

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

***Western Forest Products Inc.*
Community Advisory Group
Minutes of Meeting September 8, 2016**

Attendance:

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

Presenter: Mike DesRochers, BCTS**Regrets:** Ray Harper, Labour, David Stewart, Large Contractors**Advisors:** Paul Barolet, MOFLNRO**Observers:** Roger Briscoe, Operations Manager, Holberg Operation, WFP, Michelle Baker, Area Planner, Jeune Landing, 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 June 9th meeting, hear a presentation from Mike DesRochers on soil sensitivity and site mitigation measures, review a second draft of the terms of reference and confirm new representatives for the large contractors and Town of Port McNeill sectors, hear updates on WFP's harvesting plans for the DFA and the recreational map initiative, discuss the September 22-23 all-PAG event, and set the date of the next meeting. Annemarie noted that the September 9th field trip had been cancelled, as there was only one sector representative able to attend this year. She added that she hoped something could be done to increase the opportunity for more members to attend next year's field trip. Annemarie reminded VINWAG members that a map showing harvesting plans for the next five years was available for viewing at any time before or following the meeting. She welcomed Mayor Shirley Ackland as the new Town of Port McNeill representative and noted that Dave Stewart would be joining VINWAG as the representative for large contractors. She noted that Dave was also a councillor for the Village of Port Alice.

She invited members to introduce themselves to presenter Mike DesRochers.

2.0 REVIEW OF LAST MEETING MINUTES AND ACTION ITEMS

Annemarie asked if there were any comments on the minutes of the June 9th 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 eight 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 items 140-175 and 191, 196 and 200 were ongoing in 2016-17. Annemarie asked if Paul would provide an update on action item 163, regarding the Pacific TSA Timber Supply Review,

perhaps at the November meeting. It was added that action items 177 and 195 were to be dealt with in ongoing updates to the annual report. Annemarie noted that she would be providing an update on action item 199 during the review of the Terms of Reference later in the meeting, and that Jon would be providing an update on action item 201 later in the meeting.

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	Paul Barolet	September 8, 2016	November 3, 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 2017	
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	Sometime in 2016	
190	Integrate recommendations 1-3 from the 2015 participant satisfaction survey into a draft revised Terms of Reference	Annemarie	February 25, 2016	September 8, 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 in 2016	
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	
200	Arrange for a future presentation on WFP's safety initiatives	Jon Flintoft	June 9, 2016	Sometime in 2017	
202	Post adopted Terms of Reference on PAG website and circulate to members at next best opportunity	Annemarie Koch	September 8, 2016	October 13, 2016	

203	Amend membership lists to reflect new representatives for Town of Port McNeill and large contractors' sector	Annemarie Koch	September 8, 2016	September 9, 2016	
204	Circulate link to digital recreational map to VINWAG members	Jon Flintoft/ Annemarie Koch	September 8, 2016	October 20, 2016	
205	Provide information on planning process for harvesting that was done near Swan Lake rec site	Jon Flintoft	September 8, 2016	November 3, 2016	
206	Talk to technician at RSTBC about getting more sand in the swimming area at Beaver Lake	Jon Flintoft/Dale Dorward	September 8, 2016	November 3, 2016	
207	Talk to District roads officer about installing counters to track usage at selected rec sites in the DFA	Jon Flintoft	September 8, 2016	Ongoing in 2017	
208	Provide for brief presentation on and Q&A on harvesting plans at each meeting	Jon Flintoft/ Annemarie Koch	September 8, 2016	November 3, 2016	
209	Confirm presenters for joint meeting on relationships with aboriginal individuals and communities October 20, 2016	Jon Flintoft/Kelly McMahon	September 8, 2016	October 12, 2016	

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 SOIL SENSITIVITY AND SITE MITIGATION MEASURES: MIKE DESROCHERS, BCTS

Annemarie reminded VINWAG members that soil sensitivity and site mitigation had been added as new discussion items under the new CSA Z809-16 standard and thanked Mike DesRochers for agreeing to share his knowledge on this subject with members of the group. She invited Mike to provide some background on his work with soils in the DFA.

Mike noted he was not a soil specialist but that he had dug many soil pits on the North Island over the years. He noted that he had worked many years with Terry Lewis and considered him a mentor.

Mike then went on to provide a quick primer on soil development and geomorphology. He reviewed how soils are structured on upper, middle and lower slopes and how this affects tree growth and productivity. He pointed to where most sensitive soils are found, for example on upper slopes. Mike reviewed the soil nutrient regime and how this influences site classifications.

Mike reviewed the range of soil types, from rocky crests with shallow soils to rich soils near the bottom of slopes. Mike noted that forested swamps at the bottom of slopes tend to have very sensitive soils.

Mike reviewed soil components, including air, minerals and water. He noted that a productive forest requires more air content than water. He pointed out that saturated soils are not very productive.

Mike reviewed factors influencing soil development, including climate, geology and vegetation. He noted that our soils are mostly igneous in geological origin, moulded by high precipitation, under predominantly

coniferous forests. He pointed to the role of animal 'poop' in the development of soil. He stressed that soil development is very slow and that it can take about 100 years to develop a centimetre of soil.

Mike reviewed the geological glacial history of the North Island and how this influences the base materials for soil development.

Mike described the compacted till that is found throughout the North Island, as a result of the region's glacial history. Mike noted that most of our soils are ferric-humic podzols, supporting coastal western hemlock forests.

Mike reviewed how soil particle sizes are classified, from clay to silt to stones and boulders. He noted that clay particles are very flat and have strong hydrostatic properties that make it difficult to manage for tree growth.

Mike reviewed the soil triangle and how the North Island is made up of mostly sandy and silty loams, with some scattered clay bands.

Mike reviewed a few soil profiles found on the North Island, including poor soils made up of thin litter and humus layers, to more productive soils that have a thicker humus layer. He noted that there are many organic soils in this region, in wet areas, that can be very sensitive and do not support tree growth well.

He noted that soil compaction often takes place in these organic soils and that problems such as displacement, erosion and mass wasting can take place on these sites.

Mike demonstrated some of the issues with organic soils, including the impacts of fire, which burns off organic soils, as occurred during the July 2010 Kathleen Lake fire. He reviewed how slides can take place on organic soils, and that dry weather harvesting is one way of reducing the risk of these slides.

Mike reviewed the types of soils on river benches and terraces and how these are often protected and outside harvesting areas. He noted that wet, organic sites on medium benches are often within harvesting areas and have to be managed carefully in order to maintain productivity and to protect salmonid habitat.

Mike talked about unique soils sites like the Keith River area, a deltaic flood plain, where regeneration opportunities are limited by periodic flooding.

Mike then reviewed high bench sites and how management decisions had to be made carefully around wet soils in these areas. He noted that the presence of devil's club can be an indicator that management decisions around harvesting must be made very carefully to ensure future soil productivity.

Mike reviewed some of the harvesting systems that have been used and how they affect ongoing soil productivity. He talked about how tower logging can create scars on the landscape, which can remain visible many years after harvesting. He pointed to how bioremediation can be used to address impacts like this.

Mike went on to point out how skidder logging can create bad results on North Island soil sites, and is better used on more solid ground, and ground that is frozen.

Mike reviewed how grapple yarding with backspar hoes can affect soils by causing compaction and displacement. He noted that hoe trails caused some of the worst degradation on sloped sites, and pointed to how a site index can decrease on a hoe trail if it is not properly constructed with corduroy and properly rehabilitated. It was acknowledged that hoe trails often had to be placed on bench sites in order to get the job done safely and effectively.

Mike reviewed the effects of hoe forwarding. He noted that corduroy should be used to help avoid the creation of deep ruts. Mike stressed that corduroy must be used carefully to permit the ongoing flow of water, so as to maintain ecosystem values.

Mike demonstrated the impacts of hoe forwarding on site productivity, based on research in an area close to Holberg. He noted how, years after harvesting, there was limited tree growth at the bottom of the

machine ruts. He did note that a benefit of using hoe forwarding was that the machine tracks beat back salal on certain sites.

Mike reviewed various forms of site rehabilitation, including roadside seeding, re-vegetation, aerial fertilization, bioengineering (e.g. using barriers to allow willow whips to grow in small soil patches and rolling out coconut husk mats that are impregnated with grass seed), and soil enhancement (adding sea soil to an area). Mike showed an area of site rehabilitation near the intake of the Kokish Run of the River project, including rock armour and terracing.

Mike noted that we don't tend to have a large number of insects in our soil, that the worms we get here are mostly introduced, and that the only native worms we have on the North Island are on Brooks Peninsula. There was a discussion of the glacial refugium at Brooks Peninsula and the influence on vegetation and soils there.

Ione asked about the research on the effects of hoe forwarding in the Woss area and offered to go out with Mike when he reviews this in future.

There was a discussion about the effects of introduced earthworms on forest soils. There was a discussion about the value of aerial fertilization. It was noted that it would be too expensive to fertilize sites on a broad scale with sea soil. It was noted that fertilizing hemlock had been recommended as a means of enhancing growth of the species this area. There was a discussion of the potential positive impacts of fire on site productivity.

There was a discussion of the effects of knotweed on soil. Mike noted that knotweed produces chemicals that kill the plants around it and, as a result, it takes a few years longer for regeneration to occur on sites that have been rehabilitated by removing this invasive species.

4.0 ONGOING REVIEW OF TERMS OF REFERENCE: ANNEMARIE KOCH

Annemarie noted that, on page 4 of the second draft of the terms of reference that she had circulated to members with the agenda, she had tried to address concerns that Fred had raised at the June 9th meeting regarding independence of the members to express their opinions freely on issues related to the sustainable management plan. She reminded members that she had attempted to address a number of other issues raised during the last participant satisfaction survey and that these were highlighted in yellow in the draft circulated to members for discussion at the meeting.

Fred noted that he saw a number of areas where the document had been revised to establish a process that allows for more discussion through the group, as opposed to unilateral action by WFP. He noted that this should help to resolve any issues that arise in future. He noted that he appreciated Jane clarifying how the CSA standard spells out the role of the company in relation to the public advisory group's operations and membership, and that he was willing to try out the processes in the revised terms of reference.

He noted his concern for repeated reference to 'collaboration' and 'in the spirit of continuous improvement.' He pointed out that these terms will need to be defined at some point, but that he was willing for now to see how that happens through general practice at the meetings.

Jon provided some background on why WFP had made some general changes to the standard Terms of Reference for public advisory groups throughout its coastal operations where the CSA standard is in place.

Steve noted that it was the role of the members to represent their constituencies and not their own personal agendas.

Jon noted that one of the commitments that had been made to VINWAG was to ensure that at least one senior manager from NIFO would attend the meetings. Roger noted that this helped the managers stay in touch with concerns.

It was agreed to adopt the Terms of Reference, as presented at this meeting and to post the document on the PAG website and circulate it to members at the next best opportunity.

Annemarie noted that Mayor Shirley Ackland was replacing councillor Graham MacDonald as the representative for the Town of Port McNeill and that Dave Stewart of R&B Falling in Port Alice had agreed to be the large contractors' sector representative. Members of the group agreed to this and it Annemarie was directed to amend the membership lists accordingly.

5.0 UPDATE ON WFP'S HARVESTING PLANS ON THE DFA, RECREATIONAL MAP INITIATIVE AND SEPTEMBER 22nd-23rd All-PAG EVENT: JON FLINTOFT

Jon noted that digital versions of the TFL 6 recreational map would be available in a few weeks and advance copies would be distributed at the all-PAG event near the end of the month. He noted that general circulation of printed copies would take a while.

Tom asked whether WFP had decided to work with the Backroads Maps people on the map initiative and Jon noted that WFP had decided to proceed on its own. It was noted that the maps will be geo-referenced (i.e. able to interface with GPS in electronic devices). Jon noted that he anticipated that digital copies would be updated regularly, to advise of deactivated roads and new road, for example.

It was agreed that, when it's ready, Jon will send a link to the map to Annemarie and she will then circulate it to all PAG members. It was suggested that the link also be made available to tourist information centres and acknowledged that Kindry will have a strategy for unveiling the new recreational map to the public.

Dave asked about plans to upgrade the campsite at Swan Lake, and why the previous harvesting had been carried out so close to the lake when there's a recreation site there. He noted his concern for the visual effects of harvesting around the recreation site and suggested that, in future, consideration be given to some kind of buffer around rec sites like Swan Lake.

There was a discussion of why harvesting might have been done in the way it was and it was agreed to ask Jon to follow up with more information on the planning process and why the harvesting at Swan Lake had been done as close as it was to the recreation site. There was a discussion of whether a trail could be re-established from the parking area down to the lake.

Jon noted that WFP had been spending some funds to upgrade some rec sites, including brushing out the access road to the Merry Widow Trail. It was suggested that there be more signage and noted that the digital maps would help with finding these sites. It was noted that the road access to Merry Widow, though it is a provincial site, is WFP's responsibility because of the provincial road permitting structure.

Jon noted that some work had been done at Beaver Lake this year through a partnership with Recreation Sites and Trails BC (RSTBC), including extending the life of the picnic shelter. He added that the upper footbridge had been replaced (the original one was damaged from flooding caused by a beaver dam).

Dale asked about putting more sand in at Beaver Lake and it was suggested that he and Jon work with the RSTBC technician to look at whether this could be done.

Jon noted that there were plans to replace the lower bridge at Beaver Lake and to add more mulch to the trail at Beaver Lake.

Jon added that some work had been done at Marble River recreation site, including building a new picnic shelter at the site. He noted that some picnic tables along with some pea gravel would be added shortly.

Jon asked for input on suggested improvements to recreation sites in 2017. Patrick asked whether there are any user stats on the rec sites that could help set priorities for improvements and development. Jon noted that WFP has not been tracking usage at the sites; RSTBC may track usage at the Clint Beek site where there is a campsite host. He noted that the Resource District Engineering Officer could be might be asked to install a traffic counter to help track usage at the rec sites.

Paul noted that there had been a lot of use of Lady Ellen Point this year, and Roger noted that the parking area at Grant Bay had been expanded to accommodate higher use.

Jon noted that some work had been done at O'Connor Lake and that some fine crush had been added to fix a rough spot in the parking lot.

Tom asked whether there had been any feedback from any sector constituencies on the effects of harvesting on viewscales, for example from tourists visiting the area. There was a discussion of how some members had tried to inform visitors about the balance between harvesting plans and methods and the viewscape to accommodate tourism interests. Dave noted that he does the same with European visitors, pointing out that there are many more trees here than they are led to believe there are. John noted that he passed the knowledge about forest management that he acquires from these meetings to visitors.

Tom noted that one of the values of discussing future harvesting plans was to give VINWAG members an opportunity to share their knowledge of their constituencies' interests with WFP, to ensure that a balance of resource use and benefit is maintained in the DFA. There was a general discussion of how attitudes toward viewscales are quite fickle. Steve noted that it was important that we talk to people about how forestry works, and the compromises that must be made to support balanced use of resources.

Tom reiterated that a review of future harvesting plans offers an opportunity for members to provide valuable input to WFP that may contribute to more balanced resource use in the DFA. He pointed to plans for future harvesting near the boundary of Tahsish Kwois Provincial Park as an example of a possible topic of discussion for VINWAG.

Jon asked for direction from the group on what they wish to see addressed at the meetings with respect to harvesting plans. It was agreed to have ongoing, short presentations on harvesting plans throughout the DFA, and to allow opportunity for a brief question and answer period at each meeting on harvesting plans.

6.0 NEXT MEETING: JON FLINTOFT AND ANNEMARIE KOCH

It was agreed that the next meeting would be a joint one with members of NWAC on October 27th, 2016 at Black Bear Resort, and that the presenter would address the mandatory discussion item of relationships with aboriginal communities and individuals. Annemarie asked if members wished to recommend presenters for the meeting. Paul Nuttall (WFP) and Kathy DesRochers (MFLNRO) were suggested to address this topic. There was a discussion of possible presenters from First Nations in the DFA, including James Redford from Quatsino, and Tom Child from Kwakiutl. It was noted that, because it was a joint meeting with NWAC, presenters from the Namgis should be sought as well, including Rachel Dalton or Ed Jackson from Namgis.

It was agreed that WFP would take on the responsibility of confirming presenters for the October 27th joint meeting.

John noted that numbers on the North Coast Trail were up significantly this past summer.

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

When: **October 27th, 2016**
Dinner: **6:30 p.m.**
Meeting: **7:00 p.m.**