

NORTH SHORE STREAMKEEPERS

Minutes – Meeting of January 13, 2009

Present (17): Karen Munro (chair), Adrien Ross, ZoAnn Morten, Hagen Hohndorf, Terry Bragg, Sandie Hollick-Kenyon, Bob Gelling, Brian Comey, Thibault Doix, Ron den Daas, Richard Tak, Karl Byrne, Doug Hayman, Michael Gosnell, Graham Knell, Richard Boase, Jan Lander.

Regrets: Dick Pearce and Joyce Mathieson, Matt Casselman

Municipal Report – North Vancouver District (Richard Boase)

The District continues to welcome input from the NSSK as we continue to refine the management plan for the Lynn Creek watershed. The current focus will be on refining the terms of reference for a nutrient (fertilizer) study. The Lynn Creek management plan continues to evolve as a guiding document focussing on operational aspects, flood protection and fish habitat restoration efforts on the creek. A planning meeting will be held later in January (volunteers – ZoAnn Morten, Karen Munro, Thibault Doix). A new Environmental Control Technician (Erika Nassichuk) has been hired. There is nothing new to report on the Official Community Plan review. Richard invited the NSSK to write a letter to Council expressing the interest of our volunteers from across North Vancouver in contributing information about the watersheds and ensuring protection of streams is strengthened with any new policy work done in conjunction with the work on the OCP.

Presentation “Rainfall Interception by Trees in an Urban Environment”. Richard gave a power point presentation of a study being done by a graduate student for the District. Information on the study can be found online at:

<http://faculty.forestry.ubc.ca/moore/urbanforest/>

The presentation explains the value of tree canopy in taking up rainfall, slowing the rate of runoff and maintaining more natural stream flows. An intensive research project (with 65 stations across the North Shore) looked at the effect of individual trees and stands of trees in an urban area. **Preliminary results suggest that Douglas fir and cedar trees can intercept as much as 66% of the rainfall that falls on them.** A question was raised whether this study will be used to help preserve trees on private property when developed or redeveloped.

Municipal Report – North Vancouver District (Graham Knell)

Graham provided a list of projects the District has done in 2008 to protect stream habitat and water quality. Although all of the below projects have volunteer components to them, there are numerous other efforts such as the Scouts planting riparian plants along the Berkley Creek and local Community efforts along Keith Creek in Lynn Valley and along Roche Creek in the Seymour area.

Hasting's Creek - St. Mary's Trail – placed piping to take trail users out of the Creek, built a St. Mary's Trail – new bridge across tributary to take trail users out of the Creek.

Taylor Creek - New bridge over Taylor Creek to Banff Court – to sanitize the area from “party-youth” who have destroyed large amounts of protective riparian habitat. Did a large amount of riparian planting – and could do with more – hoping to involve local youth to take ownership.

Lower Mackay

- Took trail out of Mackay Creek Floodplain just north of West 1st Street – using inert gravel from Mackay Creek itself. Dismantled old trail and restored area with riparian plants. Removed four Tandem loads of knotweed and Giant Hogweed. Volunteers also did huge amounts of Ivy removal – still more work to be done in this regard.
- Worked closely with Streamkeepers at the end of Mapleridge Dr. removing Invasive Species and planting riparian plants.
- Removed Invasive Species from Cliffridge Ave. and replanted riparian plants – more work to be done.
- Replaced old bridge in Grousewoods.

Lynn Creek

- Up-graded drainage of Mt. Hwy Fromme Mountain – and built new bridge on the Old Cedar trail over the channel that flows down to the Lynn Creek in Lynn headwaters.
- Major up-grade of the most severely braided sections of the Sea-to-Sky Trail that was impacting the east bank of Lynn Creek in Lynn Canyon Park.

Mosquito Creek - restoration of waterways (e.g. Fairmont Creek) eventually flowing into Mosquito Creek.

Canyon Creek - shifted the last section of the Baden Powell Trail out of the Canyon Creek flood-plain.

Thames Creek - planted riparian plants to stabilize creek bank in Lynn Valley

Ocean Front Restorations

- The major removal of Japanese Knotweed from Lowry Lane Park and the planting of riparian plants along the waterfront. Planting done by the Save the Shore Group.
- The same group helped plant the street end at the east end of Panorama Park.

Removal of Invasive Species

- Lowry Lane Park – Japanese Knotweed
- Lower MacKay Creek – Japanese Knotweed, Giant Hogweed and Ivy
- Upper MacKay Creek – Ivy, Lamium, Himalaya Blackberry
- Cates Park waterfront – Japanese Knotweed, Himalaya Blackberry
- Inter-River Park – Japanese knotweed
- Morten Creek – Lamium, Himalayan Balsam, Ivy and planting of native riparian plants
- Hunter Park – Himalayan Balsam and Blackberry, Ivy

DFO Community Advisor (Sandie Hollick-Kenyon)

- Chum egg takes from South Alouette River for several groups.
- Upper MacKay Creek - conducted weekly spawner surveys with Ron den Daas, Richard Tak saw adult coho.
- Lower MacKay Creek –beaver dam at railroad bridge has made for difficult access by fish in the lower creek. When District staff removed the dam, it was rebuilt within 48 hours. Next year, it should be checked for how impassable it is to fish.
- Thain Creek (Mosquito Creek tributary near William Griffin Park) – walked the creek and found a couple of blockages and grocery carts in the fall; this will require monitoring in the future. There is good coho habitat in this area. The City and District have worked on Thain in past years, daylighting a long culvert and improving fish passage upstream. Will post a note on the NSSK Bulletin Board about fry trapping in February to early March in the area.
- Mosquito Creek Fell Channel –periodic issues with the channel intake, especially with leaf litter in the fall, so flows can fluctuate widely. While the City and Sandie check periodically, it would be good to have volunteers check the flow and report problems to Sandie.
- Beaver dams, discussion of pros and cons - the beaver does create good fish habitat, removing the dam just results in more loss of riparian shrubs and trees as the beaver rebuilds the dam, while the trees he removes leave space for cattails, which are good for removing oil from the water. NSSK decided we could co-ordinate a watch for fish passage at spawning time.
- ZoAnn suggested a “To Do” list be posted with areas identified by GPS and street address, so those interested in checking for blockages and water flow on various streams can find them.

Pacific Streamkeepers Federation (ZoAnn Morten)

On January 27, 2009 there is an event at Mulgrave School with the Environment Minister presenting a talk on four subjects of interest to the North Shore. Questions can be submitted to the Minister that evening. Workshop 2009 will be May 15 to 17, 2009, in Maple Ridge, link to registration form will be posted on our NSSK web site. Results of the Steelhead Summit on November 29/08 are posted on the NSSK website. ZoAnn directed money from a public education program she offered at Capilano Suspension Bridge to the North Shore Streamkeepers for printing work.

Finances (Terry Bragg): The balance in the general Account is \$13,523 and in the Environmental Damages Fund is \$770. This represents several grants for the MacKay Creek restoration and community art project, as well as general operating funds.

Seymour River (Matt Casselman)

Matt couldn't make the meeting due to an injury and provided the following update by e-mail.

- 268 cm of cumulative snowfall from mid-Dec to mid-Jan
- excellent survival of Alouette chum, 520,000 eggs transferred to bulk boxes to hatch
- approximately 150,000 Coho eggs will be incubated this year
- ~8000 chinook hatched and incubating
- preliminary estimate for Coho return is 1700
- winter-run steelhead coming in slowly
- adult-steelhead telemetry program continues

Hastings Creek(Hagen Hohndorf)

This fall's spawner survey had two official live, one unofficial live and one dead. The riparian planting at Chaucer and Fromme is settling well. Looking to put together a mail-out with pamphlet 'What's New at Hastings' along with an Invitation for a Planting Event, or Fry Trapping and Identification. The invitation will be to encourage the community to become involved or aware of Hastings Creek, volunteer efforts & healthy streams. We have targeted the middle of March and postal information has been obtained by the group. Bob Gelling submitted a 'What's New at Hastings Creek' sample for a starter to getting a pamphlet for mail out. Bonnie and Jan will meet and gather a group for subject ideas and photos. We are considering applying for funds from PSF for printing and mailout. Hastings Creek group looking to have a calendar of events for the year so people can plan their volunteer time.

McKay Creek, North Shore Fish and Game Club (Brian Comey)

The spawner survey in Heywood Park had no sightings over several weeks. The stream was much lower than previous years. Ran into an environmental consultant doing a survey; she reported 6 adult Coho at the weir and juvenile coho and cutthroat in the fry traps. The hatchery incubation box is working well, but in the few days of freezing temperatures couldn't get into hatchery as the locks were frozen (need to apply some heating strips there). No problem with water flow coming into the hatchery but some trouble with water in recovery tank, may be pump malfunction and DFO looking into it. We have someone every day but Thursday, checking the hatchery. Chum eggs hatched last weekend. As we have chum eggs hatching now, we expect a chum fry release in mid March. Will post release on message board on NSSK website. Karen put out the idea of NSSK helping at the Adopt a Fish booth at Edgemont Village, showcasing the various MacKay projects. In March, MacKay working group will be planning events for the summer. Lots of fry were reported all through McKay Creek during the monthly water sampling.

Upper McKay: (Ron den Daas)

The Upper Mackay Creek Ecology Community Art Project continues to develop. See website; <http://ecosystem.shawwebspaces.ca/>.

Additional funding (\$3,000.00) has been secured for the Launch of the Project - River's Day 2009 - from the City of North Vancouver Green Grant Program. An outreach to artists, artist collectives, and community groups to participate in the community project is in progress. The 2008/9 Upper Mackay Creek salmon survey reported four adult Coho in the survey area and one adult Coho on a separate day out of the survey region. These are the first sightings of adult Coho in Upper Mackay Creek during three years of surveys.

McKay Water Quality Study (Karen Munro)

The technical report for this year long study "Water Quality on McKay 2007 – 2008" at four sites is almost complete. It will be submitted to Environment Canada and posted to the website. A condensed version (the executive summary and photo report) was circulated in November and will be presented to District and City of North Vancouver Councils.

Morten Creek (Zo Ann Morten)

Our brood stock fishermen faced tough weather conditions during the short window of opportunity to collect ripe fish from the Lynn . In the end we took 6540 coho eggs from two females and 29, 589 chum eggs from two outings (mid run and end run of Alouette Chum)

Winter came right on schedule Dec 21st our hatchery froze up, due to three days of continuous severe cold . We were able to contact the Seymour Hatchery and their staff stayed until we could bundle the eggs and transfer them. Our chum were at the eyed stage while our Coho were still very delicate, half of them were just 3 days old. The new baskets which we had placed Coho in before going into the tank enabled a safe transport. Many thanks to Sandie, ZoAnn, Seymour Hatchery & Joan & Graham's alert. The chum will likely stay at Seymour Hatchery until they are ready for in the spring, but the Coho will come back to Morten Cr, when safe to do so.

We met in Oct to discuss rules / policy as to brood stock capture, this includes safety, collection permitting and future enhancement goals. While releasing some coho fry into Lynn Creek this past spring, we came across a lot of wild fry. We will increase our monitoring effort on Lynn Creek this year as fry numbers appear to have been higher in 2008. When we do the fry trapping in Hastings Creek, we will do some trapping on the Lynn using the same traps /bait to get some idea of where the fry are and thir preferred habitat. This information will feed into the Lynn Creek planning processes.

Each year has its own gains and its own challenges. Overall 2008 was a very successful year with lots of volunteer activities working with fish, fish habitat and building / site maintenance.

Partners for 2008 include – numerous volunteers, DFO, DNV, RBC Financial Funding support –PSF, HSBC, Coho Festival and DFO, DNV,

New Business: Lynn Creek 2008 slide show sneak preview. Full production will be shown at March meeting

Every Tuesday @ 10:15 a.m., Bob Parrot takes a photo of Lynn Creek at the same spot. We have CD's from 2006, 2007 & 2008.

ZoAnn suggested a spring Project Walk About after the March meeting, with invites to local gov't, DFO and others to see our projects.

Next Meeting

**Tuesday, March 17, 2009 – 7:30 pm
District Hall, 355 West Queens Road, North Vancouver**