



DECISIONS AND ACTIONS

Steering Committee
Wednesday, September 16, 2020

MS Teams virtual call

Present: Angela Hanes, Brianne Czypyha, Ian Bruce, Jack Meredith, Jameson Clarke, Yogi Carolsfeld, Julian Anderson, Dorothy Chambers, Katie Turner, Rick Daykin, Thomas Munson, Mick Collins, John Mullane, George and Vicki Blogg, Lindsey McCrank, Jen Tyler

Guests: Paul Nestman: Coast Guard Enforcement Officer
Glenys Verhulst, Sustainability Planner, District of Saanich

DECISIONS			
Next Meeting:		November 18, 2020	
ACTIONS		ACTION BY	DUE
1	Circulate information about the upcoming virtual Vancouver Island Symposium on Water Stewardship in a Changing Climate.	Lindsey	ASAP
2	Circulate Coast Guard contact information for reporting Vessels of Concern	Lindsey	ASAP
3	Circulate contact information for comments on the Trio Ready Mix application	Lindsey	ASAP
4	Find out who in the DFO is reviewing the Trio Ready Mix application	Brianne	ASAP

INFORMATION

Partner Updates

Jack Meredith

- Gorge Swim fest did not formally happen this year due to COVID, but still many people have been swimming and having a lot of fun.

Jameson Clarke

- Gorge Nature House is not currently open
- Summer students focused on social media, website updates, baseline plant and pollinator surveys.
- Currently working with the Victoria Green Team on the pollinator meadow
- Will be sampling for hydrocarbons in sediment, and Rick and Yogi both are interested in seeing the results.
- Seeking background information on Gorge Creek water quality and will follow up with Barri Rudolph, CRD

Julian Anderson

- The berm near Cuthbert Holmes Park is currently being planted with approximately 600 trees.
- Work parties will be scheduled by FoCHP when the fall rains begin.

Katie Turner

- Landscaping to be wrapped up on McKenzie Interchange berm by mid-October. Katie reminded everyone that it is an active construction site and not open to the public.
- Saanich's Park Management plan will be updated, with information on Saanich's website by the beginning of October.
- The Natural Intelligence program has been busy this summer with many messages on various forms of media
- The Pulling Together program has volunteers in 42 sites, with lots of activity

Rick Daykin

- Gorge Park Pavillion project is now launched, and will include 120 trees and landscaping, and a 2 story building
- Esquimalt has been supporting the pollinator meadow in Gorge Park, as well as invasives removal.

Thomas Munson

- Thomas has been working on the Resilient Saanich program, a 2 year process that includes stewardship programs and a biodiversity conservation strategy.

Mick Collins

- Mick recently gave a 4 minute presentation to the CRD board to support a grant for oxygenation equipment
- He is still awaiting the Elk/Beaver Lake final Watershed Management Plan
- There was a very disappointing salmon kill at the Goldstream hatchery
- GWI members may be interested in attending the upcoming virtual Vancouver Island Symposium on Water Stewardship in a Changing Climate.

Action: Lindsey will circulate information about the symposium

Yogi Carolsfield

- WFT rebranded its local research and stewardship programs as Coastal Collaborative Sciences. This addresses local conservation issues of interest to the community, in collaboration with many partners, while at the same time training early career professionals.

- WFT is doing surveys for the native oyster, and is working out protocols that would make this information useful to the CRD and their Harbours Atlas update.
- WFT made a submission to the Salmon Innovation Fund, in the name of a number of partners, that bundles together restoration projects and needs on the Craigflower, Colquitz, and Gorge creeks.

Angela Hanes

- Sara Stallard has been testing water quality in Craigflower Creek.
- There are several beaver dams but found one log crossing that appears to be human-made
- Angela is meeting with a lawyer soon regarding the HandyDART project and will update the group at the November meeting.

Brianne Czipyha

- Design for Peter Pollen Park is coming soon. After it is presented to council she can provide more information to the group.
- A new bike path has been constructed on Harbour Road near the Johnson St bridge.
- City of Victoria budgeting process is happening soon. GWI members can provide input into the 2021 Participatory Budgeting Process.
- Camping is no longer allowed in community garden areas (applies to community garden near Cecelia creek)

Dorothy Chambers

Multiple partners recently came together to put a new bottom on the fish fence using DFO money. The aim is to keep otters out of the fish fence.

CRD Harbours Program Update:

Lindsey McCrank

- Lindsey will be reaching out to GWI members with an online survey to review the GWI Terms of Reference. She wants to hear from members about meeting format, frequency, timing, and focus of the GWI.
- She is working on a set of community newsletter articles to educate the public about the Gorge Waterway. The first article will outline how to report spills and other hazards along the waterway. Other possible topics include shoreline vegetation and responsible boating.
- She wants to encourage outdoor meet-ups among GWI members and asks people to let her know of opportunities for group tours, walks, or work parties.

Jen Tyler

- Our group has been designated as the lead for a CRD Biodiversity Strategy.
- The CRD will continue working on Watershed Assessments that use biophysical parameters to rank watershed health.
- Working towards updating the land cover classification and harbours inventory. The 2021 focus for the harbours inventory will be the intertidal zone.

Presentation:

Paul Newman: Vessels of Concern Program, Canadian Coast Guard

- Paul shared with the group the Coast Guard's role in dealing with hazardous and abandoned boats.
- The program is a partnership with Transport Canada. Currently the program is dealing with over 1200 vessels, and 53% are on Vancouver Island. If a vessel of concern is seen, please call 1800-889-8852. They will assess the hazard level and put it on their list to address.
- With only 3 staff working west of Lake Winnipeg, it is a challenge to address all boats in a timely fashion, especially those that deemed less hazardous.

Action: Lindsey will circulate Paul's contact information

Glenys Verhulst, Sustainability Planner, District of Saanich

- Glenys shared information about the District of Saanich's Climate Plan and Oil for Heat Pump incentive program (PowerPoint is attached).

Trio Ready Mix Silo LED light discussion

- Trio Ready Mix has submitted an application to the City of Victoria to build a 32 m silo on Bridge St to store aggregate on site.
- The company is proposing to light the tower with 3,400 LED lights, which has concerned some members of GWI due to potential impacts on salmon.
- DFO is currently involved in a review of the project.
- The City of Victoria provided email addresses for GWI members to provide input on the proposal, which Lindsey will circulate.
- Brianne will investigate who in the DFO is involved in the review, and will report back to the group

Actions:

- Lindsey to circulate contact information for comments on the application
- Brianne to find out who in the DFO is reviewing the application

HandyDART Update

- Katie Hamilton (consultant with BC Transit) provided notes from the August 26 tour as well as a topographic map of the site. She has asked for GWI members to communicate any errors or omissions to Lindsey so Katie can update the notes.
- BC transit staff should be able to provide an update in November and will share the preliminary design once available.
- She will connect with individual GWI members as discussed (Dorothy Chambers and Gary Caton) for further tours/information
- Katie will advise Lindsey when new technical studies are posted on the BC Transit website

Group comments:

- Various members have ongoing concerns about risks associated with the fuel farm, and also about how the high water mark can be a subjective measure that can easily be manipulated.

Adjournment: 9:00 pm