

## **Shuswap Trails Roundtable Working Group**

### **Meeting Summary as of Oct 16, 2024**

**Meeting date:** October 11, 2024 9:00AM to 12:00PM    **Location:** Neskonlith, BC

#### **Present (in person):**

Richard Anderson, District of Sicamous Development Corporation  
Denise Ackerman, Columbia Shuswap Regional District (CSRD)  
Jen Bellhouse, Shuswap Trail Alliance (STA)  
Jess Booth, Columbia Shuswap Invasive Species Society (CSISS)  
Adrian Bostock, Shuswap Trail Alliance  
Linda Buchanan, Backcountry Horsemen of BC, Shuswap Chapter  
Wes DeArmond, BC Parks  
Patrick Frank, White Lake Residents Association  
Andrea Heath, BC Parks  
Steve Horton, Sled Sicamous/Eagle Valley Snowmobile Club  
Sue Hunt, Backcountry Horsemen of BC, Shuswap Chapter  
Phil McIntyre-Paul, Shuswap Trail Alliance  
Shayne Poleyko, CSISS  
Brian Pratt, 4WD Association of BC  
Jamie Sherlock, District of Sicamous  
Mike Simpson, consultant (facilitator, recorder)  
Fred Torbohm, Village of Chase  
Brad Vickerson, independent motorized trail user

#### **Present (virtual)**

Kyra Evans, Hunters Range Snowmobile Association  
Barbra Fairclough, Sunnybrae Canoe Point Stewards  
Sue Ghattas, Vernon Outdoors Club  
Marshall Kronewitt, Carl Kuster Mountain Park  
Sarah Megyesi, BC Parks  
Janelle Rimell, Interior Health

### **1. Welcome, Introductions, Review Agenda and Objectives**

Mike Simpson welcomed everyone, and thanked Brad Arnouse and Neskonlith for hosting the meeting. Brad welcomed everyone and acknowledged unceded Secwepemc territory. A round of introductions took place. The agenda was reviewed and accepted as presented, with the exception of Jen sharing from her attendance at the World Trails Conference. Early departures were noted.

### **2. Secwepemc Learning Opportunity**

Brad taught us the word swelaps which means big horn sheep, pronounced SHWAY-laps.

### 3. Previous Meeting Summary

The meeting summary from June 14, 2024, was approved with a minor edit to one of the actions related to the proper use, understanding, spelling and pronunciation of **Y'icwetsutce** and whether it's the right word. 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. World Trails Conference

Jen attended the World Trails Conference in Ottawa in late September-early October, below is what she shared as key takeaways:

- Gatineaus – decommissioning trails – bolt logs together
- Climate change – sound is silence (less birdsong)
  - Climate change could be the chance to change the thing we have wanted to change for a long time
- Accessibility – “nothing about us, without us”. Access now app
- Indigenous engagement, look at changing how we introduce ourselves
- Regenerative approach to tourism:
  - ‘In the context of tourism what is to be regenerated is the vitality of our places, local people, businesses, community and the complex ecologies that sustain them all.’
  - A trail connects people and communities, fosters a sense of place, and inspires stories.
  - The work of regeneration is fundamentally an ongoing collective practice of creativity and collaborative caring, learning and integrating diverse interests and perspectives, rooted in community and in place.



### 5. Annual Meeting Planning

The annual meeting is scheduled to be held Wed Nov 20, 2024 from 9AM to 4PM at the Adams Lake Indian Band Conference Centre. Registration link is [here](#) and Mike noted there are 41 people registered.

The working agenda was shown on screen, and feedback was solicited on relevant questions and presenters and topics were confirmed. The final agenda will be shared with registered participants a week before the meeting.

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

### Skimikin

- Linda noted Destination BC grant was received, but everything on hold due to election for signage, announcement, etc.
- Localized concern east end seed orchard trail Platt Rd., believe a local individual is moving barricade and changing trails to get firewood. Linda obtained 3 massive concrete blocks, getting them delivered and installed.
- Sue added naming trails project for Skimikin, working with Secwepemc Landmarks project – Sept 21 had the unveiling at Skimikin for the signage, had elders present and a celebration. Can be looked at by other groups. Phil noted it looks great out there, lots of education.

### Glenemma

- Linda noted amazing staging area, now being deliberately rutted, what is the plan to fix this and maintain it? CSRD just heard about rutting and will have parks contractor to address it.
- Equestrians trying to park, no designated parking for them vs. motorized; need to identify where equestrian trailers should park.
- Will there be an online map of horse trails? Adrian will get Suzanne to put online.

### Tsútswecw Provincial Park

- Wes noted about 80% of park and trails impacted 2023 wildfires.
- Met disaster relief funding threshold, engineering assessments completed. Viewing platform now open to public, based on danger tree assessments (DTA) being completed. Plaza area to east is open. It's >\$1M damage. Island loop trail with 4 bridges to replace, and upper flume trail (big impacts, will assess in future) and lower flume trail. Wade Road trail, Gorge and Packer Creek trails, heavily damaged. Geotechnical eye, will be sloughing and tree fall on those trails, will be longer term.
- Scheduled (not guaranteed) for re-opening spring 2025: replacement of bridges, Island Loop trail and lower flume trail, as well as Wade Road/Gorge Road to pictographs.
- Need to think of fall 2026 Salute to the Sockeye event and big crowds.
- Came to agreement with Skwlex te Secwepemculecw about closing for most of a year, keep Wade Road side closed until spring 2025. Ongoing assessments of values and longer term recovery, working with guardians and Interfor.
- Are there good communications? STA getting inquiries about what's open or not. Andrea will work with BC Parks communications people to keep website updated.

### Sicamous Bike Park

- Adrian noted STA started work, open late 2025 phase 1, 5km of trail, very rocky ground. Starting to plan phase 2 another 10km above phase 1.
- Jamie noted they are working on few other projects met with Richard, Jen Adrian, above Bayview linking Sicamous Creek trail. Richard added that best way to move forward with Bayview is to get money from District of Sicamous, but a more formal group to apply for other funds would be good. Phil suggested don't need a separate group but form a working group of multiple interests in the Sicamous.

#### Reinneker

- STA started work on west trail with approval this spring, built about half, hope to do bridge over winter working on permitting. Adjacent to Herald Bay Provincial Park.
- Question – what about “social trails” (unauthorized) that people build and use that contribute to erosion? Adrian and Wes can look at this and create a solution.

#### South Canoe

- Adrian has a s.57 application in to RSTBC to build new trails spring 2025 with BCWS and other volunteers, above KC (upper extension). There is a South Canoe Working Group, BC Wildfire Service is a key part of that. BCWS there as they have training ground for rapattack, and as a memorial to lost member.

#### Rubberhead

- Completed new trail summer 2024, opened in August. Bike Park style jump line, good reviews.

#### Larch Hills Traverse

- Adrian noted planning in the works to build some new sections, one off 109 road and one connecting Raspberry hill to rail trail. Contract to do preliminary field reconnaissance (PFR) (archaeological) on those trails is out; no funding confirmed, no s.57 application submitted.

#### Loftus fen

- Adrian and Denise gave an update on this CSRD project to build some trails universal trail 1km along Loftus fen in a CSRD park, it's 90% complete. Denise added that dog park and parking area is 75% complete, a little light on the landscaping. CSRD had grant to build the trail, but couldn't use grant funds for the final aspects (parking, etc.)

#### Coldstream Ranchland Trail

- Sue noted that the East Vernon hill officially opened Oct 2, 6.3km multiuse non-motorized (horse, snowshoe, walk) trail, west side is moderate, east side is more challenging slopes. Central is designated as part of Agricultural Land Reserve, working on parking issues – too tight for a horse trailer. RDNO opened it. Similar problems with dog poop bags, garbage. Working on safe cycling access and connecting to Shuswap and other trails; Coldstream end of rail trail. Info on [VOC website](#) and on newsletter.

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

- Phil noted STA providing technical support to the multiparty committee (CSRD, RDNO, SplatSin)
- Enderby – SplatSin pilot section now open, 2km section finished with signage up.
- CSISS contracted to do all invasive species stuff; despite different weed committee in RDNO; did a weed pull a few weeks ago.
- 2 pieces near completion (within a month): 4.5km on North Sicamous end, 0.5 to 4.5km; and south of Vernon (1km section active rail CP still owns, ties into line in Armstrong); had to get a lease between railway and Hwy, there is now a chain link fence 6ft high for 1km. It's ugly. That section almost open; closed to north.
- Sicamous end – supposed to be open, but connection is Bruhn bridge, closed due to highway construction delays, that will be 2027. The completed 4.5km section cannot be accessed, which is problematic. District of Sicamous and SplatSin are working to get an interim access point. Until

adequate and safe access, that will remain closed. Exploring pontoons to transport people across lake, acquiring private property. Patience needed.

- More construction happening as we speak – another \$12M secured with Splatsin and federal government. [Yucwmenlúcwu Caretakers of the Land LLP](#) doing the work, will start construction this month on another 3km on Splatsin IR south of Enderby; some challenges with ALC on ALR and pushback from some property owners. Working on easements to address access to driveways across the SNORT. Spring, construction will continue to 42.6km. Anticipated substantial completion of whole thing by 2026; more sections open next year.
- Jamie suggests there needs to be clear communication to the public about access; they're coming a long way to use trail thinking it's open. Completed vs. open! Phil suggested to get where people are getting their information from. [Rail Trail website](#) and 3 partners have the accurate information about what's open. It's a "fake information" issue.
- Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association (TOTA) will have updates linking SNORT to other rail trails to the south

Eagle River Valley Nature trail systems – Andrea

- BC Parks had complaints about access on private property, it's a park, illegal use by motorized
- Andrea and Adrian will connect about this

## 7. Roundtable of New Information (non-trails)

Future Events

- Eagle Valley Snowmobile Club (EVSC) has show and shine Oct 26, Big Days Little Texas Smokehouse, 3PM start and then film festival at 6PM
- EVSC has a ladies ride on Feb 8 in Sicamous co-hosted by CKMP
- EVSC Sled raffle Jan 1 big fundraiser. See EVSC events [here](#) and raffle info [here](#)
- Search and Rescue Banff Mtn film festival – Dec 13-14 old SALMAR theatre in Salmon Arm
- 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
- Backcountry Horsemen of BC annual raffle now, buy [online](#), \$25K top prize closes Nov 29
- Shuswap Dirt Riders guided ride Nov 2 on Mt Ida, access from Silver Creek, info on website.
- CSISS – Jess planning for different funding and grants for whirling disease, hoping to have some FN partnerships. Put link to website, some weed pulls. Contact them for education opportunities for your group.
- Vernon Outdoors Club has bowling at Lincoln Lanes with VOC 6-9pm Vernon check in newsletter Friday Oct 18
- Adams River Salmon Society – doing walkabout Wednesdays for salmon spawning (but want to minimize numbers, not heavily promoted)

Funding

- Jen noted that **Pacifican** is a funding source, fed-prov, applied in Feb 2024. No word for long time. Finally heard email with questions; filled out spreadsheets of info. Sic MTB park, signs at bike park, and planning funds for Onyx, Scatchard, Kelly Mtn for motorized trails, and South Canoe bike skills parks. \$190K applied for. Hopeful but no word yet.
- Kyra noted that HRSA applied for funds and were successful \$65K. Waiting for final response when the \$ will show up.

Sunnybrae and Garbage Issues

- Barbra noted that they’re dealing with garbage, peninsula, FSRs, impacts from Hwy construction and difficult to get to transfer station. Seasonal residents and tourists don’t know how to access; challenging but working with others to address. Bastion Mountain. Some impact from tourism with garbage in parks – household, furniture, some toxic, may not be local. FSR and access to Bastion Mtn and access in parks – could signage be put up? Part of solution.
- Impacts of tourism for garbage – can it be weighed as a measure of impact? Various points – trails, hwy pullouts, etc.
- Is there an opportunity to use weight of garbage as a metric to measure impact of tourism?
- Frank noted that this is reactive not proactive. Adrian noted they’ve discussed this with Kevin E at RSTBC, slow. End up doing it yourself. Denise noted they’ve added some signage on garbage cans. Otherwise it’s a bylaw complaint. Adrian noted a different experience with transfer station in RD of Bulkley Nechako. Barbra added – signage but also messaging to tourists, trying to change human behaviour. Linda noted “leave no trace” principles are not being utilized to most effective value. Recognize that some of those dumping garbage won’t likely read signs or care about messaging; but others want to do the right thing.

7. Next Steps

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

- Working Group – Fri Jan 17, 2025, White Lake Community Hall
- Working Group – Fri April 11 (3<sup>rd</sup> Friday is Good Friday), location TBD
- Working Group – Fri June 13 (3<sup>rd</sup> Friday likely conflicts with Indigenous celebrations), proposed outdoors (location TBD)
- Working Group – Fri Oct 17, location TBD

FUTURE TOPICS – big, beyond just this working group?

- Forest fuel management/wildfire risk reduction
- Dumping and garbage
- Forest landscape planning – discuss in January?

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 <b>Y’icwetsutce</b> and whether it’s the right word	Brad Arnouse	By November 2024
Send edits, typos or corrections on the <b>Shuswap Trail Guide and online maps</b> to Hannah <a href="mailto:maintenance@shuswaptrails.com">maintenance@shuswaptrails.com</a> for print edits by end of 2024 – specifically around access to more remote trails	Everyone	Dec 15
Register for <b>annual meeting</b> – ensure your key elected officials are aware and registered <a href="#">here</a>	Everyone	By Nov 13

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

Task or activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
Start <b>hut to hut opportunities</b> , overnight stays. Build on history. Larger areas, not just Owlhead, Blue Lake, Hunter’s Range.	Louis, others	Future meeting
Work with <b>Shuswap Tourism</b> or current organization to publish and advertise authorized trails	Everyone	Ongoing

<b>Task or activity</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Organizations to <b>sign the LOU</b> if they haven't already done so – original copy if possible (Phil or Jen have it)	Any groups that haven't signed LOU	Ongoing
Send any <b>GPS/GIS linework</b> on trails to Adrian at Shuswap Trail Alliance, <a href="mailto:adrian@shuswaptrails.com">adrian@shuswaptrails.com</a>	Everyone	Ongoing
Trails groups – send <b>suitable berry picking sites, locations of cultural plants of interest</b> (highbush cranberry, hazelnut, yellow avalanche lily, spring beauty/Indian potatoes, soopalalie, saskatoon) as trail reports to <a href="mailto:trailreport@shuswaptrails.com">trailreport@shuswaptrails.com</a> – intent is that Secwepemc governments are seeking this information, it will be shared only with them	Everyone	Ongoing
Send any reports of <b>erosion or trail damage</b> from heavy rains to <a href="mailto:trailreport@shuswaptrails.com">trailreport@shuswaptrails.com</a>	Everyone	Ongoing
Seek <b>support letters for funding</b> applications from each other	Everyone	Ongoing
Consider opportunities for funds to do <b>cumulative effects assessment</b> on a complex project	Everyone	Ongoing
<b>Secwepemc Plant Knowledge cards</b> - order from Neskonlith Education Centre by email <a href="mailto:educationassistant@neskonlithec.net">educationassistant@neskonlithec.net</a>	Everyone	Ongoing
Download the <b>Secwepemc language app</b> for your smart phone	Everyone	Ongoing
Consider doing <b>media releases</b> when projects are complete (e.g., South Canoe Parking lot, Sorrento Blind Bay perimeter trail, Skimikin)	Jen, everyone	Ongoing
If doing a <b>clean-up event</b> , contact <a href="#">Ben van Nostrand</a> 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 <b>future big funding calls come out</b> . Need time to be strategic.	Everyone	Ongoing
<b>Secwepemc Landmarks – sentinel structures</b> : contact Jen or Adrian if your group wants to undertake this for one or more in their areas	Everyone	Ongoing
Morgan requested for people <b>hosting events</b> wanting to raise awareness to submit them to the events page at <b>Shuswap Tourism</b> <a href="#">here</a>	Anyone hosting events	Ongoing