

CLSS - June 24/16 Meeting

Attendees: Bill, Cathy, Tracy, Ed, Donna R., Mary, Peggy, Tom S, Donna W, Marie

Regrets: Anne, Tom, Nancy, Ken, Dave R.

Guest: Jim Coombe

1. W Quality monitoring -5 events to date in 2016. Some changes to water chemistry samples taken and new volunteers being trained. W Quantity monitoring - Bill waiting for low water to measure stream flow. Data loggers are in and operating at all sites. The Columbia River peaked **June 9** and has dropped about 20 cm since that time. This is about ten days ahead of normal. The level was well below normal. I expect that we will be able to start measuring flow in about 2 weeks' time unless we have heavy rain. All sensors are operating and were pulled for reading on **June 14**.

2. Funding
 - a) CBWN Geo-mapping funding - still waiting for CBWN
 - b) CBT- CI funding. C Flats watershed education project not funded (lack of support from C. Flats delegates).
 - c) CBT-CI funding. River rafting infrastructure and education project - granted \$7500 of \$21,900 requested. Funds will be used for garbage can and port-a-potty at common river rafting take out spot, educational brochures and signage. Still negotiating best put in location (insurance and environmental issues) with input from gov't agencies, community members etc.
 - d) Donations from Community Associations: \$500 CRCA, \$100 Timber Springs, \$100 Columere, ? Spirits Reach
 - e) Personal donation from Columere resident of \$200

3. Canal Flats
 - a) Training of CF's boat launch staff in conjunction with MOE - Invasive Species staff scheduled for late June
 - b) Grant of \$500 received
 - c) No news on Tilley Memorial upgrade
 - d) Tracy arranged and attended Stream-trailer demo at Elementary School in CF's June 12th
 - e) Zoning changes completed but not posted to website yet. Email quote from Wendy "If the bylaw is adopted, the existing structures would be grandfathered and an inventory should be taken to document those structures. For any new structures, they would need to apply for the zoning and that

would require public consultation, including a public hearing and referring to the RDEK.”

4. 2016 Community AGM's - Bill and Tracy presented at Timber Springs, Columere, Spirits Reach and Columbia Ridge AGM's. All were well attended and well received. Thanks to Anne for her Milfoil presentation. A lot of interest expressed in educational boat tours offered by CLSS. Tracy, Donna and Tom are organizing and scheduling tours for late July - aprox 40 participants.
5. CLSS newsletters - will ask LWA if they will share their material. Anne to format and send back material to be placed in info boxes at lake access sites. Katie Watt (newly hired LWA summer student) to help as time allows.
6. Maps - Educational lake maps have been installed at Spirits Reach, Columere and Columbia Ridge. The Rae's coordinated the project for these communities. The communities paid for the support stands and installation! Canal Flats promised map installation within 2 weeks.
7. LWA summer student - some time slated for CL outreach, watershed education and WQ data entry.
8. An update from Wendy via email re her request for the posting of 10kmph signage at each end of the lake: “This is federal jurisdiction. I sent a request to Wayne Stetski (our MP), however I haven't had a response. It maybe that there is no movement on that file till a decision is made on the boating restriction. I'm not sure the timeline of that decision.”
9. Columbia Lake Provincial Park - Letter of concern to be sent to Rob McDonald (attached) based on input from group and discussion today. Environmental Report completed www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/explore/parkpgs/columbia_lk/project/
10. Miscellaneous news items: Dutch creek - hydro project (Daniel Rae); Timber Springs denied boat moorage (CPR unresponsive to requests for rail crossing); Valley Echo June 22nd article re Canal Flats concern/opposition to other lake access points being established.
11. Fairmont and Columbia Lake Area Official Community Plan (OCP): The CLSS was asked to provide input to the Regional District of East Kootenay (RDEK) re planned updates to the OCP. -“The next step is to meet with stakeholders to discuss their interests regarding land use in the area. **I would like the opportunity to meet with you to**

discuss your organizations values and concerns related to land use within the plan area. If your schedule permits, I would like to meet in late June or early July. Your comments will inform the development of draft land use policies that will be presented to the public at a workshop in late summer or early fall.” - Kris Belanger, RDEK

12. Prior to our meeting on June 24th, the group was asked to review the following documents for background information and to provide a written summary to Tracy of their input related to the Fairmont OCP update:

- Lake Windermere Official Community Plan - Bylaw 2061, 2008 (LW OCP)
- Lake Windermere Management Plan 2011 (LWMP)
- District of Invermere Official Community Plan, 2015 (DOI OCP)
- Fairmont Hot Springs area Official Community Plan. 2004 - (amended 2011 and 2013)
- Columbia Lake Management Strategy 1997 (CLMS)

From the input received the following broad areas of concern are summarized below:

- the CLMS (1997) is outdated and should be updated with something similar to the LWMP
- Regional thinking is required when it comes to lake usage. For example, opening a boat launch on the N end of CL for the sole purpose of alleviating the congestion on LW only shifts the problem.
- Long term thinking is required in terms of water use and sharing. Water will be the oil of the future.

Individual points made have been summarized under the following broader categories below: **(Please note these items were presented for discussion only and form a summary of issues the group presented. The CLSS realizes that some items are outside the scope of the OCP and some are outside our mandate as an organization):**

- A. Water quality
 - I. Drinking water source for 6/8 lakeside communities
 - II. Sewage treatment
 - III. Agricultural run-off
 - IV. Storm water and highway run-off
 - V. Recreational impact
 - VI. Sufficient Quality to support fish and wildlife populations
- B. Water Quantity
 - I. Watershed area - includes Dutch creek drainage?
 - II. Need to understand and measure inputs (Kootenay River, Dutch Creek) as well as outputs.
 - III. Water level monitoring needs gov't support and establishment of centralized data collection standards and record keeping
 - IV. Water withdrawal licenses regulation and monitoring
 - V. Ground water contributions and support of licensing and regulation
 - VI. Minimum flows in rivers and streams, min levels in lakes to support fisheries
 - VII. Flood lines need to be accurately established
- C. Land use zoning around the lake
 - I. Support the Agricultural Land Use designations

- II. Community sewage requirements for small parcel subdivisions?
- III. Discourage development in flood prone areas or hillsides susceptible to slides/debris flows
- IV. Protection of the watershed quality and quantity when considering industrial, agricultural, hydroelectric developments, or forestry applications for use.
- V. Protection of the east side of the lake and any undeveloped parcels of crown land on west side

D. Foreshore Use and zoning

- I. Protection of foreshore and riparian areas by creating a Riparian Development Permit Area (DPA) back from high-water mark (DOI regulates 7.5 m back, LWMP recommends 100m)
- II. Support of East Kootenay Integrated Lake Management Plan (EKILMP) shoreline color zoning and adopt EKILMP recommendations as guide to new construction on foreshore.
- III. Support public access to foreshore through Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure public access points and via boat (no private beaches)
- IV. Support consultation and permit approval from various ministries for foreshore developments - Development permits required for all structures on the foreshore
- V. Shared community docks that extend into water vs individual community docks that clutter sensitive foreshore?
- VI. Community docks vs mooring buoys (what is more environmentally advantageous?).
- VII. Encourage community and individual lakefront owners to enhance habitat along foreshore as per EKILMP guidelines
- VIII. Regulate beach houses, storage sheds, patios, sundecks or hot tubs on foreshore
- IX. Regulate camping, beach creation, groyne construction, infilling, private boat launch or substrate disturbance on foreshore

E. Lake Access

- I. Stress importance of manned access points to minimize threat of introduction of invasive species and to provide education point to lake users
- II. Recognize the desire to increase public access but manage that access in regard to Shoreline Habitat Inventory Mapping (SHIM), Wildlife Management Area, and Lake carrying capacity. Encourage balanced sustainable recreational use of the lake.

F. Surface water zoning

- I. Is standardized zoning between RDEK and Canal Flats (CF) possible?
- II. Establish foreshore and aquatic DPA for the lake (up to the nat'l boundary) requiring all structures to obtain DP's
- III. Are further studies required before additional launch sites, docks and marinas are allowed?
- IV. Mooring buoys - can they be regulated (placement and #) or disallowed? If mooring buoys are used they need to conform to Fed standards (which contradicts the use of floating anchor ropes recommended in LWMP). What if any, authority does RDEK/CF have to prevent the proliferation of mooring buoys? Can a registration system be implemented?
- V. Encourage lake zoning which encourages balanced, sustainable recreational use of the lake.

VI. Support and enforce the restrictions in place within the WMA (put in place to protect Flora/Fauna)

G. Environmental

- I. Support EKILMP SHIM guidelines.
- II. Regulate pesticide/herbicide use within ? m of watershed (golf courses included)
- III. Encourage sound agricultural practices including addressing run-off concerns and cattle accessing input streams
- IV. Address storm water run-off
- V. Educate and monitor to prevent invasive species introduction
- VI. Encourage on land re-fuelling of boats
- VII. Work with CPR to encourage covering of coal cars and environmentally sound side-casting practises. Encourage sharing of their Emergency Response procedures as they relate to the lake.
- VIII. Establish code of conduct for winter uses and enforce existing regulations ie - 10 k/h within 100 m of east, north, south shores (includes winter use)
- IX. Support of CLSS or similar organization in their role as stewards of lake health

H. Emergency services

- I. Emergency response planning lacking in sufficient instrumentation and current technology
- II. Consider impact of climate change and plan for it. i.e. increased temp and lower snow packs may result in lower lake levels and lower flow rates on streams.

I. Administration, Enforcement and Compliance

- I. Education and buy-in is important
- II. Enforcement options
- III. Technical, administrative and financial support for continued monitoring as done by groups like the CLSS

Action Items:

-**Bill** to measure stream flow and continue W Quantity measurements. Bill to follow up with CBWN re geo-mapping project

-**Tom/volunteers** to continue with W Quality measurements. **Tom** to set up system of data collection/backup to field book.

-**Tracy/Michelle/Harold** to finish CBT- CI River Education and Infrastructure program

-Send thank you to communities for donations (**Tracy**) and follow up with Spirits Reach (**Mary**)

-**Tracy** to investigate final outcome of CF's lake zoning bylaw, to attend Tilley Memorial Staff training day, to insure map is installed and to ask about installation of info box at Tilley park.

-Arrange Boat tours (**Katie, Donna R, Tracy, Tom**)

-**Anne** to coordinate with Megan and Katie re educational pieces for information brochures to be placed in info boxes at lake access points. Educational ideas from Ken: 1) Water turbidity - what is it: why it's important: how sediment gets disturbed and potential consequences ? 2) Water balance: maybe to discuss unknowns and what we are doing - but not to solve it. (I know this is getting a fair bit of attention from Tom, Ed, Bill. We need to address it but we don't need to solve it right away. In the end, it will be useful in terms of assessing watershed issues and possible future trends e.g. glacier fed rivers may eventually run lower as glaciers retreat). Hence lake level may go down. 3) A review of wildlife reliant on the Orange and Red areas and threats to them - with some educational aspects thrown in about maintaining a good distance and minimizing wakes etc.

-Follow up with Wendy re marking speed restrictions on lake. - **Tracy**

-**Tracy** to revise and send out letter to Rob McDonald re Columbia Lake Provincial Park (attached).

-**Tracy** to formulate CLSS position paper as related to Fairmont OCP and distribute to group for consensus. Final draft (attached) to be presented to Kris of RDEK at meeting scheduled for July 5th.