



Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Alliance

Regular Meeting Minutes

- Date of Meeting:** Friday, September 23, 2022
- Location:** Electronic Meeting
- Members Present:** Laura Patrick, SSIWPA Chairperson, Islands Trust Trustee
Sylvia Barroso, Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNR)
Karla Campbell, Capital Regional District, Electoral Area Senior Manager
Alan Martin, Fulford Water Service Area Commission
Sandra Ungerson, North Salt Spring Waterworks District Trustee
Gary Holman, Vice Chair, Capital Regional District SSI Electoral Area Director
Tim Slaney, Scott Point Waterworks District
Jason Griffin, Cedar Lane Water Service Area Commission
- Member Regrets:** Margaret Thomson, Salt Spring Island Agricultural Alliance
Mike McCormick, Beddis Water Service Area Commission
Dale Green, Capital Regional District, Senior Environmental Science Officer, Environmental Protection
- Members At-Large:** Deborah Miller, Transition Salt Spring Society
Doreen Hewitt, Cusheon Lake Stewardship Committee
Ian Peace, Salt Spring Island Water Preservation Society
- Members At-Large Regrets:** Pierre Mineau, Salt Spring Island Conservancy
Rhonan Heitzmann, Salt Spring Water Company
- Technical Working Group Liaison Present:** John Millson, Technical Working Group Chairperson
Ken Nentwig, TWG Member at-large
- Staff Present:** Shannon Cowan, Coordinator
Anthony Fotino, Islands Trust Island Planner
Jenn Baddeley, Recorder
- Others Present:** Kirk Stinchcombe, Econics
1 Member of the Public

These minutes follow the order of the agenda although the sequence may have varied.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Patrick called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. and welcomed everyone to an electronic meeting. Chair Patrick acknowledged the Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Alliance is meeting on Coast Salish First Nations treaty and traditional territory. Introductions were carried out.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

By general consent, the agenda was approved.

3. MINUTES

3.1. Draft minutes of the June 27, 2022 Regular Meeting of the SSIWPA Steering Committee

By general consent, the minutes of the June 27, 2022 Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Alliance Regular Meeting were adopted.

4. BUSINESS ITEMS

4.1. Chair's Report

Chair Patrick noted on the amount of rainfall that has occurred over the summer.

4.2. Informal Member Updates

Member Martin introduced himself and identified his role with the Fulford Water Service Commission

Member Miller of Transition Salt Spring Society noted that the 'On the Rise Festival' is currently occurring, and that the rainwater harvesting tour and parade during that Festival are happening on the upcoming weekend.

Member Slaney reported that the residents of Scott Point Water District used less water than the average seasonal annual usage.

Member Peace reported that the Water Preservation Society had a tour of the Larmour lands that were recently purchased by the Water Preservation Society and put into a protected status.

Staff Fotino introduced himself and identified his role in SSIWPA.

Member Hewitt reported that the Cusheon Lake water levels are lower than the annual average and noted several reasons as to why the water levels are lower. Member Hewitt noted there is a lack of public education regarding water usage for agricultural purposes.

Member Holman noted that the North Salt Spring Water District has passed a resolution to hold a coordination meeting with Islands Trust and that there is interest for the Capital Regional District to be part of the meeting(s). Member Holman reported that the well drilling on Drake Rd for the purpose of creating more affordable housing is underway this fall. Member Holman reported on the Maxwell Park fundraiser. Member Holman noted that the Storm Water service is considering sampling in Cusheon Lake for contaminants.

TWG Liaison Millson reported on the Fall Fair.

Member Campbell introduced herself and identified her role with CRD water service areas and commissions.

Staff Baddeley introduced herself and identified her role as recorder.

Member Ungerson reported on funding for the Maxwell Watershed Project. Member Ungerson reported that the North Salt Spring Water District has contacted Islands Trust to discuss an MOU

Member Barroso that the drought level for the Gulf Islands is still at level 4 and that the provincially-monitored groundwater wells are demonstrating normal water levels.

Member Griffin reported on a couple of new wells on Kangro Road that have been drilled in the Cedar Lane Water Service Area, and which are subject to provincial non-domestic groundwater licensing and regulation.

There was a question asked if monitoring was conducted in the Cedar Lane wells while pumping tests were conducted on nearby new Kangro Road wells. Member Griffin responded that a mutual data share has been requested.

TWG member Nentwig introduced himself and what his role is in the Technical Working

Group.

4.3. Action Log and Coordinator's Reports

4.3.1. Action Log – Current and Completed 2022

Coordinator Cowan noted that there is an action in the log that pertains to one of the recommendations in the current TWG report, which will be discussed later in the agenda.

4.3.2. SSIWPA Coordinator Report – June, July, August 2022

The Coordinator Reports Dated June, July, and August, 2022 were received.

Coordinator Cowan discussed the personnel requirements for the upcoming rain water catchment tours.

4.4. SSIWPA Workplan Projects:

4.4.1. For Information: Weston Lake Water Availability and Climate Change Impact Assessment Report

The Weston Lake Water Availability and Climate Change Impact Assessment Report was received for information.

Chair Patrick noted that in the June 2022 minutes there is a recommendation that a presentation be prepared for the report.

Member Holman requested the status of the Vortex application from Member Campbell. Member Campbell noted that there is no update at this time.

4.4.2. For Discussion: Watershed Stewardship and Protection Plan – Draft Actions

Member Campbell and Contractor Stinchcombe introduced the report, including the project purpose and partners.

Contractor Stinchcombe and Coordinator Cowan reported on the strategy actions identified in the plan and how the actions were winnowed from a list of over 200 possible actions, based on an evaluation process.

Coordinator Cowan, Contractor Stinchcombe, TWG Liaison Millson, Member Barroso, and Member Campbell presented the draft strategy actions from the plan. The draft strategy actions were categorized under the following headings:

- Watershed and Ecosystem Science;
- Groundwater Science;
- Stewardship and Water Use Efficiency;
- Water Allocation Planning;
- Watersheds and Drinking Water Planning; and,
- Watershed Protection Governance and Coordination.

Contractor Stinchcombe discussed the next steps for the plan.

ACTION: Contractor Stinchcombe has requested SSIWPA members to comment on the draft strategy actions by October 1, 2022.

There was a question asked regarding if First Nations would be reviewing the draft strategy actions. Contractor Stinchcombe noted that a referral letter went out to all First Nations that have territorial interest on Salt Spring Island, but that they received a formal response from only one Nation. Contractor Stinchcombe also noted that a draft of the plan will be sent to all First Nations for feedback. Chair Patrick noted that the agencies partnering on the plan can also bring individual projects related to the plan to First Nations for response.

There was a question asked as to when the plan will be ready to share with the other agencies. Contractor Stinchcombe noted that there is no firm date yet, but the draft plan will be finished soon.

There was a question asked to whether or not a referendum would need to be held in order to further watershed governance as presented in the plan. Contractor Stinchcombe noted that a referendum would not need to happen at this time.

There was a question about one of the draft strategy actions, specifically regarding the potential for rain water catchment timing to impact seasonal freshwater availability in surface watersheds.. Contractor Stinchcombe noted that the plan is more high level and that this point would be noted for further detailed stages of the plan implementation.

There was a question as to how long Contractor Stinchcombe will be working on the project. Contractor Stinchcombe stated he will be working on the plan until all four

agencies have signed onto it.

There was discussion regarding future funding for the plan and implementing the strategy actions.

There was discussion about First Nations engagement versus consultation, and the multiple overlapping territories and interests. It was noted that First Nations consultation would be in the purview of each individual agency that signs onto the plan, and lies outside of the scope of the plan. It was noted that First Nations consultation is regulated by the federal government, which each agency follows. The plan seeks to go above and beyond consultation requirements with First Nations and instead engage them on the strategy actions going forward.

There was a question asked regarding whether or not the plan will address SSIWPA's role moving forward. Contractor Stinchcombe stated that an organization like SSIWPA is needed.

A member of the public asked a question regarding the strategy actions, specifically relating to the purpose of gathering further data and public education. There was general discussion about the need for further data collection.

There was general discussion regarding the over-allocation of water from Salt Spring Island lakes and how the Water Sustainability Act and a Water Sustainability Plan might prevent this from further happening.

Contractor Stinchcombe noted the following changes that need to be made to the draft strategy actions:

- Provide clarity on how the strategy maintains drinking water availability, while also protecting all watersheds;
- Provide more details instead of being a high-level document;
- Provide clarity on First Nations' roles in the plan; and,
- Incorporate details on rain water harvesting.

4.5. Working Groups

4.5.1. Technical Working Group Recommendations

TWG Liaison Millson introduced the following recommendations, which were agreed by general consent of the SSIWPA Steering Committee:

By general consent, the SSIWPA Steering Committee agreed that the Islands Trust

Groundwater Wells Monitoring project update will be a standing item on the TWG agenda.

By general consent, the SSIWPA Steering Committee directs the TWG to identify data gaps in rainwater harvesting public education and to fill those gaps with the help of the SSIWPA Coordinator and the approved communications and outreach SSIWPA budget (e.g. publishing digital summaries of existing resources by the Regional District of Nanaimo, or SSI Rainwater Harvesting Best Practices Guide; or creating and publishing new digital resources with appropriate citations to evidence/statistics).

5. OTHER BUSINESS

5.1. For Information – Correspondence regarding presence of milfoil in St. Mary Lake

Coordinator Cowan noted the following points:

- Milfoil has been found in St. Mary Lake.
- St. Mary Lake will be surveyed next year for native and invasive aquatic plant populations by the Invasive Plant Specialists with the Ministry of Forests. Coordinator Cowan has requested that the other lakes on Salt Spring Island also be surveyed.
- Milfoil is an issue in shallow zones of lakes and for recreational purposes.
- CRD Parks is investing in a \$1.4 million project to oxygenate Elk Lake.
- Propose that the Conservancy notify the public of the milfoil found in St. Mary Lake, educate the public on anti-spread practices, and find out if other lakes have milfoil by discussing it with the public.

A Member suggested that as the province will be conducting invasive plant surveys, no further work will need to be continued by the SSIWPA Coordinator. It was also suggested that the SSIWPA Coordinator keep in contact with the province regarding this matter.

A Member suggested that educational resources regarding milfoil be posted to the SSIWPA website for the public to view.

A Member suggested that the Water Preservation Society, in conjunction with CRD Parks and Recreation, provide public education on the milfoil found in St. Mary Lake, including signage at the access points to the lake.

ACTION: Member Peace will bring the topic up at the next Water Preservation Society meeting.

6. UPCOMING MEETINGS

Friday, November 25, 2022 – 10:00-12:00 p.m.

Friday, January 27, 2023 – 10:00-12:00 p.m.

7. ADJOURNMENT

By general consent, the meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Laura Patrick, Chair

Jenn Baddeley, Recorder