

VANCOUVER ISLAND NORTH WOODLANDS ADVISORY GROUP
(VINWAG) and NIMPKISH WOODLANDS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
(NWAC) ANNUAL JOINT MEETING

Western Forest Products
Community Advisory Groups

Meeting Notes
May 27, 2021

Attendance:

VINWAG: Paul Barolet (VINWAG Advisor, MoFLNRORD), Steve Lacasse (Environment, NWAC/VINWAG), Natalie Stewart (VINWAG Recreation), Vince Case (Local Supplier, VINWAG), Derek Koel (Town of Port McNeill NWAC/VINWAG), Fred Robertson (Education, VINWAG)

NWAC: Steve Lacasse (Environment, NWAC/VINWAG), Stu Ellis (General Public, NWAC), Derek Koel (Town of Port McNeill NWAC/VINWAG), Pat English (Local Government, NWAC), Rod Sherrell (RDMW, NWAC), Jon Lok (Small Contractors, NWAC)

WFP: Jonathan Flintoft (TFL Forester, TFL 6, VINWAG) Charlotte Mellstrom (TFL Forester, TFL 37, NWAC), Roger Briscoe (Regional Operations Manager), Jean Matthews (Silviculture Forester, NWAC), Teresa Cleroux (Field Planner, NWAC), John Deal (Manager Forest Stewardship & Wildlife, WFP), Will Sloan (Manager Certification and EMS, WFP), Sarah Germain (Planning & Practices Biologist, WFP), Teri Heaslip (Field Planner, NWAC), Taylor Goodwin (Forestry Student, VINWAG)

Guests: Cyndy Grant (MoFLNRORD, Gwa'Ni Project), Mike Green (Gwa'Ni Project)

Regrets: Patrick Donaghy (RDMW, VINWAG); James Furney (RDMW, VINWAG), Annemarie Koch (North Island Community Forest, VINWAG), Natasha Dickinson (Karst, VINWAG)

Facilitators: Charlotte Mellstrom and Jonathan Flintoft

Notes: Taylor Goodwin, Jessica McLaughlin

1. Meeting opened at 7:00pm as Jonathan welcomed everyone and led a round of introductions. Charlotte quickly read the agenda outlining the evening's plan and introduced John Deal, Manager of Forest Stewardship & Wildlife - WFP

2. Updates a) through d)

- John Deal (Slides / Presentation included in minutes)

a) BC Old Growth Review: 14 different recommendations from the 2020 report. (Slide 1 lists recommendations) Where we are at: Government is still at recommendation 1. Engagement with FN in BC. This is very diverse as there are 203 Nations to engage, not a one-person engagement, many stakeholders. There will be discussion and engagement with other stakeholders in the future, however current priority is First Nations Engagement.

Clarification on report: Recommendations, Vision, Rationale, and Implementation.

Ancient Forests can be a loaded term which means different things in different regions.

Term was coined in the Interior and when applying it to Coastal Forests it can be problematic. Deferral from development.

Opened the floor for questions on this section - No questions.

b) Northern Goshawk: Implementation Plan 2018, within the plan is Short term objectives of

- 30 New (>176 ha) WHAs
- Research Forage habitats
- Return to Gov't with updates (this hasn't yet happened due to COVID)

Longer term objectives

- Greater than 35 WHAs

c) Marbled Murrelet: Short Term Objectives

- Land Use Objectives Regulation Order
- Spatially Protected 80% of the suitable nesting habitat
- Establish Priority Old Growth Areas

Opened the floor for questions

- Steve Lacasse: for Northern Goshawks was that 5 more WHAs in the long-term objectives or 35 more?

John Deal: Additional, a total of 65 WHAs for Vancouver Island on Crown Land.

- Pat English: Have you modeled the potential impact on Englewood AAC?

John Deal: It is negligible, the area can be absorbed across the entire TFL. Forage Requirements may have the highest possible impact depending on how government manages it.

- Rod Sherell: Asking about 176 hectares and use
John Deal: it is for breeding areas, outside of that is forage area. The one (established) in Woss is mostly in / overlapping a deer winter range, Port McNeill's (established) area has some overlap with Community Forest tenure.

d) Western Standards: See Slides as notes pertain to slides

- New Field Cards
- In process of reporting in excess of 300 Big Trees to BC Big Tree Registry
- Bear Dens, a question came up "Will a bear go back and use it?" Sarah Germain is in the process of looking into this.
- Heron standard possible rollout in the next 3 months, cautious but hopeful on that timeline

Opened the floor for questions - No questions

Charlotte directed the transition to item 3 on the Agenda and handed it off to Cyndy Grant and Mike Green with the Gwa'Ni Project.

3. Update on Modernized Land Use Planning Process

- Slide 1 shows a stunning logo by a 'Namgis member. This is to show the significance of this project - the first of its kind on Vancouver Island.
- Viewing the Process, we are reminded this is a living document; very much a "design the airplane as they fly it" though both presenters underlined their incredible optimism and confidence in this project and process.
- Gwa'ni Project - Engagement Website
"Partnering with the government to modernize land use planning in the Nimpkish Valley. Objective for 'Namgis to share recommendations with the province on resources and land uses.

"...the plan will tell people, communities, and industries how to manage and protect resources and activities alike such as: Forests, Rivers, Lakes, Watersheds, Fish and Wildlife, Caves/Karsts, Medicine and Bark Harvesting, Important Cultural Sites, Tourism, Recreation, Mining, and Forestry."

“Participation in this process is a step towards restoring our voice and authority over long-term decisions; and made on behalf of our lands and territories”.

- Links available in the presentation

Mike opened the floor for questions

- Paul Barolet: With regards to modernizing land use planning upper and lower Nimpkish, does this replace VILUP or parts of it?

Mike Green: No idea at this time. Our MOU group is tasked with consensus recommendations then it's up to the powers that be.

- John Lok: Are you where you expected to be at this point? (Recognizing this is a difficult question to quantify).

Cyndy: I love this quote “Moving at the pace of trust”. A lot of time was spent on MOU so both governments were happy with the wording. I am happy with where we are at, we are going to have a good summer. Mike concurred and mentioned “moving at the speed of government”.

- Charlotte mentioned they will send the links out to attendees and hands the meeting over to Will Sloan for item 4 on the agenda the CSA SFM update

4. Update on the CSA SFM

CSA - Canadian Standards Association, Standard - Canadian Sustainable Forest Management; www.csasfmforests.ca

Will Sloan mentioned they are ‘a bit behind the ball currently, though the process has started’. The CSA Technical Committee met April 28th and made recommendations; those are now in the decision-making process. There were 3 Options:

- Scrap it (unrealistic, no one will choose this one)
- Amend: for minor issues, does not allow for significant changes, mostly grammar and spelling. No public review or process required.
- Full blown revision: more substantive changes, definitions, revisions. Requires full review by PEFC International before implementation

The current SFM Standard expires in September 2021.

Will opened the floor up for questions so far - No questions

Update on Standard

Unfortunately 2 companies have dropped the CSA and transitioned to SFI (Sustainable Forest Initiative). The trigger for the companies to make this transition is one of the auditing companies has dropped auditing the CSA SFM Standard
CSA SFM Standard is the 7th largest Forest Certification in the world and retains its significance despite those two companies' departures.
We are committed as a company to stay CSA as long as PEFC International recognizes it.

Will opened the floor for questions

- Jonathan: The two companies who dropped out, did they retain PAGs?
Will: Not officially. Annual report for 2020 from NICOLA said last one. I believe it will be unlikely due to geography but cannot say definitively yes/no.

Charlotte handed the meeting over to Sarah Germain for item 5.

5. Introduction to the Timberlands Monitoring Program

Sarah opened by stating this was the first presentation to a PAG, so any feedback is very welcome. This program is an integrated plan for monitoring all timberland activities against our standards. Keeping in mind environmental, planning standards, adaptive management etc. This has come up now as a result of limited audits due in part to the season we face (COVID?) This program is on the use of Evidence-Based Decision Making.

"If our systems are working well, we set our people up for success".

- Program Components: Component, scope, objective, indicators, approaches, supporting strategy, frequency, accountability.
- Block Review: Monitor peer review, monitor pre-work process, field verification and monitor road, cut block and post-harvest inspections.
- Reporting Out: Operational summary, monthly report, quarterly, SFM conformance report, annual monitoring program report.
- Bear Den Standard done in April
- SFM Monitoring underway
- Review of Port Alberni which shed light on the fact that we are still not that standardized across the company which makes it challenging.
- PMFO and QSFO: Block review and road maintenance review scheduled for summer

Sarah opened the floor for questions

- Paul Barolot: When you do reviews is there a process in place to address selection bias?

Sarah: Currently random sampling, the aim is to hit a certain variety of blocks i.e.: 2 retention 2 mix high/low risk. Also, as simple as assigning numbers to blocks and utilizing a random number generator app.

Paul follow up: Effectiveness monitoring re: Bear Dens are you looking for external input outside the company?

Sarah: Yes, we use a biologist Helen Davis

John Deal: also trail cams

Paul B: Are you aware of the MoFLNRORD West Coast Region bear den project?

John Deal: yes, we have been in contact.

- Stu Ellis: What percentage of blocks will you get to?

Sarah: The sample is quite small as we are just starting out. As this is intensive it takes quite a lot of time. We did have findings in the Port Alberni review that we would not have otherwise so it's a good thing.

Stu follow up: Following the Teal Jones protestors on the media, the work you are doing could prevent this, good job.

Sarah: Yes, I agree.

Charlotte concluded the presentation part of the agenda and moved it to the wrap up.

6. Wrap up, closing remarks

Jonathan thanked presenters, stated he would get copies of presentations into the minutes, and poll the group for the next one of these types of meeting. He then opened the floor for a last chance for questions - no questions

Meeting adjourned 8:35pm