Trudy stated that Tom Pater (Regional District) would attend the meeting on behalf of the Nootka Resource Board. Maureen asked if it was still up in the air as to whether we will receive a resident biologist for our area. Steve replied that as of April 1<sup>st</sup>, Gregg Bonnell has been transferred to Nanaimo. He might be the assessment biologist for all of Vancouver Island, but this is not confirmed. Steve was asked if he had any further discussions over his concerns with Leigh Creek. Steve answered that Kevin Somerville hasn’t gotten back to him yet. A question was asked about our previous request of BC Hydro to bring back information on the possibility of stump removals in Upper Campbell. Paul responded by saying he’s heard nothing from Allister on the request. Paul talked about the “Living Blueprints” document on the table that was an action item from the last meeting. Steve questioned the validity of some of these systems and whether they ever had Chinook stocks ie: Deserted River and

Tsowwin River. Steve recommended prioritising these systems identified in the document. There was some discussion over some of them being prioritised previously. Bruce asked whether the G.R. Chinook Project enhances Mooyah River Chinook. Paul answered that when the funding is found they enhance the system, but they haven't received funding every year. Bruce stated that in 35 years he's never seen a Pink in the Gold River. Steve commented that the Burman River was the main Pink run. Paul asked how we should prioritise the system mentioned. Steve answered that we should focus on the Mooyah and Sucwoa River Chinook first and prioritise the others to follow. Paul mentioned his talks with Warren Warttig about Interfor's plans to enhance Chinook in the Mooyah River. Warren had stated Interfor would look at riparian work in the future to address some of the Chinook concerns. Chris talked about the possibility of enhancing Tsowwin River Chinook stocks with volunteers if DFO will allow it.

**6.0 Minutes of previous meeting approved by consensus**

**7.0 Correspondence**

There was no new correspondence.

**8.0 New Business**

Chris gave an update on the brood stock program this fall. He mentioned that volunteers from the local Sports Fish Advisory Board and the G.R. Rod and Gun Club helped take eggs from the Sucwoa and Tlupana Rivers last fall. Thanks to this effort the hatchery was able to release close to 30-40 thousand fish at a weight of 6 grams. The Tlupana River numbers were close to being the same. The Tahsis Pip Hatchery will put sea pens in Jewitt Cove again this year. Bruce asked how the Tahsis hatchery is doing overall. Chris replied excellent. Maureen asked where the hatchery is located. Chris answered in the Village Yard. Bruce asked what is the purpose of rearing in sea pens. Chris replied that it has been proven to increase survival rates. Chris then talked about the sea pen project at Critter Cove Marina and how they are double vaccinating and holding the fish in warmer water to see if they can control Vibrio. Steve stated that last year was the first kick at the cat and it worked incredibly well. Dick asked if the fish were marked. Chris replied that they were otolith marked. Chris then talked about the transporting of surplus adult Coho to the upper Conuma River last fall. This spring the hatchery put in a Fyke net. While they were putting in the net they observed 3-4 hundred fry in the river. Paul asked if the hatchery was going to be counting the fry. Chris replied no, that it is just to confirm that the adults had spawned. Maureen asked if the Fyke net proved successful would the funding be provided to continue this program. Steve replied probably not until the wild salmon policy is sorted out to determine what is wild and what is not. The Federal Government's Wild Salmon Policy views anything large hatcheries do as affecting the genetic diversity of salmon. The Coho biologist's preference is not to enhance Coho, but to let wild stocks rebuild on their own in Nootka Sound. Steve explained that West Coast Vancouver Island (WCVI) stocks migrate north to the Central Coast to rear. Conuma River stocks are the only WCVI stock that migrates offshore and spends their life there until its time to return to their natal streams. He's not sure if the wild stocks do the same. Bruce asked Chris if the Conuma Hatchery enhances more than just Chum on Canton Creek. Chris replied no, just Chum. Paul talked about the projects in our area that received Fisheries Renewal BC

funding. Dick mentioned that the Rod and Gun Club is interested in starting a small enhancement project on site to satellite other systems. Steve said it was a good idea, but you'll have to follow proper channels. Steve asked which systems they were interested in. Dick replied they were interested in Hutchinson Creek, Heber River and the Upper Gold (Oktwanch, etc.). Paul stated that Hutchinson Creek is a wild system that is in relatively good shape as far as escapements go, so he doesn't think we should be enhancing the system. We should focus on creating rearing habitat, which will increase production. Dick asked if the Rod and Gun Club were permitted to operate a small enhancement project by Dfo, would the Watershed Committee oppose it. Consensus was reached that if the proper channels were followed and Dfo approved the project the Watershed Committee would support it. Paul talked about the recent survey on Hutchinson Creek with Dfo and the Stream Keepers to create the side channel prescriptions. There were some discussions around fertilizing Muchalaht River to improve Sockeye stocks. Paul talked about the weir on the Muchalaht River being constructed by the Mowachaht/Muchalaht First Nations. Trudy asked where the weir was located. Paul replied it is just below the old A Frame Bridge. Steve asked about the status of the Gold River Chinook Project and the hatchery site. Norm replied after Bowater determined that there has to be a commercial lease on the site, they offered the Atlantic Salmon Hatchery the blanket lease. A sub lease was then offered to the Gold River Chinook Project at a cost of \$1.00 per year. They turned down the offer. At this time some discussion revolved around whether we should be discussing this issue when all the players are not at the table. Consensus was reached to discontinue this discussion on the record. Bruce asked Steve where his funding comes from. Steve replied the federal government. Bruce asked if the province was involved. Steve answered not for a federal facility. Paul gave a brief update on where the Nootka Sound Residents Association Sub Committee was at in their discussion around the Hart Lake Landfill.

**9.0 Action Items**

1. There were no action items.

**10.0 Presentations**

There were no presentations.

**11.0 Open Discussion**

The open discussion was short and kept off the record.

**12.0 Adjournment**

Meeting was adjourned at 8:46 pm. Next meeting is on Wednesday June 25/01 same time, same place.