

Shuswap Regional Trails Strategy Working Group

Draft Meeting Summary as at April 26, 2017

Meeting date: April 21, 2017 10:05AM to 3:10PM

Location: District of Sicamous office, 446 Main Street, Sicamous, BC

Present (in person):

Gord Bushell, Eagle Valley Snowmobile Club and District of Sicamous
Kevin Eskelin, Recreation Sites and Trails BC (RSTBC) (part of MFLNRO*)
Robyn Hooper, Columbia Shuswap Invasive Species Society
Shawn Klassen, BC Parks
Marshall Kronewitt, Carl Kuster Mountain Park
Phil McIntyre-Paul, Shuswap Trail Alliance
Ryan Nitche, Columbia Shuswap Regional District (to 2:15PM)
Mike Overend, Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association (TOTA)
Terry Rysz, Mayor, District of Sicamous (about 10min mid-morning)
Mike Simpson, Fraser Basin Council (facilitator, recorder)
Louis Thomas, Neskonlith
Brad Vickerson, Shuswap Offroad Riding Enthusiasts (SORES) (to 12:00PM)
**Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations*

Present (conference call) for the Joss Mountain/East Shuswap item #8 only:

Mike Fotheringham, Splatins
Stuart Lee, Splatins
Robyn Reudink, Ecosystem Biologist, MFLNRO (to 2:30PM)
Andrew Walker, Wildlife Biologist, MFLNRO
Ted Morton, BC Enduro Series

1. Welcome, Introductions, Review Agenda and Objectives

Mike Simpson welcomed everyone, Louis acknowledged Secwepemc territory and gave a prayer, and introductions were made around the room. The District of Sicamous was acknowledged for hosting the meeting and the Eagle Valley Snowmobile Club for providing lunch. The agenda was reviewed and accepted as presented. Quorum was confirmed as being met.

2. January 31, 2017 Meeting Summary

The meeting summary from January 31, 2017 was approved. Action items not on today's agenda were reviewed; many associated with the Roundtable meeting are complete; some are incomplete; see table of action items at end of this summary for an updated version.

Brief update on some actions from January 31, 2017:

- Refined work plan prioritization, communication is addressed in how meetings are structured
- Old actions on Larch Hills Nordic and non-winter trails are complete or no longer relevant

3. Cumulative Effects Assessment Subcommittee update

The committee met on April 13, 2017 to follow up on the actions from January 31, 2017. Phil reported back that the subcommittee felt that is cumulative effects assessment (CEA) important,

that the Secwepemc will take the lead on the initiative, that resources are needed to build the tool (Bonnie can help coordinate), that all potential partners should be invited to the June 16 Working Group meeting to explore interest and commitments, and that the end goal is to have CEA used as a tool for any proposed development within the Shuswap watershed. Reporting back on progress should be made at the November 2017 Roundtable meeting.

Discussion focussed on the recently approved provincial CE framework, which should be available publicly (interim one is available [here](#)). Kevin also noted that there is ALCES staff in Cranbrook, MFLNRO has hired them to do a pilot project in the Kootenays. Other MFLNRO CEA is addressing public vs. commercial recreation analysis in the Kootenays. There is interest in the social component of CEA, not just physical. Need to figure out right questions to ask; o/w garbage in, garbage out. Robyn Hooper noted that they have done some identification of overlapping values, including species and landscape values as an approach to identify conservation “hot spots.”

Purpose of June WG discussion on CEA (approximately 60-90min of the meeting):

- Share info on who’s doing what already on CEA in the Shuswap
- Building on 2016 Roundtable discussion, identify possibility of supporting the ALCES model, and clarify what its purpose would be
- Identify resources available or that can be applied for, and by who
- Confirm partners to support the concept moving forward

Partners to invite to June WG portion of the meeting on CEA (other than regular WG members):

- MFLNRO - Eric Valdal
- Local governments - CSRD, planning and development services staff
- Forest industry and BCTS (could the tool help spatially identify timber availability)
- Secwepemc leadership - the right technical and leadership people - Dave Nordquist, Barry, possibly elected officials
- Shuswap Watershed Council - chair Paul Demenok
- Mining sector
- Real estate development sector
- Construction sector
- Economic development people - e.g., Richard Topcezer
- STA - Jeremy Ayotte
- ALCES - staff in Kootenays doing mining work?

Resource opportunities - Rural Dividend (community stability angle); and exploring the establishment of conservation funds through local government.

4. Trails Signage Committee

The outstanding actions regarding Secwepemc content for signs, and incorporating updated Rec Sites and Trails BC (RSTBC) standards from the last meeting were not completed. There has been no Sexqeltkemc Lakes Division meeting for several months. Kevin noted that signage standards and consistency are important for the designated trails; work with Marcy as the local recreation officer. RSTBC can be flexible on trail standards. Brand and legitimacy contributes to tourism value. Sign material has stopped using aluminum, but are using alupanel Dibond (brand name). Parks has found stickers wear off.

Other sign initiatives noted were that *Play, Clean, Go* signage is being put up; Robyn H is in contact with Marcy; posters promoting the concept of *come clean, leave clean* are being put up; Robyn is to

contact Veda at CSRD for these posters. Worked with BC Parks for metal signs last year. Would like to put *Play, Clean, Go* in Larch Hills, Enderby Cliffs. The Shuswap Trail Alliance is currently putting up signs within Sicamous.

5. Roundtable of New Information

District of Sicamous - Mayor Rysz noted the announcement yesterday on the CP Rail corridor from Sicamous to Armstrong. \$2.17M from province last month; agreement to purchase announced yesterday. Will use alternative approval process to raise the funds, a consistent agreed-upon approach for 6 jurisdictions. Gord, Phil and Mike Overend attended a TOTA meeting earlier this week, exploring connections to rail trails to the south. Gord noted that the District of Sicamous is in the process of establishing a bylaw for ORVs to access trailheads on roads within District boundaries. This is only crossing of public roads at controlled crossings, for licensed vehicles; it is the same criteria for licenced vehicles under ORV Act. District will issue a permit to enable this. Intention is for ATVs and sleds; can get a sticker or a plate.

Shuswap Offroad Riding Enthusiasts (SORES) - Brad was in Moab, Utah, where they have a mix of motorized and non-motorized trails and work well with local First Nations. They have a good mapping system. Trails are all rated like for skiing, for the user group with the most difficulty. Map legends shows which trails you can go on for different activity, and which kinds of users cannot. They intermingle different uses/activities; rule is motorized has to stop for non-motorized; names of trails are all present and consistent; compatible with GPS info; good kiosks at every trailhead. 40 years of multiple use in the area. Kevin noted that he was in Moab in November, it's a good model to look at. The US Bureau of Land Management and US Forest Service have lots of density and lots of money to do this development and on-the-ground monitoring. Best example here is West Kelowna and Bear Creek - 400km of trails; it is the RSTBC standard for OHV trails. Kevin confirmed this is a direction RSTBC wants to go with more trails. Kevin suggested a book: *Great Trails* by National Offroad Highway Vehicle Coalition, Dick Dufore.

MFLNRO/Rec Sites and Trails BC (RSTBC) - staff attended a universal design workshop recently, looking at accessibility on trails (disabled, seniors and young children in strollers). Spinal Cord BC in PG does a workshop on this. Checklists are developed to assess accessibility; front country high use places are the key ones to create accessibility; signs need to have grade and surface material by distance. RSTBC is establishing a qualified trail builder list, it was on BC Bid a month ago and closes May 2. STA staff and trail builders need to be on the list. Province has the list for tendering process. STA can award contracts to other trail builders. Only real implication is that province can't hire a trail builder for STA directly. Phil to follow up with Tennessee Trent to confirm what criteria are they looking for in trail building qualifications.

Columbia Shuswap Invasive Species Society (CSISS) - Robyn H noted that Sue Davies is the new aquatic and outreach coordinator. Spring workshops are coming up covering species ID, best management practices: May 2 morning in Salmon Arm; May 11 morning in Sicamous at Public Works yard; find all the information [here](#). A workshop co-hosted with Columbia Mountains Institute of Applied Ecology and BC Wildlife Federation on wetland restoration and invasive species will be held July 27. There have been suggestion to put larger, ground-mounted boot brushes in addition to the small hand-held ones last year. Robyn encourages others to put the CSISS link on partner websites. Register for info at community events. Robyn is looking for groups to put up signage, posters and for events to participate in to promote *Play, Clean, Go*.

Eagle Valley Snowmobile Club - Gord noted that membership was up 12% this year, to 17 000 sleds.

Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association (TOTA) - Mike Overend reported that a meeting was held April 19 with groups from Sicamous to Osoyoos. TOTA committed to working with all groups along the corridor, to create a cohesive marketing strategy for the entire 250km stretch of abandoned rail corridor. Since it is not acquired yet (fall at earliest), there is no marketing of the North Okanagan/Shuswap end for 2017. Working out agreements with Okanagan Indian Band, who in the past were not supportive of the Vernon and south piece.

Shuswap Trail Alliance - Phil advised that STA got BC Rural Dividend funding for planning and trail development work. This will support 15km of trail additions on 6 trails in various locations. Shuswap Tourism and CSRD geographic information systems/mapping people are working on the master inventory of trails and attribute table; they will clean up line work, share it with RSTBC, and use it for mapping and Shuswap Tourism publications. Shuswap Trail Guide is being updated; need to collaborate with RSTBC, BC Parks and Shuswap Tourism to map and market trails. Salmon Arm hotel tax is now in place; this will support the tourism sector, including a component for trails and marketing; anticipate revenue of \$7500 per year. Targeting mountain biking. Push is on for hotel tax in all regions. Kevin advised that Bill Dowdoff is the provincial RSTBC trails mapping specialist - in same office with Ian McLellan.

Columbia Shuswap Regional District (CSRD) - Ryan advised that a request for proposals is out for development of a trails strategy in CSRD Electoral Area A (surrounding Golden), it closes next week.

BC Parks - Shawn advised they are getting a full time ranger in the North Okanagan this year (Kelowna north) plus auxillary staff. Shawn just applied for job in south Okanagan.

Neskonlith - Louis is hoping to involve another Neskonlith councillor, they met with Phil recently. Tourism strategy with the 4 Sexqelkenc Lakes Division bands is underway. Environmental Climate Action group meets April 29 from 9:30AM-3:00PM at High School Sullivan campus, using community based open space technology. Open to anyone.

6. Secwepemc Learning Opportunity

“Chip TEK wi lah” - means legend, or history. A related word is for the oral history handed down from the generations.

7. Trails Authorization Requests, Trail Planning Updates, Work Plan Review

Paper copies of the list of trails related plans for review, pending approval, in progress or completed were distributed (see updated document named *17 04 13 Trails for Review UPDATE (Shuswap Trails).docx* circulated with this meeting summary). The following were discussed in detail.

Owlshead/Cummings Lake - Shawn noted a collaborative approach to address motorized recreation. Kiosks are built, need to be put in place once snow gone. Mapping lined up, need to clarify content. Need to finalize content for kiosk, what is allowable. Request Splatsin to host a meeting to finalize the content; critical that next meeting that all parties attend to agree on access management. Need content for kiosks, riders come once snow is gone. Gord - Hunter's Range Snowmobile Club won't come to the meeting; no capacity; need pressure from Splatsin or RSTBC to participate. Need signage at the access points; people need the information. Most access coming from the Hunter's Range side. Marcy has budget for printing, just need to generate content. Technical support from STA.

Glenemma - May 1, 7-9pm at Falkland Fire Hall, not a public meeting but a leadership meeting. STA will facilitate the meeting.

Haines Creek - CSRD Parks, climbing area above Silver Creek. Need signs to get to climbing area. May 8, 7-9pm, Silver Creek Fire Hall, leadership meeting for Haines Creek. Ties in motorized use, etc.

Mt Ida - need political and then technical (contrary to Bonnie's suggestion on Jan 31). Four dates were proposed to meet in May with MFLNRO in near future to initiate the discussions for a comprehensive management plan for various resource issues, not just trails and recreation. MFLNRO gave a grant application to Louis to do a strategy. Paul Knowles from Victoria came to a meeting. Louis is meeting with Mayor Cooper next week. He needs to follow up with other Secwepemc representatives. Louis, Phil and Brad met regarding motorized use. There is increasing pressure from Alberta motorized riders to come to BC, given restrictions in place in Alberta.

Salmon River Road parallel trails - Ryan provided a heads up, there is funding in place for \$300K and MOTI to match it to do a parallel trail along Salmon R Road, from store (near school) and as far as they can go. Widening on one side, within the R/W. Design work to be done next; FN consultation, might need archaeological work underway. Potential is to reach Silver Creek Hall, to connection to Haines Creek Bluff. Dirt path 1.5m wide. About \$20 000/km as an estimate.

The Gorge backcountry ski area (East Shuswap) and Trail - a closure area; non-motorized winter polygon exists as a backcountry ski area under LRMP; 15km on Gorge Road. Use is significant. Ongoing conversations; in CSRD Area E parks plan; connected to Anstey Traverse? Recommendations to have a washroom facility. Need to consult LRMP - designated zone or legal status? Need to confirm status of polygon. Marcy is trying to designate it under FRPA to enable better management. Gord noted that Eagle Valley Snowmobile Club has snowmobiled on North Queest, but hadn't been aware of this until it came up on January. Marshall, STA and Gord got referrals on this. Two examples where things didn't come here first - not following the Shuswap Trails Protocol. ACTION - Kevin will clarify.

8. Joss Pass/Mountain, East Shuswap

Background - Phil relayed that in 2010, Splatsin and Shuswap Trail Alliance worked together with RSTBC to assess the Joss Pass trail to Greenbush Lake. Trail was in need of upgrade, review and management; they conducted environmental screening, and some work got done including creek crossing improvements. Identified 7-10 overlaps of habitat concerns in this alpine habitat, overlapping layers of concerns of wildlife. Species of interest (toad) and intersection with trails. Recommendation was made to re-route the trail out of grizzly habitat. RSTBC had no funding at the time; work was on hold. STA and Splatsin held interest. Revelstoke bike club became interested in the area. Bruno from Revy bike club had an upgrade plan to make it more bike friendly. RSTBC went out, tried riding it down, no changes made, suggested to leave it status quo. Things have been on hold since. Brad recreationally rides it; Marshall has approvals for use in the area. As logging roads have been developed on the west, access has been improved access for many more, including "social use" or less hard-core users. It was also confirmed that the commitment to develop a sub-regional alpine access management plan (AMP) for Joss Pass, and expand to a larger East Shuswap area.

Values - Kevin noted the area is sensitive alpine habitat; there is capacity challenge to get into this level of planning; value of this WG to address all these issues; seems to be some willingness for stewardship groups to take part. RSTBC doesn't want trail designation status yet; need agreement on

management first. Robyn Reudink and Andrew noted the importance of area for grizzly bears, in particular avalanche chutes, huckleberry habitat, high alpine meadows. This is the only viable grizzly population in the Okanagan (other classes are threatened, endangered); a viable population supports a limited entry hunt. Also a caribou corridor in the area; southern part of the herd not doing well in this area; was a previously well used area. Other ungulates use area - moose. Stuart and Mike noted the importance of the area for Splatsin, spiritual and cultural values, and their concern about wildlife populations.

Management measures in place - motorized vehicle closure above 1700m is in effect; however it is allowed to exceed the elevation boundary when an established trail in place. It has a recreation number, but not “established” under the Forest and Range Practices Act (FRPA) as they don’t want attention drawn to it. It’s a known feature, but not established with active management. Robyn noted that a GAR order (Government Action Regulation, under FRPA) is established to designate a large area for grizzly bear habitat. The GAR order is not specific to recreation use in some ways; more aimed at forestry practices.

Challenges - capacity challenge to get this level of planning done; enforcement capacity to monitor enforcement of management measures in place, and motorized recreation use.

Uses - There is a mix of uses, ranging from motorized (summer and winter), hiking, equestrian use (old Dominion fire lookouts), and mountain biking (from Kamloops to Revelstoke) with increased use of helicopter access. Revelstoke Bike Club and ATV Club has Joss on their brochures. Many people noted the recent increase in motorized recreation use. There is an unsanctioned hut on the way up for backcountry skiing. Monashee Powder has a commercial recreation backcountry ski tenure. Marshall noted that Carl Kuster Mountain Park has approvals for use in the area. Tenures exist for a guide outfitter and a trapline. Forest tenures include Canoe Forest Products to the north; Tolko to the South; also Stella Jones.

Ted Morton of BC Enduro Series (mountain bike races and events) described their proposed event as a 3 day race for 110 people, with one day at Joss Pass, planned for early September 2017. A commercial land tenure application was submitted in the winter. Staging area for helicopters is just west of Three Valley Gap; three helicopters shuttle riders to the top, then a shuttle at base of Wap Creek Road transfers them back to helicopter staging area. Ted noted that their initial plans were not focussed on Joss, but lots of people expressed interest and encouraged it. Ted described heli-biking as the new golf, with the average riders as being responsible, financially able to spend \$900 for registration in these races, males in their early thirties, that are receptive to environmental stewardship and committing to a responsible use code and education he provides them. Ted also noted that BC Enduro works with local clubs, provides funding for local trails, and helps build local capacity.

Next steps - A sub-regional alpine access management plan for Joss Pass/Mountain and the East Shuswap areas needs to be created; the following was agreed to on how to do it:

Who needs to be involved? Who takes the lead?

- Government can’t lead it; no formal mandate for land use planning; fits under provincial trails strategy, community planning process - can be involved with technical advice
- Therefore the Shuswap Regional Trails Strategy Working Group can take the lead
- All parties with an asserted right, responsibility to manage, interest, use, or tenure for the area will be invited to participate - list to be developed

- Location for meetings could be CKMP boardroom in Malakwa (14 max); Three Valley Gap facilities; Splantsin office; District of Sicamous office
- Take the Shuswap Trails Protocol approach - gather info first; then apply/submit to BC

Timing - need to move quickly. Aim to have an initial meeting before mid-June

- End of September is when MFLNRO needs to provide input on more closures

How to resource it?

- Rural Dividend existing funding - a little bit for technical work
- Shuswap Community Foundation
- SIBAC
- Columbia Basin Trust (expand geographic scope?) - recreation infrastructure grant
- Real Estate Foundation of BC

After a sub-regional alpine AMP is agreed to, RSTBC can seek appropriate designations to support the implementation of the AMP.

10. Next Steps

Phil offered capacity support/mentoring for other trail stewardship groups to help with trail design, consultation, planning, etc. The concept is to have 5-6 gathering points to assist any trails stewardship groups (motorized, equestrian, etc.). with the different administrative, regulatory, communication and planning tasks, where Sutra can demonstrate what STA does. Need consistent organization, regular participation, time and commitment. Phil will extend the concept and invitation more formally in the very near future.

It was agreed that Mike Simpson can modify the terms of reference and letter of understanding components for use with the Together Shuswap organizing committee.

Future meeting dates (confirm about 3 weeks before whether there is a better date):

- June 16, 2017 - location TBD
- October 20, 2017 - location TBD

June 16, 2017 draft agenda:

- To review and provide input (not decisions) to trails authorization requests from local, first nations, provincial governments
- Secwepemc learning opportunity, new word
- Information sharing, communication and relationship building
- Updates from standing or short-term committees - Trails Signage; Joss Pass
- CEA discussion (60-90min) - see purpose of discussion above

Future agenda items:

- Jeremy Ayotte - environmental screening tool
- Provincial jurisdiction issues - who does what; RSTBC; Lands officers; other; benefits of partnership agreements with RSTBC
- Communications opportunities - new

The following ACTION items were agreed to (contact Mike or Phil if any clarification is needed):

Task or activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
Implement the work plan for 2017 ; priority focus on the following priority planning areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mt Ida/Haines Creek Glenemma Owlhead/Cummings Lake Joss Pass-Mtn/East Shuswap 	Working Group	Ongoing
Joss Pass-Mtn/East Shuswap Access Management Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review details in #8 above Coordinate the parties for an initial meeting to kick start the development of a sub-regional AMP 	Phil, Mike Simpson	Initial meeting by mid-June at latest
Develop and implement a fundraising strategy , options include Rural Dividend, Shuswap Community Foundation, SIBAC, Columbia Basin Trust (limited potential), Real Estate Foundation of BC	Phil, others	Ongoing
Cumulative Effects Subcommittee to prepare for CEA discussion at the June 16 WG meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the details in #3 above about purpose and who to invite Finalize the 60-90min agenda for CEA discussion on June 16 WG meeting; clarify the questions, what the desired outcome will be Confirm availability of participants not regularly part of this Working Group 	Phil, Barry Wilson, Dave Nordquist, Bonnie, Joni, Marshall, Greg, David, Gord, Brian - with support from Mike Simpson as budget permits	All to be done in preparation for portion of agenda on June 16
Kevin to share approved provincial CE framework	Kevin	ASAP
Address trail signage and Secwepemc content at next Sexqéltkemoc Lakes Division meeting . Specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> principles for using Secwepemc names on signs; sensitivity what information can be shared - digitized information, hard copy maps 	Greg	ASAP - was to be completed by October
Trails Signage and Standards Subcommittee to coordinate signage, discuss new provincial standards, updates and education material, and work with direction from Sexqéltkemoc Lakes Division for new and existing signs, explore existing material (Avis), and coordinate specific signs across different groups/locations.	Greg, Bonnie, Robyn Hooper, Phil, Brad, Aaron, Avis, Daniel Joe	Ongoing - well overdue
Pass a band council resolution to sign the LOU - Splatsin; then sign the original (Phil has it)	Ray Cormier, Stuart Lee	Ongoing
Other organizations to sign the LOU if they haven't already done so - original copy if possible (Phil has it)	Any groups that haven't signed LOU	Ongoing
Advance communications needs and opportunities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular ongoing communication with Roundtable Pursue support from orgn'l communications officers Promote authorized trails in maps and apps 	Phil, Mike, entire Working Group	Ongoing
Miscellaneous actions arising from April 21 meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact Robyn Hooper to attend workshops May 2, 11, signage, or to have CSISS at any community event Kevin to clarify how/why Gorge Backcountry Area and Trail went directly to referral, instead of following Shuswap Trails Protocol process Phil or Sutra to follow up with invitation for mentoring/capacity support for trails groups 	Entire Working Group Kevin Phil, Sutra	Ongoing Before next meeting ASAP