

FOKLSS REVISIONING MEETING -

JUNE 20, 2024

1. OPENING COMMENTS & CONTEXT SETTING FOR CURRENT HIATUS
2. WHY ARE WE HERE - WHAT KOOTENAY LAKE MEANS TO ME
3. WHAT IS POSSIBLE? WHERE IS THE CRITICAL NEED?
4. PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED BY GROUP
5. NEXT STEPS
6. CLOSING: INDIVIDUALS' THOUGHTS AND COMMITMENTS
7. MORE DETAILED NOTES

WHO ATTENDED?

Board: Martin Carver, Sukhananda, Greg Utzig, John Betts, Ben Simoni, Tina Deenik, Robin Louie, Alanda Greene, Gwen Dell'Anno (recent ED)

Membership: Nashira Birch, David Reid, Susan Vanray, Cynthia Fraser, Nalini Rogers, Melanie Mobbs, Lily Feedback, Sarah Town, Simon de la Salle

Invitees: Gary Jackman (RDCK), Sangita Sudan (RDCK), Lesley Payne (Nelson City and Kootenay Car Share), Claire Peyton (KLP), Paige Thurston (Living Lakes), Allan Eneas (Flatbow Tribe), Rory Gallagher and Camille Leblanc (recent FoKLSS Board members)

1. OPENING COMMENTS & CONTEXT SETTING FOR CURRENT HIATUS

- We experienced a decline in board activity and strength
- Funding – with many elements part of this – we found ourselves sometimes misaligned with what we wanted to pursue and accomplish and what we needed to do in order to receive funding. With a small organisation such as ours, single year funding was an obstacle. Multi-year funding is needed to enact and complete projects.
- We had wonderful and eager young employees but often only for a year, as a result of the funding situation. (They moved on, once trained, to better pay and greater job security.)
- This hiatus, this pause allowed examining and questioning how we move forward. How will we be funded? Are there enough people who want to be active supporters? We've mined the equity of good luck. It may not be possible for FoKL to go forward. What is the critical mass for sustaining?

2. WHY ARE WE HERE - WHAT KOOTENAY LAKE MEANS TO ME

- Connecting people and interests
- Drawn to the Lake, wanting to be a better friend to the Lake
- Its natural presence, biodiversity, watersheds, beauty, light and changing moods
- Calming, clears my mind
- Water is life, water quality and availability
- Personal connection with lake: plants, animals, shore, water
- Being on the lake brings me home
- This is the mother lake, connecting to other lakes through the region through the underground hot water that flows to these other areas; our responsibility is to care. With my people's tradition, from the first day of birth we are brought to the lake. We are people of the marshes, the wetlands, the lake. We're all on the same page in that we love this lake, taking care of the lake unites us. We all love and care for the lake. Our responsibility extends out, with the water flowing into the Pacific Ocean.

3. WHAT IS POSSIBLE? WHERE IS THE CRITICAL NEED?

GROUP A - Development impact

Focussing on shoreline development "shoreline champions":

1. Develop & Maintain a "Shoreline Ambassador Program" - Mail flyers to each homeowner, offer shoreline assessments, education outreach, direct engagement with homeowners
2. Narrow our scope (3 vs 10 projects)
3. Engage non-shoreline homeowners through Summit & shoreline clean up - bring people together inspire and educate

4. Indigenous Education & Goal Alignment

GROUP B - Education & biodiversity

- Stewardship is critical
- Not education - instead inspiration
- How to make inspiration productive? Eg. beach clean up have education outcomes
- How to get teachers outside
- Education funding is MIA
- Biodiversity crisis
- Shoreline & creekside resident education
- Governance bodies are not education or enforcing shoreline & watershed
- If people knew how to be good stewards, they would do it. Similar to firesmart, but for shoreline
- **Educating home owners & youth & recreational (RDCK)**
- For Gala fundraising FoKLSS needs to be a charity, needs funder base
- Host dinner fundraisers
- Get charity status

GROUP C - Climate Change

1. Collect & Organise
 - a. Partners
 - b. Data available
 - c. Analysis & synthesis
 - d. Community observation
 - e. Lean on the network & utilise
2. Create the Story
 - a. State of the lake
 - b. Consistency
 - c. Newsletters and videos
 - d. Digestible & accessible
3. Understanding the shift
 - a. Risk awareness
 - b. What does it mean?
 - c. What do I do with this information
 - d. Fire & Flood & Drought
4. **Need sustainable funding for staff to gather data related specifically to our lake and tell the stories**

GROUP D - Everything Else

- Strong partnerships - expanding to access information from projects in relevant areas, funding to train students for doing this leads to grants through student/group/organisation
 - Indigenous

- RDCK
- Living Lakes
- SD8
- Selkirk College
- Broadening links
- UBC
- Supporting Yaqaan Nukiy projects in partnership eg. bringing volunteers to participate in existing projects
- Work with ways/groups who can support admin work - Living Lakes, Kootenay Lake Partnership, Kootenay Conservation Partnership, SD8, City of Nelson - to be more efficiency
- **Identifying core funding with partnership or aligning with other organizations**

5. PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED BY GROUP

- a. **Indigenous Education & Goal Alignment**
- b. **Educate (eg. Kootenay Lake Summit) public on:**
 - i. **Ecology**
 - ii. **History**
 - iii. **How the lake operates**
 - iv. **Cumulative Effects**
- c. **Identifying core funding with partnership or aligning with other organisations**
- d. **Collect data & tell the stories**

Overall summary - building culture together, build foundation for advocacy and connection

- People connection
- Land/watershed
- Food and animals
- Traditional land based activities

5. NEXT STEPS

- e. Create an endowment fund & work from the interest
- f. Potential program partners - KLLCF, BCHydro, Teck, Columbia Power, RDCK, Province, Bonneville Power
- g. Support reconciliation/reparations for Yaqaan Nukiy, support salmon re-intro
- h. Match with donations from residents
- i. Use fund to support general operations
- j. Create a United Nations funding model for the Lake. Collaboration could be funded through agreed/committed contributions, for example, from all the monitoring programs that contribute their data to a FoKLSS Climate Change Communication

Program. The (quite small cost per organization) could be included in their budgets as an integral part of their data monitoring project costs

- k. Focus on Specific Issues pertaining to the lake
- l. Advocate to governments from this focus on the Lake
- m. Board needs to more hands-on active on projects
 - i. Avoid trap of administering funders' project only
 - ii. Set aside money from funder - ie admin % as unrestricted cash
 - iii. Develop Board membership with a view to succession
- n. How do we recruit an active Board as needed?
- o. Educate (eg. Kootenay Lake Summit) public on:
 - i. Ecology
 - ii. History
 - iii. How the lake operates
 - iv. Cumulative Effects

6. CLOSING: INDIVIDUALS' THOUGHTS AND COMMITMENTS

- Paige: Living Lakes will see what it can do to support administration, etc
- Lily: I'm impressed with the care and passion shown for the lake which leads me to want to be involved and be a good member
- Nalini: I want to be a good member
- Melanie: I'm intrigued with the idea of joining the board. Will discuss with my partner.
- Camille: I could have a role as an advisor. I know a lot of what **not** to do. I can rejoin the Board in another year.
- Rory: This is such a great group advocating for the Lake and it's exciting to me but I'm not in a position to be on the board anymore.
- Ben: My term on the board is coming up and I feel invigorated with this meeting, but I'm not in the best position to be a working board member just now with a small baby. I want to see where this goes: Are we able to establish the funding we need? We've been trying. The bank account window for FoKLSS will close. Switching to an active, working board has implications.
- Greg: It's time for new blood on the board. I would like to be a resource, to be in an advisory role
- Susan: Being a board member, going to meetings, is not my thing but I am passionate about engagement in projects. Is having a board the only way to do the work needed. Could we have a model like a non-profit co-op or enterprise? A way to do this without meetings?
- Sangita: I'm an advocate for FoKLSS. I will join the board in two years.
- Cynthia: I will think about how I can be an active voice. Would like to suggest, as an example of a different fund-raising method, to have fundraising community dinners which can pull in more members and community
- John: I will proceed in a transition process. The board needs to determine the next steps. I'm willing to put in energy to help pass FoKLSS on.
- Gwen: I'm available for admin support. Being on the board would be a conflict of interest

- Sukhananda: We need to pull together what has happened here this evening, communicate to members and beyond. We need someone with fund-raising skills/training/experience to work with businesses, companies. I'm very willing to help with these transitions.
- Robin: Money is easy to get. We need to Just ASK. My strength is on the land. Just having my name on the board brings support. Glenco is coming out to be on the walk on the land. I'll try to get an opening for funding. It never hurts just to ask. I can start speaking for FoKLSS: it's surprising who we have access to, who we can reach.
- Martin: I'm inspired by the "what" and the "how". I can see a sustainable funding model possible. But it's a lot of work. We're making threshold decisions and the clock is ticking. We need (maybe three) people who could champion and lead through to a new reconfiguration. Do we have enough? We need people to be on a working group to lead the transition, for example, a 6-month commitment. The model is great. Getting there is the challenge.
- Alanda: I appreciate the work. I don't know where, or if, I fit right now.
- John: maybe we need a bit of time – a percolation moment.
- Sangita: A next step is to articulate what is involved. This is not a mountain
- Greg: new ideas have come out, we've put together the pieces. . "one bite at a time". Can the ideas be checked out to see what will work – contact organisations.

7. MORE DETAILED NOTES

- **Education and Biodiversity Group, and Development Group:**
 - Need for developing homeowner awareness and education about the lake
 - Shoreline Development: a "Kootenay Lake Ambassador Program" could bring awareness to shoreline issues: native plants, a healthy shoreline
 - Bringing awareness (eg., a summit) on Indigenous Education and goal alignment; having an audience to join with the Yaqan Nuki and develop awareness of shared goals, ways to implement them. There exists with many a strong desire to understand the Yaqan Nuki goals and connect with the lake. FoKLSS could develop a collaboration with them that helps people understand the culture more and the relationship to the lake.
 - Robin Louie commented that there is currently signage being created by the Yaqan Nuki about conservation projects, in the watersheds, traditional mountain food, a focus on mountain tops and preserving water. Developing agro-forest use for medicines and foods, identifying plants. This is easy to understand when we understand the water. We make a culture grow by taking everyone's ideas and thoughts and aligning our goals. Getting the words known so the messages are heard, so we create a collective voice.
 - There are communities that don't get heard enough. I'm indigenous but I don't want to be considered just that. Let's work on building a culture together. That's something we can all do.
 - We can be building a culture and building connections.
 - How do we talk about the connection to all the beings that are part of the lake?
 - Learning to understand the connection in all the levels.
- **The Climate Change Group**

- Residents and businesses in the region are generally unaware of the extent to which climate change is affecting us already. Individuals may notice particular impacts – wash outs and localised droughts, landslides and smoke – but not recognise the connections with climate change.
- Yet a mass of monitoring is already happening, turbidity, snowpack, rainfall, Cabin/Watershed monitoring, osprey, fish, development control, water quality, lake levels, temperatures, smoke and air quality, fire (other data identified from the working sheet)
- The difficulty is that it is gathered and held through a wide range of organizations, Selkirk College, Nelson City, the RDCK, consultants (others from the working sheet). It is not brought together and collated.
- It is not communicated effectively and meaningfully through reports, videos, stories. People need to understand what is happening and what is at stake. Build whole lake picture through relatable local community stories.
- There's a role for FoKLSS in bringing data together in a long-term sustainable way, making it more readily available and educating the public.
- The work requires long-term funding, bringing people and data together – staffing.
- **The Everything Else Group**
 - Wanting to educate the public to succeed
 - We felt we would do better to focus specifically on the lake. Main success is focussing on educating the public. The Summit, eg, allowed us to hear back from participants.
 - Being active on the land is effective, reclamation projects, etc, but had ended up with funding given through aligning with other groups' goals. Past "hands-on" projects have been very successful and some do have a primary role in engaging volunteers, eg., beach clean ups, but the scattered funding model also made it very hard to succeed.
 - How do we recruit an active board and sustain it? Education is key.
 - Important to help people understand the shifts on Kootenay Lake, to access and digest the science knowledge of what is happening, what the information means, to make the data accessible, to make FoKL a resource.
 - Reaching out, eg, to loggers working half-way up the mountains, understanding connections and impacts elsewhere.

Wrap Up: Ideas, Suggestions, Ways Forward

- Reach out to FortisBC, Columbia Power, Teck, CBT, Bonneville (?) Power (USA?) or BCHydro, etc to create an endowment fund to provide a stable, interest income yielding, ongoing funding foundation Other potential funding sources mentioned included - Salmon Funding and having a website for fundraising
- Kootenay Lake Border Control/Idaho flooding concern – can we work with them?
- We need 5-10 year funding to get started, eg, a tax levy via the RDCK. We have a strong reputation and brand. Is there a parallel in the way Kootenay Conservation is funded specifically for the lake that could be helpful to us. [Can John explain this? Also Ben mention the need for core funding and mentioned the SDK(?)]

- Develop stronger partnerships that allow
 - reliable core funding in place, or
 - become housed in other organisations such as Living Lakes
- Create a United Nations funding model for the Lake. Collaboration could be funded through agreed/committed contributions, for example, from all the monitoring programs that contribute their data to a FoKLSS Climate Change Communication Program. The (quite small cost per organization) could be included in their budgets as an integral part of their data monitoring project costs,
- We need a fundraiser on the board.
- Re-establish the board as more of a working board. Build connections and maybe have board members from specific organizations: Selkirk College, Living Lakes Canada, school districts, invite an RDCK member onto the Board. Approach Eric Sargeant from the Shoreline Homeowners' Association.
- Avoid over-complicated projects, like Harrop Wetlands where we need to find match funding and get involved in major site works (diggers, engineers, etc)
- Can FoKLSS be funded by various organizations? Engagement, communication, education. Who can we partner with, eg, Kootenay Youth?
- We need skilled grant writers. Maybe the education aspect would be more easily managed than large projects. We need active board members.
- Keep having conversations on partnerships and ways of getting support