

Shuswap Trails Roundtable Working Group

Meeting Summary as of April 15, 2025

Meeting date: April 11, 2025 9:00AM to 12:00PM

Location: Larch Hills Nordic Chalet

Present (in person):

Richard Anderson, District of Sicamous Development Corporation
Trina Antoine, Splantsin te Secwepemc
Jen Bellhouse, Shuswap Trail Alliance (STA)
Linda Buchanan, Backcountry Horsemen of BC, Shuswap Chapter
Keith Cox, Shuswap Outdoors
Anita Ely, Interior Health
Kyra Evans, Hunters Range Snowmobile Association
Barbra Fairclough, Sunnybrae Canoe-Point Stewardship Society
Patrick Frank, White Lake Residents Association
Evan Houle, Interior Health
Sue Hunt, Backcountry Horsemen of BC, Shuswap Chapter
David Lepsoe, Village of Chase
Eleanor Marshall, Mallory Ridge Community Trails Society
Craig McBride, Larch Hills Nordics
Sue McCrae, Shuswap Economic Development Society
Phil McIntyre-Paul, Shuswap Trail Alliance (STA)
Doug Nookes, Shuswap Outdoors
Brian Pratt, 4WD Association of BC
Carly Procyshyn, District of Sicamous Development Corporation
Kyle Routledge, Shuswap Economic Development Society
Debbie Seymour, North Shuswap Chamber of Commerce
Jamie Sherlock, District of Sicamous (DoS)
Mike Simpson, consultant (facilitator, recorder)
Shelley Witzky, Shuswap Trail Alliance

Present (virtual)

Lynnea Baker, Recreation Sites and Trails BC (RSTBC)
Sue Ghattas, Vernon Outdoors Club
Steve Horton, Sled Sicamous/Eagle Valley Snowmobile Club
Marshall Kronewitt, Carl Kuster Mountain Park
Sarah Megyesi, BC Parks
Fred Torbohm, Village of Chase

Before the meeting started, a [video](#) played: *Spring Blowout Day in the Shuswap – one day of fun in the sun, April 5, 2025*, highlighting various outdoor activities to be done in one day.

1. Welcome, Introductions, Review Agenda and Objectives

Mike Simpson welcomed everyone, and thanked Craig McBride and Larch Hills Nordic Society for hosting the meeting. Trina Antoine did an opening prayer and acknowledged Secwepemc territory. A round of

introductions took place. The agenda was reviewed and accepted as presented, and early departures were noted.

2. Secwepemc Learning Opportunity

Since we were in the area of Enderby Cliffs, Trina taught us the word for cliff – Tplaqin (phonetic pronunciation Te-PLAH-keen) – and noted there will be ceremony later this year to rename Enderby Cliffs to a Secwepemc name. She also told a story of the importance of the area for female puberty training, and how coyote was sneaky and tried to peek at women when they were naked. He was punished for this by having his male member turned to a pillar of stone. A similar story exists related to Polin, a Splotsin woman who lived at Bolean (Pillar) Lake, as the origins of the pillar of stone.

3. Previous Meeting Summary

The meeting summary from January 17, 2025, 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.

Jen thanked Shuswap Outdoors, Carl Kuster Mountain Park and Recreation Sites and Trails BC (RSTBC) for their financial support to erase the budget deficit for 2025.

4. Wildfire Resiliency

Jen reported on a wildfire resiliency webinar hosted April 8, 2025 by the Outdoor Recreation Council of BC. Key points were who to connect with (FireSmart coordinators in local or First Nations governments), suggestions to protect assets, and the fact that trails networks can function as firebreaks and improve access for suppression. It was also noted that recreation groups bring local knowledge and trusted relationships. Key resource is [FireSmart BC](#) as they have lots of resources.

Mike provided a brief overview of the [Shuswap Community Wildfire Roundtable](#) with the key points that it focuses on preparedness (not wildfire response or recovery), and is inclusive with representation from local, Secwepemc and provincial governments, forest industry, structural fire departments, trails organizations and more. The key purpose is to improve coordination and communication amongst those working in wildfire preparedness.

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

Mallory Ridge

- Eleanor noted that Columbia Shuswap Regional District (CSRD) has approved funding to develop parks plans over the next few years for Electoral Areas A, C, D, E, F and G, with A, D and F proceeding this year (Mallory Ridge is in Electoral Area D). CSRD staff are in the process of tendering the work to retain a consultant to update the parks plans, of which community engagement will be a significant component. This is an opportunity to advance Mallory Ridge as a protected area and will build on the inventory of trails and features that STA did.

RSTBC Modernizing section 57 process

- Recreation Sites and Trails B.C. (RSTBC) is launching a pilot of a modernized approach to authorizing the construction, maintenance, and rehabilitation of trails and recreation facilities, under Section 57 of the *Forest and Range Practices Act*. The modernized approach is intended to better define requirements in applications, improve authorization processing efficiencies and enable better recreation management and stewardship.
- Key components of the new approach include:
 - Simplifying the process for minor complexity applications, as well as for construction and maintenance activities proposed on established recreation sites and trails;
 - A modernized web-based application form to improve useability and application processing;
 - Improved application tracking and follow up; and
 - Improved guidance and tools for applicants and decision makers to support application completion and the review of applications.
- The pilot was launched on **April 1st, 2025**. At that time, the [RSTBC Authorizations Webpage](#) was updated with information on the pilot including the new application form and applicant guidance. A [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#) is also now available. The pilot will run for at least 12 months. The timing of the end of the pilot will depend on the feedback we receive and the evaluation process.
- RSTBC welcomes your feedback on the new approach as we strive to enhance service delivery and better support applicants throughout the process. Feedback may be provided by emailing RSTBC.Authorizations.Feedback@gov.bc.ca or by completing the optional survey at the end of the new application form.
- Lynnea noted that any s.57s already submitted do not need to come through this new process – just new ones.
- Questions and comments included kudos, people appreciate moving to a digital platform, and connection to the pre-engagement part of the [Shuswap Regional Trails Strategy](#) and Richard noted another pilot program that Tennessee noted in November about a pilot trails “network” definition program (Lynnea will look into it).

PLANS – the fact that CSRD is doing parks plans for most electoral areas is significant, not just for Mallory Ridge. It was also noted that Thompson-Nicola Regional District is developing a [TNRD Parks and Trails Strategic Plan](#), as well as updating official community plans (OCPs) for eastern Electoral Areas that are adjacent to the Shuswap/CSRD. It was also noted the significance of OCPs for local governments (regional districts, municipalities) as a key planning document that gathers community input during its development and is the foundation for future funding applications (comprehensive community plans (CCP) are analogous in First Nations communities). OCPs and parks plans also an opportunity to align priorities of the [Shuswap Regional Trails Strategy](#).

Skimikin

- Linda – created 3D model of Skimikin as there is a big Backcountry Horsemen of BC rendezvous coming up BC wide in Princeton, so they did this to identify trails.

Highlands Blind Bay

- Sue McCrae noted there is a 4km trail open to public put in by developers. Map provided. Not biking, mostly walking, but it’s 3m wide.



Adrian was involved in planning process. New subdivision that bylaws require trails or park to be developed. Developer did the trail development itself. Also connects to OCP. Being finished right now. Is it accessible for seniors? Flatter access points. Parking exists, 12ft wide.

Sunnybrae Parallel Trail

- Barbra noted they're reviewing South Shuswap Destination Trail Planning Framework as it will give reference point for developing an engagement plan for community on the parallel trail, which is the #1 priority in CSRD Electoral Area C. Distance looking at 2-3km in secondary development area. Communities would like a pathway all the way from Hwy 1, but this is just now a smaller piece. Could connect with larger West Bay Connector.
- Phil noted that active transportation parallel trails are identified and enabled in the CSRD Master Plan 2017 for all of CSRD.

White Lake Provincial Park Trail

- Patrick noted Phil and Adrian did walk on west campsite trail to end of Perry Road, did preliminary field reconnaissance (PFR, for archaeological values) and some signage, looking to get new trail started. Community engagement underway. Sarah M coming out in mid-May, hoping to get a work plan started. Phil would like to forward current STA plan/assessment to Patrick – need to re-route to a higher bench to avoid wet area. Re-route of an existing trail. Want to transition from just a plan out to a working group.

Mara Lookout

- Brian noted thanks for support for 4WD Association in pursuing a s.57 for Mara Lookout from the south (noting there is an existing rec site trail from the north). No real updates, as they are waiting to hear from Kayla or Michael at Splatsin. If support is provided from Splatsin, they will reach out to those that pledged support and then go for s.57.
- It was noted that this is not a recreation site at this point...it's a recreation reserve. Lynnea clarified that Mara Lookout is not established, so the tool to manage a rec reserve and trail is s.57. Have talked about s.57 whether it can be authorized, then after a few years, RSTBC would have to do a s.56 to get a recreation site established. Several years.
- It was also noted that the Mara Lookout (the fire lookout structure) had work done by RSTBC in past, but no maintenance on that lookout for some time. Summer 2024 emails from the public noting state of lookout and repairs are needed. Would be great to get a s.57 with 4WD Assn as it would help maintain historical lookout. Brian noted that they would like to see a guardianship coalition not 4WD Assn taking it on. Splatsin still developing guardian program. Small working group exists. State of lookout needs work or will deteriorate.

North Shuswap – various items

- Debbie noted that the parallel trail pathway team has received an update from Fiona's team at CSRD. They have received approval for extension of the BC Active Transportation grant to 2027. CSRD are waiting for archaeological study, have to request permit from Agricultural Land Commission as a piece of the pathway runs through Agricultural Land Reserve. The local group has an estimate from Lawson Engineering for preliminary designs for connecting trails. Want to expand and connect pathways all around Scotch Creek. They are looking for potential funding to have the preliminary designs completed to be ready for future active transportation or infrastructure grants. Possibly providing to CSRD.

- North Shuswap community is looking to engage the local Mountain Bike Group recently formed in North Shuswap, they are pursuing funding to do archaeological studies
- Explore concept of planning framework for North Shuswap, build on South Shuswap Destination Trail Framework, and dovetail with CSRD Parks Plan for Electoral Area F process
- Anita noted that Interior Health team provides service to local governments on connections to health; challenge with getting past ALR issue, IH could help address that and persuade benefits for health such as active transportation projects.

Larch Hills Link Trail and Catamount Canyon

- Craig showed a map on-screen (see file named Link Trail and Catamount Re-route.pdf circulated with this summary) describing a proposed link trail.

Larch Hills non-track set trails

- Keith added that the grade on a trail to the junction in Catamount Canyon is steep 17% downhill grade and also needs to be addressed. Seeking approval for this realignment, and proposed activities by Tolko in the area that didn't identify these trails raised the history: the non-track set trail system was built in the 1970s-80s with approval from BC government, but that approval was rather casual, and circa 2002 when trail management changed, any previous "approvals" were lost. The intent is to get these non-track set trails authorized (noting they're not "social trails" as there was an original approval)
- It was noted that establishing existing trails under s.56 may not always be possible, they have to adhere to certain standards.

Forest and Range Practices Act:

- S.56 is authorization to establish trails
- S. 57 is authorization to construct or maintain trails

South Shuswap Destination Trail Planning Framework

- Phil hosted an online meeting March 28, it's done but a [living document](#) – support to many other plans and initiatives that can follow. Holds lots of history back 20 years. Can fit into next update of parks planning (see update earlier). Flag any typos or edits to Phil via email.
- Carmen Massey sends regrets – many folks were keen, suggested to create a South Shuswap working group – Carmen offered to host and follow up in May or June.
- Framework is an umbrella that has 30 individual projects identified, and enables more

Shuswap North Okanagan Rail Trail

- Phil reported on behalf of CSRD, RDNO and Splatstine Secwepemc – construction happening as we speak. Mara Lake section last week. Two fully complete in Armstrong and Sicamous Narrows areas. Enderby 2km is active and complete. 7km total complete. Next 10km from 4.5 to end of Mara Lake under construction. Building trail surface, 12 sections of erosion not done until late August in fish window or winter 2025/26. Goal to have surfacing finished by May 9, not sure whether open for public use after May 9.
- Richard noted Sicamous council is interested and people are getting excited about a viable distance of 14km. ALR issues from Rosemund Lake crossing south is challenging, ALC has to give their approval, issue is easements which are getting in place.
- Splatstine is aggressively pushing to get this done; funding application to federal government to get final overpass designs done for final 6.5km and overpass designs.

West Bay connector

- Jen noted that preliminary designs have been received, PFR done, STA supporting ALIB to federal funding that would see final design complete.

Onyx and Scatchard – Indigenous engagement

- Shelley noted that STA got funding for Indigenous engagement, having community meetings, site visits (yesterday), trying to get elders out, maybe use drones to capture and communicate. Reach out to Shelley if you want to connect and provide input. Will gather more info on cultural and spiritual importance. Will bring more people out, engage with C&C and staff. Hook in with Chase Harper trails perhaps. Tourism is a big driver. Good way to be caretakers. Jen added will also be opportunity for non-Indigenous to engage.

East Vernon Hill

- Sue Ghattas noted several processes where Vernon Outdoor Club has been involved, grasslands and hillside trails. East Vernon hill has access, but inadequate parking, environmental hazards and erosion not addressed. It's a well used trail, not planned for number of people using it. Looking at safe access. Other side is the Western Bluebird trail put in by RDNO on old downhill biking trail, hikers can't use top section, VOC wants to put in some switchbacks to make it easier and safer, and connect back to East Vernon Hill.

Sicamous – general

- Richard noted that a small group has formed to have quarterly meetings addressing trails, economic development, and various planning initiatives.
- Old action item re: Larch Hills Mountain bike access and MOTT highway construction – Adrian meeting with MOTT to bring that up, reached out in January, keep nudging them to meet. Hoping to meet soon. Looking for access to Plan H grants for accessibility.
- District of Sicamous is updating its' OCP

Owlhead Mountain bike park

- Jen noted that phase 1 almost complete, started this week, should be open to ride by July
- Phase 2 – submit s. 57 for review over winter. Richard added to connect with Jamie Sherlock about opening event for phase 1 part. **ACTION:** share mountain bike contacts with them.

Chase Creek Trails and Harper Lake

- Linda noted an endurance rider inquired about trails in that are there – what's going on? No established trails (they are social/unauthorized) – Neskonlith has s.56 submitted, hoping to have social trails established, no intent to push out equestrian users. Addition of accessible trail and highlight Indigenous knowledge. Contact Jen for more info, Neskonlith leading with ALIB and Skwlax.

Gordon Sidney Cabin replacement application – Hunters' Range Snowmobile Association

- Kyra noted that the old Enderby visitor centre was trucked up to alpine a few years ago to be used as an emergency shelter at end of trail. It's falling apart. They want to keep an emergency shelter there, first step is nominal rent tenure application to BC government (will be 2-3 year process, they have archaeological overview assessment completed already), once that's in place then pursue a new structure.

6. Roundtable of New Information (non-trails)

Columbia Shuswap Invasive Species Society (CISIS) events in the Shuswap coming up are:

- White Lake Turtle Festival - April 12th
- [Land Manager Meeting & AGM April 16th](#)
- Salmon Arm Earth Day Event - April 26th
- Reach out for training on invasive species

Shuswap Trail Alliance's hosting 20th anniversary on June 7 spring at South Canoe Trails with Five Alarm Funk. Still some early bird tickets at \$30 each. See more info on [website](#).

Outdoor Recreation Council of BC – June 7 is Trails Day, register an event with them and get up to \$300 for your event (two step process). More info [here](#).

Salmon Arm Bay Nature Enhancement Society – Eric Christmas Memorial Boardwalk and wildlife view platform project is along the Foreshore/Raven Trail in Salmon Arm. The old boardwalk was removed last September and new screw piles were installed over the winter. The goal is to have the rest of the boardwalk constructed later this summer/fall. As mentioned, the project budget is \$350,000, and fundraising coming into the home stretch. More information, including how to donate, can be found here: <https://www.sabnes.org/>.

Larch Hills – lots of trail maintenance will commence by end of June, details will be posted online and shared with Jen.

Interior Health – Anita noted that there are 6 new positions across IH in Environmental Health, team is up to 17 total from 8 about 10 years ago.

Sicamous – BC Backyard Ultra April 25 running event (6.47 miles every hour until one person left), June 7 is UCI World Pump Track only Canadian. July 1 road hockey tournament, strong man competition on July 19, Easter weekend egg hunt in DOS park. October 2026 will host a national ticket for Backyard Ultra world championship. Contact Jamie for more information on all.

Hunters Range Snowmobile Association – snow show, Nov 14-15 at Splat sin Community Centre.

Wildsafe BC – not running across Shuswap this year, administrative oversight.

7. Next Steps

Working Group: future meeting dates, 9AM-12PM (rule is 3rd Friday of January, April, June and October):

- Working Group – Fri June 13 (3rd Friday likely conflicts with Indigenous celebrations), proposed to be fully outdoors, no hybrid option. Proposed locations (shelter structure needed): South Canoe, Yard Creek gazebo, Enderby ball diamonds/Lions Park, Splat sin Centre, Adams River Salute to the Sockeye shelter at Tsutcew park. If Enderby could tie into rail trail.
- Working Group – Fri Oct 17, location new Sicamous Health Care Centre
- Annual meeting – November (exact date TBD)

The following **ACTION** items were noted:

Task or activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
Consult with elders and Chief Atahm School on the proper use, understanding, spelling and pronunciation of Y'icwetsutce and whether it's the right word (explore dialects)	Brad Arnouse, Shelley Witzky	Delayed
Larch Hills Traverse – Sicamous trailhead. Meet with MOTT construction people and figure out viable options for trailhead, signage needed for 2025 biking season by June.	Adrian, Phil, DoS, Splatsin, MOTT	May
Explore concept of planning framework for North Shuswap , build on South Shuswap Destination Trail Framework, and dovetail with CSRD Parks Plan for Electoral Area F process	North Shuswap	Ongoing
Look for other ACTION items in each item update in summary	Everyone	Ongoing
Share details about another pilot program that Tennessee noted in November 2024 about a pilot trails “network” definition program	Lynnea	Not determined

The following **ongoing ACTION** items are noted:

Task or activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
Start hut to hut opportunities , overnight stays. Build on history. Larger areas, not just Owlhead, Blue Lake, Hunter's Range.	Louis, others	Future meeting
Work with Shuswap Tourism or current organization to publish and advertise authorized trails	Everyone	Ongoing
Organizations to sign the LOU if they haven't already done so – original copy if possible (Phil or Jen have it)	Any groups that haven't signed	Ongoing
Send any GPS/GIS linework on trails to Adrian at Shuswap Trail Alliance, adrian@shuswaptrails.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 – intent is that Secwepemc governments are seeking this information	Everyone	Ongoing
Send any reports of erosion or trail damage from heavy rains to trailreport@shuswaptrails.com	Everyone	Ongoing
Seek support letters for funding applications from each other	Everyone	Ongoing
Consider opportunities for funds to do cumulative effects assessment on a complex project	Everyone	Ongoing
Secwepemc Plant Knowledge cards - order from Neskonlith Education Centre by email educationassistant@neskonlithec.net	Everyone	Ongoing
Download the Secwepemc language app for your smart phone	Everyone	Ongoing
Consider doing media releases when projects are complete (e.g., South Canoe Parking lot, Sorrento Blind Bay perimeter trail, Skimikin)	Jen, everyone	Ongoing
If doing a clean-up event , contact Ben van Nostrand at CSRD about up to \$500 in support for meals, supplies and waiving of tipping fees	Trail stewardship groups	Ongoing
Consider joint applications/working collaboratively if future big funding calls come out . Need time to be strategic.	Everyone	Ongoing
Secwepemc Landmarks – sentinel structures: contact Jen or Adrian if your group wants to undertake this for one or more in their areas	Everyone	Ongoing
Morgan requested for people hosting events wanting to raise awareness to submit them to the events page at Shuswap Tourism here	Anyone hosting events	Ongoing
Engage Interior Health team for a “health benefits perspective” for funding applications or overcoming barriers for projects	Local governments	Ongoing