

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

***Western Forest Products Inc.*
Community Advisory Group
Minutes of Meeting Held February 28th, 2019**

Attendance:

Jon Flintoft, NIFO, WFP	Steve Lacasse, Environment
Vince Case, Suppliers	Patrick Donaghy, Local Government Alternate
Fred Robertson, Education	Ray Harper, Labour
Tom Doak-Dunelly, General Public	Gaby Wickstrom, Port McNeill Mayor
Dave Trebett, Tourism & Recreation	

Presenters: Clint Parker, Todd Flanagan, Alan Berry, B.C. Wildfire Service

Regrets: Gunnar Wigard, Large Contractors, John Tidbury, District of Port Hardy, Natasha Dickinson, Karst, Damaris Sadler, Port McNeill Chamber, Larry Pepper, NICF, Chris Read, Aquaculture, Sandra McLaughlin, Port Hardy Business Alternate

Observers: Roger Briscoe, Operations Manager, Port McNeill Forest Operation, WFP

Advisors: Paul Barolet, MFLNRORD

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 action items and minutes from the November 22nd, 2018 meeting, hear a presentation from representatives of the B.C. Wildfire Service on approaches to fuel management and fire response, hear an update on the five-year harvesting plans and an operational update for the DFA, review results and recommendations from the 2018 participant satisfaction survey, review and confirm the 2019 meeting schedule and set the date of the next meeting.

She invited members of VINWAG to introduce themselves, for the benefit of the B.C. Wildfire Service presenters.

2.0 REVIEW OF LAST MEETING MINUTES AND ACTION ITEMS

Annemarie asked if there were any comments on the minutes of the November 22nd 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 of six 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.

Annemarie noted that action items 256 and 257 had been completed and she thanked members of VINWAG for submitting responses to the annual survey. She asked members if they would agree to removing items 208, 210, 237, 244 and 247, as work had been done on these initiatives. Members agreed to remove 208, 210, 244 and 247 but it was agreed to keep action item 237 and Annemarie offered to follow up with Jane Cameron of the CSA Technical Committee on this matter.

Annemarie noted that the remainder of the action items were ongoing or in process and asked members if they had any comments or questions on the action items or minutes. There was no further discussion and the minutes were accepted as circulated.

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 2019	
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	
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	
213	Implement recommendations in 2016 participant satisfaction survey report	Annemarie Koch/Jon Flintoft/VINWAG Members	February 23, 2017	Ongoing in 2019	
237	Talk to the writers of the new CSA Z809-16 standard to determine whether the intent of the new Indicator 3.2.2 is to provide direct measures of water quality and quantity in the DFA	Jon Flintoft/Will Sloan	November 9, 2017	Discussion with Jane Cameron on February 22, 2018. Annemarie to follow up with Jane in 2019	
238	Integrate the proposed new Indicators 3.2.2 and 5.1.2 into the SFMP	Jon Flintoft	November 9, 2017	For the 2018 SFMP Annual Report / April Meeting	
243	Implement recommendations in 2017 report on participant satisfaction survey	Annemarie/Jon/VINWAG Members	February 22, 2018	Ongoing	
246	Continue to review and develop the targets for new Indicator 3.2.2	Jon Flintoft/VINWAG members	April 26, 2018	Ongoing	
248	Consider holding a 'VINWAG open house' to let members of the public know about the group and its role	Annemarie/Jon/ All VINWAG Members	June 14, 2018	Sometime in 2019	
250	Provide more information on the planning processes around targets for Indicator 1.1.4	Jon Flintoft	June 14, 2018	During 2019 annual report review	

253	Revisit future of WFP's CSA certification programs on the North Island and the value of the public advisory process to WFP on the North Island at the joint meeting with NWAC in May,2019 and ensure Kindry is advised of this	Jon Flintoft	September 20, 2018	Joint Meeting With NWAC in May,2019	
258	Confirm revised harvesting plans for area near Hecht Beach trail and report back to Dave about this	Jon Flintoft	February 28, 2019	April 25,2019 meeting	
259	Check out status of road to Side Bay and determine when it will be open again	Jon Flintoft and Paul Barolet	February 28, 2019	April 25,2019 meeting	
260	Implement recommendations from 2018 participant satisfaction survey	All	February 28, 2019	Ongoing	
261	Talk to Strategic about participating in the October 24 th joint meeting with NWAC on knotweed projects in North Island DFA's	Annemarie	February 28, 2019	For April 25,2019 meeting	
262	Communicate to Kelly that NWAC members are welcome to participate in the September 13 th VINWAG field trip but the itinerary will be set within the North Island DFA	Jon/Annemarie	February 28, 2019	For April 25,2019 meeting	
263	Set up 2019 meeting schedule to allow for confirmation of the 2020 meeting dates during the November meeting; topics/content to be confirmed at the first meeting in the schedule year	Annemarie	February 28, 2019	For distribution with February 28 th meeting minutes	

3.0 FUEL MANAGEMENT AND FIRE RESPONSE: CLINT PARKER, TODD FLANAGAN, ALAN BERRY, B.C. WILDFIRE SERVICE

Annemarie reminded members of VINWAG that the request for a presentation on fuel management and fire response had been made last fall by VINWAG members, following some devastating fires on the DFA over the summer.

She introduced the representatives of the B.C. Wildfire Service, thanked them for coming and invited them to proceed with their presentation.

Clint noted that there were very few down times with the B.C. Wildfire Service anymore and that the organization was either dealing with fires or preparing for fire season throughout the year. He added that

there had been two consecutive catastrophic fire seasons in the Province in 2017 and 2018 and that the wildfire service was looking hard at adapting to and dealing with what seems to be an increasing threat and scope of fire in the Province.

Alan introduced the other two representatives of the B.C. Wildfire Service present at the meeting and provided a background on their experience in the Province and, more specifically, in the region. He began his presentation with a review of the provincial wildfire service organizational structure, including the coastal fire centre area. He then went on to review fire statistics, noting there were 297 fires and 174,955 hectares burned in the coastal region.

Alan noted that the fires on the North Island were smaller in size than some of the larger fires in more remote areas of the north and central coast. Alan reviewed the location of fires in the Province in 2018. He pointed out that fires were historically concentrated in the Interior or northeast part of the Province but, more recently, fires had shown up in areas like Haida Gwaii and northern Vancouver Island. Alan noted that not only had the location of fires spread throughout the Province but the number of hectares burned had increased dramatically in 2017 and 2018. He noted that prioritizing fire response resources was a challenge, given the increasing number of interface fires that were occurring.

Alan noted that almost half a billion dollars had been invested in fire suppression in 2018 and that this did not include the costs of replacing or repairing infrastructure in communities affected by fires.

It was noted that the B.C. Emergency Management System was used to prioritize allocation of fire suppression resources. It was suggested that, from an ecological perspective, there are areas where fire should be reintroduced in the ecosystem, but that this needed to be balanced against the interests of all forest users and communities within forested areas.

Alan noted that one of the challenges in 2018 was the number of fires that occurred all at once, in the case of the North Island due to a major lightning storm.

Alan reviewed some weather data, showing temperatures were generally above normal throughout the Province. He noted, for example, that the build-up index in Woss was above records kept at that location for the past 20 years.

Alan noted that 2018 was a dry year overall, though there was above average rainfall in the spring of 2018. He noted that snow pack does not seem to play as critical a role on the coast as it does in the Interior. He noted that, if June rains don't come in their usual amounts, the summer fire season can be more intense.

Alan reviewed the lightning data for August 11th, 2018. He noted that this particular storm came with very little precipitation. It was noted that fire resources were already stretched to the limit when the August 11th lightning storm hit northern Vancouver Island. Clint noted that resources were brought in from outside the Province to assist with suppression efforts.

It was noted that Australia was a good source of help with fire suppression resources because their resources could be integrated easily with ours and the firefighting seasons are reversed.

Alan noted that, in relation to fire threats throughout the rest of the Province, the fire threats on the North Island last summer were not as high.

Alan noted that the number of firefighters required throughout the Province could easily have been double what was available last summer.

Alan reviewed the fires on the North Island last summer and the factors that were taken into consideration in allocating suppression resources, e.g. steering fires away from critical infrastructure.

Alan reviewed fires over 1,000 hectares in size in the Province, including the Klinikini complex and Tahsish fires.

He pointed to some other fires of note, including the Larry Lake and Pinder Peak wildfires, due to their proximity to transportation corridors.

Alan reviewed factors involved in redirecting resources as new fires break out.

Alan reviewed possible approaches to wildfire risk reduction. He pointed to the wildland urban interface, that area between local communities and adjacent forest, where the risk and results of fire are more significant. He noted these were areas where fuel and risk reduction measures were important. There was a discussion of the vegetation management prescriptions around Woss.

Alan noted that there was a new template coming out for the community interface plans that had been produced earlier this decade for communities.

Alan reviewed some of the funding programs associated with wildfire risk reduction, including Community Resiliency Investment Program (CRI) and Forest Enhancement Society of B.C. (FESBC).

There was a discussion of reducing risk to high value assets, including communities, telecommunications and transportation infrastructure. It was noted, for example, there was work done this past fire season to reduce risk around a Telus tower that provided critical communications for the area.

Alan noted there is funding available for communities to plan and take measures to reduce risk from fire.

There was a discussion of the possibility of multi-year agreements for approaching risk reduction. Alan recommended that anyone interested in available fire risk programs take a look at resources on the UBCM website.

Alan reviewed the eligible applicants and the processes for making application to CRI and FESBC.

There was a discussion of managing stand structure and 'firesmarting' areas, catering practices to specific biogeoclimatic zones. It was noted that North Island forests are, relatively speaking, fairly fire resistant.

There was a discussion of the interface fire in Port Hardy in 2015 and efforts that had been made to investigate whether to manage fuel around the community. It was noted that, at the time, the area around Port Hardy was seen as relatively low fire risk. It was suggested that the community update that analysis and seek funds to re-evaluate the risk and determine whether to take measures to reduce risk at this stage.

It was suggested that there be a closer look at post harvest risk in areas around communities, and ways to manage fuel sources associated with harvested areas.

There was a discussion of how major leaseholders and land owners have been approached about better understanding and collaborating around risk and fire management measures. Clint noted that BCWS was meeting with WFP on the North Island to talk about these things. Clint pointed to the importance of engaging with land managers to collectively prepare and respond to fire risk.

There was a discussion of the amount of woody debris left over after harvesting of second growth and what might be done with this material. It was noted that, apart from burning, there is not currently an economic means of dealing with this material. It was noted that there is a statutory duty of the land manager to deal with this material and burning is often chosen as the means to do this.

There was a discussion of the Coast Revitalization Strategy and how this might affect fuel management. It was noted that a balance between air quality and fuel management had to be struck when burning is used as the primary means of abatement.

It was noted that there is not a market out there for the residual fibre currently, so efforts are being made to find economic ways that don't involve burning to deal with the fibre. It was noted that most of significant wildfires involve slash so the management of slash needs to be investigated.

It was suggested that waste be managed before trees are planted, wherever possible.

Annemarie thanked the BCWS representatives for their presentation and invited them to stay after the meeting to answer further questions.

4.0 UPDATE ON FIVE-YEAR HARVESTING PLANS: JON FLINTOFT, WFP

Annemarie reminded VINWAG members that regular updates on five-year harvesting plans in the DFA was one of the recommendations arising from the annual participant satisfaction surveys and she invited Jon to proceed with his presentation.

Jon noted he had talked to the Operations planners so he could review harvesting and operating plans for the three areas in the DFA. He started with Holberg noting there would be a helicopter logging program out of there this year, about 45 km of new road construction and 9 km of road reconstruction, 580,000 cubic metres of harvest and a couple of cutblocks harvested along San Josef Main. It was suggested that the harvesting along the San Jo Main not take place during tourist season. Jon noted that planning to harvest the block by Hecht Beach had been revised to meet concerns expressed by Dave to protect a trail accessing that area. It was agreed that Jon should get an update on the revised harvesting plans near the Hecht Beach trail and report back to Dave. It was noted that a cutblock was being designed near Quatsino Narrows for harvest in 2020.

Jon noted there would be lots of highway logging truck traffic on the road out to Winter Harbour.

Jon noted that a 25,000 cubic metre helicopter logging program had been completed in Port McNeill late last fall. The next helicopter program in Port McNeill was scheduled for 2020. He noted that was about 75 km of new road construction and a couple of km of road reconstruction and about 585,000 cubic metres of harvest planned for 2019. He added that there were 17 bridges up for replacement in 2019. Jon added that there was some tethered falling planned for 2019. Jon noted about 11,000 cubic metres had been identified for salvage from wind damage in January 2019. He added that about 3,000 to 4,000 cubic metres of burned timber associated with the Pinch Creek fire was planned for salvage in 2019.

Jon noted there was about 250,000 cubic metres of harvest planned in the Jeune Landing Operation including about 12,000 cubic metres of helicopter logging along with about 35 km of new road construction and 12 km of road reconstruction. There are a couple of cutblocks near Atkins Cove planned for harvesting in 2020. There is are a couple of cutblocks planned for near Port Alice. He added that about 2,000 to 3,000 cubic metres of burned timber associated with the Larry Lake fire was planned for salvage in 2019.

Jon discussed some of the visual quality objectives for areas along Neroutsos Inlet. There was a discussion of the road access to Side Bay. It was noted that the road was partly FSR and Interfor road permit. It was noted that the road to Side Bay was currently closed. Jon and Paul agreed to find out when the road would be open again.

There was a discussion of the helicopter logging across from Port Alice and it was noted that WFP would log this area as cleanly as possible as long as it was economically feasible. There was concern expressed for the amount and quality of wood left in heli-logging cutblocks and it was noted that efforts would be made to reduce the amount of valuable wood left behind.

There was a discussion of a proposed run of the river proposal in the area between the pulp mill pump house on Victoria Lake and the pulp mill in Port Alice and whether this might come up in the SFMP, as it might affect availability of water for forest production.

Dave asked what WFP planned to do with Ledge Point. He noted he disagreed with harvesting the point and other areas on the peninsula with high visual value. Jon noted he would pass on this information.

Jon noted that Jeune Landing and Holberg had been merged into one Quatsino Sound Forest management unit. He noted there had been no job losses as a result of this merger. It was noted that

marshalling points weren't changing and that there was no intent to change seniority listings. It was noted that the merger should lead to some administrative efficiencies.

Jon noted that WFP had reinstated limited log exports in response to changing market conditions.

Annemarie thanked Jon for his updates.

5.0 REVIEW OF RESULTS OF 2018 PARTICIPANT SATISFACTION SURVEY: JON FLINTOFT AND ANNEMARIE KOCH

Annemarie referenced the results of the 2018 survey that had been circulated to VINWAG members with the agenda and asked members if they concurred with the recommendations provided with the summary. She asked if members would like any additions or changes to the recommendations.

Jon asked about a comment made in relation to corporate changes in the DFA. There was a discussion of concern of members that senior management remain in North Island communities. It was noted that part of the comment was a concern that upper management wasn't hearing what PAG members were saying. There was discussion of the SFMP target to have senior management meet with VINWAG members at least once a year and on an as needed basis.

It was noted that, if there were a shift of corporate management away from the North Island, that would be of concern to VINWAG members and members would hope to be advised of this and consulted at an appropriate time.

There was a discussion of CSA certification and it was noted that a commitment had been made by WFP to carry on with the public advisory process in some way even if WFP moved to SFI certification. VINWAG members expressed their support for continuing with a public advisory process.

Annemarie asked if the recommendations addressed the concerns and comments expressed in the survey. Members noted they agreed with the recommendations made.

6.0 REVIEW AND CONFIRMATION OF 2019 MEETING SCHEDULE: ANNEMARIE KOCH

Annemarie referenced the draft 2019 meeting schedule that had been distributed to VINWAG members on February 14th. She noted that members of NWAC had suggested a second joint meeting in 2019, on October 24th, to discuss knotweed projects in the DFA. She noted that the 'Namgis First Nation had offered to provide a presentation on work they are doing in the Englewood DFA, Paul had offered a MFLNRORD perspective and Jon was approaching the Quatsino First Nation to make a presentation on work being done in the Victoria Lake area. She asked members if they agreed with having a second joint meeting on October 24th. Members agreed to having an extra joint meeting with NWAC on knotweed projects in North Island DFA's and Patrick suggested asking someone from Strategic to participate in this meeting as well.

Annemarie noted that NWAC members had also asked if they could participate in some way in the annual field tour on September 13th. Members agreed to keep the field trip itinerary within the North Island DFA and focussed on issues within the North Island DFA, but to keep it open to NWAC members who wished to come along.

Annemarie noted it had been suggested to her that it might be better for VINWAG members to set their schedules if a discussion of next year's meeting schedule took place earlier in the fall, so that confirmation of the schedule could take place at the November meeting. She said that, if members agreed to this approach, she would integrate it in the 2019 meeting schedule.

Members agreed that it would be ideal to try to confirm meeting dates in November but to keep meeting presentations and content open to some modification early in the schedule year.

7.0 NEXT MEETING: ANNEMARIE KOCH

Annemarie noted that, further to the schedule, the next meeting would be April 25th, 2019 and that the meeting would consist mostly of a review of the 2018 annual report and include an update on the five-year harvesting plan.

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

When: APRIL 25th, 2019
Dinner: 6:30 p.m.
Meeting: 7:00 p.m.