

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

***Western Forest Products Inc.*
Community Advisory Group
Minutes of Meeting November 3, 2016**

Attendance:

Jon Flintoft, WFP	Steve Lacasse, Environment
Tom Doak-Dunelly, General Public	Jeff Houle, Suppliers
Dale Dorward, Small Business	Leith Paganoni, Aquaculture
Gunnar Wigard, Small Contractors	Gaby Wickstrom, Port McNeill Chamber of Commerce
Shirley Ackland, Town of Port McNeill Education	John Tidbury, District of Port Hardy Fred Roberston,
Ray Harper, Labour	Patrick Donaghy, Local Government
Dave Trebett, Tourism & Recreation	

Regrets: Ben Trerise, Fish and Wildlife, David Stewart, Large Contractors, Ione Brown, NICFLP

Advisors: Paul Barolet, MOFLNRO

Observers: Clint Cadwallader, Senior Operations Manager, NIFO, WFP, Michelle Baker, Area Planner, NIFO, WFP

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 throughout 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 September 8th meeting, have a round table discussion regarding harvesting plans in the DFA and SFMP priorities for 2017, distribute the 2016 participant satisfaction survey, hear an update on the UBCM forest policy paper, hear an update on the Pacific TSA Timber Supply review process, receive further information on the planning process associated with harvesting in the Swan Lake area, review the draft 2017 schedule of meetings, and set the date of the next meeting. Annemarie noted that Fred Robertson had asked to provide an update on the UBCM's resolution to ban all further logging of old growth on Vancouver Island during the discussion regarding SFMP priorities in 2017. Before moving to a review of the September 8th minutes and action items, Annemarie invited Jon to acknowledge two long serving members of VINWAG who were not present at the all-PAG event or the joint October 27th meeting. Jon presented vests to long serving VINWAG members Fred Robertson and Dale Dorward and thanked them for their dedication to the public advisory group. He also acknowledged Steve Lacasse and Ray Harper, who were previously recognized at the all-PAG event and joint meeting with NWAC on October 27th. Annemarie then invited everyone to introduce themselves.

2.0 REVIEW OF LAST MEETING MINUTES AND ACTION ITEMS

Annemarie asked if there were any comments on the minutes of the September 8th 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 three 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 action item 163 would be covered by a presentation by Paul Barolet later in the meeting, that action item 175 could be addressed during the discussion of the draft 2017 meeting schedule, action items 178 and 204 would hopefully be completed by the end of November (based on email

communication from Kindry), action item 190 had been addressed with the adoption of the latest version of the Terms of Reference at the September 8th meeting, action item 200 would potentially be addressed during the discussion of the draft 2017 schedule of meetings later in the meeting, action items 202,203 and 209 had been completed and action item 205 would be addressed by Jon's presentation later in the meeting. Jon suggested that action item 206 be dropped, noting that he had approached Kaela Mitchell of RSTBC and that it would not be possible to add sand to the beach at Beaver Lake because of restrictions contained in the Fisheries Act as well as there not really being an existing sandy beach. Jon stated that, further to action item 207, he had contacted Chris Walker at MOFLNRO about monitoring parks and recreation site usage numbers with road counters and that Chris had advised him that the District was monitoring certain roads, including the ones accessing Mitchell Bay, Mount Cain, Ledge/Lady Ellen Point, Winter Harbour, Vernon and Grant Bay. He noted that the Resource District has been monitoring use of selected roads for well over a year, as a means of determining whether the level of use is a determinant for additional investments in certain recreation sites and access roads. He reviewed some of the recent usage statistics for these roads. Dave noted that the work on the Ledge Point Road was excellent and commended the parties responsible. It was noted that action item 208 was in process.

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	
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 the annual report, as information becomes available	
178	Coordinate production of a local map of roads and recreational sites in the DFA	Kindry Mercer	June 4, 2015	November 30, 2016	
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	
195	Include how many animals were actually taken as a result of hunting in the DFA	Jon Flintoft	April 28, 2016	For the annual report, as information becomes available	
196	Consider ways to enhance communication of what VINWAG does to the public, integrate with WFP's communications strategy	Annemarie Koch	April 28, 2016	Ongoing	
204	Circulate link to digital recreational map to VINWAG members	Jon Flintoft/ Annemarie Koch	September 8, 2016	November 30, 2016	
208	Provide for brief presentation on and Q&A on harvesting plans at each meeting	Jon Flintoft/ Annemarie Koch	September 8, 2016	Ongoing	
210	Update VINWAG on efforts to form a coalition of industry, community, business and professional stakeholders to	Fred Robertson, Shirley Ackland, John Tidbury	November 3, 2016	Ongoing	

	address the recent UBCM resolution to ban all future harvesting of old growth on Vancouver Island				
211	Submit completed participant satisfaction surveys	All VINWAG Members	November 3, 2016	November 24, 2016	
212	Amend the draft 2017 schedule of meetings to include a June 22 nd presentation on stumpage	Annemarie Koch	November 3, 2016	February 23, 2017	

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 GROUP DISCUSSION REGARDING HARVESTING PLANS IN THE DFA AND SFMP PRIORITIES IN 2017

Annemarie reminded VINWAG members that an annual group discussion regarding SFMP priorities and harvesting plans in the DFA was one of the recommendations arising from the 2015 participant satisfaction survey. She noted that the format of the discussion would be informal and that she would try to capture key points in the minutes.

Members agreed to have Jon start with a discussion of harvesting plans for 2017. He noted that he had looked primarily at areas near parks and recreation sites that were scheduled for harvesting in the near future, and then discuss some of the most recent harvesting initiatives in the DFA, including helicopter programs and an innovative harvesting system to economically access timber on steep slopes.

Jon referred to a couple of sites near protected areas that were scheduled for harvest in the near future, including a site near Raft Cove, another along the access road to the O'Connell Lake rec site where it was hoped some work could be done to improve the access road to the site. He referred to another proposed block close to the Village of Port Alice, along Marine Drive, on a piece of private land. He noted that WFP planned to discuss the harvesting plans with council in Port Alice. He pointed to proposed blocks along Victoria Lake and how the access road in this area (e.g. to Spruce Bay) had been widened and improved to facilitate recent harvesting in the area. Jon noted that WFP would be consulting with cabin owners close to the proposed cutblocks about the harvesting plans.

Jon pointed to harvesting plans in the Port McNeill area, including some blocks that would be heli-logged. He pointed to some blocks that would be harvested near the Merry Widow trailhead in the near future. He noted that the access road would be upgraded again and access improved. Jon referenced a proposed block close to the Clint Beek rec site and how plans would ensure no increased risk to user safety at the site. He noted that there might be associated opportunities to expand the site.

Tom asked about the O'Connell Lake rec site. Jon noted it was established as a rec site under older legislation, and that for WFP to do work on the site, it would have to be re-established under the new legislation. It was noted that the Mahatta River rec site was an established site, but that the river was cutting into a number of the campsites. It was noted there was a beautiful beach at O'Connell Lake and that it was a great place to fish.

There was a question about the effect of the SAR recovery strategies for marbled murrelets and northern goshawks on harvesting plans. Jon noted that there had been no decision yet on where the areas that would be set aside would be located and when this would be done. There was a general discussion of the SAR process and related socioeconomic impact studies.

Jon reviewed the company's new heli-logging initiatives, in relation to other more traditional logging methods on the operable land base. He noted that heli-logging was more expensive and so the wood had to be more valuable to provide for a margin after harvesting. Jon noted there is a program underway in Jeune Landing from the end of November through to early 2017, and there would likely be another heli-logging program in the Port McNeill area in 2017/2018.

Jon discussed other forms of logging, including re-introducing the skyline process. It was noted that this type of harvesting was like a lost art and that its success would rely on having enough skilled people in the workforce to design and implement the harvesting process. There was a discussion of factors such as yarding distance, cost of lines and the number of people on the ground.

Jon asked Michelle to talk about the innovative winch-assisted harvesting method being introduced on the DFA, for volume inaccessible by conventional or helicopter logging, due to slope and economic factors. Michelle demonstrated the winch-assist method with photos and videos. Clint noted he had travelled to Chile to look at this process in action. He noted that the approach was proving economically viable in this area and improving yarding productivity significantly on steep slopes.

There was a discussion of how the method works in the field. It was noted that the method appears to be a game changer for improving economics and the range of wood that can be safely and affordably harvested on slopes.

There was a discussion of the impact of this method on terrain stability. Jon noted that the thickness of the forest floor can act as a cushion for the machine. It was noted that this method can have less of an impact than a hoe chucker, by providing a 'four wheel drive' effect.

Ray noted that the method could be hard on operators in the long term. It was noted that the use of harnesses should help this, and that other practices would be put in place to maintain long term safety and health of the operators.

Dave asked whether there should be barriers to protect the visual qualities around rec sites, and protect these sites from wind throw. Jon noted that the rec sites are in a working forest and that reserves or visual buffers around rec sites can be bad and good, e.g. reserve areas could be subject to windthrow over time. There was a discussion of how regeneration of a harvested area was also something to demonstrate near rec sites, and that signboards could be used to explain various logging practices to visitors. It was noted that significant green-up generally occurs five to eight years after harvest on the DFA

Dave noted that it was his impression that the age of the timber we are logging is getting younger and younger, and he questioned how harvesting younger stands relates to stewardship and sustainability. He asked whether there could be something in the plan that 'gave the tree more lifespan before it is cut down.' Jon noted that the management plan guiding the AAC has a forest timber supply analysis that takes a look at growing stock and when age classes become operable from an economic and utilization perspective. He added that some younger stands need to be harvested in order to allow other age classes to grow, to provide a balance of harvest and growth over time. There was a discussion of where younger stands of trees had been harvested. There was a discussion of the reductions in operable areas that may be leading to more pressure on younger stands. Clint noted that WFP has a rigorous process in place to determine age classes and then set sustainable cut for each species. He noted that this is carried out by the Chief Forester and that the company is held accountable to this cut.

Dave asked if WFP is overcutting. Clint noted that WFP's overall goal is sustainability.

Fred provided a history of a resolution passed at the UBCM this year to ban all further logging of old growth on Vancouver Island. He explained how the resolution was passed first through AVIM and then through the UBCM, and noted that the resolution passed without the knowledge and against the wishes of a number of North Island municipal representatives.

Fred noted that the resolution does not acknowledge the old growth areas that have already been set aside, and he pointed to the increasing attention of various parties toward the old growth on the North Island. He stressed the importance of discussing sustainable forest practices and the certification process

with these groups, and the impacts that a blanket ban on harvesting old growth will have on communities on the North Island.

Fred noted that WFP and members of VINWAG need to get out ahead of this movement to ban old growth harvesting on Vancouver Island. He pointed to efforts with the Centre of Excellence in Forestry to get information out on sustainable forestry practices on the North Island but stressed that a concerted effort needed to be made to demonstrate that current harvesting on the North Island is sustainable and that a ban on all harvesting of old growth would have significant impact on communities in the region. It was noted that the people who were calling for a ban on old growth harvesting were from urban areas where most of the old growth has already been logged.

There was a discussion of the 'rural-urban' divide on forest management.

Fred noted that people who are trying to stop all future logging of old growth on Vancouver Island need to see that communities in the region are united, and a coalition of groups needs to come forward and provide more information on sustainable forest practices on the north island and the economic impact of a total ban on harvesting of old growth on Vancouver Island.

John noted that he had drawn attention to a recent paper from UBCM on the need for more community input on forest policy decision-making, and he pointed to the need for more communication between industry representatives and the councils that represent communities. He invited forestry representatives to make presentations to councils and other community groups on sustainable forestry practices.

John noted that there would be further discussion on logging practices at a meeting of mayors in Campbell River and that this would be an opportunity to communicate sustainable forestry practices. There was a discussion of how beneficial it would be to bring urban teachers to see sustainable forest practices on the North Island. Steve suggested that representatives of the CSA certification process make presentations at meetings like the UBCM conference.

It was agreed that Fred, Shirley and John should form a coalition of North Island community, industry, business and professional stakeholders to get out in front of what appears to be an effort to stop all future harvesting of old growth on Vancouver Island, in part by demonstrating the sustainable forestry practices that are in place now, and showing the severe economic impacts such a ban would have on North Island communities. It was agreed that this coalition should make use of a number of communication strategies, including use of social media. It was agreed to work with Kindry at WFP, forest industry associations and the ABCFP and that the messages could be delivered through recreationists and educators as well.

4.0 DISTRIBUTION OF 2016 PARTICIPANT SATISFACTION SURVEY: ANNEMARIE KOCH

Annemarie noted that she had circulated a copy of the 2016 survey in Word, by email to members, so that they could fill it out digitally, or print it out and submit it. She invited members to fill in the survey and provide their comments and direction on how the public advisory process could serve them and WFP better.

There was a general discussion and it was agreed that members would submit their completed surveys by November 24th. Annemarie noted that results from the surveys would be discussed at the next meeting and that a summary of results and recommendations from the survey would be presented at that time.

5.0 UPDATE ON UBCM FORESTRY POLICY DECISION-MAKING PAPER: JOHN TIDBURY

Annemarie noted that, at the September meeting, John had brought a recent UBCM policy paper on the need for greater community consultation in forest policy decision-making to her attention, and she invited him to provide an overview of the paper and its purpose to members of VINWAG.

John noted that the paper had come about as a result of the apparent lack of communication between councils and forest companies, and how council members were in the dark about forestry practices. He noted that UBCM members had talked about forest practices throughout the Province and how they feel

there is a lack of communication between forest companies and municipal representatives. It was noted that there was not a great knowledge amongst UBCM members of the public advisory groups associated with the CSA certification process, and that most municipal representatives were not happy with what they saw as a lack of consultation between forest companies and communities. John suggested that the forest company liaisons should meet with councils throughout the Island to talk about what the forest industry is doing in the way of sustainable forest management and what the industry does for communities. It was suggested that the presentations be made by industry groups, the ABCFP, and groups representing CSA certification public advisory groups.

It was noted that communication coming from community representatives, such as the people on public advisory groups would be most effective.

It was agreed that elements from this discussion should be taken into consideration by the group that Fred, Shirley and John were leading to increase communication about sustainable forest practices on the North Island. It was noted that ultimately there needs to be a larger body with Provincial scope to represent sustainable forest management practices. Fred noted there was a lot of room for First Nations involvement in this initiative and that the group would be seeking their involvement.

6.0 UPDATE ON PACIFIC TSA TIMBER SUPPLY AREA REVIEW AND THE EFFECTS OF EARTHWORMS ON FOREST SOILS: PAUL BAROLET

Paul provided a short history of the Pacific TSA, noting it was created as an amalgamation of TFL areas taken back to support establishment of the BCTS market pricing system. He reviewed the areas under the Pacific TSA and noted it was one of the most difficult Timber Supply Area Reviews (TSR's) to do because the areas were so diverse. He reviewed the current areas within the Pacific TSA, including inaccessible areas and uneconomic areas, and noted that the current Timber Harvesting Land Base (THLB) was 600,000 hectares. He noted that previously the land base was over one million hectares and that this would be reduced to 600,000 hectares as a result of the TSR. When asked how information for these reviews was gathered, he explained that estimates were made on the basis of best available technology. He noted there were ongoing upward and downward pressures on the land base. Jon noted that the modelling process includes a process called 'sensitivity analysis' that provides for scenarios that give a better view of what could happen on the land base under different circumstances (i.e. management regimes).

Paul reviewed the timber profile in the TSA, noting it was mostly hemlock-balsam.

Paul provided a brief look at the role of earthworms in forest ecology, noting they were not generally thought to be good for forest productivity. He reviewed the four native earthworms on Vancouver Island. He noted that most of our soils are acidic and worms don't thrive in acidic soils, so it doesn't seem to be a factor in our forests yet. He noted there were 19 species of introduced earthworms on Vancouver Island. There was a discussion of how gardeners have introduced a number of invasive species on Vancouver Island.

7.0 PLANNING PROCESS FOR HARVESTING NEAR SWAN LAKE REC SITE: JON FLINTOFT

Jon noted that Swan Lake rec site is located off the San Josef mainline, on the way to Cape Scott Provincial Park. He noted that the site is located on WFP owned private land. He explained that the cutblock in question is located along the western side of the lake, and that the reserve that was originally left between the lake and the cutblock boundary was much larger than was required by the Private Managed Forest Land legislation. He noted that the stand type of the area had originated from the 1908 hurricane. As such, the stand was quite homogeneous, with newly opened edges being susceptible to blowdown. Jon explained the efforts WFP had made to assess and prescribe windfirming on the reserve edge to mitigate the amount of blowdown. Jon noted that the reserve edge had now gone through five winters and that, while some blowdown had occurred over this time, a more windfirm (acclimated) edge had been created. He reviewed the efforts that had been made to ensure that the edge of the cutblock remained stable. However, he pointed out that occasionally unusual or catastrophic winds occur over the DFA, and that the windfirming treatment had not completely stood up to these higher than planned for winds. In the recreation site itself, WFP had completed an annual danger tree assessment in the later

winter of 2016. The assessment identified several danger trees that required falling (i.e. leaving the trees standing could pose a hazard to site users). For safety reasons, these danger trees were removed using a mechanical feller-processor. If the danger trees were felled by hand fallers, likely more trees would have had to be felled to ensure worker safety. During the mechanical falling process, some machine disturbance was created (roughed up the access road, some ruts). This disturbance will be looked at along with plans for the rec site itself in 2017.

There was a discussion of whether wind models were being adapted to take climate change into consideration. Jon noted that changes in wind direction and speed had been observed over the past few years on the DFA.

There was a discussion of how windfirming techniques had changed over time, based on observations made after the treatments.

It was noted that these changes on forest management should be communicated to the public. John pointed to the recreational value of the site and the need for some maintenance and for better communication to visitors about the sustainable forestry practices in use in the area.

8.0 DRAFT 2017 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS: ANNEMARIE KOCH

Annemarie noted that she had prepared the draft schedule of meetings with the intent of covering off previously recommended presentations that were related to the SFMP and required or suggested in the CSA standard. She invited members to provide their feedback on the date and proposed content of the meetings in the draft schedule.

Members noted that they would like to see a presentation in 2017 on stumpage, by one or a combination of WFP, Ministry and BCTS representatives. It was agreed to move the update on the recreational map initiative to the February 23rd meeting and set the June 22nd meeting aside for a presentation on stumpage. Members agreed with the dates and agreed that the first meeting in 2017 would take place on February 23rd.

9.0 NEXT MEETING: JON FLINTOFT AND ANNEMARIE KOCH

It was agreed, following discussion of the 2017 draft schedule of meetings, that the next meeting would be on February 23rd, 2017, and that the presentation would be on WFP's safety policies and procedures.

Steve thanked Jon and WFP for so strongly supporting the broodstock collection at the Marble River hatchery this fall. He also thanked WFP for putting on the all-PAG meeting in September. He noted the presentations and field trip were incredible and that our visitors were shown some very good sustainable forest practices on the North Island. Annemarie thanked Steve for so capably handling the master of ceremonies duties at the event. Dale asked everyone to come out to the Rotary auction this year in Port McNeill.

Annemarie and Jon thanked everyone for supporting the public advisory process throughout the year and wished them a safe journey home.

When: February 23, 2017
Dinner: 6:30 p.m.
Meeting: 7:00 p.m.