

MEETING MINUTES

MABR Roundtable Gathering Volume 25
Friday March 10th, 2023, 09:00am to 11:30am
Town of Qualicum Beach Municipal Office
(201-660 Primrose St. Qualicum Beach, BC V9K 2R5)



Attendees (14)

Anne Skipsey, Town of Qualicum Beach, Councillor
Catherine Watson, Community Representative
Cheryl Jones, Snaw-naw-as First Nation, Councillor
Graham Sakaki, MABRRI, Research Institute Manager
Jenica Ng-Cornish, MABRRI, Assistant Manager Projects
Kim Burden, Parksville & District Chamber of Commerce, Executive Director
Lehann Wallace, Regional District of Nanaimo, Area G Director
Michael Recalma, Qualicum First Nation, Chief
Pam Shaw, MABRRI, Research Director
Ray Woroniak, Community Representative
Renée Jamurat, Islands Trust, Regional Planning Manager
Steve Adams, Mosaic Forest Management, Resource Technologist
Sylvia Martin, City of Parksville, Councillor
Tom Reid, Nature Trust BC, West Coast Program Manager

Objectives

The main objectives of this Roundtable gathering are for participants to:

1. Continue to engage in respectful and meaningful dialogue with one another.
2. Hear from one another about regional/organizational/community updates.
3. Discuss past, present, and future events for the MABR/RI.
4. Welcome new Community Representatives to the MABR Roundtable.

Welcome & Opening Prayer

- Round of introductions and welcome to new members.
- Graham reviewed the *Culture of Engagement*.
- Agenda adopted.

Circle Updates from Roundtable Members

Ray Woroniak, Community Representative

- Biosphere and SDGs awareness day – is there interest in this from the roundtable? The event would primarily be aimed towards youth with interactive activities where community groups demonstrate which SDGs their work contributes to. The event would be most successful while students are in school so that teachers can bring classes to the event.
 - Roundtable members voted in favour of hosting this in September 2024 as it will take some time to work out the details and determine capacity. Members agreed that the

focus of the event should be around all the SDGs, not just environmental, to align with the mandate of BRs. Will need to brainstorm areas within the BR that can handle large volumes of people – Lehann suggested Little Qualicum Hatchery.

- SDG 2 (Zero Hunger): Would the roundtable like to support SD69 to provide breakfasts and lunches for children in need? There are currently 25 children at Arrowview Elementary who are unable to bring their own lunch to school, and some work could be done to find out the need across the school district. The roundtable may be a good place to do some organization – Ray is willing to facilitate the work.
 - Members recounted that food security was high on the list of priorities when the Roundtable was originally being formed, as food security is an important part of wellbeing and fostering healthy communities.
 - Members agree to support this initiative in various ways:
 - MABR endorsed/sanctioned events that could support a food program. We do not currently have a policy around businesses displaying the MABR logo, but should come up with one.
 - Letters of support provided by the Roundtable.
 - MABRRI may be able to help with grant raising.
 - Other internal connections – Kim and Ray to connect about possibilities of making a request to 100 Oceanside Men who Give a Damn and approaching Parksville and Qualicum Rotary Clubs.
- Lehann: Is there a place where all information is captured of organizations in the region and their work, services, and activities? Ray has an excel document listing local groups and their websites. Members will take this offline via email to contribute to and build on the list that Ray has started.

Catherine Watson, Community Representative

- Catherine is Involved with the Friends of French Creek Conservation Society (FFCCS). There is currently a working group developing a management plan for the French Creek Estuary Nature Preserve with the RDN.
- Also involved with Mid Vancouver Island Habitat Enhancement Society (MVIHES) – they are doing riparian planting along the Englishman River and the cedar fence is finished in estuary area. MVIHES is also involved in riparian restoration, forage fish sampling, water quality testing, and will be getting more involved in youth education and outreach.
- Catherine is also involved with the Canadian Federation of University Women – an international organization with local branches. The Federation does international outreach, supports women’s equality and education in many areas, provides scholarships through book sales, and engages in the Red Dress campaign in Qualicum Beach and Parksville.

Renée Jamurat, Islands Trust

- Ballenas-Winchelsea Local Trust Area committee meetings are scheduled for –April 19, 2023 and October 4, 2023. Any key information that the Roundtable would like shared for the public through the Trust can be done so through Trust area correspondence.
- Islands Trust council meetings were held this week – information is available on the website.
 - Approved budget for upcoming projects.

- No land use projects are planned for Ballenas-Winchelsea.
- Working on ways to communicate better and have stronger connections, being curious about with relationships with First Nations communities, particularly Snaw-naw-as First Nation.

Cheryl Jones, Snaw-naw-as (Nanoose) First Nation

- Nanoose is working with MABRRI to install totem poles at the gas station in Nanoose. They have been successful in getting two 12 ft. totem poles that will each have MABR plaques, and will also be working with Mosaic to get the poles. The Nation has chosen two carvers within the community who will create welcoming figures – a man and a lady. The deadline to have this completed is September 2023, and the project is well on track to be completed by then. Gratitude and excitement reciprocated from MABRRI and Mosaic to be working together on this project.
- Graham and Pam mentioned there is funding to include a redesign of the signage at the Nanoose rest stop, to include an improved history and land acknowledgement. Cheryl is planning to do a site visit to identify what needs to be updated.

Pam Shaw, MABRRI

- Milner Gardens and Woodlands is setting out on strategic planning exercise. Volunteers will soon see a survey about what they imagine happening at the garden in the future.
- The history of Milner Gardens is currently told starting from around 1920, leaving out a lot of important history before this time. Part of the strategic planning work is looking to be able to tell a bigger story about the truths of the history. Pam will keep the Roundtable up to date on how this proceeds.

Lehann Wallace, Regional District of Nanaimo

- Financial planning process is underway for the RDN. [RDN Get Involved Budget Talks website](#) has financial plan and member summary breakdowns, where funding allocations, capital plans, etc., can be viewed.
- Related to the French Creek Estuary Nature Preserve Management Plan that Catherine spoke to earlier, RDN Area G has funded the development of the management plan. The direction of the plan is to form a committee with community groups and staff at RDN to have a management plan in place for the property to ensure nature preservation and permissible access. This is a key priority for Area G Parks Service.
- Nature Trust BC is providing opportunities to learn about restoration work on the Englishman River. Chris Bob has helped host some tours and info sessions.
- French Creek water budget analysis study: RDN Board of Direction looking at water budget for French Creek, which started in 2020. This will be put through an additional review as the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship is re-evaluating the boundaries of aquifers in the area.

Sylvia Martin, City of Parksville

- Parksville is currently in strategic planning meetings. [Let's Talk Parksville website](#) provides updates on what's happening. The strategic plan will come up with budget items that are currently being reviewed.

Steve Adams, Mosaic

- Related to earlier discussions in this meeting, tying things to SDGs and UNDRIP are important and should be goals for this group.
 - Graham mentioned that the MABR Annual Report links initiatives to the SDGs ([2022 Annual Report available online](#)).
- Mosaic has a planning program underway to develop seed that is resilient to climate change.
- Mosaic has a 15-passenger van on the way to do tours.
- Earth Day on April 22 – clean up efforts at various watersheds with community and Mosaic staff.
- Upcoming tours at Nanaimo and Englishman watersheds with RDN and City of Nanaimo – grade 4 and 5 students in School Districts 68 and 69.

Chief Michael Recalma, Qualicum First Nation

- Qualicum First Nation is also working on totem poles for the gas station by August this year.
 - Graham mentioned there are discussions around applying for the same funds that Snaw-naw-as did through the First Nations Cultural Council.
 - The Nation's election is this in August 2023.

Tom Reid, Nature Trust BC

- Marina Way property that the Nature Trust acquired: the 5000 square foot house has been removed, and restoration has just been completed (seawall removed, fill removed, beach nourishment, archaeological assessment).
- Working on a similar project in the lower river to place large woody debris structures to stabilize and create fish habitat.
- In year 5 of estuary resilience to climate change study. The Englishman River is currently one site being looked at. Will be releasing reports to community and governments that will say whether the Englishman River will be resilient to climate change (there are some challenges it faces).
 - Looking at adding the Little Qualicum River to the estuary program to do a similar study.
- Craig Bay to Little Qualicum (PQBWMA): cumulative impacts of multiple applications of seawalls.
 - Receiving funding to do a whole coast study with climate modeling and coastal assessments to identify areas of real vulnerability, and then pilot community level foreshore projects to look at multiple projects at a time.
 - Lehann suggested bringing together land use designations (upland information) – maybe there needs to be zoning changes in uplands to account for estuary damage.
- Signed an agreement with Nanoose First Nation for stewardship management within the Nation's territory. Have set a culture of engagement and common set of values for working cooperatively on the ground.
- Nature Trust is continuously active on acquisitions – the property on Little Qualicum River is currently being fundraised for.
- Lehann: 3 motions were passed in the RDN in January - incorporate regional watershed protection, regional growth targets to be established, and urban containment boundaries be reviewed to incorporate floodplain mapping.
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Kim Burden, Parksville & District Chamber of Commerce

- Currently renewing the board of directors.
- Annual General Meeting coming up in April.

- Working with the Brant Festival to do the “Find the Goose” event to encourage people to get out and become familiar.
- Planning for upcoming Canada Day event.
- Attended the Indigenous Resource Opportunities conference in Nanaimo last week. A main take-away was a presentation from Chief Roberts in Campbell River on their Guardians program, which incorporates data collection to empower Indigenous folks to get out on the land and gain better understanding on what’s happening on the land and in the ocean.
 - Suggested to add a conversation about a similar program on a future agenda.
 - Chief Recalma mentioned that Qualicum First Nation just starting a program to do monitoring in the ocean – starting with herring and will expand to encompass year-round monitoring.
 - Pam mentioned a training program through VIU’s Resource Management Officer Training program has a course for lands and waters working with Indigenous communities (RMOT 496 – Resource Management and Aboriginal Rights).
 - Graham mentioned there are typically a lot of funding opportunities for such programs.

Anne Skipsey, Town of Qualicum Beach

- There is interest around food security in Qualicum Beach.
- TQB submitted a motion on Scotch broom to the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities.
- Anne attended the Federation of Canadian Municipalities Sustainable Communities Conference in Ottawa in February. There will be links on the TQB website on some of the materials covered, such as life cycle costing and climate change initiatives.

Teagan and Sarah, Fridays for Future Qualicum Beach

- Circulated a petition that MP Gord Johns will take to parliament this spring. The petition helps youth voices be heard, and if passed will require the government to consult youth every time decisions about climate are made.
- Fridays for Future students have been door-knocking most days after school. Petitions will be mailed in on Monday, March 13th.
- Petitions can also be signed online (House of Commons website); however, signatures on paper count more as they can be read once every 25 signatures, but only once every 500 signatures for online.

MABR Updates

Pam Shaw, MABRRI

- **TRANSECTS program**
 - Hosted out of University of Saskatchewan by Maureen Reid, who is also involved with Redberry Lake Biosphere Region.
 - This is a multi-year project to bring together students from Canada, Germany, and South Africa (and maybe other countries) in a biosphere to participate in a Transdisciplinary International Learning Lab (TILL).
 - Pam participated in a TILL in Germany with Eberswalde University. The program was forestry-oriented with students attending from Canada, South Africa, Germany, and France.

- The MABR and VIU are hosting the next TILL here in May 2024. 18 Masters and PhD students are fully funded to attend, and will be split into 4 working groups once they are here. 4 faculty members will also be attending.
 - Students will be staying in campus housing at VIU, with meals provided by campus food services.
 - Will plan for students to get out within the biosphere region to see work of community groups on-the-ground.
- Alanna, Pam, and Graham are working on planning the TILL. Will need to start promoting the program for students to apply to.
- The MABR to decide the research questions for the program – we need an overarching question and subsequent questions for groups. Suggestions so far include: water resiliency/planning, linking to the SDGs and the 5 P's of Sustainable Development, and breaking down silos to conserve biodiversity.
- Graham proposed a subcommittee to Roundtable members who want to be involved to advise questions and research. Lehann, Kim, Steve, and Catherine volunteered to be on this committee.
 - The committee will meet in March, April, and May to prepare for student applications opening in July. Students will then be chosen by September 2023.

Graham Sakaki, MABRRI

- **MABRRI strategic plan**
 - When the strategic plan was reviewed at the last Roundtable gathering, there was a comment around where Reconciliation falls on the list of research objectives. This has been addressed by including a diagram that includes all 5 objectives in a circular fashion, along with a statement that they are listed in no particular order.
 - There was also a comment around including traditional place names – MABRRI will work on this with local First Nations, but it will take some time and the strategic plan will be updated when able.
 - Roundtable members approved to move the plan ahead.
- **Canadian Biosphere Reserves Association (CBRA) Regional Reconciliation Hubs**
 - CBRA is moving Indigenous Advisory Councils from national to more regional focus.
 - A BC regional gathering is scheduled for April 3-5, 2023, in Tofino (Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation territory), to bring together each of the BC biosphere regions – Clayoquot Sound, Átl'ka7tsem/Howe Sound, and Mount Arrowsmith. Graham invited Roundtable members to attend and will send out details via email. Roughly 6 members from each biosphere region will be attending.
- **Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA) update**
 - MABRRI recently had a meeting with Ian Adams from Canadian Wildlife Service (Environment and Climate Change Canada). 2 KBAs are being proposed within the MABR – one for the Important Bird Area currently in the Parksville-Qualicum Wildlife Management Area and one for Vancouver Island marmots hitting upper regions of MABR and going into Nanaimo. These 2 KBAs will be out for public review soon and will be circulated to Roundtable members.
 - KBAs don't count towards protected areas in Canada's 30x30 conservation target.
 - There is more work to be done – other regions in the MABR don't have enough data to inform potential KBAs, or data is outdated.

- **Brant Wildlife Festival**
 - The MABR was approached by the Nature Trust to take over the festival, starting in 2024. The Nature Trust will continue to support during the transition, and will still be involved in future years, but the organization's capacity is better suited for participation rather than organizing the events.
 - Does the Roundtable want to take this over and house it under the MABR's name? Can members support financially? Can we expand the event?
 - Kim: happy to pitch and look for partnerships.
 - Anne: TQB has a policy not to give grants, a 5-year fee for service instead was agreed upon instead. Perhaps other municipalities can consider the same to provide multi-year support.
 - Steve: Mosaic is supporting the festival this year and would commit to continuing to support
 - Sylvia: Could propose multi-year funding to the City of Parksville.
 - Roundtable members voted in favour of the MABR assuming a leadership role for the festival in 2024.
- **Letters of support: Can we support the requests from Broombusters and Parksville Community Centre?**
 - Roundtable members voted in favour of the MABR providing letters of support to both.

Closing

- Final reflections and closing words.
- Next Roundtable hosted by **Mosaic Forest Management** (201-648 Terminal Ave, Nanaimo, BC V9R 5E2): **June 2nd, 2023, 09:00am – 11:30am.**

Appendix A

MABR Roundtable Gathering Vol. 25

Friday, March 10th, 2023 from 09:00am to 11:30am

Location: Town of Qualicum Beach - 201-660 Primrose Street,
Qualicum Beach BC V9K 2R5, Canada

Roundtable contact: Graham Sakaki (250) 802-4826



AGENDA

Time	Activity
09:05 – 09:15	Welcome/Opening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words of welcome • Acknowledgement of First Nation unceded Territory • Around the circle brief introductions • Review and collectively adopt agenda • Reminder of the MABR Roundtable Culture of Engagement
09:15 - 09:45	Community Representative Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ray Woroniak – Biosphere Awareness Day, SDGs (specifically #2 and how it relates to SD69), questions and feedback on report. • Catherine Watson – TBD • Discussions
09:45 – 10:30	Roundtable Member Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What’s new with your organization?
10:30 – 10:40	Coffee Break/Health Break
10:40 – 11:00	MABR Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MABRRI Strategic Research Plan • CBRA Regional Reconciliation Hubs • Snaw-naw-as Signage Project • TRANSECTS MABR TILL 2024 – What is our overarching research question? • ECCC OECM Project • KBA Update
11:00 – 11:25	Letters of Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can we support the requests of Broombusters and Parksville Community Centre Brant Wildlife Festival <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do we want to take this on under the MABR
11:25 – 11:30	Closing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final reflections • Next Roundtable date and host • Closing words