



## CHILLIWACK RIVER WATERSHED STRATEGY

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### Meeting Minutes

**Date:** June 13th, 2005      **1:15 p.m.**  
**Location:** Fraser Valley Regional District, Cheam Boardroom

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**Chair:** Marion Robinson, Fraser Basin Council

**Present:** Tom Cadieux, Fisheries and Oceans Canada  
Dave Lamson, Chilliwack River Action Committee  
Frank Sobkowich, Electoral Area E Director  
Mark Johnson, Fisheries and Oceans Canada  
David Barnes, Fisheries and Oceans Canada  
Graham Daneluz, Fraser Valley Regional District  
Meeri Durand, Fraser Valley Regional District  
Brad Whittaker, Watersheds Coalition/UCFV

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The Meeting Commenced at 1:15 p.m.

Marion Robinson introduced herself as the facilitator for the meeting and gave a brief introduction to the work undertaken by the Fraser Basin Council and its mandate.

### **1.0 Presentation by the Chilliwack River Action Committee**

David Lamson of the Chilliwack River Action Committee made a brief presentation in regards to the work and intent of this volunteer organization. The presentation included the following points:

- The Chilliwack River Action Committee (CRAC) was formed in 1997 in response to a desire to address concerns at the Slesse Park Clay Slide
- The slide that occurred partially covered the river and caused increased sediment loads in the river for over six months
- Thurber Engineering was commissioned by Fisheries and Oceans Canada to study the slide and make recommendations to mediate the negative impacts of sedimentation in the river
- Clay slides and erosion are a natural occurrence in river systems, such as the Chilliwack, however, the removal of stream side vegetation such as trees has caused the slides to be larger in magnitude
- Following the study by Thurber there was inaction by government agencies due to a gridlock in decision making

- The Chilliwack River Action Committee formed as a response to this gridlock and met with Community Futures and the Fraser Valley Regional Watersheds Coalition to see what could be done and TAKE ACTION
- Northwest Hydraulics Consultants were hired to engineer works to raise the dike twenty feet to interfere with erosion processes from the slide area
- This work has held the slide for the past eight years (work was completed in 1999 and 2000)
- The Tolmie Slide is another on-going project coordinated through CRAC
- Funding and engineering for the project was from Fisheries Renewal and Golder and Associates
- Sixteen groynes were spaced at twenty meter intervals at the toe of the slope – groynes were constructed of large rock and boulder and larger woody debris
- The design takes into consideration fish habitat by creating pools and providing shelter
- The groynes address the undercutting that causes further slumping at the site
- A slump in January 2005 took two of the groynes out, but in essence they held the slide from being more significant, with the river recuperating in two days in comparison to the six months observed at the Slesse Park slide
- The committee will be reconstructing the damaged groynes and building another five to complete the project this summer
- Lovely Pond and Ryder Creek are another project being undertaken this summer at Thompson Park – the project will increase wetland area by 100 %
- The channel is an historic tributary of the Chilliwack River, but there is a desire to limit fish access to the wetland area to address concerns over other aquatic species in the system
- Other projects include Pierce Pond and culvert work on Deer Creek, where a culvert jam caused forty spawning Coho were stranded last year
- CRAC is also assisting in a fertilization project in cooperation with Greg Wilson at Water, Land and Air Protection and Dave Barnes of Fisheries and Oceans Canada on Post, Centre and Foley Creeks – this was already piloted on Silverhope Creek
- The impact of fertilization will be monitored and plans to fertilize the entire river may follow as soon as next year
- This is an \$8000 project, but will cost only \$2000 because of volunteer efforts
- Algae growth and production levels are hoped to increase and wild steelhead numbers will increase
- Studies have shown a 63% increase in size of juvenile fish – the project will be an on-going effort until steelhead and salmon returns are self-sustaining
- The river system contains 80% hatchery stock and these fish do not contribute carcasses for nutrient recycling in the river
- The fertilizer program is an attempt to balance the fishery and make it more sustainable over the long term – steelhead are an endangered species in many areas of BC – only a few hundred steelhead are wild in the Chilliwack/Vedder River system

- Food production is not consistent with the needs of hatchery and wild stock – long term management will be required
- CRAC is looking at projects for next year, these include work at the Slesse Creek Slide, Nomie Creek across from the Tolmie Slide and Pierce Creel
- There is a potential gravel placement program in the Upper Chilliwack River – but issues of flood protection need to be addressed – opportunity for public involvement
- The CRAC logo ties people, fish and environment together and not in exclusion of one over the other

Discussion:

- There may be a resistance from the public under the Riparian Areas Regulation to protect riparian habitat to support hatchery stock or the sport fishery
- The issue of hatchery and wild stock needs to be addressed and hatchery operations understood

***Action Item: Arrange for a presentation or tour of the Hatchery and the Hatchery Program***

## **2.0 Executive Committee Update**

- Tom Cadieux, Mark Johnson and Matt Foy met with the Executive Committee in May
- The Executive Committee needs to be engaged as much as possible
- The committee was given a copy of the letter written by Hugh Sloan of the Fraser Valley Regional District voicing the commitment toward the Watershed Coordinator position in response to the position being reposted
- It was also brought up that a Chair had been brought on to the project to facilitate meetings (Marion Robinson, Fraser Basin Council)
- The Executive Committee wants to be included in the Forestry Tour and wish Tom Blackbird to also participate – this tour should be arranged so that the new coordinator is involved
- The concept of two pilot projects on partnership building and knowledge management
- Team needs to be expanded within Fisheries and Oceans Canada
- The Executive Committee would like to expand and include representatives from Fraser Valley Regional District and First Nations
- Brian Clarke has been given a copy of the Terms of Reference to forward to the Inter-agency Management Committee
- Budget proposal will go forward in June and July – Chilliwack River will continue to be the main focus
- Tom is pursuing the development of a Planner's Atlas – up-to-date reference to take away information that is not required

- The Executive Committee is eager to see products and increase feedback
- There is a desire that the Terms of Reference include a profile of the watershed, similar in structure to the State of the Environment Report
- A consultant has been hired to provide a template of how Matt's narrative will work on the website with reference to the relevant documents
- The Terms of Reference have been approved by the Fraser Valley Regional District and there needs to be a consideration that the Project Team can not continually revise the Terms of Reference

### **3.0 Review of the Background Information Stage/Progress-to-Date**

#### **Habitat Atlas**

- The Community Mapping Network is continually adding new information to the web-based mapping for the project as hosted on their website
- The Fraser Valley Regional District is hoping to also develop a hardcopy or disc based atlas for those who are not as computer literate and wish to have the information in hard copy
- It is likely that these hard copy atlases will include several critical themes and then be distributed out of the Fraser Valley Regional District, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection and the University College. Copies should also go to the Regional Library
- This will follow a similar format as the Regional Atlases developed by Katrina Rogers and Brad Mason
- Discs will link all of the mapping and documents together and will be dated – mapping, background narratives and bibliography
- The link to the Community Mapping Network from the Regional District's site needs to be re-instated

***Action Item: 15 to 20 hardcopy atlases will be produced for distribution. A Background Information package will also be made for all the products of the Background Information stage and linked to information sources***

#### **Background Narrative**

- A draft copy of the Background Information document was made available for distribution and review by the Project Team
- When a final copy has been approved it will be posted to the website and linked to the various narratives under preparation, as well as the electronic bibliography
- A final copy should be completed by July or August before public open houses are underway
- There were discrepancies in the background information in which this report was written (example youth hostel at Post Creek) and members are asked to review the document and provide any information to correct any errors or fill in any gaps

***Action Item: The Project Team will review and provide comments on the Background Document by the end of July so that revisions and a final product can be posted by August 2005***

### **Bibliography**

- A copy of the bibliography was available at the meeting for review and as an example of the format that is suggested for posting to the website.
- The web version and disc version will link to PDF copies of the critical documents. Contacts will be made available for those documents that are not provided

***Action Item: Tom Cadieux and Graham Daneluz will form a sub-committee to address what documents are critical and the format it will take on the website***

## **4.0 Determination of Next Steps**

### **Stakeholder and Public Consultation**

- A draft stakeholder and public consultation plan was distributed to the group for review
- Comments have been received by Tara Friesen at the City of Chilliwack and Mark Johnson from Fisheries and Oceans Canada
- It is important that we determine and expand this reference so that we can start public outreach on this project
- The document will be revised again and distributed
- The American side of the watershed needs to be addressed and various agencies with an interest invited to the public open houses
- There will be a mechanism developed to ensure that interest groups are kept involved and sub-committees formed to address their concerns
- Brochures and public outreach products were not included in the document and should be added
- Public meetings could take the form of quarterly Watershed Assemblies to allow the public to air ideas – perhaps hosted by the Coalition
- Another idea is that of a video of the elders or watershed stories told by various elders from First Nations and early pioneers or community members
- The Chilliwack River Action Committee could host the event and the Coalition facilitate discussions
- Rivers Day, September 25<sup>th</sup>, would be a good day to have a public open house to introduce the project – allows for informal gathering, river clean-up, and to introduce the concept
- An assembly could be organized a month or two later at a local community facility – mugs and maps are available as donation for a draw for those participating
- A Media Release would need to be coordinated with the clean up committee – Media Plan/Schedule is required

*Action Item: A sub-committee will be formed to plan the public event on River's Day.*

### **Media Release**

- A media release and letter to notify stakeholders will be released and coordinated for late July, early August to coincide with public outreach for the Lovely Pond and Hope Slough projects
- Meeri will act as the media contact for the project

### **Timeline**

- A timeline will be developed to assist the Project Team in meeting deadlines and prioritizing

*Action Item: Meeri will develop a timeline for the project to assist the Project Team in prioritizing and meeting deadlines*

## **5.0 Slide Show Presentation of the Cultural Heritage Tour**

A slide show of photographs and some of the background of the Cultural Heritage Tour taken in May was presented to the group for those unable to attend

## **6.0 Other Business**

### **Presentation Schedule**

- Due to difficulties scheduling a presentation by the Ministry of Forests, a field trip will be arranged in lieu of this presentation

### **Field Trip**

- The field trip conducted in May was well attended and there has been an interest expressed to conduct a forestry tour of the valley
- It has been requested that the Executive Committee for WFSP be invited to attend, as well as Tom Blackbird
- The tour will be coordinated to accommodate the hiring of a new watershed coordinator

*Action Item: A field trip will be arranged shortly after a new watershed coordinator is hired*

### **Action Items from May Meeting**

- A demonstration of the Community Mapping Network will be arranged for interested individuals with Brad Mason
- Matt and Sylvia will be asked to address why the project for Lovely Pond has been scaled down and what concerns that addresses
- The Chilliwack River Watershed Strategy had a display at the Squamish conference 'Leading the Way' and was successfully attended

- A stakeholder list was provided at the meeting. Project Team members are asked to provide addition contacts as they deem appropriate

***Action Item: Meeri will arrange for interested individuals to have a tutorial on how to use the Community Mapping Network***

***Action Item: Matt Foy and Sylvia Letay will be asked to provide a brief over view of the changes made to the Lovely Pond project***

### **Watershed Coordinator Position**

- Meeri Durand has taken on a new role as a Planning Coordinator for the Fraser Valley Regional District
- A six-month position has been posted until June 17<sup>th</sup> and the successful incumbent is expected to be on staff by July or August

Discussion:

- There is a concern expressed on behalf of the Fraser Valley Regional Watersheds Coalition regarding the six month posting at that the caliber of the individuals applying for the position will not be as high due to the short duration of the contract
- There is a desire that the posting be for a longer period of time or that a business case be built to provide further funding into the position
- It was expressed that if there are no successful candidates that the position will be reposted at a later date and the question of funding for the position may be secured by that time to allow for a longer posting

### **Summary of Action Items**

- 1.) ***Action Item: Arrange for a presentation or tour of the Hatchery and the Hatchery Program***
- 2.) ***Action Item: 15 to 20 hardcopy atlases will be produced for distribution. A Background Information package will also be made for all the products of the Background Information stage and linked to information sources***
- 3.) ***Action Item: The Project Team will review and provide comments on the Background Document by the end of July so that revisions and a final product can be posted by August 2005***
- 4.) ***Action Item: Tom Cadieux and Graham Daneluz will form a sub-committee to address what documents are critical and the format it will take on the website***
- 5.) ***Action Item: A sub-committee will be formed to plan the public event on River's Day.***

- 6.) *Action Item: Meeri will develop a timeline for the project to assist the Project Team in prioritizing and meeting deadlines*
- 7.) *Action Item: A field trip will be arranged shortly after a new watershed coordinator is hired*
- 8.) *Action Item: Meeri will arrange for interested individuals to have a tutorial on how to use the Community Mapping Network*
- 10.) *Action Item: Matt Foy and Sylvia Letay will be asked to provide a brief overview of the changes made to the Lovely Pond project*
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**The Next Meeting will be  
July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2005 at 1:15 pm  
Fraser Valley Regional District  
Cheam Boardroom, Fourth Floor**

**Attachments:**

- 1.) Draft Background Document**
- 2.) Bibliography**
- 3.) Draft Stakeholder Consultation Plan**
- 4.) List of Identified Stakeholders**
- 5.) Project Schedule**