

Roberts Creek Official Community Plan Committee (RCOCPC)

Meeting Minutes: April 21, 2010

Roberts Creek School

Present: Mary Degan (Acting Chair), Norma Brow, Carolann Glover , Linda Hoechstetter , Jeff Rosnau, Frank McElroy, Dianne Sanford,
Regional Director: Donna Shugar,
Guests: Caroline Depatie, Elise Rudland
Regrets: Elaine Futterman, Mike Allegretti, Mark Lebbell, Roger Richmond,

1) *Agenda:* The following agenda was agreed upon:

- 1) Approve agenda
- 2) Approve minutes
- 3) Elise Rudland will speak to bike signs being made for Mt. Elphinstone trails
- 4) Highway style signs put up by the ATV club
- 5) SC Trails Society Report
- 6) Meeting with BCTS on Thursday, 10 a.m., regarding logging on the Wagon Trail
- 7) Correspondence from Wayne French regarding our request for a logging plan for the cut above Grauman Rd. by Island Timberlands. Area Proposal
- 8) Norm Kempe (BCTS) response to our Amphibian Habitat Rehabilitation
- 9) Director Report
- 10) Next Meeting

2) *Approval of Previous Minutes:*

Mary Moved and Frank seconded that the minutes be approved.

- 3) Elise Rudland, a member of the SC Community Forest Advisory Committee as well as Halfmoon Bay Greenways group attended to speak about some signs that have been created for the Mt. Elphinstone trails. The signs proposed were the provincial standard but showed a bicycle (only) and trail names and are designed to be mounted on the top of a 4x4 post. Members of the Committee had expressed concerns about the suggested exclusivity implied by the bicycle and she agreed to come speak to the Committee.
- Elsie had worked in the Halfmoon Bay community on support for parks and trails. At some point, the SCR D took over maintenance of some of the Forestry Recreational areas such as Homesite Creek and Big Tree, and also applied for Section 57 protection on some trails – a process that took a year and a half – partly to remove liability from the community group that had developed these trails. For user enjoyment and safety, the importance of establishing signage was identified for these areas and trails. The signs were all covered by a Tourism Grant through UBCM and were only put up on official trails that were covered under a section 57. These signs were designed using provincial standards that have been established for use in Parks. When the SCTrail Society got Section 57 status on some of the established Mt. Elphinstone trails, with money left over in the signage fund she had proposed to the SCTS to the get some signs made for some of the Mt. Elphinstone trails.
- Out of her experience in Halfmoon Bay, she suggested that Roberts Creek may wish to identify priority trails that could be considered for protection under Section 57 by the SCR D.

Donna commented that trail development in the community has been focused on trails in the build up areas many of which have been built and are managed by the SCR D Parks and Recreation function, but there would be support for further trail protection if money were available to support it.

Given the multiuse nature of these trails and the existing tensions and perceived danger of sharing these trails, discussion ensued as to whether these bicycle signs should be installed and who has the authority to decide. In the end it was agreed that new signs should be made that show walkers as well as bikers. Although used by other groups as well – horseback riders, and motorized vehicles - this multi use signage would indicate users do share this space.

4) Highway style signs put up by the ATV club were not discussed

5) SC Trails Society Report. Elaine and Mike attended last month's SCTrail Society meeting, where the signage issue was identified. (See attachments)

6) Meeting with BCTS on Thursday, 10 a.m., regarding logging on the Wagon Trail. Russ Brewer, RPF, the Practices Forester from BC Timber Sales had offered to meet with interested parties to walk the Wagon Trail area which is slated for logging. It is located on the Wilson Creek side of the Upper Tube area. Carolann, as well as Elsie Rudland and Caroline Depatie, met with him. Here's Carolann's summary of that meeting:

This is what is likely to be the outcome for the trails in the block of land that is slated to be cut: 1) the trail, as it follows the cut block boundary, will have a forest on one side (the side that is not in the cutblock) and pretty much clear cut on the other side. Because of the wind pattern, a 5m full buffer, on the side to be cut, would likely blow down, as would the alternative, a 10/15m thinned buffer. 2) rather than reconstruct the 3 trails that cut through the cut block (vertically) to join the trail that runs horizontally through the middle of the cutblock, Russ will try to get authority to build a new trail on the far edge of the cut block, along a ridge above a creek and a ravine. He said he would likely need letters of support from community groups to the Ministry to get the okay on building a new trail. If permission is not granted, one of the original trails would be reconstructed but now it would

be through a clear cut (once it is clear cut, I think hikers could create a footpath quite readily; cyclists might need a more formal pathway). One of those 3 vertical trails has been claimed by the horse riders with a horseshoe (made of cardboard) nailed to a tree at the bottom of the trail. 3) if the roads built to extract the timber are left mostly intact, it is hoped the ATVs would use them rather than the trails that hikers, horses and cyclists are prone to use. These "decisions" came out of discussion among the 4 of us. I felt Russ was very much onside with the public use of the area

Caroline mentioned to me that she would be willing to join, Donna, at the Gumboot on a Saturday with the map of the cut block and the trails affected, to show those interested and hear their comments.

7) Response from Island Timberlands requesting details of the planned logging. (See attachments.) It was suggested that the Committee respond to this letter with a request to refrain from logging the area on the east side of Gough Creek because of its importance as Amphibian Habitat. Dianne Sanford agreed to draft a letter. (See Attached)

8) Norm Kempt, the Planning Forester for BCTS responded by email regarding the Amphibian Habitat Rehabilitation proposal. "Essentially it appears you are proposing what is typically referred to as a Wildlife Habitat Area (WHA). Planning of WHA areas is a function of the Ministry of Environment – it is done in conjunction with the land tenure holder, in this case BCTS; so, in that sense we are involved. However, the final decision to designate a WHA for a particular species resides with the Ministry of Environment. "
(See full response in Attachments)

9) No formal directors report was given but Donna mentioned that the the Shoreline bylaws were still with the Province. A follow up email the next day stated that they have been given Ministry approval and will be forwarded to the Board for adoption in May

10) *Next Meeting:*

The next meeting will be on May 19, 2010 at 7:00 PM at Roberts Creek School.

12) *OCP Review Items:*

The following items have been identified so far:

- 1) Beach access
- 2) Foreshore erosion and retaining walls
- 3) Addition of a mission statement
- 4) Road allowances
- 5) Signage
- 6) Tree retention on private land
- 7) Greenways
- 8) Design guidelines for the commercial core
- 9) Change bylaws to permit home based business proprietors to be able to teach or offer classes.
- 10) Lighting
- 11) Property usages
- 12) More types of unique zoning.
- 13) Downtown parking (new)
- 14) ALR review (new)
- 15) Terms of reference and a mission statement
- 16) Affordable housing
- 17) Short term rentals

Hi all,

Mike and I attended the S.C. Trails Society meeting last night. I hope you will discuss some of the following information at your next meeting on April 21.

1. Signs are already made and will be installed on the trails soon. There are around 30 of them. I have not seen them. Elise Rudland has had them made. I emailed her to ask for a photo.
2. Sunshine Coaster Race is on May 8 & 9. Sue Duxbury is the Coordinator. I asked about porta potties but they did not know if there were to be any. Sue was not at the meeting.
3. There is a tentative date for the election of Board members for the Society: maybe Sept. or Oct. This would be the first election. There is no mechanism for membership yet.
4. The yellow highway signs from the photos I sent you were probably put up by the ATV club. Another bridge has appeared (builder unknown) which is appropriate for dirt bikes.
5. They plan monthly "trail days" for working on the trails.
6. The North end of the S.C. Trail (by SCRDP) from Egmont to Halfmoon Bay will be done by July. It is built for use by ATV's but is "multi-use". It is unknown when or where the route through Roberts Creek will appear.

As a result of the logging flagging we saw on the Wagon Trail, a meeting is being set up with a BCTS manager on April 22. Someone from the OCPC (and/or Donna) is invited to attend. The trail is a nice one and perhaps it could be saved if it appears that we care. Caroline Depatie is setting up the meeting: cdepatie@dccnet.com

Elaine

On Apr 14, 2010, at 3:25 PM, Kempe, Norm FOR:EX wrote:

Good Afternoon Elaine,

Yes, I have had a chance to review your proposal with my colleagues in Powell River. Essentially it appears you are proposing what is typically referred to as a Wildlife Habitat Area (WHA). Planning of WHA areas is a function of the Ministry of Environment – it is done in conjunction with the land tenure holder, in this case BCTS; so, in that sense we are involved. However, the final decision to designate a WHA for a particular species resides with the Ministry of Environment.

That said, the Ministry of Environments “Identified Wildlife Strategy” does accept proposals for WHA’s such as your submission, which they will consider. If I understand the history of this area correctly from my predecessors notes, this very area was once proposed as a WHA for tailed frogs by BCTS. MOE’s interest in the area seemed to be contingent on them linking this site to a similar site on adjacent private land in an effort to make one contiguous WHA. I believe the uptake on this by the private landowner did not materialize and MOE subsequently abandoned the proposal. I suppose we could resurrect this proposal with MOE again to see if they perhaps have a different view on the merits of the residual public land area as a WHA.

I do want to say though, that as a result of your letter, we have decided to evaluate several other areas in the Elphinstone area for their potential to function as amphibian WHA’s. Next week members of our Powell River Field Team will be in the area with a biologist, who is an amphibian specialist, to assess several sites for this possibility.

I know you are well aware that the forests in the Elphinstone area harbour a number of values - recreation, water quality, fish, wildlife and aesthetic value in addition to timber. We are obliged to manage for all the various forest values appearing on the landscape and this means attempting to strike a balance among those values present in an area. Non-timber values often manifest themselves as constraints to the timber harvesting land base and have a net down effect on the operable (harvesting) land base. Accordingly, areas identified as containing multiple non-timber values become our preferred sites for consideration as long term reserves. This layered approach to constraint planning attempts to minimize the impact to the operable THLB.

With this concept in mind, it is our intent to evaluate several areas which presently support significant non-timber values and determine if they also contain suitable amphibian habitat. And, if some of these areas contain the necessary habitat requirements, I thought we could perhaps work together to construct a WHA proposal. Your thoughts on this are appreciated and I suspect we’ll be in touch soon to review our field findings.

Thank you,

Norm Kempe
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BCTS Campbell River
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Island Timberlands
Wayne A. French
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April 26, 2010

Re: Amphibian Habitat Recovery Area in Roberts Creek

Dear Mr. French,

Upon careful consideration, the members of the Roberts Creek Official Community Plan Committee would like to respectfully request that you refrain from cutting on the east side of Gough Creek. ("Approximately 325 metres of the cutblock is adjacent to Gough Creek" - paragraph three, first sentence, letter of April 13, 2010, addressed to Roberts Creek Official Community Plan Committee.)

This area has been identified as adjacent to an Amphibian Habitat Recovery Area as identified by amphibian experts, and upon discussion with BCTS, Norm Kempe, (email, April 14, 2010), it appears that the area would fit into the Wildlife Habitat Area (WHA) category.

The adverse impact the cutting would have on the amphibian habitat in the adjacent area would be significant, and the good will created within the community by leaving the area intact for amphibians and also for walkers would be a great show of community stewardship for your company.

Sincerely,

Dianne Sanford
OCPC Committee

cc - Robert Vander Zalm
Acting District Manager,
Ministry of Forests, Powell River
Forests.SunshineCoastDistrictOffice@gov.bc.ca

cc - Norm Kempe
Planning Forester,
BC Timber Sales, Campbell River
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cc: Russell Brewer
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