

South Coast Conservation Program

Regional Dialogues on Land Use

Planning for Species and

Ecosystems at Risk

Proceedings Fall 2013



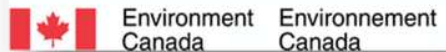
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Special thanks to Danielle Prevost with Canadian Wildlife Service /Environment Canada for her ongoing contributions to the SCCP in providing an understanding of SARA and the roles and responsibilities of landholders.

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Cover images: Pacific Water Shrew - Dennis Knopp, Great Blue Heron - Winnu, Western Painted Turtle - Chris Lee

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INTRODUCTION

The South Coast Region of BC supports some of the highest biodiversity in Canada. Ensuring this diverse natural capital remains healthy is integral to sustaining community health and well-being. The ability to address biodiversity and sensitive ecosystems in local planning varies significantly across the regional landscape. Local governments have limited resources and capacity to address this disparity. As such, the South Coast Conservation Program (SCCP) hosted regional dialogues that provided a platform for local governments to come together and find solutions that address the regional dimensions of species and ecosystems at risk issues.

Hosted in each of the four main regional districts of the South Coast, the workshops provided local governments the opportunity to share information, explore case study examples, discuss challenges and develop solutions that are relevant to each specific region. Session dates and locations were as follows:

Fraser Valley: October 31st hosted at the Reach Gallery in Abbotsford

Metro Vancouver: November 7th hosted at Metro Vancouver's Kathleen Building

Squamish-Lillooet: November 12th, hosted by the Resort Municipality of Whistler at the Whistler Library

Sunshine Coast-Powell River: November 26th, 2013 at the Gibsons and Area Community Centre

This initiative supports components of the B.C. Government's Species and Ecosystems at Risk and Local Governments Working Group (SEAR LGWG) recommendations found in "[Working Together to Protect Species at Risk: Strategies Recommended by Local Government to Improve Conservation on Municipal, Regional and Private Lands in British Columbia.](#)"



SESSION SUMMARIES

The following are presentation and discussion summaries for each of the four regional dialogue sessions. All presentations can be found on the SCCP [website](#). Where presenters attended more than one session, session summaries are presented only once.

Fraser Valley Session Summary

1) Overview of Species and Ecosystems at Risk in the South Coast: Pamela Zevit, coordinator of the SCCP provided an overview of SEAR issues in our region and introduced the conservation work the SCCP is currently undertaking.

Key Points:

- Founded in 2005, the SCCP is a multi partner conservation program helping facilitate projects and activities to restore and protect species and ecological communities at risk on the South Coast of B.C.
- The South Coast Region of British Columbia is a biodiversity hot spot and home to 275 provincially listed species at risk (98 Red listed and 177 Blue listed), 3 provincially listed ecosystems at risk, and 59 SARA- listed species. Of the 59 federally listed species, only 17 species have published recovery documents. There is a lot of work to be done.
- The topographical and biological constraints of this region and a growing human population result in increasing pressures on species and their habitats.
- Climate change, invasive species (including domestic cats) and development pose the greatest threat to SEAR in our region. Understanding these threats is key to SEAR protection.
- The SCCP promotes and facilitates the protection of species and ecosystems at risk through a variety of projects. These can be found on our website www.sccp.ca.

Additional Discussion:

- How do we measure effectiveness of conservation initiatives like the SCCP's SEAR and LG project? There are limited resources for SEAR conservation so we need to determine what works best and where to prioritize efforts, and in order to do this we need to measure effectiveness of projects and actions. Something to keep in mind with each project that we undertake.
- We need to work on messaging for the public. LG's would benefit from a basic language piece that demonstrates the language and information that will make SEAR issues understandable to the general public.
- How can local governments help the SCCP? The SCCP needs reciprocal investment from local government so it can spend its time working on the issues rather than chasing grant funding. The SCCP is looking into developing a social enterprise model to achieve this.

2) Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment Canada: Danielle Prevost, (Stewardship Coordinator) provided an overview of local governments' responsibilities under the Species at

Risk Act and provided additional information regarding potential opportunities for collaborative efforts towards species protection.

Key Points:

- The Species at Risk Act (SARA) provides protection to federally listed species on all land types across Canada.
- Landowners and managers can choose how to conserve species and their habitat.
- Environment Canada can support these actions through a variety of programs and partnerships.
- At the end of the day, species and their habitat must be “effectively protected”.
- On provincial and private lands Environment Canada is required to assess whether effective protection of critical habitat is in place. Critical habitat must be protected, but how this occurs is flexible.
- There are opportunities for local governments and CWS to collaborate in the protection of species and their critical habitat (see presentation slides).

Additional Discussion:

How can local governments (LG) assist CWS?

- Finding landowner contact information for landowners with critical habitat (CH) identified on their land is time consuming and expensive for the federal government as they don't have access to the BC assessment rolls. LG can help by providing CWS with landowner contact information once CH is identified.
- LG can share sensitive ecosystem inventory (SEI) and biodiversity mapping information with CWS for potential incorporation into the federal/provincial Regional Biodiversity Strategy.
- Data sharing agreements are necessary for the above-mentioned collaborations.
- LGs can put SEAR and CH information on their websites. Perhaps a “Did you know?” section.

How can CWS assist local governments?

- EC has CH and SEI mapping and conservation areas database that can be shared.
- LG's need a better sense of the CWS organization so they know whom to contact, depending on the nature of the issue. Staff like Danielle Prevost is a good first point of contact, but a basic org chart with contact information would be helpful.
- A fact sheet about what types of bylaws, stewardship measures and enforcement are considered to be “Effective Protection” under SARA would be helpful.

3) City of Surrey Ecosystem Management and Biodiversity Conservation Strategy:

Stephen Godwin, Environmental Coordinator at the City of Surrey provided an overview of Surrey's draft BCS, with a focus on the financial feasibility of the strategy.

Key Points:

- Surrey is one of the fastest growing and developing areas in the South Coast. Surrey's biodiversity is regionally significant with relatively large natural areas and high levels of local biodiversity, including 1/3 Land in ALR.
- This Biodiversity is affected by a number of issues and impacts including: habitat loss, climate change, population growth, approved land use plans, planning tools and development controls, public perception and human disturbance.
- An Ecosystem Management Study (EMS), complete with Ecological Inventory, Ecological Assessment and management policy recommendations comprised the first phase of Surrey's efforts to set the foundation for Biodiversity Conservation. The second phase is the development of the BCS, which is informed by the EMS and will influence other plans, policies and bylaws in the city.
- The BCS identifies biodiversity management areas based on land use type and categorizes priority habitat using a Green Infrastructure Network comprised of Hubs (large natural areas >10ha), Sites (areas <10ha) and Local and Regional Corridors (narrow areas that provide for movement of species).
- The Strategy will be implemented by incorporating it into the New Surrey OCP, which will provide for its incorporation into other city charters, plans, policies and bylaws, zoning and development permits.
- A financial analysis is currently underway to determine the feasibility and specific options for implementing the protection of Surrey's Biodiversity through the use of the Green Infrastructure Network. The three types of "GIN" charges currently being explored include, an Area Based Green Levy, a citywide DCC Levy, and a citywide GIN tax.
- Council has been very supportive of the strategy up to this point. Developers have not balked at the Green Infrastructure Network DCC charges as long as those charges are known up front so they can budget accordingly.

Additional Discussion-Lessons learned from Surrey:

- Separating mapping from priorities/ DCCs makes the process less scary. Mapping is objective and safe, once council gets used to the ideas and information provided in the maps, you can move on to the more politically contentious issues.
- Make sure you move slowly and incrementally. Work language into the OCP and as many other documents as possible. This will increase political will as well as increase public pressure in favor of the strategy.
- Consultation: Include anyone who would oppose the project and also include those who have good information to share.
- Work hard to gain public support and keep it top of mind- constantly having the public ask Council about the Strategy will encourage council to support the work.

4) Wetlands – Loss, Current Initiatives, and Looking Forward: Dan Buffet from Ducks Unlimited Canada and Neil Fletcher from the BC Wildlife Federation provided an overview the status, current conservation initiatives and planning considerations for the most imperiled sensitive ecosystem type in the South Coast.

Key Points:

- There has been significant loss of Tidal and Non-tidal Wetlands in the Fraser Lowlands compared to what was present historically. In the last 20 years, thousands of hectares of wetlands have been lost.
- By area, agriculture, golf courses and landfills are the three greatest types of encroachment on wetlands in the Fraser Lowlands.
- There are a number of innovative projects being undertaken in BC with the aim of protecting wetlands. Some of these initiatives include The Okanagan Wetland Strategy, wetland mapping and policy work by the City of Kelowna, work by the Wetlands Stewardship Partnership and SWAMP, and Workshops put on by the BC Wildlife Federation.
- Several NGOs in the Lower Mainland have become signatories of the Wetland Declaration, which is a call to action for the protection of wetlands in the area¹.

5) Breakout Discussion: Session participants discussed the challenges, opportunities, gaps and priorities for integrating SEAR into land use planning in the FVRD. Highlighted gaps and priorities included:

- Funding for habitat rehabilitation
- Guideline for wildlife corridors in addition to provincial Riparian Area Regulations (RAR) (terrestrial as well). SCCP to provide warehousing of this information and what was produced in past projects
- LG need more of a “heads up” from CWS about what SAR Recovery Strategies are about to be released so that LG can be ready to answer the public’s questions or to refer them to CWS. CWS will likely be having multispecies consultations in the future.
- Green Infrastructure Network for FVRD
- Produce future projections of the Valley based on different types of land use choices to use as selling point for protecting and managing green space/ biodiversity. This could be a Master’s project and would require establishing relationships with Academia (something SCCP could take on?)
- Incentives programs for Landowners
- Need better summary/ case studies of incentives that are actually applicable to the LG jurisdiction/ capabilities.
- Need overview of the tools that we already have and need guidance on how to leverage them (example: riparian area tax credits, ecological gifts grant etc.)
- SCCP delegation to Council (provide business case for SEAR protection). We need to sell them on the benefits of SEAR protection and allow them to say yes in a way that makes council look and feel good about those choices.
- Look for more community champions for the issue.

¹ Contact Dan or Neil for more information on what local governments can do to support the protection of these imperiled ecosystems.

- Research different types of incentives for different parts of society- explore this knowledge gap.
- Continue to educate youth. Target areas that need to be protected and have a lot of development pressure (agricultural communities for example).
- Focus on communities and what is important to them (for example, water health is an important value in Chilliwack). Use municipal voter lists and polling to target communities that either 1) share the conservation ethic and can be community champions or 2) are opponents to conservation and are the focus for incentive programs, education etc.
- Need to look at what is working for developers and copy it.
- Need to appeal to the 'silent majority' who have environmental values. Not sure if this actually exists in the FVRD. Opinion polls could be used to determine if it exists².
- We need to focus on the financial component as it builds on an existing ethic. We need to "sell" the public and council on any initiatives or projects we are proposing.
- Lessons learned from Sumas Mountain: provide people with information as it becomes available and far in advance of any actual actions. It takes a LONG time to build relationships- don't try to push things through. It would have worked better had it not been led by government.

Metro Vancouver Session Summary

1) Overview of Species and Ecosystems at Risk in the South Coast: Pamela Zevit, coordinator of the SCCP provided an overview of SEAR issues in our region and introduced the conservation work the SCCP is currently undertaking. See Fraser Valley Session Summary for a full description.

2) Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment Canada: Tasha Sargent, (On behalf of Danielle Prevost, Stewardship Coordinator) provided an overview of local governments' responsibilities under the Species at Risk Act and provided additional information regarding potential opportunities for collaborative efforts towards species protection. See Fraser Valley Session Summary for a full description.

3) City of Surrey Ecosystem Management and Biodiversity Conservation Strategy: Stephen Godwin, Environmental Coordinator at the City of Surrey provided an overview of Surrey's draft BCS, with a focus on the financial feasibility of the strategy. See Fraser Valley Session Summary for full description.

4) Wetlands – Loss, Current Initiatives, and Looking Forward: Dan Buffet from Ducks Unlimited Canada and Neil Fletcher from the BC Wildlife Federation provided an overview the status, current conservation initiatives and planning considerations for the most imperiled sensitive ecosystem type in the South Coast. See Fraser Valley Session Summary for a full description.

² See: Species at Risk Public Opinion Surveys for Canada, BC and the South Coast. <http://sccp.ca/resources/species-risk-public-opinion-surveys-canada-bc-and-south-coast>

5) Breakout Discussion: Session participants discussed the challenges, opportunities, gaps and priorities for integrating SEAR into land use planning in the Metro region. Highlighted gaps and priorities going forward included:

- Creating Champions:
 - 1) Elected Officials need to experience the value of biodiversity and SEAR. They should be sent on a field trip with a passionate and engaged tour guide that can drum up their support of these issues.
 - 2) Public Support is also important. Providing more interpretive walks and educational events would help garner more public support.
- Having a SEAR liaison position in the Region would be helpful. The SEAR liaison could perform the following duties: delegations to council with information (not to advocate) on a regular basis, figure out potential champions on council to help out, look for potential opportunities to highlight success within municipalities, develop appropriate and consistent sound bites/messaging regarding SEAR for LG media, develop list of LG staff and contacts. Could the position be funded by the federal government?
- Need to take multi-species approach and develop plans that incorporate the recovery considerations of many species.
- Need more case studies, lessons learned and we need to promote our failures so we avoid repeating them.
- Need better relationship with/ leadership from organizations like the Urban Development Institute (UDI). Could start by linking them with the Real Estate Foundation of BC because they have good principles. We could also present to them about SEAR. This could be a role of the LG liaison.
- Are there talks between the province and the federal government with regard to taking land out of the Agricultural Land reserve because it has high ecological value? LG doesn't have a lot of flexibility because ALR land still has to be "farmable".
- When the federal government does consultations for SAR it should let municipal staff know which landowners are being contacted. A letter alerting LG staff to the consultation would be helpful as disgruntled citizens often go to their local government when they receive the federal consultation letter rather than going to CWS. Staff can then brief each other and the mayor and council. The letter should be accompanied by an information package that has enough detail that FG staff can answer political questions.

Squamish Lillooet Region Summary

1) Overview of Species and Ecosystems at Risk in the South Coast: Pamela Zevit, coordinator of the SCCP provided an overview of SEAR issues in our region and introduced the conservation work the SCCP is currently undertaking. See Fraser Valley Session Summary for a full description.

2) Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment Canada: Danielle Prevost, (Stewardship Coordinator) provided an overview of local governments' responsibilities under the Species at

Risk Act and provided additional information regarding potential opportunities for collaborative efforts towards species protection. See Fraser Valley Session Summary for a full description.

3) Sensitive Ecosystems Planning and Protection in the SLRD: Bob Brett of Snowline Ecological Research and the Whistler Biodiversity Project provided an overview of the sensitive ecosystems in the SLRD and spoke to the special considerations, challenges and opportunities for planning for these unique and valuable ecosystems.

Key Points:

- Converging climate types, and variations in altitude and topographical features result in a high level of local/regional uniqueness in ecosystems in the SLRD.
- As a result, the SLRD has approximately 60 provincially listed species at risk and several provincially listed ecosystems at risk, not including a large number of insects, fungi and ecosystems that are not listed by the Conservation Data Centre.
- Ecological sensitivities are processes or components of ecosystems that are susceptible to disruption or damage by an external factor. External factors most likely to affect biodiversity include habitat loss and fragmentation, invasive species, habitat degradation, climate change and genetic drift.
- Challenges to the protection of Sensitive Ecosystems in the SLRD include: limited sampling, inaccurate conclusions, lack of valley-wide focus, lack of multiyear accumulation of knowledge, studies becoming obsolete after development and the lack of proper studies when development is concerned.
- Despite challenges there is a lot of good work going on in the region (Squamish Estuary Wildlife Management Plan, Whistler Biodiversity Project, work by local Stewardship groups etc.)
- Local governments can support the conservation of sensitive ecosystems by having a good GIS system, commissioning a detail TEM and if possible a historic TEM, supporting local naturalist and stewardship groups but also hiring the best possible experts and hiring independent experts where possible, collating data for public distribution, developing relationships and support invasives control.

Additional Discussion:

- Discussion regarding lack of accountability of environmental consultants. Local government checklists and asking for specific standards/ information to be collected during the assessment would help close the gap. Including the requirement for SAR to be reported would also help. Having this type of language in an easy to access format would be helpful to LGs.
- RPBios are bound by provincial legislation; they work under right to title and have a legal responsibility for their professional practices. Some professional biologist may not be truly aware of their expertise limitations and undertake studies beyond their skillset.
- Suggestion that we adopt system similar to Australia, all data collected during assessments for developments MUST be submitted to a body like the Conservation Data Centre.

- There is also the need to maintain ability for non-specialists (citizen science), First Nations and historic information to contribute. In other words, have a way to vet the information but allow it to be included (i.e. the Butterfly Atlas).

4) Biodiversity and Development in the Pemberton Valley - A Case Study for the

SLRD: Veronica Woodruff from Stewardship Pemberton provided an overview of the discovery of the Sharp-tailed Snake in the Pemberton and the implications to development.

Key Points:

- The Pemberton Area is home to 16 provincially listed herptiles including the Rubber Boa and the newly discovered Sharp-tailed Snake (STS).
- The cryptic Sharp-tailed Snake was found on Mackenzie Ridge, in the Pemberton Valley in August 2011. The snake was found more than 200 kms from the nearest record in British Columbia (Gulf Islands) and more than 300 km from the nearest mainland record in Washington State.
- In the spring of 2012, searches for more snakes found four new sites, seven new specimens, two neonates and two hibernacula. To date, more than 600 hours of searching has produced 13 new specimens, 7 sites and more records of other listed herptiles like the Rubber Boa.
- Some of the STS sites occur on private property slated for development.
- In 2013 Stewardship Pemberton received a Habitat Conservation Trust Fund grant to establish the location and extent of STS population(s), inventory of co-occurring species, initiate community awareness, outreach and involvement, and to work with the Village council, First Nations groups, other landowners and developers on STS mitigation strategies.
- Several STS sites occur within a development permit (DP) area that requires an environmental review including inventory of sensitive ecosystems and detailed recommendations for protection and/ or mitigation of impacts to environmentally sensitive areas on the site. The DP guidelines are not specific to STS or SAR but they need to be addressed if found. The Village of Pemberton included the requirement for the developer to work with Stewardship Pemberton on mitigation as a condition of the DP. Currently having difficulty getting developer to honor terms of the DP.
- Two other properties are waiting to start development and are the sites with most of the STS sightings. Village of Pemberton feels there is a real opportunity to do the development in phases and protect the species and habitat.
- MOE sent a letter to the Village of Pemberton stating that the EA work did not address the issue adequately. Now many eyes and levels of government are on the developer. Developer needs to do a good job.
- MOE also made specific recommendations as to how/ who could undertake an EA. This also raises the issue of professional accountability from consultants working on the project.

Additional Discussion:

- Comment on need to understand STS populations across a wider area rather than just at the site. The timing and scope of the study is crucial.

- Suggestions for the next EA: The report should be reviewed by the Recovery Team
- Local government need help to ensure that DP guidelines and checklists are comprehensive and include SAR as well as species and habitats of value. Could some standardized examples be created?
- A Shared Environmental Planner position for the VOP, SLRD? Would be a much-needed resource.

5) Breakout Discussion: Session participants discussed the challenges, opportunities, gaps and priorities for integrating SEAR into land use planning in the SLRD region. Highlighted gaps and priorities going forward included:

- Need to develop legislation to protect ecosystems, not just species.
- Where does legislative protection exist? SARA, the Wildlife Act, the Migratory Bird Convention Act, the Water Act and others provide some protection. It would be helpful to have a list of what regulations exist and what wildlife features they apply to for use during development application review. Local governments can also enact bylaws to fill some of the regulatory gaps, but to do so they need understand what gaps exist in federal and provincial legislation.
- There are opportunities for Sea to Sky communities to work together. It currently doesn't happen often despite the Regional Growth Strategy having a statement for Sea to Sky communities to work together on environmental issues.
- SCCP could do delegations to council regarding SEAR. This could provide an opening for staff to inform council about what they are doing and make changes.
- Gaining a better understanding of what SEAR exist in the region is a priority.
- Better mapping and gaining a better understanding of where CH is located is also a priority. A limitation of CH identification is that it's only for species included in recovery strategies. Currently only 17 recovery strategies out of 59 federally threatened or endangered species on the South Coast have been completed, so there are many at risk species, like the Sharp-tailed Snake that don't have CH identified and are likely not on the radar at all.
- Is developing a corridor-wide environmental planning group a priority? It hasn't been discussed much but perhaps the SLRD could host such discussions? Collaborating on mapping and connectivity would be helpful.
- Squamish and Pemberton are both experiencing increasing use and growth pressure but neither has an overall management plan. The feeling in the community is that there is still a lot of green space.
- Unfortunately local government will do what it has to but has limited capacity to ask for extras. LG will need higher levels of government to make things a requirement. CWS is putting a greater emphasis on effective protection assessments.
- The province should create a checklist of relevant legislation for different species, ecosystems etc. for use by LG.
- The SCCP wants to build a reciprocal relationship with local governments. How do we have the shared investment process take place? How do we move beyond year-to-year grants? A fee for service model (like the Invasive Species Council of Metro Vancouver or Clean Air Society) is an option. The shared environmental planner position is another possible

model. Could the SCCP act as Environment Canada's "help desk" and could that be a potential source of funding?

- Next Steps: EC could make presentation to SLRD Board and to individual Councils.

Sunshine Coast Session Summary

1) Overview of Species and Ecosystems at Risk in the South Coast: Pamela Zevit, coordinator of the SCCP provided an overview of SEAR issues in our region and introduced the conservation work the SCCP is currently undertaking. See Fraser Valley Session Summary for a full description.

2) Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment Canada: Danielle Prevost, (Stewardship Coordinator) provided an overview of local governments' responsibilities under the Species at Risk Act and provided additional information regarding potential opportunities for collaborative efforts towards species protection. See Fraser Valley Session Summary for a full description.

3) Sunshine Coast Wildlife Project: Michelle Evelyn, Executive Director of the SCWP provided an overview of the organization's goals, past and present projects and insights on SEAR conservation and protection on the Sunshine Coast.

Key Points:

- The Sunshine Coast Wildlife Project focuses their conservation efforts on a number of species and ecosystems at risk on the Sunshine Coast including but not limited to Western Painted Turtles, amphibians, bats, snakes, raptors native pollinators, wetlands and Coastal Douglas-fir ecosystems.
- The goals of the organization are achieved through a combination of science (wildlife surveys, habitat assessment, wetlands mapping and monitoring), conservation (landowner stewardship, habitat protection and threat mitigation) stewardship (building turtle beaches, amphibian ponds, bat boxes, owl nest boxes and bee boxes), and engagement (kids programs, presentations, guided walks, stewardship guides and interpretive signs).
- Recent work with Western Painted Turtles has highlighted a couple of key lessons learned. Firstly, you must understand the local condition because understanding site specific challenges allows you to design and implement conservation solutions to address the specific problems. Secondly, just get on with it! Don't wait for someone else to take care of the problem (Michelle, David and their family built turtle beaches on their own with donated materials they sourced from community members). The next lesson learned is to get community members involved in monitoring- this increases efficiency, decreases cost and create more interest and buy-in to your projects. The fourth lesson learned is that small projects and actions can have a big impact (nesting beaches were a small action but have been incredibly successful in increasing hatchling survivorship and reducing road mortality of females searching for suitable nesting habitat). The final lesson learned is that conservation works best when all segments of the community are involved.

4) Sensitive Ecosystems Planning-Coastal Douglas-fir as a Regional Focus: Darryn McConkey, Senior Ecosystems Biologist at MFLNRO provided a description of the conservation status and stewardship considerations for the CDF.

Key Points:

- It is important to maintain ecosystems because they provide the goods and services that benefit society. They are also a good 'coarse filter' approach to conserve biodiversity.
- Coastal Douglas-fir ecosystems contain the highest number of species at risk in BC. Many ecosystems and species are only found in the CDF. Half of the CDF is permanently converted. The vast majority of CDF ecosystems are at risk (many globally).
- Potentially recoverable threats to the CDF include land use (forestry, some agriculture, recreation and human water use) as well as irreversible land conversion (urban, residential rural, industrial, mining). After 2 decades of conservation work in the CDF, 8% has been protected and there is increasing interest in stewardship.
- There are many challenges faced by those attempting conservation actions in the CDF. There are limited opportunities on Crown Lands due to existing obligations. The concept of ecosystems as a unit of conservation also results in challenges. More than 80% of CDF occurs on privately owned land, which means that private land stewardship is key to conservation.
- Conservation of the CDF is a multi-stakeholder endeavor with limited resources, so a strategic and coordinated approach is needed. The Coastal Douglas-fir and Associated Ecosystems Conservation Partnership (CDFCP) was created to coordinate these efforts and fill the gaps.

5) Breakout Discussion: Session participants discussed the challenges, opportunities, gaps and priorities for integrating SEAR into land use planning in the SCRDR region. Gaps and priorities going forward include:

- There needs to be more communication about who (conservation org, LG, province, Environment Canada) is doing what with the public. There are many opportunities for collaboration and a more strategic approach.
- Sound environmental policies need to be developed now in order to have a comprehensive, proactive approach rather than a reactive one.
- Shaping the public view about SEAR issues needs more work. There is also a lot of resistance to strangers and to regulatory mechanisms. It takes a long time to build trust, but we need to keep at it.
- When developers come to the Development and Building Department for permits there should be a checklist of items that should be included/ considered for inclusion in the DP. Developers get angry when things happen after. It would avoid a lot of headache to have a preemptive environmental development checklist.
- Another priority is to identify conservation areas on the west side of Howe Sound that the Squamish and Sechelt Nation find important, and use those as areas for collaboration on environmental issues. It seems like there is currently very little interest in this land, but it could be an excellent opportunity for proactive, comprehensive planning.