



# District of Squamish Marine Action Strategy Development Public Forum Summary

Prepared by:



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# INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes the input from the District of Squamish Marine Action Strategy Public Forum held January 24, 2018, 6:30 pm – 9:30 pm at the Squamish Adventure Centre. Following initial input from a staff Working Group session, Informant Interviews in October - November and a stakeholder Focus Session in December 2017, draft strategies and emerging actions were developed for initial public review.

The specific objectives of the forum were to reach out to a broader audience to:

- Build awareness and inform all interested members of the public about the MAST project
- Seek input on the strategic framework that will guide the development of the strategy
- Seek input on initial marine focus areas, goals, objectives and actions developed to date with stakeholders, and identify any gaps.
- Begin to prioritize short to long term actions and identify partnerships and resources
- Foster relationships and partnerships that can benefit the marine environment for people and the ecosystem.

## WHAT WE DID

A “Squamish Salt Life” Panel was held as Part 1 of the Marine Forum, from 6:30 pm – 8:30pm, drawing from local community members representing industry, commerce, recreation, tourism, development and environmental stewardship areas. Thirteen representatives from these sectors gave a 3 - 5 minute presentation on “a day in their work or volunteer lives,” which was followed by public Q&A. Appendix 1 sets out the Panelists.

Part 2 took place from 8:30 pm – 9:30 pm involving an open house with display stations for input on key aspects of the draft marine strategy.

Approximately 60 people attended the Public Forum from a breadth of backgrounds ranging from community, recreation, industry, business and environment sectors. Appendix 2 sets out the attendees.

A survey was launched on the same day for those that could not attend the forum. The forum posters, and the survey link are available on the project web page: <https://squamish.ca/yourgovernment/projects-and-initiatives/marinestrategy/>

# WHAT WE HEARD

The following summarizes the top themes that arose in the Salt Life Panel, the Q&A and the feedback provided on the display posters.

## Salt Life Panel Presentation Highlights

Panelists presented on their work, play and volunteer efforts in and around Squamish waters. Some of the top highlight points were as follows:

### Randal Lewis

- Herring coming back. Oolichan extinct
- Squamish Nation successfully opposed the coal port proposal in Squamish
- Lead-zinc concentrate in the Cheakamus canyon is a concern downstream
- Working on habitat restoration since 1970s

### Francesca Knight

- 2006 spill in estuary devastating; leveraged funding from 1 partner to get funding from another
- Culverts in the dike - great for water exchange but was not passable by fish due to tide velocity

### Geoffrey Waterson, SWS

- Windsports has a growing tourism impact; 700 members; 1300 day users; wind and water quality is phenomenal; glassy flat water and more and more visitors come out to the end of the spit to watch the show
- They don't do the sport in estuary or near terminals and provide information on the fish and birds in the WMA
- SWS has provided on the water emergency response as well.
- Clean sport, uses wind, not gas.

### Ian Lowe, SPC

- Less than 10 years old; 6-person Board; 2015 – had no base
- Spring 2016 they obtained a container, providing secure storage at the park on MBC with access to MBC. They are 90% capacity with storage
- Hub for events. Parking is good
- Sheltered water area; and sheltered from the wind
- Hold 2 km race from Porteau to SYC
- Only Canadian stop for the World Surf Ski Championship. 120 world-class paddlers; 20,000 purse prize.
- 2018 – 120 boats and includes stand up and outrigger
- Threats/ Concerns:
  - MBC flood protection wall; will beach access be possible?
  - Temporary lease with DOS
  - Water access, safety in an area with buried industrial waste/equipment
  - Derelict boats in MBC
  - Visiting boaters ignoring speed limits
  - Park is like a magnet; needs lighting and basic irrigation and landscaping improvements

## **Norm Hann, Paddleboards**

- 2008 – Howe Sound excursion for the first time; saw it from the water; a totally different perspective
- Amazed. Saw white-sided dolphins chasing herring; started at Squamish Nation village
- Saw marbled murrelet diving after herring; rare to see this; shimmering herring; a vision of hope for Howe Sound
- In 2017 the Coastal Stoke program began, centered around safety, skills and awareness of the marine environment
- New marine trail helping paddling flourish; can paddle to Tantalus Landing, old village site, camp
- Do coffee runs Squamish to Britannia
- Concern with leaching of minerals, pollution history
- Howe Sound changes your perspective; get out there; build connections

## **Catherin Lea-Smith, Wharfinger, Squamish Harbour Authority**

- Government moved away from direct management of wharves in '91
- Clean Marine Program sets minimum standards
- Need to expand facilities that allow responsible boating
- Need marine education, training school
- Squamish is not a destination but a starting point

## **Doug Lea-Smith Squamish Harbour Adventures**

- Importance of dock to marine use, tourism
- Streamkeepers, Chris Tamburi
- Tourists love industry; they love to watch the logs dumping into the water, freighters moving in and out; so need both!

## **Wayne Moffat, Commodore, Squamish Yacht Club**

History:

- Established in early '70's by 12 members
- Purpose - to alleviate moorage shortages and improve boating facilities in Squamish
- Non- Profit, Member Funded Society – built by members for members
- Grass roots club, supported by local businesses of the day and avid boaters
- Community picnics, fishing derbies and dingy races were enjoyed by many local residents in the 70's and 80's
- Land leased to club for \$1.00 a year by Weldwood
- Donated club house was old BC Tel garage
- Dock 'floats' built by members with loan and fundraising
- The club continues to be member funded today

Primary Activities:

- Learn to Sail program: Advanced Sailing Program; Partnering with BC Sailing (and others) to successfully hold; Weekly Racing Series; Reciprocal and Transient Moorage Facilities; Support local Non-Profits with free club house use

Community Values

- Founders of S.O.A.R. Squamish Open Annual Regatta (established in 1974). Precursor to Squamish Wind Festival

- Home to Squamish Search and Rescue
- Yearly bursary for At-risk Youth
- Annual work weekend at Potlatch
- Recent member of Clean Marine initiative
- Longtime supporter of Marine Parks Forever Society

#### Opportunities and Challenges

- Learn To Sail Program at capacity: Possible partnership with BC Sailing facility currently planned for new waterfront may allow for expansion
- Future uncertain: Water lot lease in jeopardy; Public/private partnership with District?

#### **Scott Shaw-MaLaren, RCMSAR**

- 33 stations and 1200 members across BC
- 17 are trained in Squamish, with 9 new recruits
- Full year to train; transient community a challenge
- Work with Canada Coast Guard to provide help
- Not as well-known like land based SAR. Are on call 24/7/356
- Lot of effort; entirely community funded and all volunteer
- 150K fundraised for a vessel; 450K to replace.
- Need to go down to 1 vessel; no secure base/boat to use so use space at SYC and Harbour Authority

#### **Jeff Levine, Marine Consultant**

- Dealing with derelict boats; moored on pilings for years. Some have social, mental health and drug abuse issues and are otherwise homeless. Some deaths occurred. Fiberglass boats need to be maintained or they fall apart and then sink. A small boat costs \$8,000 to remove. One boat cost \$200,000 to remove. Another boat cost \$900,000 due to its size and the materials inside it; there was dry cleaning toxic liquid in it that the owner was dumping years into the MBC.
- Transport Canada has helped with navigation markers and via Supreme Court order has been able to get the derelict boats out. Partners involved have included Bethel Land Corp, Keith Scott, Bosa, Transport Canada, and the District. Bosa also spent \$1 million to take out 400 creosote pilings. This is an important initiative because when herring attach to these pilings they die instantly.

#### **Steve Fofonoff – GeoPacific**

- Limited development back in 2002 but now there is a desire to develop out to the foreshore. The Integrated Flood Hazards Management Plan took two years to develop as a flood protection strategy for downtown and will help manage these new developments in the face of flooding threats. Required for life and safety. The strategy will be a mix of vertical solutions and green shores, rock and riprap. Community engagement emphasized the need for access to the water.
- Old pilings have been removed in one area of MBC; 12 truckloads of old logging wire were removed. Dike in MBC will involve 1 m high wall because of tide swing and 1200 pilings have been inserted for seismic safety. Green shore approach will be taken along Cattermole.

#### **Kim Stegeman-Lowe, President, Squamish Terminals**

- Deep water port is an asset. Squamish port enables intermodal transport and access to rail, highway and sea. Squamish Terminals in business for 45 years. Brings in \$900 million/year.

Without the Terminals, products would not get out to market as efficiently. Privately owned and operating on private land. Federally regulated.

- 100 full time staff. 80% live in Squamish and base salary is 2x the national average. Pay \$6 million in taxes to all 3 levels of government.
- Challenges include: need for connected transportation; labour, housing shortage; pulp export market is mature; need to diversify; community growth – encroachment on truck route.

### **Mike Sheehan, BC Marine Logistics**

- Focus of this private company is on marine safety and emergency response. Saw a gap arising on the need to rely solely on RCMSAR as primary responder, or on local barges or water taxi but these are not equipped for emergency response. Has 3 emergency boats; are paramedics with marine background, search and rescue. Service Sunshine Coast, Vancouver, and Howe Sound.
- Need a location for shore access, storing boats; needs to lease or buy land.

### **Bryan Shier, Skomish Forestry**

- Joint venture with Squamish Nation with tenure in Squamish River area and TFL 38 and involvement in upcoming Squamish Community Forest. Greatest need is water access; able to transport 4-5x more than by trucking.
- Showed Squamish log flow summary overview map. Feel we can have it all; tourism and industry. 3-4000 truckloads/year down Loggers Lane. Approximately 20 FTE on both sides of channel, with another 60-70 in the woods harvesting and transporting.
- 1999 SEMP took a decade of cooperative planning; result was to remove industry but traded for future use Site B. Now industry is being pushed out of downtown due to development pressure.

## **Q&A Feedback Highlights**

Key points which arose in the Salt Life Panel Q&A were as follows:

- Concern with not having proper public access to any of waterfront; lots of studies; 22 years since Squamish bought the lands and appears nothing has been done. Desire for a clean public beach.
- Concern with Contamination and release of monitoring results. MOE is responsible for this information not the District.
- Concerned with the public boat ramp being hard to use at high tide; can't launch a boat and park a trailer safely.
- Desire for all uses to be balanced; need to allow for public water access; concern with not saturating with development; businesses need a place to operate; need certainty.
- Divers also need access to the water in Squamish.
- The water needs to be cleaned up. Industrial waste under the water.
- Dredging is important but be wary of sedimentation. There are prehistoric sponge reefs in Howe Sound and sedimentation will destroy this species.
- Porteau and Britannia doing a great job to clean up and address erosion and sedimentation problems.
- Regarding how MAST dovetails with SEMP/SEMC: MAST scope is the whole estuary not just conservation area. SEMP is still in effect and has been integrated into the OCP Update. SEMC is intergovernmental. DOS sits on it but senior government has shifted off over time. Query a new role for SEMC. SERC is not functional. Next step for estuary planning unknown for now and the desire is for more integration.

- Reminder that from SODC to development the proposal includes 1/3 of the (102 acre) land for public access and beach access. Today developers are allowing the public to use the land since they took over. Phase 1 will be a park prior to residential and commercial uses.
- Liveaboard boat community concerned with being evicted; lack of safe anchoring/mooring. Are at risk by anchoring in 100km deep waters. Hope for support.

## Poster Display Feedback Highlights

The top themes that arose from the input received at the display stations were as follows. Detailed input is in Appendix 3.

### Focus Area 1: Governance/ Shared Leadership

- Need to connect with our federal government representative who supports marine causes
- Develop formal agreements with all key government levels to support Squamish marine environment
- Hope MAST will address broader coastal area
- Include SEMC and members in MAST in next iterations of SEMP/SEMC
- Ensure balanced representation and respect for all marine based interests and users

### Focus Area 2: Marine Economy

- Need for safe access and use for recreational and business uses
- Need for zoning for non-motorized craft to promote tourism
- Need for marine-based transportation and linkages

### Focus Area 3: Coastal Ecosystems

- Need for protection/conservation, research and monitoring, and development of marine environmental protection policy
- Improve water quality

### Focus Area 4: Marine Gateway

- Ensure a sustainable environment on which marine business and recreation is based
- Ensure formal, permanent access, linkages and connectivity
- Need for marine based infrastructure, amenities and facilities
- Be aware of Squamish Yacht Club and other water-based recreational user concerns: need for a land base for members, storage, rentals, marina and water access



## Appendix 1: Panelists

Topic/Focus	Panelist(s)	
Stewardship/Conservation	Randall Lewis, Squamish Nation and Squamish River Watershed Society	Traditional oral knowledge, flora fauna/technical environmental and traditional knowledge of Squamish Nation holistic territory
	Francesca Knight, Squamish River Watershed Society	Squamish River Watershed, estuary conservation + restoration perspectives
Marine Recreation	Jaime Martin or Chris Rollett, Squamish Windsports Society	Windsport snapshot, spit management, needs etc
	Norm Hann, Norm Hann Expeditions	Howe Sound paddlesport, eco-business + conservation
	Representative from Squamish Paddling Club	Paddlesport snapshot, vision + local needs
Marine Gateway/Infrastructure	Catherine Lea Smith, Wharfinger and Douglas Lea Smith	Squamish Harbour Authority mandate and perspectives on waterfront issues and tourism
	Wayne Moffat, or designate Squamish Yacht Club	Perspectives from SYC
	Representative from Royal Canadian Marine Search and Rescue (RCMSAR)	Marine search and rescue support in Howe Sound
	Steve Fofonoff, Geopacific Consultants Ltd	Coastal flood protection considerations + sea dike design
	Jeff Levine, Consultant	Experiences preserving navigability and efforts in the Blind Channel to address derelict vessels and pollutants
Marine Industry + Transportation	Kim Stegeman, or designate, Squamish Terminals	Squamish terminals intermodal port operations, marine interface and transportation etc
	Bryan Shier, Garibaldi Forest Products Ltd and Eric Anderson or designate, Squamish District Forestry Association	Forest industry uses, perspectives and needs related to the marine realm

## Appendix 2: Attendees

Name	Organization/Business
1. Adam Slade	
2. Andrew Norris	
3. Drew Copeland	
4. Mike Sheehan	BC Marine Logistic
5. Cyan Thomas	Boat Owner
6. Evan L	Boater
7. Jake Belzil	Boater
8. Mister Pigeon	Boater
9. Candace Rose-Taylor	Cascade Environmental
10. Sara Burbridge	Cheakamus
11. Tina Currie	Coastal Stoke SUP
12. Douglas R Day	First Cambridge Development Corp
13. Eric Anderson	Forest Association, Streamkeepers
14. Steven Tulk	Kite Clash
15. David Gayton	Library
16. R.McCleery	Marine
17. Andrea Hockey	Ocean Marine
18. Duane Fluet	Ocean Marine
19. Rauneet Mines	Pam Goldsmith Jones (office)
20. Tom Bruusgaard	Past Harbour Master
21. Loren Parfitt	Resident
22. Martin L	Squamish
23. PL	Squamish
24. Kelly Servinski	Squamish BBB
25. Linda Kelly Smith	Squamish CAN
26. Haley Ritchie	Squamish Chief
27. Carl Halvorson	Squamish Environment Society
28. Rachel Shephard	Squamish Environment Society
29. David Burden	Squamish Marine Service
30. Art McGillivray	Squamish Marine, Blue Heron Marina

31. Liz Wood	Squamish Resident
32. Chessy Knight	Squamish River Watershed Society
33. Emma Jarrett	Squamish Terminal
34. Erin Yeo	Squamish Terminals
35. Jim Gracie	Squamish Terminals
36. Joe Webber	Squamish Terminals
37. Geoff Waterson	Squamish Windsports Society
38. Rebecca Aldous	Squamish Windsports Society
39. Andrew Guilbride	Squamish Yacht Club
40. Bill McNeney	Squamish Yacht Club
41. Cliff Wood	Squamish Yacht Club
42. Diana Lyons	Squamish Yacht Club
43. Heidi Pedersen	Squamish Yacht Club
44. Janet Gugins	Squamish Yacht Club
45. Jillian Coyne	Squamish Yacht Club
46. Morgan Campbell	Squamish Yacht Club
47. Tina Fox	Squamish Yacht Club
48. Linda Wood	Squamish Yacht Club, Secretary
49. Carl Ingrahm	Squamish Yacht Club, TBYC. Boat owner
50. Rhonda O'Grady	SRWS
51. Eileen Kroc	SWS/CCG
52. Cortney Brown	Trout Country Fishing
53. Rachel Huber	Upstream
54. Ian Forbes	Vancouver Pile Driving

## Appendix 3: Poster Display Input

The following synthesizes the input from the posters at the display stations. The bullets are the exact comments provided and have been organized into themes.

### Focus Area 1: Governance/ Shared Leadership

#### **Need to connect with MP federal government representative who supports marine causes**

- Connect with MP, Pamela Goldsmith Jones re legislation process for abandoned and derelict boats and other marine related issues; she cares about the marine environment
- No mention of federal government funding support – contact MP Pamela Goldsmith Jones

#### **Develop formal agreements with all key government levels to support Squamish**

- #1 opportunity to develop formal agreements with different levels of government to support Squamish with Funding for all the focus areas: marine economy, coastal ecosystems and marine gateway.

#### **Hope MAST will address broader coastal area**

- Take SEMP and SEMC and expand the scope to other areas of Squamish marine environment

#### **Include SEMC and members in MAST in next iterations of SEMP/SEMC**

- How will SEMC be included in MAST?
- If there are related action items, will SEMC or members be engaged to be part of the review process.
- Lot of blood, sweat and tears went into SEMP and the decisions and actions – hope it is respected going forward with MAST.
- If SEMC dissolved be sure to discuss with SEMC members especially if reinventing SEMC – out of respect.

#### **Ensure balanced representation and respect for all marine based interests and users**

- Lot of industry at the Salt Life Panel – ensure balance.

### Focus Area 2: Marine Economy

#### **Need for safe access and use for recreational uses**

##### **Need safe water access for scuba diving, great tourism potential**

- Please contact me for the next forum – Rachel Huber (added to master contact list).
- There has been no coordination for an active scuba diving community. Large potential for tourism dollars but no safe water access.

##### **Need boat moorage for day users, e.g., sailors, scuba divers**

- Need boat moorage for day users North of Howe Sound! i.e. for scuba diving and day sailors.

## **Need for zoning for non-motorized craft to promote tourism**

- Need C5 – use for non-motorized raft to promote tourism.

## **Need for marine-based transportation**

### **Need for marine highway**

- Marine highway – yes please include!

### **Need ferry service**

- Support a ferry service.

## **Water lot ownership?**

- Who owns the water lot at Victoria and Main, 1200 ft.

## **Focus Area 3: Coastal Ecosystems**

### **Need for protection/conservation**

#### **Need to protect estuaries because they are scarce and support 50% of coastal species**

- Estuary makes up 2% of BC coastline; no one has talked about its scarcity; over 50% of coastal species make use of estuaries.

#### **Protect fish habitat**

- Missing: the stuff that depends on the water or lives under the water – not just the stuff that floats on top.

#### **Use native planting in demonstration gardens**

- Include demonstration garden of native plants.

#### **Great to see a focus on marine and estuary habitats**

- Great to see a focus on protection of marine and estuary habitats.

### **Need for research and monitoring**

#### **Collect baseline data with government and community partners**

- Consider collecting baseline data with government and community partners on water quality, noise levels, herring, boat traffic, so we can measure change over time.

### **Need for development of policy**

#### **Designate areas for dog off-leash with mandatory poop pick up**

- SEMP has policy: Dogs on leash, most have dog on leash policy. Designated areas for dog off leash with poop pick up.

#### **Develop erosion protection policy**

- Develop erosion protection policy to prevent future and further damage to underwater ecosystems in Howe Sound. i.e. glass sponge reef, rockfish.

### **Improve water quality**

#### **Improve water quality in Blind Channel**

- Improve water quality in Blind Channel Area – not just Estuary. It's toxic!

## Focus Area 4: Waterfront Gateway

### Ensure sustainable environment on which marine business and recreation is based

- All those wonderful, wonderful things that we come to see or enjoy – that are a critical part of an environment-based business, rely on a sustainable environment.

### Ensure formal, permanent access, linkages and connectivity

#### Ensure public transit connectivity to marine trails and access points

- Need public transit to access and connect with marine trails and marine areas.

#### Need for marine access and infrastructure for running windsports business

- Concern that I invested in business in downtown to avoid impacting the WMA but now I don't have safe water access nor the infrastructure necessary to run a windsports business.

### Need for marine based infrastructure, amenities and facilities

#### Identify needed community infrastructure, amenities and facilities needs

#### Need trail system in estuary

- Need continuous accessible looped trails to access the wide variety of the eco-systems within the estuary.

#### Need permanent safe public access to waterfront

- There is no permanent safe, public access and amenities to waterfront.

#### Kiters require additional launching spot other than the spit

#### Shared space needed for marine community groups – Marine Centre

- It seems like a lot of different marine groups need a home (Squamish Yacht Club, Marine Search and Rescue, Paddle Club, Kiting). BC Sailing is also looking for a Western Headquarters. Maybe everyone can get together with a shared space on the Oceanfront for a "Marine Centre."
- Great idea, Squamish Yacht Club would be happy to connect.
- Great Idea.

### Where are float homes addressed?

#### Squamish Yacht Club concerns

- Learn To Sail Program at capacity.
- Possible partnership with BC Sailing facility currently planned for new waterfront may allow for expansion.
- Future uncertain
  - Water lot lease in jeopardy.
  - Is a public/private partnership with District and/or others possible?