

Shuswap Trails Roundtable Working Group

Meeting Summary as at April 27, 2021

Meeting date: April 16, 2021 9:00AM to 12:00PM

Location: Zoom web conference

Present:

Jim Beckner, trail enthusiast
Jen Bellhouse, Shuswap Trail Alliance
Adrian Bostock, Shuswap Trail Alliance
Gord Bushell, District of Sicamous
Blaine Carson, Shuswap Trail Alliance member, trail enthusiast
Garfield Chursky, Shuswap Dirt Riders (SORES)
Keith Cox, Shuswap Outdoors
Dave Crowfoot, Shuswap Backcountry Riders
Wes DeArmond, BC Parks (from 10:50)
Avis Denault, Adams Lake Indian Band
Brock Endean, Chase Chamber of Commerce
Patrick Frank, White Lake Residents' Association
Wes Gano, Eagle Valley Snowmobile Club and Sicamous Mountain Bike Park
Robyn Hooper, Columbia Shuswap Invasive Species Society (to 9:15)
Sue Hunt, Backcountry Horsemen of BC – Shuswap Chapter and Larch Hills Nordics (summer use)
Kim Kaiser, Columbia Shuswap Invasive Species Society
Marshall Kronewitt, Carl Kuster Mountain Park
Ritchie Leslie, Vernon Outdoors Club (to 11:30)
Chris Lynd, trail enthusiast
Eleanor Marshall, Gardom Lake/Mallory Ridge resident
Craig McBride, Larch Hills Nordics
Phil McIntyre-Paul, Shuswap Trail Alliance
Ryan Nitchie, Columbia Shuswap Regional District
Ryan Povarchook, BC Parks
Carly Prosychnyn, District of Sicamous Development Corporation
Debbie Seymour, North Shuswap Chamber of Commerce
Marg Sidney, Armstrong Spallumcheen Trails Society
Jay Simpson, Columbia Shuswap Regional District (to 10:15)
Mike Simpson, Fraser Basin Council (facilitator, recorder)
Natalie Sorkilmo, Eagle Valley Snowmobile Club (to 10:25)
Louis Thomas, Neskonlith Indian Band (from 9:20)
Trevor Timmer, Clever Trail Design (to 11:30)
Fred Torbohm, Village of Chase
Brad Vickerson, motorized trail user
Shelley Witzky, Adams Lake Indian Band (10:35 to 11:00)

1. Welcome, Introductions, Review Agenda and Objectives

Mike Simpson welcomed everyone, Secwepemc territory was acknowledged, and introductions were made. The agenda was reviewed and accepted as presented.

2. Secwepemc Learning Opportunity

Avis shared the word for sun – phonetic “SKWEK-wiss” and actual spelling skwekw7es. Go to the website www.firstvoices.com and download the Secwepemc language app for your smartphone.

3. Previous Meeting Summary

The meeting summary from January 22, 2021 was approved. 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.

Sustainable funding – the discussion from January was continued. Jen updated that the deficit for 2021 has shrunk, as the City of Salmon Arm contributed \$1500. Even if the Shuswap Trails Roundtable annual meeting is held virtually, there is a deficit of about \$3000 for the external costs associated with 4 working group meetings and the annual meeting. Many groups are in the process of securing a donation for 2021 or agreed that they would ask their organizations including CSISS, District of Sicamous, SORES (but would like to know status of their s.57 application, which rests with Recreation Sites and Trails BC (RSTBC)), Larch Hills Nordic Society, Chase Chamber of Commerce and Vernon Outdoors Club.

Some requested a copy of the budget, to understand what exactly is being funded – see the file named *21 04 16 Roundtable and Working Group 2021 Proposed Budget.docx* circulated with this meeting summary. It was clarified that although the funds are managed by the Shuswap Trail Alliance, this funding is for the Shuswap Trails Roundtable and its Working Group, not the Shuswap Trail Alliance generally. ACTION – any group can follow up with Jen Bellhouse with any questions or with a donation. It was agreed there needs to be a more durable funding model than “pass the tin cup” each year.

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

Gorge

- Jen noted that the small group just met this week, Eagle Valley Snowmobile Club (EVSC) submitted a proposal that they are interested to work with groups for ski touring in the area, as long as there is a formal group. Alpine Club of Canada is willing to form an association of ski tourers, then small group will meet again, then advertising of an area for backcountry ski touring can proceed. No official designation as non-motorized, but working together collaboratively to ensure facilities are there, roads are taken care of, etc. and plan built. Adrian noted that the ski tour association is starting to be formed. Natalie thanked Adrian for providing the background, past meeting summaries as discussed in January.

North Shuswap Pathways

- Debbie noted that CSRD has allocated funds for engineering review on top 3 priorities and are looking at proposals from engineers. Expect report by fall. Group looking at Scotch Creek connector trails too, some existing trails looking to connect. Ryan Nitchie added that he'll issue the purchase order this morning, engineering will be starting next week. Topographic survey in late April-May. Conceptual design by end of June, preliminary design in July with cost estimate. Jay noted that \$25K was added to North Shuswap Trails at yesterday's CSRD board meeting; Ryan will use those funds to finalize designs once received. Then meet with Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI), present designs to them, then have permit in place before grant application for building is in place. Great that MOTI has active transportation mandate in place now.

Larch Hills Nordics

- Craig described the maps shown on screen (see files named *Link Overview.pdf* and *Link-v2.pdf* circulated with this meeting summary). The Land use and trail planning committee proposed this as a shorter link, rather than a loop up to Cec's cabin; not full width, groomed for skating and classic, and 3-3.5m in width. No s.57 application yet; want any input at this point, is there summer use opportunities? Looking for 6% grades maximum. Email cmcbride@telus.net with feedback
- May change Catamount Canyon to take advantage of better ground; had some drainage problems in past. Keith added moving intersection to east, on flat ground; it's high speed at an intersection, this would improve safety. Water collects in bottom of gulley; needs better location.
- Busiest season ever this year at Larch Hills Nordics. Timber salvage operation ongoing this year; there will be some blockages for summer users.
- Larch Hills Nordics got \$75K for lighting project.

Kela7scen (Mt Ida)

- Louis noted that the Little People are sending him messages. He'll connect with STA. Still very political, it will take some time to get the political bodies together with COVID restrictions. Need 5 bands together (ALIB, LSLIB, Neskonlith, Splatsin, Shuswap). Louis has Paul Knowles, retired forester to help him with it. Needs to be looked at before things proceed; RSTBC not actively monitoring, from Louis' perspective. Louis will try and get the ball rolling. Louis has lots on the go, limited capacity.
- Garfield noted that their club is still waiting on s.57 application. Their club would love to work with Louis and the Secwepemc communities. This winter, on side of Mt Ida behind industrial park, lots of logging and road centreline have been added towards water reservoir behind industrial park. Garfield trying to find out what's going on. Louis suggests check with Terry Smith at Silvatech, might be wildfire risk reduction/forest fuel management or salvage of insect kill? Louis suggests there should be a moratorium until management plan in place.
- Blaine has spent much time there, and Thornton Mine, east peak has a lot of erosion from what he sees as from motorized use. He asked whether someone knows of the location of a cairn on the mountain, noting the death of a long-time teacher who was hiking up there. Blaine has also accessed from Silver Creek Park, 9km corner, and then west ridge to lookout or through other road to saddle and then come around behind the bowl. Lots of people hiking there, lots of motorized use, lots of hunters. Is there a need for signage noting the importance to Secwepemc people? Committee to look at various things with different interested groups (even skiers have been seen this year)
- We've discussed Kela7scen for several years now – agreed that Secwepemc need to take the lead; community support won't be a problem Louis thinks. Louis has talked to Greg Kylo in the past about turning it into a park; that would be a long process. Phil affirmed that this a priority, everyone is poised to support, but Secwepemc need to take the lead. Is it a time for a small group from Shuswap Trails Roundtable Working Group to sit down with Secwepemc leadership to determine how we work together, support Secwepemc communities, and do some management (signage, engage groups, etc.). Should we approach Pespesellkwe about engaging? Louis will engage with Neskonlith Chief and Council. Louis noted there are lots of political priorities. Louis can lean on Jen for support. Garfield likes the sound of forming a focused group to communicate, advance everyone's interests, and protect the mountain but also enjoyed. Others expressed interest in participating, including Backcountry Horsemen of BC – Shuswap Chapter; Adrian interested too as a mountain biker, the motorbike trails are great for mountain bike use.
- Shelley added that through Secwepemc landmarks project, not authorized by elders to do anything on Kela7scen; can do something at Salmon Arm wharf, have an orientation pointer looking at the Kela7scen as requested by youth involved (to include name, Kela7scen, Mt Ida, and elevation). Louis asked Shelley to spread the word that the political leadership needs to re-engage on Mt Ida. ALIB

council met with MP Mel Arnold, and Shelley mentioned STA for a “recreation layer” and advocate for funding. Shelley will follow up with MP Arnold.

- Louis suggested that although the sacred circle is important, should focus on the whole mountain
- ACTION – form a small group to explore the short-term management needs, determine how different trail stewards can support Secwepemc leadership

Blue Lake connector

- Dave reported that he received an email from Marcia Bennett, Recreation Sites and Trails BC on March 31 saying that Tolko may deactivate their road under permit that provides access to the connector. MB reached out for thoughts from several folks; there is no timeline yet on the deactivation. He asked does this change current plans? Dave suggests move ahead anyway; Gord and Phil concurred. Gord advised that we need to get Frontcounter BC moving. Dave noted that Marcia will need to follow up with MFLNRORD and Tolko and others.

Owlhead/Hunter’s Range

- Phil reported that Curtis Munroe from Hunter’s Range Snowmobile, Clint, Chris Lynd, and a mix of people are working on mapping details. Waiting to receive final clean version from Clint (google map work), once back, CSRD mapping staff will finalize map, then to RSTBC and BC Parks to reconvene everyone, look at map, finalize the trailhead kiosks for non-winter use up and ready to go. Met 2-3 times since January. Ryan P noted the kiosks are in BC Parks yard; Phil noted 8 are assembled (for motorized access points) and there are up to 12 locations for them to be installed. Jen to follow up with Ryan P ASAP.
- Connectors in the area – looking for improved connectors in various areas (i.e., Skyline bridge); Gord noted that he’s waiting to hear from Marcia on her meeting with forestry side of MFLNRORD. Eagle Valley Snowmobile Club has funds in place to do the work.
- Non-motorized, Owlhead historic trail – applied for funding to do repair work to trail, the work was authorized, but funding application declined. Jen got other funding from Forest Employment Program and leveraged other funds, in summer 2021 and into 2022 STA crews will look at doing the improvements. Cache Cabin repairs will continue. Jen said trail improvements, picnic tables, outhouses, new boardwalks (500 meters) are planned.
- Gord – Mara Lookout, Ian McLellan put out a referral for groups to take over the Mara Fire Lookout, but RSTBC gave that area to Marcia to manage. Lookouts must be cared for or they deteriorate fast. EVSC still keen, want to keep those assets in good shape and keep it open for multi-use. Phil noted a kiosk at Mara Trailhead would be ideal there.

Glenemma

- Ryan Nitchie noted that the s.57 application is still in review with RSTBC. A portion of area and trail system in agricultural land reserve (ALR), staff put application to the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) to permit rec trails on Crown land in ALR. Not anticipating any issues, the agriculture community seemed supportive of having a management plan for area. ALC doing review concurrent with RSTBC.
- Garfield contacted cattlemen in the range use of area; developed a relationship, haven’t contact horse people yet; positive conversations in supporting project from ranchers.
- Ryan cautioned to not mix the two projects together. Motorized users will have to initiate management plan for motorized use, separate from CSRD plan. Phil clarified that this is the next step, the upper trails.

Skimikin

- Sue updated that since January they received signage, some was posted over winter; rest will be put up once snow gone. Working with Shelley and Libby re: elder site visits for signpost project, 4 signposts planned. Two s.57 applications, had meetings, and split it to 3 s.57 applications (phase 1 ready to go, 2 almost, 3 longer as needs an EA of riparian area around lake). Backcountry Horsemen applied for more grant funding to do more signage and screening reports.
- Chris Lynd noted that content for kiosks in fall is underway, put together by contractor for RSTBC; not gone to print yet. Should have good content at trailhead and campground. Will find out about timing soon for maps for kiosks. Proper spelling is Skmike which means "in behind the mountain"

Monashees Trails s. 57 application

- Ritchie Leslie reported that the Vernon Outdoors Club has been working with RSTBC for 4 years to get 8-9 trails with a s.57 in place; the existing trails were not sanctioned. These applications have been lost by Front Counter BC twice. VOC resubmitted everything each time, and were told not to expect any updates for 1-3 years.
- Frustration with RSTBC budget levels, which are inadequate in his view to service the recreation needs of the rapidly growing population of the Okanagan Valley, which now exceeds 400,000. Crown Land trail systems in the Eagle Pass and Monashee areas, as well as around the Valley Rim, are particularly under stress due to easy road access. Parking, access road maintenance, trail erosion, garbage & waste management, uncontrolled wild camping on Crown land are key issues.

Mallory Ridge

- Eleanor Marshall gave an update on long-term advocacy for protection of the Mallory Ridge area that is part of three watersheds. There was an initiative in 2008 to make it a conservation park that didn't proceed. They keep Splatsin informed of any updates, and she noted that communities on both sides of Mallory Ridge are opposed to Tolko proposed logging areas. The Ridge is an upland area between Glenmary and Gardom Lake with high conservation values. It is rich in tree and plant species as it transitions between the southern interior bioregion and the wetter interior bioregion. It contains a safe well used animal corridor and refuge. Wetlands and ponds contain many species including painted turtles and small amphibians. Many bird species thrive and nest in the area. There are outstanding views of Mt Ida, Deep Creek and Gardom Lake from the cliffs and to other areas from other viewpoints. Approximately 20 kms of social trails are mapped and many follow old skid trails from horse logging days in the 1940s and 50's. The trails are maintained by locals. There is easy access and heavy use year round by multiple users (skiers, hikers, snowshoers, horseback riders, mountain bikers, orienteering, nature appreciation, wildlife, birding and flower viewing) and is getting well known through multiple guided hikes given by the advocacy group members. There are opportunities for future amazing viewscape trails following the ridges. This is a hidden gem that needs preservation for future generations and for the creatures that inhabit the area. The nearby hydro line is used by vehicles such as ATV's for recreation as well. Contact Eleanor if you want to be involved or have a tour at toelmarshall@gmail.com or phone 250-832-1073

Mt McPherson

- Keith Cox advised that he and others have been working to look at a 25 year old route (not up to trail standards), including a reconnaissance in 2020 with BC Parks, RSTBC staff and some from STA. Hope to keep initiative rolling along.

Sicamous Mtn Bike Trail Park

- Wes updated that Phase 1 is mapped out, ready to submit a s.57 application; following Whistler guidelines. Wes committed to share maps or KML (Google Earth) files of proposed trails, which Mike can send to the entire Working Group for comment and feedback.

White Lake Hall and John Evdokimoff (JE) Park

- Patrick Frank noted that the White Lake Community Association is working on a connector trail system between White Lake hall and JE park. Expecting lots of traffic this summer. Sutra did a design as a volunteer exercise; need follow up with Jen, Sutra and Patrick on where this is.

Eagle Pass Mountain

- Phil and Jen advised that the final engagement summary report is out, and that the next step is for RSTBC to make a decision.

Rosemond Lake

- Phil gave short update, it is in the works, Splatins and RSTBC are engaged, and it is connected to Rail Trail both physically and through the trail technical committee. Lots of interest from various groups to support.

Shuswap North Okanagan Rail Trail

- Things continuing, ALC has approved project moving ahead for the 3 owners (Splatins, RDNO, CSRD)
- 3 owners approved a test section
- Funding has been applied for.
- Trail remains closed; hazards not addressed yet.
- See website <https://shuswapnorthokanaganrailtrail.ca/>

Joss Mountain

- Adrian reported that Jeremy Ayotte has mostly finished environmental screening, wants to put up game cameras for grizzly bear in June.

West Bay connector

- Jen updated that an expression of interest has been submitted to the federal funding program Canada Healthy Communities Initiative, could get \$150K to leverage BC Rural Dividend funds if invited to do a full application.
- Louis working with Ducks Unlimited on Salmon River delta and traditional harvest, he is looking for their support for connector as well

Eagle River Blueway

- Ryan N reported that there was a productive meeting April 14 with Wes DeArmond about a rest area as part of the blueway system, partnering with BC Parks on a pit toilet. CSRD staff identified a few MOTI access points for put in/take out spots. Target area is “downtown” Malakwa to Cambie-Solsqua bridge, this will access the CSRD’s Ken Ritchie Memorial Park, landlocked and has a nice beach.
- Louis noted that Neskonlith has an agreement with MOTI to work to Alberta border; Louis and Ryan N should connect to explore how to use this agreement to advance this initiative.

Secwepemc Landmarks project

- Shelley noted that they are into the storytelling stage, Kenthen Thomas has started going around to 6 classrooms as part of the project. Storytelling to students, what kind of design the students want to do,

create design, then second class design posts and carve. Libby and Kenthen working on it. South Canoe Outdoor School elementary students sat still for 45min and listened to Kenthen.

- Sculptures still being created; hoping to put up first ones SA wharf and Chase wharf in late summer/early fall. No landmark on Kela7scen, just a viewpoint at Salmon Arm wharf
- Elders filled out surveys, approving sculpture design (some like coyotes) but elders are worried that a small portion of visitors might try and find the real one so looking to create a landmark protection committee, looking for Louis and Mike Wilkinson to be involved.
- Fred asked about signs by Scatchard Mtn, are they delayed? Only letter back was from ALIB approving spelling and name. Suggests Chase does a follow up to Neskonlith and LSLIB, and Shelley will ask Libby to also follow up on this. Louis noted that an email would be sufficient.
- Louis reported that there are landmarks being established east to the Golden area, he's working with Mike Wilkinson (researching Teit's work) in Golden, by the Shuswap Indian Band, and a training manual being developed. Louis noted that he's working with looking at putting up landmarks in Golden area. Starting to look at developing a training manual; Shuswap band doing them too.

Armstrong Spallumcheen Trails Society

- Marg reported that they applied for a CN grant up to \$10K for the Mt Rose Swanson trail to do maps, mini maps, and three counting cameras at major trailhead entry points

5. Roundtable of New Information, and Other Updates

Columbia Shuswap Invasive Species Society

- Kim noted there are 3 online workshops coming up in May, one for trail stewards and users, what to look for and how to manage them. Register even if you can't attend, and you'll get the material after
- See <https://columbiashuswapinvasives.org/get-involved/workshops-and-presentations/>

Shuswap Trail Alliance

- Jen noted they have received funds from City of Salmon Arm and others to merge two websites (trails, trail alliance) into one, and include blueways. Send any suggestions to Jen for website content.
- Phil, Adrian and Jen are moving into new roles. See news release [here](#)

Armstrong Spallumcheen Trails Society

- COVID permitting, coutdfown to Canada Day, June 27, new area, Chamberlin Road end

Many people reported that different flowers, glacier lilies and mosquitoes are out.

6. Next Steps

Future Working Group meeting dates (3rd Friday of January, April, June, October):

- Friday June 18, 2021, 9-12
- Friday Oct 15, 2021, 9-12

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

Task or activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
Follow up on Four Year Funding Proposal : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow up with RDNO board 	Someone other than Phil	ASAP
Develop new approach to sustainable funding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider whether groups can each contribute a small amount this year and in years to come Submit donations to Jen at STA 	Groups	By June meeting
Kela7scen (Mt Ida) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize that Secwepemc leadership need to take the lead Form a small group to explore the short-term management needs, determine how different trail stewards can support Secwepemc leadership 	Jen, Louis, others (see notes above)	By June meeting
Start hut to hut opportunities , overnight stays. Build on history. Larger areas, not just Owlhead, Blue Lake, Hunter's Range.	Louis, others	Future meeting
Develop a proposal for modernized land use planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a proposal that the Secwepemc Lakes Division of Qwelminté Secwépemc could bring forward to the province to financially support modernized land use planning in all priority areas and "hot spots" in the strategy and work plan A small task group to develop a proposal with a scope of work and budget. Topics to address include but are not limited to: capacity needed to engage with all land managers and respond to referrals; ability to engage all parties to develop comprehensive plans for an area 	Shelley, Tess, Louis, Loretta Eustache, Phil, Jen	Ongoing, delayed due to COVID. Build on the draft concept initiated Feb 26, 2020.
Work with Shuswap Tourism or current organization to publish and advertise authorized trails	Everyone	Ongoing
Standing Action Items		
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
Send any GPS/GIS linework on trails to Sutra Brett at Shuswap Trail Alliance, earthboundprojects@gmail.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	Everyone	Ongoing
Share updated Working Group contact list with all participants	Mike	Ongoing
Seek support letters for funding applications from each other	Everyone	Ongoing
Upload approved Working Group meeting summaries to website	Jen	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