



AGM Meeting Minutes

Mar 20, 2024, 7:00pm, Creston Rotocrest Hall, 39 members present

1. Call to order and Land Acknowledgement - 7:02 PM
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of previous meeting minutes
4. President's Report
 - a. Local Colors and Vancouver Film Festival - well attended functions to engage people and fundraising events. Thanks to Lindsey on his contribution to Local Colors .
 - b. Bird Fest - Next major annual event organized by a committee of 12 under the umbrella of Wildsight Creston (WC). This year is the 12th year of the event that brings wide attention to the Creston Valley management Area and the adjoining Nature Conservancy of Canada lands to convey the value of those nature spaces.
 - c. Family Nature Walks - WC receives funding from Regional District to support the program that is organized by Melissa Flint. The walks have been on local trails, and the program will be expanded once the volunteer base is organized to restart the program.
 - d. Turtle Fencing - Jim Smith was out today with the Creston Valley Management Area staff to place fencing to protect turtles from crossing the West Creston road that has claimed the loss of many turtles. Jim also provided logs for the turtles to perch on in their habitat area.
 - e. Water Monitoring - Melissa trained volunteers and members to collect data on water taken from the Goat River for the last two years. WC participated with other organizations with training and data collection that is conveyed to Columbia Basin Water Hub for long term monitoring.
 - f. Introduced a new program called Friendly Fencing. The program was initiated by Debby Johnston who raised concerns over the presence of abandoned and dangerous fencing to wildlife. WC works with the Creston Valley Rod and Gun Club to remove such fencing. Debby has researched the subject to design and provide information for all the landowners in the Valley by sending them a brochure about to be published. We are still fundraising for that project which needs another \$1000 to complete.



- g. WC Work Bees - work bees are initiated by Wildsight when conservation issues come to light, such as the removal of dangerous fencing.
- h. WC Monitor of Conservation/Resource Development Policies -
 - i. Kootenay Lake Timber Supply Area Review- sent input to the chief forester calling for a drastic reduction of the allowable timber supply based on the report's calculations and conveyed concerns over non spatial dogmas?. watersheds, unstable terrain, and education about forestry.
 - ii. BC Biodiversity and Ecosystem Health Framework - WC responded to the BC Government acknowledging the significance of the Framework in changing the paradigm shift in resource management from exploitation to conservation. Our letter conveyed the need for decision makers to be held accountable and responsible to align with the objectives of the Framework. We highlighted the need to include the reference to increased ecosystem conductivity through valley bottoms and private lands. In addition, the success of this Framework is contingent on k-12 education. which requires an aligning paradigm shift.
- i. Duck Creek Watershed - WC challenged Canfor and Blue Mountain hydrological reports which showed discrepancies in their ECA calculations. WC discussed the issues with Canfor's hydrologist. Canfor did not harvest the blocks of concern they planned to cut in 2023. The Lower Kootenay Band also added pressure to prevent the harvest.
- j. Fawn Rescue - Lindsay brought to attention to WC the motility of fawns who seek shelter in hay fields at harvesting time. Lindsay researched preventative measures, such as using infrared sensing to identify the locations of hidden fawns prior to combining activity. WC will conduct a pilot project this fall employing drones to detect the animals.
- k. Watershed Management Guide = WC is working with RDCK to initiate regional sustainable water management plans for the benefit of water conservation for the Valley, including Duck Creek.
- l. WC Green Map - this is a GIS mapping project to gain data for conservation measures for the Creston Valley. WC and the Selkirk College developed the database and through WC's pilot project, data related to fencing and cottonwood locations is being added. Fencing by Valley landowners has altered the migration pattern of wildlife. The presence of cottonwood vegetation is essential to the sturgeon population. WC's pilot mapping project will add data to a small portion of the Green Map. Artificial Intelligence analyses the air photos to generate data on cottonwood and fencing locations. This project ties in with Robin Louie's (Lower Kootenay Band) elk movement monitoring. WC hopes to raise funding to the tune of \$400,000 to expand the coverage of the Green Map area to understand and plan future development and connectivity protection.



- m. Speaker Series - similar to the nature walks, WC will be reassembling the program after the COVID19 disruption. Brian asked for input for potential speakers the audience would like to promote for our Creston Valley community
- n. Strategic Planning Process - WC Board was guided through a number of sessions, by a consultant funded by CBT, to define WC's mission and vision. The strategies to achieve those statements were adopted by the Board.

5. Financial Statement

Financial Statement presented

6. Nominations for Board Member

- a. Brian made three calls for nominations answered by Dee Howard who was nominated by Deborah Johnson.
- b. With the resignation of Jim Smith and Rob Louie, Dee Howard was welcomed to the WC Team

7. Adjournment - 7:28 pm

8. Presentation by Richard Klafki, Director of Rocky Mountains Program, Nature Conservancy of Canada