

# Nicola Lake Steering Committee

## September 15, 2015 - Meeting Notes

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### Attendance:

David Lawrence – Nooaitch Band  
Angela Fountain – Shackan Band  
Tracy Wimbush – Nicola Tribal Association  
Dave Caswell – Lower Nicola Band  
Stewart Murray – Douglas Lake Ranch  
Diana Norgaard – City of Merritt  
Mike Ohata – Highland Valley Copper  
Tom Pypker – Thompson Rivers University  
BJ Moore – Nicola Valley Fish and Game Club  
Allison Guichon – Gerrard Guichon Ranch  
Lorna Latrimouille – Beaver Point Estates  
Tom Wilms – Nicola Valley Institute of Technology (afternoon)  
Steve Rice – TNRD Electoral Area I Director (afternoon)  
Doug Edwards – Fisheries and Oceans Canada

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*The meeting started at 10:10 AM*

### Welcome & Introductions

- Tracy Thomas welcomed everyone present
- **Action** – BJ and Dave Caswell to touch base with Tolko contacts to help find representation at this planning table

### Endorse the July 13<sup>th</sup> notes

- The July 13<sup>th</sup> notes were endorsed

### Review July 13<sup>th</sup> action items:

1. Action – Committee members need to find an alternate person for their committee seat and send the name and contact information to Tracy Thomas (TT) – **incomplete**
2. Action – TT will update the membership based on the information received at the meeting and via email – **complete; ongoing**
3. Action – TT will update the terms of reference based on feedback from Committee members and will send out when revisions have been drafted - **complete**
4. Action – TT to look into the interpretation of MoE water quality samples at Nicola Lake – **The bulk of the water samples taken at Nicola Lake were reported to the Nicola Working Group by Bob Grace in 2013 – Personal communication Dennis Einarson**
5. Action - TT to revise the Nicola Lake Action Plan based on Committee input and post the Nicola Watershed Plan to [www.nicolaplan.ca](http://www.nicolaplan.ca) – **incomplete**

6. Action – Mike Ohata to investigate Ministry of Environment funding for water quality testing – **Tracy organized future water sampling with Dennis Einarson, MoE**
7. Action - TT to make changes to the Nicola website to reflect the change in scope from lake to watershed - **underway**
8. Action – TT to contact representatives from the organizations/agencies listed above and add representatives to the Nicola Steering Committee - **ongoing**
9. Action – TNRD (Randy), City of Merritt (Diana), and BC Parks (Michelle) to add the Nicola webpage to their websites - **complete**
10. Action – TT to contact Gold Country Tourism to ask for permission to add Nicola webpage to website - **incomplete**
11. Action – TT to add invasive species monitoring to Nicola EWM Plan - **complete**
12. Action – TT will complete the DRAFT EWM Plan and present it to Committee members - **complete**
13. Action – Diana and Randy to lobby UBCM for mandatory boat washing at BC Parks in September - **UBCM has not had a meeting**
14. Action – TT to put up EWM prevention/education signs at north and south ends of Nicola Lake on Highway 5A as part of the EWM Plan - **incomplete**
15. Action – TT to draft media release regarding the Nicola planning process and projects that are underway – **incomplete**

#### **Dennis Einarson, MoE - water quality**

Unfortunately, Dennis was not able to attend the meeting. He will review Nicola water quality data to date at a future NSC meeting.

#### **Doug Edwards, DFO – Nicola Water Management Tool**

- Doug provided the Steering Committee with a brief background and update regarding the NWMT:
- DFO approached the NSC over a year ago as there were funds available to support the development of a tool to aid in the operation of the Nicola dam; the Committee was in support of developing a tool for the Nicola.
- The systems are vastly different, that is taken into account
- The Tool will be similar to the one used in the Okanagan. To learn more about the Okanagan Fish Water Management Tool go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2xTF7xMm-UY>
- The tool is a computer model that used historical and real time data to help dam operators make decisions. Information regarding water temperatures and flows, flooding and the timing of salmonid life stages in the system are taken into account to help determine the timing and volume of dam releases
- As there is a lack of real time data in the Nicola watershed, other projects are underway to support tool development including the upgrading of gauging stations on Spius Creek and Guichon Creek and the development of a groundwater project

- Phase 1 (planning) is now complete, funding is being sourced for Phase 2 (development of the tool) and Phase 3 (implementation and training); funding is also being sourced for ongoing operational costs

## Updates

Eurasian watermilfoil management plan:

- A second draft of the EWM plan was reviewed at the meeting – there were a few revisions noted including the addition of terrestrial species and the grouping of control sites based on being public or private land in addition to the criteria employed
- **Action** – NSC to take part in weed pulling event
- **Action** – TT will make revisions to the draft plan and post the draft plan to [www.nicolaplan.ca](http://www.nicolaplan.ca)

Research collaborative:

- Tom Pypker, Thompson Rivers University (TRU) expressed an interest in having graduate students conduct research in the Nicola watershed to Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO). As a result, Tracy Thomas was contacted and a meeting between TRU, DFO and MFLNRO was set up.
- The meeting resulted in the group agreeing that there needed to be a “research collaborative” with the groups listed above along with local First Nations, the BC Ministry of Agriculture, and others as needed.
- Ideally, this collaborative would be an informal group that meets regularly to discuss and prioritize research in the Nicola watershed. The result of these meetings would be collaborative and strategic level decision making, communication/sharing of resources and a reduction in the duplication of effort across the watershed.
- A meeting will be called in the fall to address upcoming funding pots
- Tracy Wimbush is interested in being a member of the research collaborative

Other:

- An engineering firm has been hired to develop a plan for the operation of the Mammit Lake dam
- **Action** – TT to post the Bennett groundwater report to Nicola website
- First nations are able to do technical work around fish and water in the watershed
- Tracy Wimbush and David Lawrence asked to be kept informed of all activities related to the Nicola
- **Action** – David Lawrence and Tracy Thomas will draft a request for funding to MFLNRO for the Nicola Water Management Tool
- **Action** – David Lawrence and Tracy Thomas to meet with the manager of the Citxw Nlaka’pamux Assembly regarding funding for the NWMT
- **Action** – Tracy T. to send out past summer student report to NSC members
- **Action** – Tracy T. so set up opportunities for NSC to get to know each other better, possibly combined with a workshop

## Nicola Watershed Plan – content and planning

- The Committee discussed and agreed that a watershed plan needs a planning process complete with a speaker series and possibly hands on workshops. Pieces from the Nicola Lake Action Plan that the Committee thinks are relevant will be carried forward to the new watershed plan
- The new scope also requires some new people around the table; there are some new members to date; part of the planning process is making sure that stakeholders, governments, industry, etc. are represented

- As a very preliminary start to the watershed planning process the Committee worked on developing a vision for the watershed. A vision was not drafted though there were many values expressed as well as an opportunity for committee members to learn about others at the table.
- The watershed planning process will also require funding to support the work

#### Education/speaker series ideas

- Water quality – Dennis Einarson
- Groundwater/surface water interactions - Doug Lewis
- Invasive species prevention and management (aquatic and terrestrial) – Jo-Ann Fox/ Brian Heise
- Forest hydrology – Rita Winkler
- Range pond water loss – Aaron Cohello
- Bio solids – Randy Murray, Wendy Gardner
- Stream bank erosion/ bioengineering/ shade – TBD
- Ground water – Tom Pypker
- Agriculture and water use – Andrew Peterson
- Environmental Farm Planning/FRISP – Lee Hesketh/other?
- Climate Change – Ag Canada
- Dam operation
- Future water demands

*2:30 PM – Meeting Adjourned*