



DECISIONS AND ACTIONS

Steering Committee
Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Victoria Canoe and Kayak Club

Present: Rick Daykin, Don Munroe, Melissa Huston, Julian Anderson, Craig Elder, Jacques Sirois, Becky Goodall, Dorothy Chambers, George and Vicki Blogg, Mick Collins, Bill Buckley, Morley Eldridge, Sara Stallard, Jody Watson, Rob Wickson, Holly Neate

Guests: Janelle Erwin, Ministry of Transport; Mike Pearson, Ministry of Transport; Ken Brock, Canadian Wildlife Service; Orien , Canadian Wildlife Service; Chris Hyde-Laye, District of Oak Bay

DECISIONS			
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Next Meeting: Wed., May 18, 2016			
ACTIONS		ACTION BY	DUE
1	Provide contact info for the TLC covenant manager of 508 Selkirk Ave	Jack M	Asap
2	Ask Barri Rudolph to do a presentation on the Gorge stormwater data	Jody	Next meeting
3	Follow up with Jeff Miller re: sediment sampling in Gorge Creek ponds	Jody	ASAP
4	Get a copy of Occasional Paper #1 for a list of birds protected by the MBA from Ken Brock	Jody/Kitty	ASAP
5	Get a copy of the environmental assessment reports from Janelle for comment	Jody	When available
6	Install MBS signage around the sanctuary	Parks staff, Jaques Sirois, residents	By summer
7	Provide a GPS location for all MBS signs to Ken Brock (ken.brock@canada.ca)	As above	When installed
8	Discuss potential Green shores partnership with municipalities	Jody	ASAP
9	GWI display at Earth Day in High Rock Park	??	
10	Provide proposed trail names for CHP to the group for info	Becky	ASAP

INFORMATION

Presentation: McKenzie Interchange on the TransCanada Highway - Dave Edgar/Janelle Erwin, BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI)

- Key issues to address: safety, congestion and reliability
- Option 1 is a tight diamond; Option 2 is Partial Cloverleaf with TCH underneath
- Consultation Input – eliminate/reduce the number of traffic lights, include Burnside Road intersection in the scope of the project, build for future capacity
- Scope was expanded to include Burnside intersection, also added 2 right turn lanes from McKenzie onto the highway
- Cuthbert Holmes Park – lots of feedback, address runoff, remove invasive species, resolve congestion even if it affects CHP, minimize footprint, mitigate park impacts, concern about wildlife trees and heron colony
- Mitigation considerations – could exchange excess right of way (MOTI land) to replace lost parklands, replant with trees, remediate invasives, improve stormwater runoff, improve park pathways
- Option 1 will mean 0.25 ha of parkland will be impacted (does not include the land that will be impacted with the existing MOTI RoW)
- Option 2 – 1.4 ha of impact within Saanich park lands (does not include MOTI RoW), land exchange, stormwater management would be inside the cloverleaf
- MOTI understands that they must mitigate impacts to Colquitz Creek – stormwater detention pond before going to Colquitz – 100% collection of stormwater runoff
- Will do nest bird surveys and monitor birds during construction (March 1 - Aug 31 for songbirds), impacts to birds will be considered
- Other considerations – park and ride, connections to Galloping Goose trail, future expansion for LRT
- Neighbourhood concerns: safety, Cuthbert Holmes Park, impacts on property values, local traffic, mitigation of noise, traffic management during construction, ability for all modes to cross the highway (pedestrian, cyclists) – will have an overhead walkway
- Schedule – currently in the functional design phase, feedback until March 18, shovels in the ground by the end of this year
- Greenhouse Gas Emission analysis for both options is being conducted
- GWI concerns included:
 - Area calculations do not include the lands within the existing MOTI RoW that currently function as park, much of these lands are treed, therefore impact is much greater than being presented
 - No environmental reports are available for us to look at. They will not be made public until after the consultation period is complete
 - Invasive species management for the RoW areas will need to be multi-year
 - Great concern over the overall impact to the park

Presentation: Victoria Harbour Migratory Bird Sanctuary - Ken Brock, Canadian Wildlife Service

- Established in 1926 to prevent hunting
- Prohibitions – don't shoot them, don't carry guns, cannot have dead birds or parts of them, don't let pets run at large, no activity harmful to migratory birds
- Not a lot of habitat protection actually provided

- Permits can be issued for all prohibitions
- Provincial tenure of seabed in Gorge Waterway means the province would permit, not the federal government
- Borders of the Victoria Harbour MBS include all waters up to the high water mark from Portage Inlet through the harbour all the way out to 10 Mile point, includes Trial Island
- Chain Islets are in BC ecological reserve and Important Bird Area (IBA), not part of the MBS. How do you get an area designated as ecological reserve? Ecological reserve act – would have to check into this
- Question is how far up the river does the high water mark go as there is lots of tidal influence. Ken B has heard this argument and it is not supported by CWS
- Habitat protection – for what purpose was the sanctuary proposed, wintering area for large number of seabirds and migratory birds; in case of federal lands, they could enact habitat protection, but in this instance the provincial would have to, one of the challenges is the working harbour within an MBS and that is not going to change
- National conservation program – connecting communities to nature – focus urban Canadians to experience nature – we already have this opportunity here in this area – might be better to focus on education and awareness
- How can we use the sanctuary to connect urban Canadians to nature? Sanctuary - lots of people experience sanctuary here in the Gorge
- Q – tracking of successful prosecutions in sanctuary – none in the last 20 years
- Only one other urban sanctuary in Canada– Wascana Lake in Regina, SK is a MBS
- MBS signs have been installed in Esquimalt, Saanich, 3 in Colquitz estuary – at least 6 signs Gorge Creek estuary
- CWS wants to track where the signs are going so members are requested to provide a GIS location for the signage
- Migratory Bird Convention in 1916 resulted in MBS act in 1917. Convention does not speak to the regulations
- How does CWS work with local governments to achieve habitat protection? CWS provides signs
- Local governments have land use, zoning, etc
- Celebrate cultural and natural heritage
- Migratory birds – list of birds actually protected by the MBA and regulation - CWS Occasional paper #1, Ken can provide
- Cormorant under provincial jurisdiction
- Enforcement officers would be hired in this region (email from Courtney)
- Several species at risk within the bird sanctuary
- Interpretive signage and MBS boundary
- Improve the herring habitat and the bird will come
- Get the data to say how are things working
- Pull together existing data from Coastal Waterbird Surveys and Christmas bird counts
- Resources limited

Presentation: Harbour Issues/Concerns - Dorothy Chambers

- Landslide on Esquimalt – no riparian protection along the Gorge – 7.5 m from high tide for set back, lots of variances on this file, could not provide information under PIPA, slope denuded with fill, new dock,
- Esquimalt have EDPA along the entire waterway, cannot build foundations or anything above the high water mark, sediment along the slope

- Research on plan for boat launch at Gorge Creek – concerns with boaters heading up the creek, don't encourage boaters there, fecal coliform count upstream 80,000, from Gosper Cres storm drain, day lighted and good estuary, Dorothy found floating oil absorbent pads and took them to Esquimalt
- Mercury coming out of Gorge Creek – one of the storm drains drains 40% of Esquimalt
- Dorothy wanted to bring these concerns forward to the group

Update – Boats at Anchor in the Gorge Waterway (Jody/CoV staff)

- CoV is re-looking at the Bylaw and have proposed some changes to the Gorge Waterway regulations
- Can view the council discussion COW Feb 18 staff presentation from about 6 minutes to 13:40, council discussion from 13:40 to 37 minutes
- Proposed changes to the bylaw enable short term anchoring (less than 72 hours, proposed limited mooring buoys, and a management plan for the area)
- Will also try to work with the 6-8 people living aboard to find strategies for alternate living arrangements
- Mooring buoys will be installed to limit number of boats and to protect eelgrass habitat
- Proposed schedule:
 - May 2016 – education and outreach
 - June/July 2016 - post notices on vessels to move
 - September 2016 – remove remaining vessels through injunction
- There were discussions regarding working with other municipalities and staff indicated these discussions are occurring
- An amended motion to proceed with proposed changes and plan was approved by council

Increasing Awareness of the 3 Migratory Bird Sanctuaries in the Capital Region

(Jody/Jacques)

- Jody, Jacques and Laura Kravac (WFT) attended a meeting called by the Friends of Shoal Harbour MBS. The intent of the meeting was to:
 - Discuss how to collaborate more effectively to promote greater awareness of the three MBSs; and,
 - To explore whether the Nature Canada NatureHood program could assist with the development of a regional conservation vision that uses the three MBSs as an anchor

Possible Green Shores Partnership

- Contacted by the Green Shores partnership to see if there is interest in joining a Local Government working group to:
 - Increase awareness of and use of green shores program and encourage broad adoption of Green Shore practices
 - Deliver Level 1 and 2 Green Shores training in the region
 - Would like to have more discussions with municipal representatives

Update on CRD Harbours Program - Jody

Lekwungen/UVic/Oak Bay/CRD research initiative

- Discussing opportunities to collaborate on research and sharing of knowledge to assist First Nations in increasing their ecological understanding and cultural connections to the land in this area.
- Songhees and Esquimalt Nations are involved in the discussion and the areas that they are really interested in are Portage Inlet and the Gorge Waterway, Bowker Creek and the Oak Bay waterfront and marine areas surrounding Discovery and Chatham Islands.
- Will continue to keep the GWI informed/involved as appropriate and will continue to pursue such a partnership
- Attended the Herring Forum on March 11. Great turnout and discussions, possible First Nation partnerships and good linkages with this

Water Sustainability Act

- A couple of sessions with MOE on the new Water Sustainability Act and regulations.
- The new WSA includes new measures to protect stream health, regulate groundwater, manage water use during times of scarcity, and expands opportunities to participate in decision-making processes (i.e. develop water sustainability plans).
- Key changes include: licensing non-domestic groundwater use, new water fees and rentals, stronger protection for aquatic ecosystems, expanded groundwater protection measures and enhanced dam safety.
- Just released regulations associated with water sustainability, fees, rentals and charge tariffs, groundwater protection and dam safety

Partner Updates and Events:

- Victoria Golden Rods and Reel – new weed harvester will be in place in May at Elk/Beaver Lake, part-time coordinator will be posted later this spring, final report on remediation options is now publicly available, proposed a chemical biological treatment coating the bottom of the lake, inert substance that will lock the phosphorus into place, that is the recommended solution, lots of work to be done to ensure it is suitable
- Esquimalt – 11 goats coming to Highrock Park, urban forestry poster, April 20 earth day – looking for people to have displays, bring the bird displays and discuss migratory birds, will send by email; March 22, 12 -2:30pm - Routes of Change event at Gorge Park, non-motorized around the world trip
- FoCHP – Concerned about McKenzie interchange, Saanich put up signage on three of the bridges, MBS sign up in the estuary, comment period for the highway interchange
- SIASS – have been to level 2 of Green Shores workshop , really cool stuff moving ahead. If you see silt come from a storm drain at Austin St contact Sarah as she is the environmental monitor for that area
- WFT – successful herring event on Friday evening with Songhees Nation on Craigflower Bridge, staff from Songhees Wellness Centre went herring fish at the bridge
- GWAS – new members on the board – eager to start some new projects, hoping to apply for grants to get a summer student for the waterway
- VCKC – busy time for the club, canoeing, moving water, marathon, dragon boat courses, 35th paddle for the kids, Tsartlip, Easter Seals in Camp Shawnigan, April 1 and 2 Wake Up the Gorge paddling event, April 23 is the club's 20th Gorge waterway clean up from Tillicum Bridge to Portage Inlet
- VicHbrMBS – participating in herring forum, NatureHood meeting today, talk to VEHS, just keep spreading the word
- PISCES – primarily focused on highway interchange right now, trying to make results of surveys all online

- BGCA – phase 1 and 2 Local Area Plan for Burnside Gorge, draft plan to community in April or May – available online
- Saanich Parks – waiting to see what happens with the highway interchange, concerned about impacts; first draft of orientation signs for the park, name trails and overlaid grid, putting two interpretive signs in the park this year, one at the fish fence, birds in the estuary get the bird sanctuary in that, orientation signs up by the end of April, will send a draft of the trail names out to those that provided inputs
- GTCA – 2017 Canada Day picnic will be celebrating the Gorge Bridge, earlier bridge was completed 24 May 1867 in time for Queen’s regatta, present bridge in 1967, want to celebrate the Gorge Bridge, want to create some interpretive signage for the project including signs on the bridge, could include legend of Camosung, consulting companies in town have offered to fund this.