

Shuswap Trails Roundtable Working Group

Meeting Summary as of October 22, 2023

Meeting date: October 20, 2023 9:00AM to 12:00PM **Location:** Virtual

Present:

Jen Bellhouse, Shuswap Trail Alliance (STA)
Jess Booth, Columbia Shuswap Invasive Species Society
Gordon Bose, Gorge Ski Touring Association
Adrian Bostock, Shuswap Trail Alliance
Linda Buchanan, Backcountry Horsemen of BC - Shuswap Chapter
Keith Cox, Shuswap Outdoors
Wes DeArmond, BC Parks
Janelle Rimell, Interior Health Authority
Barbra Fairclough, Sunnybrae Community Association
Patrick Frank, White Lake Residents' Association (WLRA)
Sue Ghattas, Vernon Outdoors Club
Joni Heinrich, Village of Chase
Steve Horton, Sled Sicamous/Eagle Valley Snowmobile Club
Sue Hunt, Backcountry Horsemen of BC - Shuswap Chapter
Chris Lynd, Solstice Adventures
Kelly MacDonald, Interior Health Authority
Eleanor Marshall, Mallory Ridge Community Trails Society
Morgen Matheson, Shuswap Tourism
Craig McBride, Larch Hills Nordics
Phil McIntyre-Paul, Shuswap Trail Alliance
Carly Procyshyn, District of Sicamous Development Corporation
John Reed, Shuswap Economic Development
Debbie Seymour, North Shuswap Chamber of Commerce
Mike Simpson, consultant (facilitator, recorder)
Fred Torbohm, Village of Chase

1. Welcome, Introductions, Review Agenda and Objectives

Mike Simpson welcomed everyone, acknowledged territory and made opening comments. A round of introductions took place. The agenda was reviewed and accepted as presented. Note that quorum was not met as there were no Secwepemc government representatives present.

2. Secwepemc Learning Opportunity

Jen and Phil highlighted the [Secwepemc Landmarks](#) website which has the history of the landmarks project, links to each landmark, and audio links for pronunciation of various Secwepemc words. The [First Voices app](#) was also noted as being useful, however it was noted that there are many dialects in the Secwepemc language.

3. Previous Meeting Summary

The meeting summary from June 16, 2023 was approved with the correction of adding Barbra Fairclough as present. Many action items are related to trails initiatives and will be covered later in the agenda. Many are standing items; see table of action items at end of this summary for an updated version.

4. Trails Authorization Requests, Trail Planning and Sub-regional Planning Updates

Gorge

- Gordon Bose gave an overview of recreational use in the area back to the 1950s, and how the current local Gorge working group is looking at winter use in the area. The Gorge Ski Touring Association and Eagle Valley Snowmobile Club will continue dialogue through this coming winter season.
- See handout named *Gorge Timeline for working group.pdf* circulated with this summary

Skimikin

- Sue noted that lots is happening, they will have a Skimikin Working Group meeting for Nov 8 to discuss lots of projects. Trails signage and trail naming will be a big topic. Almost finished linework and will update network map. Will be assigning names to trails but need final approval for Secwepemc names.
- Backcountry Horsemen of BC – Shuswap Chapter will be renewing agreement with RSTBC
- Linda completed seed orchard trail on s.57 and seed orchard manager is doing Fire Smarting and danger tree removal on the trail. Started work on non-motorized trail with grant received 2 weeks ago, Trevor has machine out, construction started.
- Chris Lynd added progress with motorized trails, ATVBC grants and CSRD funding to complete trail authorized for ATV use before winter. Working on communications to get landmarks trails along the new trail.

Glenemma

- Adrian noted that STA have been working with CSRD and RSTBC, signage installed, CSRD doing parking lot, ongoing project. Work proceeding. RFP for building parking lot is out. Adrian will get project working group together again.
- Sue Ghattas noted it's a wonderful project, keep in touch with them, borders Vernon area.
- Chris noted Backcountry Riders board met, they support any work out there, reach out to them.

Larch Hills Traverse

- Adrian is working on planning route for mountain biking from traverse down to rail trail, from top of mountain to Mara Lake, very early days, Adrian wandering around finding a route. Raspberry Hill (midpoint traverse) down to Hurricane Bay. This is NOT connection to trailhead, or Bruhn Bridge.

South Canoe

- Adrian is working on updated master plan, see file named *South Canoe Master Plan Update 2023.pdf* circulated with this summary and send any feedback to Adrian by mid-December

CSRD Area C, F and G and wildfire impacts to trails

- Jen noted that Bush Creek East wildfire ran up Mt Baldy, Scotch Creek and Hlina trail systems. Boardwalks are impacted, as are slopes around trails. STA redirected \$20 000 from an old grant, got BC approval to do wildfire impact assessment on those impacted trails. Working with Forsite Consultants to do this work. Will set up a process such as slope stability, different assessments on different

timelines (i.e., now, next year, etc.) and they'll initiate some assessments. Next steps for rebuilding. STA has some anonymous funds set aside to rebuild some affected trails. Hoping BC gov has some rebuilding fund too. Probably 2025 when Mt Baldy and others re-opened.

- Mt Baldy Scotch Creek and Hlina are all formally closed by Recreation Sites and Trails BC (RSTBC)
- Preliminary review of Mt Baldy – suggest we keep giving communication updates on status, don't wait until 2025. Jen said they'll work with Forsite on support for communications.
- BC Parks and trails closures – not covered here – Jen in contact with Wes DeArmond of BC Parks, offered support, BC Parks doing their own thing for now.
- Good info for Shuswap Ec Dev committee – recovery actions that are actionable, keep them in the loop so that we're not duplicating. Two way street of communication.
- **ACTION:** take to Shuswap Ec Dev committee. John Reed, Barbra, Adrian, Jen, prevent duplication.

Chase Creek Falls

- Jen noted that STA is working with Skwlax and Chase to set up landmarks structure, part of that is trail upgrade – working through permitting, etc. hope to finish by spring 2024. Skwlax applied for the grant. MOTI property so no s.57 needed. Also STA funds from anonymous donor were allocated.

RSTBC pilot project for Mountain Bike (MTB) Trails

- Adrian noted that the 2021 RSTBC updated trail standards for MTB trails signage and policy, STA is a partner, initiated v2.0 based on feedback. By end 2024 will see some updated trail standards. **ACTION:** Adrian share sign standard with Janelle from IHA.
- What about overlap on multi-use trails? Adrian noted that MTB standards are the default use for summer trails as the highest standard to sustain impacts from biking.

White Lake

- Patrick noted there there is not much to update from BC Parks on Forest Service Road (FSR) relocation, still talking with MOF. PFR on west side, STA got a Parks Enhancement fund grant with WLRA to do PFR work, archaeologists are doing that work right now, will have report soon.

Kela7scen (Mt Ida)

- Jen noted that there will be an upcoming Kela7scen working group meeting on Tues Oct 24, meeting on site where burn was, will hopefully have cultural heritage overview assessment report on what kind of trails can be where, will have reps from 3 Secwepemc communities, BC Wildfire Service, BC Timber Sales and various user groups.

North Shuswap Parallel Pathway

- Jen noted that CSRD is submitting grant application to BC Active Transportation from Ross Creek park to Fraser Bay, apply for full \$500 000, total project cost over \$700K. Phil helping with application. Big support from Debbie and a group out there. Waiting to hear back from MOTI. Sounded supportive and good application. Should hear back on funding application by March 2024. Needs archaeological work, can't anticipate date for project completion.
- Debbie is happy to see this get to this point, and said this has happened due to the Shuswap Trails Roundtable and what she saw done at Silver Creek

North Shuswap, Swklax Band and Crowfoot

- Discussed for several meetings now; Debbie has talked with Carmen Massey before summer wildfires. Had plans to organize and facilitate a meeting with Skwlax and various interests. Need a backcountry

plan for the North Shuswap including North Shuswap. Skwlax has no capacity due to wildfire impacts; how do we proceed?

- Jen suggested that Skwlax needs to be involved. Could do some background info, collect use, document concerns and issues. Phil added this is a relationship piece – need Dianne Francois and others involved. Wildfires have shifted priorities and these meetings on trails are lower priority given what Skwlax has experienced. What about BC Parks process around Tsutswecw Park, are there common processes where we're getting people together on wildfire recovery where people are already meeting?
- Talk about this in November 29 annual roundtable meeting, small group discussion on subregional trails. Specifically invite Crowfoot snowmobile club to the annual meeting.
- **ACTION:** Debbie, Jen and Phil think about this further after this meeting.

Secwepemc Landmarks

- Tsutswecw Park – landmark installation delayed due to wildfire
- Were on target to complete phase 1 this fall before wildfires, but two artists from Skwlax lost their homes, work completed and underway and tools. \$5000 from Shuswap Comm Foundation to replace tools. Looking at spring installations at earliest for spring 2024, and delays to phase 2.
- As noted earlier see website [here](#)

Mallory Ridge

- Eleanor and the Mallory Ridge Community Trails Society met with CSRD Board on July 20, had 60 supporters attend, Wayne McCrory gave a presentation as did CSRD Area D director.
- Phil has Mallory Ridge trail assessment almost ready to go, will send to Eleanor. Next step will be to submit to RSTBC and First Nations review

South Shuswap Destination Trail Plan

- Phil is working on final steps of the draft then it needs to go to the project working group, will meet with CSRD Area directors, but also FN meetings. From June WG meeting tried to get Skwlax meeting was lined up but delayed due to East Bush Creek wildfires. Has met with Dianne and Wes Francois. Too much going on, their focus is on wildfire. Dianne and Tess recommend that process delayed to 2024. Funding runs out by Dec 2023 Phil will do a initial draft noting Skwlax session delayed and needs input. Dovetails with regional trails strategy and protocols. Met with CSRD directors Marty and Natalya, wildfire recovery and trails are important. Phil will follow up with John Reed and Shuswap Ec Dev. Hoping to get done in next few weeks, have an update at Nov 29 annual meeting.
- Patrick noted that WLRA looking for a community meeting mid-November can he present? Phil said no, he has to get this done. It can be discussed at the Shuswap Trails Roundtable Annual meeting.
- Phil clarified that he's not the champion for individual trails within the plan, that's up to local groups
- Barbra noted survey conducted on trails, results posted on CSRD website, is there a pdf available that summarizes this? Phil notes it's cumbersome to look at it, he'll share his summary.

Sunnybrae parallel trail

- Possible first step with a plan for this, ball in CSRD's court (Darcy Mooney, Derek Sutherland) as Ryan Nitchie is no longer with CSRD

5. Planning for the Annual Meeting

Date: Wednesday November 29, 9AM to 4PM.

Venue: Quaaout Lodge, Little Shuswap Lake (in person only, no virtual option)

Registration: 55 people to date, registration link [here](#)

Building on the ideas generated at the June Working Group meeting, the following was brainstormed:

Morning:

- Kukpi7 Tomma welcome
- Introductions – just name, organization
- Celebration and history, looking back on 10 years, discussion at tables about highlights
- Wildfire – NOT a debrief of the wildfire season, but some short presentations on impacts to trails, and questions to group about considerations for signage, respect, impacts, break down silos, etc.
- Skwlax guardians – Jen confirmed they will present
- BC government update – Jen is in touch with the new director RSTBC

Afternoon

- Subregional breakouts
 - Maps – new or updated ones? **ACTION:** Adrian, Phil and Jen discuss this and connect with CSRD GIS. Some new content is missing (e.g., Mallory Ridge)
 - Instructions – before breakout groups, identify key project areas by 7 areas so people know where to go.
- Business
 - approve last year's summary;
 - current year report;
 - next year plan and budget (subject to new input)
 - proposed updates to the strategy (but also add input from subregional groups)

Other considerations

- Tables for people and groups to display information
- Lots of networking time, 30min morning coffee break
- Suggest Thursday evening event? (informal, no host) – likely not
- Map of wildfire 2023 impacts – big one on the wall? (Forsite may be able to produce one)
- Advise people to stay home if they're sick, and masks are welcome if people want

6. Roundtable of New Information, and Other Updates

- Barbra noted that [Wildsafe BC](#) Working Group, Area G and City of SA and Area E, have noted wildlife patterns have changed with 2023 wildfires, have a look at their info for any groups in backcountry
- Jess noted that the [Columbia Shuswap Invasive Species Society](#) had their AGM this past week, coming towards end of field season, will share reports and data. Workshops and events – let them know if any need for invasive species related workshops or events this fall or winter.
- Janelle noted there is funding from [Vision Zero and Road safety grant](#) program recently opened, to help provide funding for road safety open to Jan 15 open to local gov FN and NGOs project eligible are those not under MOTI jurisdiction
- Craig noted that the cross country ski dog trails are completed at [Larch Hills Nordics](#) and will be open this winter, need signs, map will be online soon

- Sue noted that the [Vernon Outdoors Club](#) has many snowshoe trails with different standards than hiking trails

7. Next Steps

Working Group: future meeting dates, 9AM-12PM (rule is 3rd Friday of January, April, June and October):

- Friday January 19

The following ongoing **ACTION** items are noted:

Task or activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
Start hut to hut opportunities , overnight stays. Build on history. Larger areas, not just Owlhead, Blue Lake, Hunter's Range.	Louis, others	Future meeting
Work with Shuswap Tourism or current organization to publish and advertise authorized trails	Everyone	Ongoing
Organizations to sign the LOU if they haven't already done so – original copy if possible (Phil or Jen have it)	Any groups that haven't signed LOU	Ongoing
Send any GPS/GIS linework on trails to Adrian at Shuswap Trail Alliance, adrian@shuswaptrails.com	Everyone	Ongoing
Trails groups – send suitable berry picking sites, locations of cultural plants of interest (highbush cranberry, hazelnut, yellow avalanche lily, spring beauty/Indian potatoes, soopalalie, saskatoon) as trail reports to trailreport@shuswaptrails.com – intent is that Secwepemc governments are seeking this information, it will be shared only with them	Everyone	Ongoing
Send any reports of erosion or trail damage from heavy rains to trailreport@shuswaptrails.com	Everyone	Ongoing
Seek support letters for funding applications from each other	Everyone	Ongoing
Consider opportunities for funds to do cumulative effects assessment on a complex project	Everyone	Ongoing
Secwepemc Plant Knowledge cards - order from Georgia Jules at Neskonlith Education Centre by email educationassistant@neskonlithec.net	Everyone	Ongoing
Download the Secwepemc language app for your smart phone	Everyone	Ongoing
Seek an exemption for motorized vehicle closures in areas of 2021 wildfires: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The areas are closed for 18 months, generally, due to safety concerns ▪ Applications for exemptions to the closure can be sought to allow access for disabled access, for activities required for assessment, maintenance and public safety, or for activities that otherwise support the goals of wildfire recovery ▪ More information about applying for an exemption is here ▪ Please contact staff at 2021Wildlife.closures@gov.bc.ca prior to applying, and see this link for a frequently asked questions document related to these closures 	Any trails groups that need access to wildfire closure areas	Ongoing
Consider doing media releases when projects are complete (e.g., South Canoe Parking lot, Sorrento Blind Bay perimeter trail, Skimikin)	Jen, everyone	Ongoing
If doing a clean-up event , contact Ben van Nostrand at CSRD about up to \$500 in support for meals, supplies and waiving of tipping fees	Trail stewardship groups	Ongoing
Consider joint applications/working collaboratively if future big funding calls come out . Need time to be strategic.	Everyone	Ongoing
Secwepemc Landmarks – sentinel structures: contact Jen or Adrian if your group wants to undertake this for one or more in their areas	Everyone	Ongoing