

Reay Creek Technical Working Group Meeting

November 21, 2019

Attendance:

Organization	Attendee
District of North Saanich (DNS)	Eymond Toupin
Town of Sidney (ToS)	Bruce DeMaere
	Brian Robinson
	Jenn Clary
Capital Regional District Environmental Division (CRD)	Barri Rudolph
Victoria Airport Authority (VAA)	Margaret Marra
Transport Canada (TC)	Eddie Uyeda
	Danielle Wensauer
W̱SÁNEĆ Leadership Council	Justin Fritz
	Shauna Johnson
BC Ministry of Environment (MoE)	Aimée Brisebois (via phone)

Meeting called to order at 10:30am.

Approval of the agenda.

Update of Representative for the Reay Creek Technical Working Group

The Reay Creek Technical Working Group welcomed the W̱SÁNEĆ Leadership Council. Justin Fritz and Shauna Johnson are representatives today, permanent representative will be appointed for future meetings. There are also new representatives from ToS, VAA and MoE.

Update from Transport Canada on remediation

Remediation of contamination within Reay Creek (now referred to as KÉL,SET (Reay) Creek by TC) inside Victoria Airport was completed in 2019. Prior to and during this work, TC collected several cutthroat trout, two coho salmon smolts and several thousand stickleback and released them downstream of the dam. TC will be conducting environmental monitoring of the restored (i.e., replanted) upland areas that were cleared for access during the remedial work for two years.

Historical uses of Reay Creek

Shauna Johnson had consulted with her elders and they noted many stories of the significance of Reay Creek and it was of great sadness that the W̱SÁNEĆ no longer have a presence along the creek. The mouth of Reay Creek was an important location for First Nation communities to gather food. There was a village at Bazan Bay and there were long houses along the beach. Reay Creek was used as a transportation corridor.

The W̱SÁNEĆ expressed their desire to be involved at the earliest stages of development planning and not just at the end when the plans are almost finalized. Specifically to the Reay Creek Pond project, the W̱SÁNEĆ expressed concerns regarding: restoration of a dam, restoration of retaining pond, lack of access through private property, and unclear benefit to fish habitat for maintaining the dam. The W̱SÁNEĆ Leadership Council representatives highlighted the need for support to engage W̱SÁNEĆ community members more broadly on this project.

The W̱SÁNEĆ inquired if permits are required for discharges to storm sewer. Only clean, rainwater run-off is supposed to be directed into a storm sewer, so permitting is not required. Any potentially-contaminated run-off is to be treated, permitted and directed to a sanitary sewer.

Update from Town of Sidney on dam

ToS is moving forward with renovation of the dam. ToS commissioned a Fish and Fish Habitat study that concluded that: maintaining the dam and pond, and adding a fish ladder would increase the growth of the existing fish population; and removing the dam and pond would increase spawning habitat and would produce more salmon smolts to leave to the ocean. ToS is moving in the direction of renovating the existing dam based on findings of this study, as well as anecdotal informal from community groups and local environmental groups.

To provide residents and community members with an opportunity to learn about the dam renovation and ask questions about the project, ToS will be holding a public information session on January 30, 2020.

Next steps

- Engagement with W̱SÁNEĆ Leadership Council related to Reay Creek pond remediation and dam renovation projects
 - W̱SÁNEĆ Leadership Council is interested in being involved in tree and plant planting for both projects
 - W̱SÁNEĆ Leadership Council representatives requested comparative information related to fish habitat and fish health with regard to Reay Creek Dam options
- VAA to provide the list of plants that were replanted on VAA land
- ToS to provide information for January 30, 2020 info session
- TC to provide final reports from VAA land remediation when available

Meeting frequency

Due to the upcoming work by both TC and ToS, the Reay Creek Technical Working Group will meet quarterly in 2020.

Meeting adjourned at 12:00pm.