



SERNbc Annual General Meeting: December 3 2024

Meeting Purpose:

- Introductions
- Financial Review
- President REport
- Coordinator Reports
- Nominations/Elections
- Presentations

Meeting Called to Order: 10:02 am, December 2 2024

Directors Present

John DeGagne, Adrian Batho, Duncan McColl, Scott Schilds, Dave Hooper, Nathan Prince, Sean Rapai, Stephanie Wilford, Wayne Selewski, Brad Martin, Ashely Sutherland, Olin Albertson

Introductions

In person:

Steve Gordon, Vanessah Ushcenko, Katee Doyon, Shelby Roberts, John DeGagne, Stephanie Wilford, Jeff Anderson, Don Wilkins, Olin Albertson, Brandon Geldart, Dave Hooper, Wayne Saleski, Sean Rapai, Duncan McColl, Ashley Sutherland, Adrian Batho, Sam Cheblak, Andrea Erwin, Julia Bizon, Melissa Mjolsness

Online:

Brittney Grunerud, Frank Doyle, Mae Whyte, Kim Lutz, Sherry Coffey, Ray Klingspohn, Roberta Webster, Katerina Sofos, Brad Martin, Scott Schilds, Patrick Ferguson, Greg Crookes, Nathan Prince, Micah May, Stewart Pearce, Victoria Kress, Philip Batista, Bradley Peyton, Sybille Haeussler, Drew Gilchrist, Kelly Hrywkiw, Brad Martin, Kirstin Jorgensen, Marten Geertsema,

Financial Review:



Sherry Coffee – Financial statements for March 31, 2024

- Based on the review, no concerns noted
- Statement of financial position review
- Decrease in deferred revenue compared to 2023
- Statement of operations – Expenses 791,907.00 in 2024, compared to 1,520,366.00 in 2023
- Excess of revenue decrease in 2024 compared to 2023

Wayne Seleski – what form are the investments?

- SC – Gauranteed Investment Certificates

WS – are there restrictions on what we can and cannot invest in?

- John DeGagne – not certain, would require board decisions
- WS – yes, just don't want to be aware for the board, to ensure investing appropriately

President Report:

John DeGagne

Continue to build capacity – community of practioners

- First meeting in spring
- Also partnering with HCTF, FWCP and Pacific Salmon Foundation
- Also potential and new partnership with BCWF
- With this group, hoping to sustain the connection of practitioners, to ensure the delivery of work on the ground
- Continuing to work with Fuse, and the next step is a survey on the concept of a “hub”
- No clear definitions of what a hub is/will be, so the next step is to survey practioners to better define the idea

Governance –

- looking to engage Board of Directors and membership to re-establish sub-committees
- Have had sub-committees in the past, but they have kind of dissolved a year or two ago
- Working to re-esatblsh those sub-committees, in whatever form they need to take
- Clarity, transparency around how we deliver funds and projects is a priority
- Small group currently meeting, to clarify what they are asking the board to support
- Something will be provided and brought to the broader group soon
- Ashley Sutherland – will be working with Brandon Geldart on a draft
- Intent is to work on this over the next year, to be brought to the AGM next year



- Some confusion of whether SERN is a funding agency, or whether building coordinators etc.
- How can SERN ensure sustainable funding? To maintain the organization
- Don't currently have a formal membership sign up, attendance and participation is informally viewed as membership
- May get to that, but as of now the informal approach is working and SERNbc is willing to continue with this approach, and no fees

Collaborate

- Remains a priority
- With nations, stakeholders, many different contractors, funding agencies to deliver on what those funders are interested in
- Collaboration is a big part of what we do, and a big part in supporting our ability to do that
- Focus on project planning and implementation

Directed by our strategy document, which expires next year

- Work is currently directed by the strategy, which is expiring
- Consider renewing process to renew the strategic plan
- The process is a good one to go through, allows SERN to consider if the organization is on track, and should sustain efforts, or is off track
-

Wayne Seleski – the question of whether we are a funding agency is interesting. Noted that we may be a “motivator” for restoration

- SERNbc started with fire, and seeing value in fire, and SERNbc has gotten 100% away from fire
- Membership is everything,
- Broadcast fire is boutique, but from a wildlife standpoint, perhaps wildfire in last 10 years has contributed, but is not necessarily targeted
- Suggest SERNbc should be in the role of a “motivator”

Jeff Anderson

- Need to ask people what is needed, and a lot of money being distributed through the Real Estate Foundation, based on what communities are needing

Brad Martin



- Following up with John DeGagne about synergies with fire would be needed, to meet and talk

Brandon Geldart

- To Wayne's point, much of the work SERNbc has done, through action is motivating
- Shovel Lake ERP is influential, for what can be done on the landscape
- Good examples of how for how examples of Chu Cho Environmental is going to SERNbc for guidance on stocking standards

John DeGagne

- Are actively building on Shovel Lake ERP, and working with Tsay Keh Dene on Omenica Fires

WS

- Currently stymied by policies that limit change in how forests are managed

Dave Hooper

- Believes SERN has been very influential, and has demonstrated concepts and projects that can be done

JD – important to implement projects, and learn from doing

Coordinator Reports:

Brandon Geldart

Increase emphasis placed on admin tracking.

- Return on investment/coordinator cost
- In 2024/2025, would have had a profit, but used that to hire more coordinators
- Pivot away from adhoc projects, and focus on building relationships
- Coordinator agreement to formalize process to provide seed funding, but will also then receive administration fees
- 3 capacity building projects
 - o Sharped tailed grouse habitat enhancement
 - o Whitesail reach monitoring
 - o Tsay Keh Dene Nation seed collection
- Additionally mycelium inoculation trial



- Incoluating woodchips for road restoration with CNC - on linear features/roads
- Road restoration projects
 - Nazko road restoration – 70 km of road restoration, 30 km of fire guard pullback
 - Saik’uz road restoration – 9.8 km of road restoration
- Restoration planting
 - Nazko planting – 109,000 aspen seedlings
 - Sugarbowl caribou restoration, required to plant trees, to implemented this work to meet requirement
- Fish passage projects
 - Al Irvine doing very good work
 - Peace
 - Skeena
 - Area between Skeena and Prince George
 - Working with funders, nations, licensees, to address obstructions in streams, which address can enhance fish populations and improve habitat
- Beaver co-existence training
 - Training exercise in Summit Lake Park
 - Also a strong partnership with Highways, Blueberry First Nation, BC Parks Staff,
- McLeod Lake Moose Enhancement
 - Uses variable spaced thinning, road restoration and girdling in older plantations
 - Initiated with Jeff Werner – BC Gov.
 - Partnered with CNC and UBC to study impacts and benefits
 - 7 year project
 - Funded by FWCP

Forward looking projects

- MLIB Moose Enhancement year 2
- Nazko road restoration year 2
- Nechako Cottonwood Planting Year 1
- Future Fish Passage Work

Don Wilkson



- HCTF has changed its programs a bit
 - o Urges everyone to look up HCTF community grants, which are different program grants
 - 3 different community grants now, and important to understand difference from program grants

Dave Hooper

- Interested in seeing studies on what predators the linear feature work effects
 - o Does it make a difference in the overall wildlife populations?

BG

- 600 m is an average threshold in order to target restoration
- For every km of road, you restore 2km² of habitat
- When areas stopped being used by people, the wildlife typically responds positively
- FWCP Moose Limiting Study – showed that in areas with wolf cull, it seems that there were similar levels of moose mortalities, but grizzly bear predation increased in the absence of wolves
- Just some benchmark metrics

Patrick Ferguson

- Terrace Community Forest – wildlife habitat creation in a second growth landscape
- SERN provided \$10,000.00 to develop the project plan/prescription
- Terrace Community Forest had money from FESbc, and implemented the prescription
- Second growth forest lacks diversity (dark/low light dense tree stands)
- Treatments used commercial thinning, as well as diameter based selections, to open up the canopy and reduce tree density
- Not all prescriptions were feasible, as not all equipment available to contractor
- Report pending with the operational costs and learnings from the project, which will become available on SERN website
- Many learnings, mostly around where you can and cannot do the thinning work
- Variable width trails and corridors
- Currently developing a wildlife monitoring plan

Date Creek Goshawk Territories Planning

- Have identified potential restoration opportunities

Beaver Coexistence Projects

- Ongoing discussions around opportunities for this work

Don Wilkins



- Beaver Coexistence project – are you working with the registered trapper?
- PF – have not, but will
- DW – concern is that you have spent a lot of time and money, and the trapper might disrupt that, and other people have tenure over the land and wildlife and you need to work them
- JD – agreed

Jeff Anderson

- Suggests operating at watershed scale, instead of smaller one off projects
- Looking at areas where beavers are needed, and areas for ecological restoration
- To Don Wilkins point – working with these individuals like trappers is a key consideration
- JD – has not heard of a project where this has happened, approach may be to work with trapper to live trap, and consider moving beaver to new area

Don Wilkins

- Many trappers not equipped for live trapping, as that live trapping equipment is costly
- Also moving beaver into an area has not necessarily work, as far as he understands
- The area must be conducive to having beaver.
- Don is available as a resource and to answer questions if needed

Sean Rapai – financial report indicates expenses and cash are down in 2024, could you provide more detail on this, and the strategy to use administration fees to cover costs of coordinators?

- Example of beaver project, how can we ensure projects like this are financially sustainable to SERNBC?

Brandon Geldart

- There are more costs to implement these beaver projects,
- Employment opportunities are clear
- Largescale projects are down, but paying coordinators now, which in the past the cost of coordinators was not included in project costs

JD – salaries are compensated by delivery of projects, but lots of space for discussion around how we balance the costs of contractors or employees

DH - Redosier Dogwood Project – Plugs grown at Woodmere Nursery, supplied to private lanowners. Seeding cheaper than plugs.



- Although important to note that likely Woodmere was undercharging for the seedlings provided in early years.

Olin Albertson

- Has any had success with staking and planting red alder?
 - o Has had some success, but just in small examples

Jeff Anderson

- Did a workshop, and the answer is no
- Using stingers to plant

Scott Schilds

- Planted red alder
- Had good survival of seedlings
- Variable success of staking

Nominations/Elections:

Led by Adrian Batho

Bylaw review

- Numbers of directors must be 5 or greater
- Working to maintain 10 – 15 board membership
- Objective is to develop a board with a majority of members that are not government affiliated

AD - Is there anyone else that would like to make there name stand for membership on the board?

AD – not hearing any nominations from the floor

Those letting there names stand for re-election

- John DeGagne, Adrian Batho, Duncan McColl, Scott Schilds, Dave Hooper, Nathan Prince



Jeff Anderson

- Makes motion to elect these candidates by acclamation

No objections

- The follow Board members were appointed for a two year term - John DeGagne, Adrian Batho, Duncan McColl, Scott Schilds, Dave Hooper, Nathan Prince

Duncan McColl – just wanted to announce the creation of a Regional Wildlife Advisory Committee, for those interested through SERN, or the organizations they represent.

Presentations:

Wayne Salewski - Nechako Environment Water Stewardship Society

Julia Bizon – Ecological Restoration of Wildlife Forage and Understory Diversity in a Young Pine Monoculture Plantation in Central-Interior BC - UNBC

Dr. Lisa Wood – Glyphosate Research and Forest Organisms and Wildlife Health - UNBC