

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

***Western Forest Products Inc.*
Community Advisory Group
Minutes of Meeting June 4th, 2015**

Attendance:

Jon Flintoft, WFP	Tom Doak-Dunelly, General Public
Ray Harper, Labour	Dave Trebett, Tourism and Recreation
John Tidbury, Port Hardy	Steve Lacasse, Environment
Graham MacDonald, Port McNeill	Patrick Donaghy, Local Government
Ben Trerise, Fish and Wildlife	

Presenter: Kindry Mercer, Regional Engagement Coordinator, WFP

Regrets: Jeff Houle, Suppliers, Gunnar Wigard, Small Contractors, Fred Robertson, Education, Gaby Wickstrom, Port McNeill Chamber of Commerce, Katherine Dolmage, Aquaculture, Ione Brown, NICFLP, Janet Dorward, Business

Observers: Joli White, Tourism and Recreation Alternate, Adrian Pendergast, School District 85 High School Forestry Program Coordinator, Vince Devlin, Area Manager Jeune Landing, 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 April 23rd meeting, hear a presentation by WFP regional engagement coordinator Kindry Mercer on recreational initiatives on the DFA (general information for Criterion 5, Economic and Social Benefits), review a draft outline of the October 22nd joint session with NWAC on recruitment and retention strategies in the region, hear an update on the Technical Committee's proposed changes to the CSA standards, hear a brief review of the recent external audit in Holberg, discuss the September 11th field trip and set the date of the next meeting.

Annemarie reminded everyone to take a look at the operational map that Jon had brought for members to review and comment on, and then invited those present to introduce themselves for the benefit of the presenter and of observer Adrian Pendergast, the teacher who will be delivering the high school forestry training program this fall.

2.0 REVIEW OF LAST MEETING MINUTES AND ACTION ITEMS

Annemarie asked if there were any comments on the minutes of the April 23rd 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 four 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.

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 2015	
163	Provide an update on the Pacific TSA Timber Supply Review	Jon Flintoft	September 11, 2014	Later in 2015	
172	Enlist an energy sector representative	Dale Dorward	February 26, 2015	June 4, 2015	
173	Dedicate the April,2016 meeting to a review of the 2015 annual report	Annemarie Koch	April 23, 2014	April,2016	
174	Include Block used as example for stumpage presentation in September 11 th field trip and invite Kevin and/ or Jennifer to participate	Jon Flintoft	April 23, 2015	September 11, 2015	
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	
179	Further develop October 22 nd session outline based on input from VINWAG	Annemarie Koch	June 4, 2015	September 10, 2015	
180	Follow up with Jane Cameron about limited ability of VINWAG to report on aboriginal issues without ongoing and direct input from First Nations representatives	Annemarie Koch	June 4, 2015	September 10, 2015	
181	Set up September 11 th field trip as per input from June 4 th meeting	Jon Flintoft	June 4, 2015	September 11, 2015	

Annemarie noted that action items 156 and 176 had been completed. Jon reported that action item 174 would be addressed in the planning of the September 11th field trip. Annemarie noted that Dale was still trying to enlist a representative of the energy sector and, in his absence, recommended that action item 172 be carried forward to the September meeting. It was noted that the remainder of the action items are ongoing.

Further to action item 140, Annemarie noted that the first meeting of the Vancouver Island North Forestry Program Society had taken place on May 29th at the school board office and that the forestry training initiative was moving ahead this fall, and several students from both high schools had signed up. She thanked Adrian Pendergast, the teacher who will be delivering the course, for attending the meeting and invited him to say a few words about the program. Adrian provided some background on the proposed course, noting that the course was running on an academy model. He noted he was looking for guidance from people working in forestry and added that he welcomed input on the program.

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 WESTERN FOREST PRODUCTS' RECREATIONAL INITIATIVES, COME PLAY IN THE WORKING FOREST: KINDRY MERCER, REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT COORDINATOR, WFP

Kindry noted that WFP's new slogan was 'Come Play in the Working Forest.' She provided some background on her professional development, including time on the North Island in communities like Jeune Landing.

Kindry noted that Jon had toured her around many of the recreation sites on the North Island and that she was going to share some information from that tour. She invited members of VINWAG for feedback, including filling out a survey that she had circulated to members.

Kindry noted that advisory groups are an amazing resource and that she was looking forward to feedback from members of VINWAG.

She reviewed the elements of an evolving recreational strategy, including assessing the current state of resources and management challenges, developing a vision and then putting a plan in place.

Kindry noted that elements of a recreational strategy have been prepared in draft form and are currently being reviewed. She noted that WFP recognizes the rich recreational resources on the North Island and will provide support for developing and maintaining these sites. She pointed to maintenance issues such as danger tree assessments, and grading and brushing of roads, and how partnerships such as those with Recreation Sites and Trails BC and the Regional District help to address this.

There was a discussion of whether to supply firewood at sites and it was noted that people have taken firewood in the past and that this has discouraged the provision of free firewood at recreational sites.

It was noted that vandalism has been a major challenge with many of the sites on the North Island. It was noted that public safety can be an issue as well, where acts of vandalism and loud partying are more severe.

There was a discussion of how the Clint Beek site had been upgraded and was now one of the most popular sites on the North Island. Jon noted that the presence of a camp host was supporting greater family use of the site and tending to discourage vandals and the party crowd.

It was noted that putting cameras in strategic places might help to reduce vandalism. There was a discussion of the amount of garbage being left on back roads and at campsites.

It was noted that most people know when large parties are happening at sites like Marble River and that efforts might be made to curb the negative effects of these gatherings.

There was a suggestion that WFP show more of the forestry history in an area. Kindry acknowledged that foresters needed to tell their story better.

She reviewed the various recreation sites she had seen during her tour in March with Jon, pointing to the beauty of Grant Bay, for example.

Kindry asked which recreational sites that members of VINWAG use. Members noted that they use Vernon Lake and Merry Widow.

Kindry pointed to some of the maintenance challenges, including vandalism, erosion and weathering and general regrowth of the forest. She noted that Jon usually checks out the sites to determine what types of maintenance can and should be carried out, bearing in mind budget, level of use and accessibility.

It was noted that quads and heavy trucks are breaking down barriers that previously kept people out of sensitive areas.

It was noted that making extensive investment in sites and adding a host can help, but that there are only a limited amount of funds and a whole lot of sites out there so this was not a strategy for all sites.

There was a discussion of the role of community members in helping to maintain sites and keep them accessible. It was noted that this problem was not WFP's alone and that there is a need for partnerships and a better understanding by community members of the value of these sites.

It was noted that pride and a feeling of ownership were necessary elements in keeping the sites up.

Steve asked if the school might help to engender a feeling of ownership by the young people and instill pride in these recreational sites. Adrian noted that he would follow up on this, for example, looking at ways to involve the young people in maintaining local recreational facilities, including sites and trails.

It was noted that Earth Day might be chosen as a time for young people to form work parties and help to keep up some of the recreational sites,

Kindry noted that, with social media, even the most remote recreational sites were being monitored by the many people out in the woods. She pointed to how this keeps the company on its toes.

Kindry reviewed the need to take a look at and improve signage and pointed to some of the outdated signs, some of which were falling down. She noted that the company would be looking at ensuring more consistency in the type and quality of signs. She targeted next year for this to be started. She noted that signs that were most out of date would likely be removed first and replaced with newer signs of more consistent quality.

Kindry noted that the long term WFP vision for recreation was to make sure all the recreation sites are safe and a positive reflection of the company and to maintain a long term plan to maintain recreational resources.

She reviewed the values associated with the indicators around recreation sites in the DFA and noted that the strategy would be consistent with these values.

Joli asked about the status of the sites under Recreation Sites and Trails BC. Jon noted these sites on Crown land were still considered to be within the working forest. Jon noted that sites on private land were treated differently.

There was a discussion of First Nations interests in some of the recreation sites. Patrick asked whether there had ever been consideration for setting up a broad users group, including First Nations, to develop a broad North Island Recreational Strategy. It was noted that the Regional District had initiated such a process and that the organizers had discovered the many jurisdictions involved make development and implementation of such a strategy very challenging, but that all agreed it was worthwhile.

Kindry pointed to some of the partnerships that have been successful, including the involvement of the RDMW, Province and WFP in the Clint Beek site.

Kindry noted that WFP was looking at maintaining and enhancing its premier sites, like Clint Beek Recreation Site. She noted that Grant Bay was another such site and that WFP was looking at developing partnerships to help maintain this site.

Kindry noted that WFP used to have Palmerston but it's not in their tenure anymore.

Kindry noted that the Beaver Lake Trail and Recreation Site is still very popular and well maintained. It was noted that this site was accessible and a good place for educational programs.

Kindry noted that secondary sites would be kept safe and given a minimum level of maintenance.

Graham noted that he felt that the operators should look at making money with the sites. He suggested making a business out of operating these sites. Patrick noted that the amount of money going into a site was usually not enough to even pay an attendant. He noted that, if an attendant protects the site, then the investment is worth it.

Steve noted that recreation is a way for the company to give back to an area, because the forest belongs to the people.

Graham asked whether there was a budget for maintaining recreation sites in the DFA. It was noted that there is a budget for recreation site maintenance in North Island Forest Operation.

Graham noted that some consideration should be given for using a business case for operating the recreational sites.

It was noted that the infrastructure and number of sites available at Cluxewe Resort was not replicable out in the woods.

John Tidbury noted that visitors, particularly from Europe, want wilderness like the North Coast Trail, not necessarily developed recreational sites like Cluxewe Resort.

Dave asked about an advertising program to promote the recreation sites. Kindry noted that one of the ideas was to have more information kiosks to tell the story of forestry and promote use of the recreational sites and further background on the working forest.

It was noted that active promotion of sending people out could come into conflict with operational safety on the roads. It was noted that any promotional strategy would have to take safety considerations like this into account.

Kindry reviewed one of the new Road Safety signs (calling for people to yield to logging trucks). She reviewed some of the social media approaches to improve public safety, for example at <http://www.wfproadinfo.com>. Kindry pointed to the success of the social media initiative in place for the Bamfield Road.

It was suggested that whatever link is set up, it needs to be maintained, otherwise it could do more harm than good. It was suggested that photos of vandalism be posted on the social media sites.

Kindry provided a mapping update. She noted that the local goal was to have a map available for the North Island Forest Operation and the company goal was to have tourist map coverage available for all WFP tenures where recreational opportunities exist.

She referred to the current North Island map available through the tourist information centres. Kindry was asked whether WFP still has the map that was provided years ago. It was noted that the hardware didn't currently speak to the software that produced that map.

Tom suggested that a high level map would not provide the detail that people need to find their way around the roads in this area.

Kindry noted she had been approached by Backroad Mapbooks. They told her that, if WFP made a map, they couldn't afford to make one. She noted that there had been discussion of partnering to prepare a map in partnership with Backroad Mapbooks that is similar to the Search and Rescue map that is available at Hyde Creek gas station.

Kindry reviewed the Backroad Mapbooks' map that covers the south island and it was suggested that this type of map could work for the North Island, along with a map app that could be offered. It was noted that a free pdf might be made available for the public off WFP's website, and printed maps could be made available at cost.

It was suggested that areas where the company did not wish the public to be, like dryland sorts, should perhaps be marked in red, for example.

Annemarie thanked Kindry for her presentation.

4.0 REVIEW OF DRAFT OUTLINE FOR JOINT SESSION WITH NWAC ON OCTOBER 22: ANNEMARIE KOCH

Annemarie reviewed the draft outline of the proposed joint session with NWAC on October 22 to review existing and recommend future training and recruitment strategies to replace approximately 30 percent of the forestry workforce over the next five to ten years.

She noted that proposed panellists included Lisa Perrault and Randy Boas of WFP, Jon Lok of Strategic Natural Resource Consultants and Bill Nelson of Holbrook Dyson. She noted that proposed topics of discussion ranged from the need for successful training and recruitment initiatives, to the current training and recruitment initiatives, to the issues involved with successful recruitment and retention to possible future recruitment and retention initiatives.

She asked VINWAG members for feedback on the proposed topics and presenters, and the suggested format for the panel session.

Patrick suggested that there be more First Nations' involvement. It was suggested that Annemarie work with WFP's First Nation's coordinator and to approach Ralph Wallas or Conrad Browne for some ideas as on how to integrate First Nation's involvement in the session.

It was suggested that Randy Boas be included in the presentation on existing programs, and that Pat English be part of the presentation on the need for a recruitment and retention strategy.

It was suggested that the session be started at 6:30 rather than 7 p.m., and that the presenters be strictly kept to their times so that a maximum amount of discussion could take place. It was agreed that Annemarie should revise the program, based on this input and report back to VINWAG members prior to the October 22nd session.

5.0 UPDATE ON TECHNICAL COMMITTEE'S PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE CSA STANDARD: ANNEMARIE KOCH

Annemarie shared public advisory group representative on the technical committee, Jane Cameron's update on proposed revisions to the standard as follows:

"The biggest proposed change now on the table is grouping all the aboriginal indicators in one area, instead of having those indicators spread out in other sections. There will also be more consistent wording in those aboriginal indicators.

You will also find smaller changes, including in our public participation process, e.g. we will be recommending that more information about CSA audits be made public and made more easily accessible. As well, we are proposing some easing of forecasting for certain indicators. There will be one new water indicator proposed."

Annemarie noted that the proposed revisions should be open for public review throughout the summer and that Jane had advised that she would keep PAG members posted on the review process.

She invited VINWAG members for their feedback and comments on the technical committee's proposed changes to the CSA standards.

Steve asked about First Nations' participation and he noted it was hard to comment when First Nations don't participate in the meetings. Jon noted he had provided this feedback previously to the technical committee. Annemarie noted that she would follow up with Jane Cameron about this.

6.0 UPDATE ON THE EXTERNAL AUDIT UNDERTAKEN IN EARLY MAY: JON FLINTOFT

Jon noted that, overall, WFP did very well during the May audit, noting there was a high level of satisfaction from the public advisory group and that there were no non-compliances or non-conformances noted.

Jon noted that WFP had been re-registered following the audit. He noted the auditor had commented on how good the facilities looked at Holberg.

Jon noted there would be an internal audit the week of October 19th and that they would be stopping in at Port McNeill and Jeune Landing.

7.0 DISCUSSION OF SEPTEMBER 11TH FIELD TRIP: JON FLINTOFT

Members agreed that they would like to tour cutblock 63514 with Kevin Laird and Jennifer Bendickson to discuss how stumpage was calculated for the site, and to then get in a boat and travel Quatsino Sound and look at some viewscapes, before travelling to the Quatsino dryland sort and then returning to Port McNeill.

Jon noted that people travelling from Port Hardy could park at Beaver Lake and be picked up on the way to the first stop on the tour.

8.0 NEXT MEETING:

It was agreed that the next meeting would take place on September 10, 2015. Annemarie reminded everyone that Doug McCorquodale would be the September 10th meeting presenter and that he would be addressing the implications of recent changes to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans' approach to habitat management.

Steve thanked WFP for supporting the Port McNeill Branch of the Royal Canadian Legion to cut and deliver 257 truckloads of wood as part of their fundraiser. He noted that the first loads were for seniors and disabled people and the rest were sold as part of the Legion's fundraiser.

Annemarie and Jon thanked everyone for coming and wished them a safe journey home.

When: SEPTEMBER 10, 2015
Dinner: 6:30 p.m.
Meeting: 7:00 p.m.