

**VANCOUVER ISLAND NORTH WOODLANDS ADVISORY GROUP  
(VINWAG)**

***Western Forest Products Inc.*  
Community Advisory Group  
Minutes of Meeting February 25, 2016**

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**Attendance:**

Jon Flintoft, WFP	Gaby Wickstrom, Port McNeill & District Chamber of Commerce
Gunnar Wigard, Large Contractors	Ione Brown, NICFLP
Jeff Houle, Small Contractors	Ray Harper, Labour
John Tidbury, District of Port Hardy	Graham MacDonald, Town of Pt. McNeill
Tom Doak-Dunelly, General Public	Steve Lacasse, Environment

**Presenters:** Jon Flintoft, WFP, Gaby Wickstrom, Port McNeill and District Chamber, VINWAG

**Regrets:** Katherine Dolmage, Aquaculture, Fred Roberston, Education, Joli White, Tourism & Recreation Alternate, Janet Dorward, Business, Dave Trebett, Tourism and Recreation, Patrick Donaghy, Local Government, Pat English, Local Government Alternate

**Observers:** Jim McDowell, NIFO Planning Manager, WFP, Kevin Laird, Stumpage Appraisal Supervisor, WFP, Roger Briscoe, Operations Manager Holberg and Quatsino Dryland Sort, WFP

**Advisors:** Paul Barolet, Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resources Operations

**Chairperson and Facilitator:** Annemarie Koch

**Minutes taken by:** Jon Flintoft and Annemarie Koch

## **1.0 SAFETY AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Annemarie welcomed everyone to the meeting, stressed the importance of safety in WFP's operations and reviewed the procedures to follow in the event of an emergency. Annemarie reviewed the objectives of the meeting, namely to review the minutes and action items from the November 12th meeting, have a discussion with Jon Flintoft, Jim McDowell, Roger Briscoe and Kevin Laird about WFP's harvesting plans, review the results and recommendations from the 2015 participant satisfaction survey, review and confirm the 2016 meeting schedule, hear an update on the forest worker engagement strategy, and set the date of the next meeting. She noted that Fred Robertson had sent his regrets and was not able to attend the meeting and that he would provide an update on the youth forestry initiative at the next meeting. She suggested that a brief discussion of the proposed all-PAG meeting on September 22-23 on the North Island be added to the agenda.

Annemarie noted that while Jon would be talking about the harvesting plans at this meeting, some version of the map showing harvesting plans for the next 2-3 years would be available at every VINWAG meeting.

## **2.0 REVIEW OF LAST MEETING MINUTES AND ACTION ITEMS**

Annemarie asked if there were any comments on the minutes of the November 12th meeting and reviewed action items requiring updates or immediate attention with members, and the results of the discussion are summarized in the table below, along with the addition or modification of 5 action items developed during the course of this meeting. For the benefit of new or recent members, Annemarie noted that she would be assuming all members had read their minutes and would not be taking additional time to go through them at the meeting, other than to deal with questions, changes and action items. Action items that were completed were dropped from the list and revised action items were retained as modified.

It was noted that most of the action items were ongoing in 2016, and that action items 185 to 189 had been completed.

ACTION ITEMS					
#	Item	Responsibility	Initiation Date	Target Date	Completion Date
140	Follow up on engaging youth in SFMP	Fred Robertson/Jon Flintoft/Kindry Mercer/A. Koch	June 27, 2013	Ongoing in 2016	
163	Provide an update on the Pacific TSA Timber Supply Review	Jon Flintoft	September 11, 2014	Later in 2016	
175	Dedicate a future meeting to a presentation on stumpage by a government and a WFP representative	Annemarie Koch	April 23, 2015	Sometime in 2016	
177	Review the wording for the target related to Target 2 of Indicator 3.1.1, number of slides treated so that it is clearer and more easily measured and tracked	Annemarie Koch/Jon Flintoft	April 23, 2015	For 2015 annual report	
178	Coordinate production of a local map of roads and recreational sites in the DFA	Kindry Mercer	June 4, 2015	Sometime in 2016	
190	Consider recommendations 1-3 from the 2015 participant satisfaction survey into a draft revised Terms of Reference	Annemarie	February 25, 2016	For April 28 <sup>th</sup> meeting	
191	Follow up on recommendations 4-5 of the 2015 participant satisfaction survey in mutual consultation	Members of VINWAG and WFP	February 25, 2016	Ongoing in 2016	
192	Keep members posted about May 25-26 <sup>th</sup> external audit	Jon Flintoft	February 25, 2016	Ongoing	
193	Post final 2016 meeting schedule on PAG website	Annemarie Koch	February 25, 2016	February 29, 2016	
194	Prepare draft all-PAG itinerary for review at the April 28 <sup>th</sup> meeting	Annemarie Koch	February 25, 2016	For the April 28 <sup>th</sup> meeting	

Annemarie added that, unless members of VINWAG wished to discuss any of these ongoing items, and unless there were any comments or changes, she would ask members to adopt the minutes of the previous meeting. The minutes were accepted as circulated.

### **3.0 DISCUSSION OF WFP'S HARVESTING PLANS FOR THE DFA: JON FLINTOFT, JIM McDOWELL, ROGER BRISCOE, KEVIN LAIRD, WFP AND VINWAG MEMBERS**

Jon opened the presentation with an outline of how the TFL 6 management plan is prepared, including a Timber Supply Analysis. He pointed to the area of the plan and the annual cut at this time, and noted there is usually approximately 140,000 cubic metres harvested annually from the private land on the DFA.

Jim reviewed how a 20 year plan is developed and provides overall direction for interim harvesting plans. He noted that the 20 year plan allows WFP to reach out into the future to examine the profitability of harvest blocks, for example, through a long term planning exercise.

Jon noted that even out to four to five years, the plan is really a best guess, as there are many factors that change over time, like deletions to the THLB due to set asides for critical habitat for SAR. He added that technological improvements like LiDAR can help enhance these estimates by providing better inventory and planning information.

Jon stressed the importance of inventory management, including setting targets for approved logging plans, and having a supply of completed engineering plans, to keep work going for at least 12 to 14 months ahead of the planning stage.

Jim noted that stability can be maintained through this planning process, though political and other changes can create challenges in acquiring required approvals.

Jon noted that markets are another area of uncertainty and that, even when there are approved plans in place, there might not be an immediate market for the product.

He reviewed the requirements for a 20 year plan, including market projections, mill requirements, harvest systems and harvest profiles.

Jon noted that WFP is transitioning from old growth to second growth and that equipment requirements and acquisitions need to reflect this.

Jon pointed to the need to establish capital investments that support changes in harvesting profiles, for example.

Jim noted that projections for capital requirements are made over a 20 year period now, as forecasts are becoming more and more sophisticated.

Jon reviewed some of the factors to consider in planning, including THLB versus NCLB, operable versus non operable areas, higher level plans, Watershed Management Strategies and cut control.

Graham noted his concern that Port McNeill's watershed is scheduled to be logged. He asked if WFP would be bringing in a hydrologist to look at the sensitivity of the Port McNeill watershed.

Jon noted that WFP's Watershed Management Strategies document was prepared by a hydrologist and that concerns such as those expressed by Graham would be taken into consideration with the development of the plan.

Ione asked about how the transition to old growth was progressing. She referenced a Forest Practices Board report that was coming out this fall on this subject.

Jon noted that TFL 6 is still predominantly old growth, but that WFP was transitioning to second growth to minimize the fall down effect.

Jim noted that current harvesting ratio was at 40% second growth, versus 60% old growth.

Tom asked how sustainable WFP's current and planned harvesting levels are for cedar. Jim noted that cedar was a driver in this industry but that WFP was within a few percentage points of where the cedar profile says they should be on Crown lands, though there was a higher percentage of cedar likely coming out of private lands.

Ione asked where WFP was with respect to cut control at this stage. Jim explained that WFP was at 108% in Year 3 of the cut control period.

Tom asked about the Neucel situation and whether the lowered demand was impacting the cut. It was noted that the lowering of demand for this pulp wood in the area has had an effect, but has also opened up some opportunities in new markets for this lower quality wood.

It was noted the WFP was doing well with second growth hemlock and balsam at this time. Jim noted that the goal was to maximize productivity of mills and that these mills are processing this second growth wood.

Paul asked about the alder from Colonial. John Tidbury noted that alder was now being used for hot tub construction.

Jim noted he did not know where the 3,000 cubic metres of alder went from Colonial, but that the value of alder has now exceeded the value of second growth hemlock in some cases. It was noted that most of the alder buyers were in the Pacific North West. It was noted that WFP is planting alder in anticipation of increasing market demand for this species.

Graham noted that natural nurseries for cedar can be found where limestone is used to build road, and he suggested using naturally regenerated cedar as a source of seedlings.

Steve asked about the impact of setting aside critical habitat for SAR. Jim noted that one of the species with the most potential impact on harvesting plans was the northern goshawk. He pointed to some fairly significant areas proposed to be set aside for critical habitat for goshawks. He noted that the protection of 112 breeding sites could result in setting aside thousands of hectares to protect nesting and foraging areas in second growth and old growth throughout the DFA.

Steve noted that it had been suggested at the workshop that an aspatial approach to protecting the goshawk be integrated into the certification process, to provide some flexibility around managing for critical habitat for the goshawk.

It was noted that the sooner WFP can find out what the criteria are, the better the company can adapt its management approach to accomplishing the federal government's requirement to protect the goshawk.

There was a discussion of mortality related to the topping of trees to help windfirm them. It was noted the edge treatment can protect the trees within the setting and non-timber resources adjacent.

#### **4.0 REVIEW OF RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE 2015 PARTICIPANT SATISFACTION SURVEY: ANNEMARIE KOCH**

Annemarie referred VINWAG members to the summary of survey results, as follows, which she had distributed with the agenda:

1. Discuss how members request and receive information and consider making this an indicator in the SFMP.
2. Discuss and define a process for response to requests from members and consider making this an indicator.
3. Engage in a discussion to clarify the current and desired role of the public advisory group in the CSA process.
4. For the reasons stated by the survey respondents, namely the group's perceived lack of influence on corporate and operational policy, and the benefits of having a structured and constructive dialogue between WFP and members of the public advisory group:
  - A. Consider meeting periodically as a group to define a maximum of three priority issues which fall under the purview of the CSA standard.

Bring these priorities forward to WFP for action and measure progress in the context of the normal meeting agenda / schedule.

On an annual basis, provide the group's consensus to WFP on its performance on addressing these priority issues and provide this consensus to the External Auditors during their normal reviews.

- B. At least one annual discussion in the normal meeting schedule should be led by Jon with the group, around the proposed harvesting program. This discussion will be supplemented by ongoing availability of a wall map and other visuals showing current and proposed harvesting plans in the DFA.

That this annual discussion of harvesting plans occurs could form the basis for a Local Indicator, and WFP response to any issues raised (within a specific timetable) could also be incorporated.

- 5. Continue to hold joint meetings with members of NWAC, where there are SFMP-related topics of mutual interest to discuss, for example, aboriginal interests and community sustainability.

She noted that she had tried to incorporate some of the recommendations in the draft meeting schedule, for example, asking Jon to have a discussion with members about the five year harvesting plan in the DFA, and scheduling a session in November to define and discuss priority issues falling under the purview of the CSA standard.

She added that she had proposed a joint session with NWAC in October around the newly introduced discussion item of relations with aboriginals. And she noted that VINWAG members had been invited to take in John Deal's presentation on WFP's goshawk and marbled murrelet strategies at the February 11<sup>th</sup> NWAC meeting. She pointed out that there might be a presentation on agroforestry at the November 24<sup>th</sup> NWAC meeting and that interested VINWAG members would be invited to attend.

She noted that the annual review of the Terms of Reference on April 28<sup>th</sup> might be a good time to review recommendations 1-3 around requests for information and clarification of the desired role of the public advisory group in the CSA certification process.

With respect to recommendation 3, Tom noted that members seemed to be asking whether the group was here just to be informed by WFP, or are we also here to provide input to WFP, and are they listening. It was noted that this issue was in the context of the way the CIFO amalgamation was rolled out and why, for example, WFP did not discuss the potential effects of the amalgamation on community stability with PAG members. Members agreed that, while they wished to have had the opportunity to discuss and perhaps try to mitigate the impacts of WFP's decision on community stability, their input did not extend to WFP's jurisdiction to make its own business decisions, as they did with the amalgamation.

Steve noted that, when the process started, it was a learning process for members. He noted that, at this stage, members had more information and could provide more valuable information to the company. He noted that it was time that the group could become more advisory in nature and provide valuable input to WFP on important areas under the SFMP.

There was a general discussion regarding the value of enhanced communication and dialogue between WFP and members of VINWAG.

Annemarie asked members whether they agreed with pursuing the recommendations and, if so, how they would like to go about this.

It was agreed that Annemarie should attempt to integrate recommendations 1-3 into a draft revised Terms of Reference for review at the April 28<sup>th</sup> meeting.

It was agreed to try to follow up on recommendations 4 and 5, in consultation with WFP, over the course of the year.

Jon thanked all those who responded to the survey.

## **5.0 REVIEW AND CONFIRMATION OF THE 2016 MEETING SCHEDULE: ANNEMARIE KOCH**

Annemarie reviewed the draft schedule of meetings with members. She noted that the all-PAG workshop was tentatively scheduled for September 22-23, between the September VINWAG meeting and the joint October meeting with NWAC.

Tom asked whether Jon might like to combine the September 9<sup>th</sup> field trip with the all-PAG field tour. It was agreed to wait and see how things go over the next few months before making a decision on this.

Jon noted that the external auditor will be coming on May 25-26<sup>th</sup> and that they would want to talk to some VINWAG members. He noted that he would keep members posted about this.

The meeting schedule was confirmed and it was agreed that Annemarie should post the final schedule on the PAG website.

## **6.0 UPDATE ON FOREST WORKER ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY INITIATIVE: GABY WICKSTROM, VINWAG**

Gaby noted that a group had been formed to look at a worker recruitment strategy for the North Island, following discussions of this at the joint VINWAG/NWAC meeting held October 2015.

She pointed to the need for a common vision, and to identify who needed to be invited to the group. She noted the individuals involved in the group had looked at places where community, business and industry could work together to engage a talented workforce. She noted that, ideally, she would like to see the group work with business and industry to find ways to work together to find solutions to engaging a talented workforce on the North Island.

She noted the group was meeting on March 1<sup>st</sup>. She asked members of VINWAG to let her know who they thought should be part of that group.

Gaby reviewed the common vision for the group and stressed that the group was intended to be solutions-based.

## **7.0 ALL-PAG MEETING ON THE NORTH ISLAND, SEPTEMBER 22-23, 2016**

Annemarie noted that WFP had agreed to host a gathering of WFP's Public Advisory Groups on September 22-23<sup>rd</sup>, 2016 on the North Island. She noted that she had been working with Jon and Kelly to develop an itinerary for the event that would include presentations and a field tour.

She noted that Jon was going to ask WFP's CEO to attend, along with other senior WFP staff, and asked if VINWAG members had any suggested topics they would like to see addressed in the presentations and areas they would like to see covered in the field tour, bearing in mind that the event is for all of WFP's PAGs.

Jon noted that WFP's CEO had spoken to the all-PAG gathering in 2012 and that he hoped he could attend this meeting on the North Island. He noted that he was looking at trying to get a manufacturing VP to talk about where the logs go after they are harvested.

Tom suggested putting a question to each of the participating public advisory groups about what they have learned over the 20-some years of operation, and to share these learning experiences, perhaps in a round table format, at the gathering. It was agreed that Annemarie should put together a draft itinerary for the event for review at the April 28<sup>th</sup> meeting.

## **8.0 NEXT MEETING:**

It was agreed that the next meeting would take place on April 28, 2016. Annemarie and Jon thanked everyone for coming and wished them a safe journey home.

**When:** APRIL 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016  
**Dinner:** 6:30 p.m.  
**Meeting:** 7:00 p.m.