

NWAC MEETING MINUTES

June 9th, 2022

Meeting start: 7:00 pm

Attendance: Jeanne Matthews, Charlotte Mellstrom, Teri Heaslip, Brad Galleazzi, Jack Miller, Stu Ellis, Pat English, Jon Locke, Cameron Brady

Guests: Annemarie Koch, Jon Flintoft, Stuart Glen, Cindy Grant, Mike Green

Regrets: Paul Barolet, Steve Lacasse

1. Safety, Check-in

- Charlotte goes over safety procedures (evacuation, mustering point), washroom locations.
- Introductions

2. Gwa'ni Project

- Charlotte starts off by handing over the meeting to Mike Green and Cindy Grant for a Gwa'ni Project update presentation

- Mike mentions previous presentations regarding the process at past PAG meetings with VINWAG and NWAC.
- Hands out meeting package – available to all attendees.

Cindy begins with some questions to get discussion going, regarding engagement with the process.

- Points out project website address and email address for contact with the team. (Gwani.Project@gov.bc.ca)
- Summarizes engagement to date for the project (letters out to government, stakeholders, and interest groups; online survey which ran from October to December 2021; virtual stakeholder meetings; finalize the what we heard report in April 2022).
- Summarizes the findings of the “What We Heard” report:
 - Recreation was a key value from the survey.
 - Predictability in the forest sector was emphasized; it was clear that people in the industry are looking for predictability and stability, there was also a high emphasis on First Nations values.
 - Top concern for Indigenous survey responders were impacts to salmon and wildlife, and increased forestry activities.

Mike goes over land use planning in the Nimpkish Valley

- Brief history of the VILUP and transition to a more modern LUP (timeline is in the meeting package).
- 'Namgis brought up concerns in 2016 regarding old growth harvesting and land use, they felt that harvesting of natural resources must be sustainable and respectful.
- UNDRIP.
- Described how Gwa'ni is a government-to-government process, and involves consensus-based decisions.
- The Gwa'ni Project group is comprised of 3 members from the 'Namgis, 5 from the BC government, technical support from WFP, support from other agencies, and outside experts (geoscientists, climatologists, etc.).
- Developing consensus recommendations is the end goal of the project, and may lead to modernization of VILUP, management options, or the creation of other processes.
- There is further engagement planned for this process.

Questions:

- *Charlotte asked for a copy of the integration diagram to send out to everyone as it is not in the package.*
- *Jon asked about other projects like this around the province and whether the process is similar. Cindy explained that there are 4 FLP and 9 modernized land use plans but other plans have more FNs or multiple licensees which creates multiple moving parts. Mining is involved in some as well.*
- *Jack asked how the government old growth deferral areas affect how the project works. Mike explained that 'Namgis received the polygons and then had 30 days to respond. 'Namgis was working with WFP to come up with their own plans for reserve designs, though they did use the information provided by the government. They also talked to other licensees within the area and came up with various forms of agreement on how to proceed. Jack goes on to explain that one of the common fears locally is that part of the government strategy is to delete TFL37, and asked if there is a way to bely the fears that there will not be logging. Mike says that this has never been a goal, and that the 'Namgis leadership supports a good economy for the whole North Island. The Nation has an interest in restoration from past forestry practices but doesn't want this to negatively affect the local economy.*
- *Stu wanted to know if WFP is a silent partner, or whether their opinion holds weight at the table. Mike says that WFP has been great to work with, 'Namgis and Western have had a long relationship that is now in a good place. The project is government-to-government at a strategic level, but WFP is supportive. Stuart attends many of the technical committee meetings and learns from the items 'Namgis brings to the FLP meetings. The parties are as integrated as they can be. A lot of the FLP work will inform the Gwa'ni project as there is quite a bit of overlap with TFL37.*
- *Pat wants to know how and at what stage the determinations from the pilot get folded into the AAC determination. Stuart says it will be covered in the next presentation.*

3. TFL 37 FLP Presentation

- Mike introduces the members of the FLP technical team, and Stuart comments that the project is cool because they bring life to the project as they work. Mike and Charlotte also say that because it's a pilot they get to "build the plane as they fly", which is interesting.
- This project will inform FRPA amendments and is sponsored by the Office of the Chief Forester.
- FLP will replace the current FSPs.
- There will be two deliverables: one is the draft FLP and the other is recommendations to support joint decision making between WFP and 'Namgis, and WFP and the province to support Section 7 of DRIPA.
- Currently in the modeling stage of the project: defining values, assigning values, and then modeling them under different scenarios.
- Stuart explains that nothing mutually exclusive, so part of the project is bringing many or all tactics together at the same time and seeing how they affect one another during the modeling. "How are changes effecting different indicators?"
- Stuart explains spatial temporal modeling using 'Patchworks'.
- Next steps: integrated modeling, draft the FLP, review and comments from the public.

Questions:

- *Pat wanted to know where sustainable communities fits into the values being considered. Annemarie clarifies that they want to know if sustainable communities is one of the values. Mike says that that is not a value unto itself but that there are other values that make up that broader one (ie. Timber, wildlife, culture). Combined they form a stronger local community. Cindy adds that the Gwa'ni project does have a community value that is evaluating impacts. Pat is concerned from an economic impact point of view as there has been economic contraction over the last few years in the North Island. Annemarie says that the link between those values and LOCAL communities needs to be looked into more, as for example timber could be more of a corporate interest than a community interest. Mike wants to know how they would want them to add it as a value. Annemarie and Pat are curious about the socioeconomic impacts, and want it to be a more obvious consideration. Annemarie says that at the very least that the linkage should be clearly demonstrated. The FLP is primarily forestry focused, which will feed into the Gwa'ni project. Gwa'ni is more of the strategic level plan focuses on land use more broadly and will touch more on community values and interests.*
- *Jack wants to know what is going to happen with AAC? Is this going to stop government from takeback when AAC is not met? Going forward, what is this plan going to look like? What will the government back off on? Will our cut continue to decrease?* Mike explains that the work to bring the data together has been done, now the consequences and impacts can begin to be evaluated. There will be adjustments to get it as good as possible, but there is no way to know the impacts.
- *Annemarie is looking for a world where the population of the north island increases, and that these values may create that so we may need to be prepared for a larger community in the future.* Mike goes back to the diagram from the Gwa'ni project presentation, and uses it to

explain how local groups have been consulted, and how the FLP process fits in. There is also a socioeconomic assessment aspect of this project that will be handed to the government when the project is complete.

- *John wants to know if there was a significant addition, or reprioritization of values as many of them have not changed from previous landscape level planning projects.* Mike explains that no values were invented. The perspective and the weighting of the values is what changed, rather than the values themselves. Stuart agreed and added that they are bringing different pieces of data together to understand the values differently.
- *Back to Pat's previous point.* He points out that values change, and that something like this in the long run may have a very beneficial outcome. But going from point A to B may be a rocky road. Although coming out of this we may have a better valued economy there will be winners and losers, so if you lose 25% of your AAC because of this that's a loss of 25% of the jobs. How do you manage that? It's something you have to face. Cindy says that the elephant in the room was brought up at a previous meeting, which is good. Economic growth is not seen as a value in this project, rather it is one of the project objectives.
- *Jack wants to know if optimization refers to everything within the plan (ie. Timber, recreation etc.).* Mike says yes, multiple factors, optimization across all of the values. Stuart uses a station wagon metaphor to describe how the model optimizes different scenarios.
- *Jack wants to know where the word "treaty" fits in.* Mike explains that this is not a treaty process, BC treaty commission is totally separate.
- *Jon wants to know what the process will look like in a post-treaty world.* Mike says that he hasn't really thought about it, but bring up the Huu-ay-aht as an example.
- *Brad wants to know what the timeline is for the process.* Mike explains that early next year the draft should be done and open for review and comment. Charlotte adds that it is important to note that after the FLP is drafted it needs to be established by the chief forester. This project will likely be the first of the FLP projects to be completed and it will be interesting to see how this process works. Stuart reiterates that there is no template for this, but that a lot of work has been put in to determining a recipe or set of steps for creating an FLP from scratch and there has been little deviation from the original plan.

Charlotte closes by thanking everyone for the good discussion. She will come up with a plan to do this again for an update to keep NWAC members informed. If there are any further questions for the night's speakers direct them through Charlotte as she can send you to the right person. Charlotte wants to know if the NWAC members would like to have a meeting in either July or August. Charlotte will send out some possible dates to see if we could round up enough people. The summer meeting would cover indicator results from last year. Mike also encourages everyone to sign up for Gwa'ni project email updates.

Charlotte called the meeting to a close at 8:38 pm.

4. Next Meeting: TBD