

Shuswap Trails Roundtable Working Group

Meeting Summary as of Jan 28, 2025

Meeting date: January 17, 2025 9:00AM to 12:00PM **Location:** White Lake, BC

Present (in person):

Richard Anderson, District of Sicamous Development Corporation
Jen Bellhouse, Shuswap Trail Alliance (STA)
Adrian Bostock, Shuswap Trail Alliance (STA)
Linda Buchanan, Backcountry Horsemen of BC, Shuswap Chapter
Anita Ely, Interior Health
Patrick Frank, White Lake Residents Association
Steve Horton, Sled Sicamous/Eagle Valley Snowmobile Club
Kathleen Ludwig, White Lake Residents Association
Ray Ludwig, White Lake Residents Association
Eleanor Marshall, Mallory Ridge Community Trails Society
Carmen Massey, White Lake resident
Morgan Matheson, Shuswap Tourism (CSRD)
Craig McBride, Larch Hills Nordics
Phil McIntyre-Paul, Shuswap Trail Alliance (STA)
Brian Pratt, 4WD Association of BC
Debbie Seymour, North Shuswap Chamber of Commerce
Jamie Sherlock, District of Sicamous (DoS)
Mike Simpson, consultant (facilitator, recorder)
Warren Staff, Shuswap Trail Alliance
Fred Torbohm, Village of Chase
Hannah Treleaven, Shuswap Trail Alliance (STA)

Present (virtual)

Brad Arnouse, Neskonlith
Wes Dearmond, BC Parks
Kyra Evans, Hunters Range Snowmobile Association
Sue Ghattas, Vernon Outdoors Club
Sarah Megyesi, BC Parks
Shelley Witzky, Shuswap Trail Alliance

1. Welcome, Introductions, Review Agenda and Objectives

Mike Simpson welcomed everyone, and thanked Patrick Frank and the White Lake community for hosting the meeting. Brad Arnouse did an opening prayer and acknowledged Secwepemc territory. A round of introductions took place. The agenda was reviewed and accepted as presented.

2. Secwepemc Learning Opportunity

Brad and Shelley taught us the following words:

- Pellkwetmin: stay at home month
- Swucwt – snow is deep

- Sewllkwe – water
- Cpeqétkwe – means “white water” referring to a white sediment in White Lake

3. Previous Meeting Summary

The meeting summary from October 11, 2024, 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.

4. Annual Meeting Debrief and 2025 Work Plan

Debrief about the [annual meeting held November 20, 2024](#) was positive: venue and food was great; all four Secwepemc governments were present; relevant topics in the morning that were short; and good discussion in the afternoon subregional breakout groups.

Some of the evaluation comments were that some subregional breakout groups had too many people, and some had very few. Discussion about how to address this raised the following suggestions:

- Don’t break the subregions into smaller areas – this would only enable discussions that are not cohesive that would need to be brought together later
- Don’t amalgamate areas with less interest into others – aim to gather more people
- Consider having a facilitator at the large subregional breakout groups to ensure everyone has an opportunity to speak. Anita offered IH staff who are all trained in facilitation.
- Consider getting ideas in advance for what to discuss

Jen noted that the 2025 work plan hasn’t changed, and that there is still a \$3500 deficit for the Shuswap Trails Roundtable this year. This means that other than the annual meeting, the working group meetings will have to be virtual. The most significant cost is for facilitation, not necessarily the venue where we meet. Some of those present offered venues or to look for alternate funding sources.

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

Larch Hills Nordics

- This past summer we completed a number of new trails on the adjacent private property with the support and funding from the owner. These include groomed double wide ski trails as well as a new snowshoe trail.
- There are a number of new fences and gates to ensure there is no trespassing on the private land during the non-winter months.
- The proposed 1.3 Ginzu groomed Link Trail proposal is still ongoing. The EIA has been completed and letters have been sent out to stakeholders. Waiting on Splatsin review.
- We have a new Prinoth Bison groomer. Funding was from donations, annual contributions from the club as well as grants. Total cost just under \$600,000
- An all members survey is going out soon. Our last strategic plan identified priorities including race trails, lit trails, beginner trail, new Chalet and expanded canine trails. All of these priorities have been accomplished, therefore the LHNS Board is looking for future direction. Another backcountry shelter as well as a couple of day shelters will be on the survey.
- We are working with STA on the summer use advisory committee.

- Snow conditions are terrific this season on the 57 km. of groomed trails and over 100 km. of ungroomed trails. The Loppet is this weekend. Should be fantastic.
- Reminder no tobogganing at LHN
- How do we know what trails are accessible for summer? Adrian noted it's on STA and LHN websites

Larch Hills Traverse Trailhead

- The Larch Hills Traverse trailhead on the Sicamous side has been impacted by Hwy 1 construction; it currently doesn't exist. Adrian noted that Ministry of Transportation and Transit (MOTT) meetings a few years ago had discussion on how to address this satisfactorily, however the project scope has now changed, trailhead access cut off. Don't know how to address this.
- MOTT didn't get back to STA about trailhead access options. As MOTT have moved from a planning team to a construction team, it's different people. Jamie noted that District of Sicamous staff are trying to address this too.
- Signs are needed to direct people, to walk bike facing traffic on highway, etc. to safely access the trailhead
- **ACTION** – DoS, Splantsin, STA folks to convene, meet with MOTT construction people and figure out viable options for trailhead, signage needed for 2025 biking season by June, etc. Phil and Adrian to take the lead. Richard noted that District of Sicamous land could be an option.

New Sicamous Trails Group

- Jamie and Richard noted that there is a new group looking for soft wins on signage, looking to make trail connections north and south of community as well as biking trails.
- They have recruited a disabled senior recruited to join group, with the goal of doing an audit of existing trails for accessibility for those with mobility challenges, strollers, etc.

Foreshore Bird Viewing platform

- Adrian is working with Salmon Arm Bay Nature Enhancement Society (SABNES) with an application to rebuild the viewing platform. They are still raising money, but he noted it's a good design with room for classroom at end with low invasiveness.
- Once funds are secured, STA crew may be doing construction in summer 2025. Water Sustainability Act section 11 is already in place.

South Shuswap Destination Trail Planning Framework

- Phil noted that Hannah is helping to get this finished, it is the framework plan that was initiated several years ago and built based on lots of input and engagement from pre-COVID, as well as the Inner Shuswap input from past Shuswap trails Roundtable annual meetings.
- 5-10 key items included, concepts, connects all the trails in area, BC Parks. Also identifies circle routes and connections/architecture; access issues and parking; and paddling opportunities
- Jen has identified new funding to start implementing this.
- To be implemented by multiple partners – it's a framework for others to support, with projected costing for certain projects. STA's role is done, it's up to partners to pick this up and help implement it. Can evolve over time (living document).
- Next steps – there will be a link to the planning framework on website by next week. February for steering group to meet.
- Discussion ensued about whether this concept be applied to North Shuswap? How does this relate to CSRD parks plans that they are mandated to do? It was noted that CSRD parks are

planning to plan and this may be a good time to raise this. It was also suggested to use the [Shuswap Trails Roundtable Regional Trails Strategy](#) to leverage the idea.

STA planning funding – Jen noted they’ve acquired funding to develop plans by March 2026 for:

- Balmoral for additional MTB trails
- Kelly Mtn for specific motorized trails
- Scatchard Mtn is to update existing trail plan and address some concerns raised, work with Secwepemc governments and discuss next steps
- Onyx is to update existing trail plan, address ongoing recreation use and environmental damage, work with Secwepemc governments and discuss next steps
- Owlhead bike park has funds to finish phase 1 construction (DoS funds to phase 2); phase 1 by summer 2025; Owlhead bike park funding work with Splatsin for indigenous interpretative signage throughout
- South canoe skills park \$50K to work with contractor to design skills park with City of Salmon Arm (could include a pump track). Lots of existing infrastructure to work around.

Skimikin

- Linda noted grant received is now complete, signage up, 2025 looking at maintenance primarily. Future plans are to do a preliminary field reconnaissance (PFR) for trails on other side of lake.
- In process of writing grant report. Funds have to be for construction, not planning.
- Ongoing dumping of garbage is a challenge.

Mallory Ridge

- Eleanor noted that she’s trying to get key parties (CSRD including Electoral Area director, STA) together regarding status of Mallory Ridge, it’s up to CSRD.
- Doing trail maintenance, trying to get grant for expenses (didn’t happen) so it’s volunteer and donation based.
- See Gardom Lake Stewardship Society [webpage](#) for related study info and updates on Mallory Ridge.

West Bay connector trail

- Jen noted that ALIB got 3 grants and City of Salmon Arm is doing project management with design underway. Completed design with level C costing expected by Feb 2025. Interest was noted in seeing the plans and whether they will be public.
- Active transportation grant funding opportunity will open soon, Jen will work with Neskonlith and ALIB to apply, could be 100% funding
- Best case scenario construction sooner than expected.

[Shuswap North Okanagan Rail Trail](#) (SNORT)

- Phil noted that as per Splatsin news release last month, they have engaged Lawson Engineering as lead engineer of record. [Yucwmenlúcwu \(Caretakers of the Land\)](#) are project managers.
- Rest of work lined up and ready to go, getting tenders out in February, hope to get work underway in spring. However where they can work is up in the air – Agricultural Land Commission has to provide approvals for issues raised by some Armstrong farms.
- Overpass over highway design C cost estimate is underway. Whether this funding intake or the next one is to be determined.

- It was noted that Splantsin are hiring band members and youth for as much of the work as possible, but much of the tendered work is skilled heavy equipment work and Splantsin doesn't have capacity in that.
- Sections of trail are opening, CSISS engaged to work on invasive plants, volunteer days are happening, with more opportunities coming.

North Shuswap Parallel Trails

- Debbie wanted to remind people that CSRD holds funds to initiate planning for a parallel trail in the North Shuswap, she hasn't heard an update on status from CSRD lately.
- Archaeological study should be complete in spring, the permit application was submitted in summer 2024

Vernon trails extension of Grey Canal

- Sue noted that there are updated maps on the [Ribbons of Green](#) website with 7 sections now open for hiking. In the west access road in Bella Vista, the Rise vineyard area - either at Pinto Place or Vineyard Way parking- reach round the westbench contours of Swan Lake. We still hope to close a break from Turtle Mountain north at Blue Jay to the east side where just off Hwy 97 on Baker Hogg roadside parking to gain walk all the way to Warren road trailhead access on far East End of old canal route. Parking is limited in many places along this side so check map before driving in large group. the section from Turtle Mountain Blue Jay section to Baker Hogg is still being pursued by all user groups through the various landowner stakeholders working hopefully soon together to complete the circuit. It connects with the new Coldstream Ranchlands Park that replaces the former East Vernon Hill trail system now open to mountain bikes, collaborative proposals access for road bike touring near these trail heads
- It was noted that this will connect to SNORT and Kalamalka rail trail system

Eagle Valley Snowmobile Club (EVSC)

- Steve noted they got their authorization (not a s.57) in December, a road maintenance agreement with MOF. It's a modified agreement as a test run for other snowmobile clubs, just for winter use only. Removes liability for erosion and environmental issues, and clarifies what MOF is not responsible for.
- Got gaming grant application – community gaming grant \$25K and capital \$47K that needs 50% matching funds.

Sunnybrae Parallel Trail

- Jen noted that Barbra Fairclough will be getting a community group together to advocate for this concept that has been raised previously

Gorge Ski Touring Association

- Adrian noted they met with Pacific Wood tech, EVSC, Rec Sites and Trails BC and noted the road is plowed this year. Radio use is mandatory and has been largely abided by.
- Steve noted good communication with EVSC.

Owlshead Hunters Range Cummings Blue Lake Working Group

- Brian noted that this working group will be meeting again Feb 11
- He also met with Kayla Gunner at Splantsin about Mara lookout on Morton peak

BC Parks update

- Wes noted trails in Tsutswecw are under Disaster Finance Agreement (DFA) guidelines, engineering report to come and then work to be done in spring 2025, viewing platform and main trails are hoping to get done by mid summer. Many trails are so badly damaged may not get rehabbed (Upper Flume).
- White Lake Cedar Creek and Forest Service Road (FSR) along lake – stalled out on progress there. Working with planning group in Kamloops on options for day use if road moved away from lake; based on receiving funds from BC MOF (silent in last year there). Advocacy groups working on this.
- Patrick Frank noted they can revisit this. They have a request in to MOF/WLRS for a watershed assessment for entire White Lake watershed and specifically Cedar Creek area. Road relocation WLRA would be happy to facilitate a meeting to raise concerns. **ACTION:** Wes, Frank meet then engage others (MOF, other stakeholders, etc.). Confirm MOF commitment.
- Wes noted that Wade Road trail is NOT open (it could be Skwlax is in there, they have a key to access winter house).

Glenemma

- Lots of garbage noted, who should someone contact? Reach out to Hannah Treleaven maintenance@shuswaptrails.com

6. Roundtable of New Information (non-trails)

General comment on progress – Anita commented that there’s been a lot accomplished – perspective that she has been around this group since 2013, then stepped away, now back. Happy to see progress on North Shuswap parallel trail, as well as other initiatives.

Carmen noted that this group would be a good one to talk about **climate resilience** of this infrastructure we use and love. Community infrastructure. Steve noted that their parking lot was put in as a staging area and plays double duty. Patrick noted that cutblocks around this community should be thinning, fire prevention and connect the dots with forestry/fuel management. Jamie noted there’s a funding source for that right now (fire smarting). Anita noted that a big community resilience piece is social connection as done through this WG; for grants there’s usually a Plan H social connectivity grant of \$5K that could be accessed (for this WG deficit?). Adrian noted that there is also a [Shuswap Community Wildfire Roundtable](#) that overlaps with the entire Shuswap and connects. Keith noted that trails could be designed more as a fireguard and managing fuel adjacent to trails. Craig added that LHN has 157km of trails and access for wildfire suppression is a consideration going forward. Patrick would participate in a project for wildfire risk reduction.

White Lake Residents Association are hosting their 3rd annual **Turtle Festival** April 12. Goal is to raise awareness at time of year when they start crossing roads; motto is “Learn enjoy protect.” Can we get signage for turtles and educate people? Turtle nesting. Kelowna Turtle Adoption program guy coming to speak. Looking for signage – tip is MOTT put signs up, but people stole them. Suggested to sell turtle crossing signs.

Shuswap Cycling Club movie night and AGM Jan 30 at Salmar theatre, looking for board members.

Secwepemc Landmark structures – 5 more installations scheduled; White Lake is next. Unveilings of new installations will take place in spring.

Bird Sanctuary in Coldstream looking for board members (Sue Ghattas is contact).

Sicamous will host **Backyard Ultra** (race of 6.47 miles run, run every hour, winner last year ran 28 laps) to be held April 25-27 and Sicamous will host 2026 the international Backyard Ultra (ticket to go overseas) and use nature park and trails. They are also looking to bring **Strong Man** competition to Sicamous on July 19.

Shuswap Trail Alliance's annual fundraiser launching Fri Feb 7 silent auction, also sell tickets for June 7 spring celebration 20 year anniversary at South Canoe Trails with Five Alarm Funk. 300 early bird tickets at \$30 each. See more info on [website](#).

EVSC has their annual Carl Kuster Mountain Park (CKMP) ladies ride on Feb 8 and a fundraiser dinner on Feb 22, see website for more details

Hunters Range Snowmobile Association has winter events planned for this season, Saturday February 1, 2025 is 4th Annual Ladies Ride and Sunday March 2, 2025 is Bingo Rally/Family Day.

Shuswap Tourism meeting to review trails guide next week, Morgan noted trying to have most guides digital. Funding declines. Not all will be printed.

Debbie noted that a **winter festival in North Shuswap** weekend of Feb 14-16 with bed racing (team of 5 builds and races their bed) on Feb 16. Food beverages, etc. Chamber website and Shuswap Tourism.

Brian noted that **Lumby** is having outhouse races on January 26.

Columbia Shuswap Invasive Species Society (CSISS) are putting together our workplans, so reach out for events, presentations, weedpulls, environmental and community events.

7. Next Steps

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

- Working Group – Fri April 11 (3rd Friday is Good Friday), virtual at this point, could be in person it will be determined and shared if it is, and location would be needed
- Working Group – Fri June 13 (3rd Friday likely conflicts with Indigenous celebrations), proposed outdoors (location TBD) or at new Sicamous Health Care Centre
- Working Group – Fri Oct 17, location TBD
- 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	Brad Arnouse	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	Well before summer
Explore concept of planning framework for North Shuswap		
Share link to South Shuswap Destination Trail Planning Framework	Jen, Phil, Mike	By late January
Look for other ACTION items in each item update in summary	Everyone	Ongoing
Explore funding options to address \$3500 deficit , whether Plan H grant or other individual groups/organizations	Everyone	Ongoing

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, it will be shared only with them	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