

BV Community Resource Board – Final Minutes

Jan 23, 23

Present: John, Eric, Jeff, Christoph, Ron, Bob, Sue

Guests: William George, Economic Development Officer, Town of Smithers
Aurora Lavender, General Manager, Wetzin'kwa Community Forest Corporation
(WCFC)

Regrets: Ted, Matt

Chair: Bob started us off then Jeff

Recording: Sue

Next Meeting: Feb 21, 23 - see email for updates, this may change

Meeting convened at 7:05pm

Organizational

Review of minutes.

A **motion** to approve the December minutes was made: All in favour.

For a full list of acronyms please check the link:

https://bvcrb.ca/images/uploads/documents/bvcrb_acro.pdf

1. Guest:

Aurora presented a slide show on the Environmental Stewardship Plan and remediation of the Wetzin'kwa Community Forest Corporation (WCFC). Her presentation was followed by a question and answer period.

Action Item*** Jeff please circulate her report.

Event:

Wetzin'kwa Community Forest's Resource User Group (WCFC's RUG):

Feb. 1, 7pm - Silvicon - Victoria Rd.

ZOOM link to be issued as well.

Marie Grulichova, Communications and Administrative Manager, marie.grulichova@silvicon.com

Discussion Topics:

Shaded Fuel breaks - what are they?

There is a fire based stocking standard as defined by the BC Wildfire Service. Treatment units are smaller areas in the woodlot but if there is a specification of 600 - 800 stems per ha. in a treatment unit, this would mean reducing the amount of remaining forest to that despite any other existing treatment underway.

CORE ecosystems and landscape corridors are supposed to be harvested differently, based on the community consensus that non timber values need to be maintained. The defined ecosystems and landscape corridors protect traditional harvest areas as well. When these corridors and CORES were created, the Province assured the Board partners and contractors would adhere to the treatment plans in the LRMP. As a result, the Board forfeit the status of Parks for a lot of these lands for the more favourable custom specifications.

The pressure to log always exists despite the rationale for doing so. **Wildfire prevention** is just another rationale for logging, and the process does not take into account existing LRMP's or other conservation or ecosystems project planning.

Wetzin'kwa has a selected logging contract list. This is determined by Silvicon. There is a community perception that there is a **conflict of interest** as Silvicon is the operator and the manager.

An enhanced **forest inventory** will be contracted out to a company named ECO-RA.

Questions from the Board:

1. Can we access WCFC LiDAR images?

Yes - it has been used by a couple community groups in the past, just contact the office.

2. What is the status of a Demo Forest?

Silvicon did some surveys among House Groups and are working on some ideas.

3. SubAlpine Fir or Balsam - why is this not planted?

According to Aurora it grows back naturally in suitable numbers. According to Directors there is insufficient science based evidence of the success of replants of these species. Directors ask why hasn't the WCFC tried to replant it and get some baseline data? Presumably because there was no market for Balsam, is this true? Balsam can outproduce spruce in some stands.

4. What was planted this year? No numbers were provided.

Spruce,Pine,Larch - no Douglas Fir.

5. Hazard versus Risk: the difference is key. There is little community risk of wildfire from the Community Forest lands but yes there is hazard to the recreational users and facilities in and of the Community Forest. Pushing fire abatement as a hazard reduction strategy puts undo pressure on logging and mitigation strategies.

6. Biochar hasn't been presented as an option. Wetzink'wa did issue an invitations to tender for Biochar in the recent past but there was no response. An air curtain burner business was proposed but its status is unknown. There is a budget for alternatives to open burning but how do we access this?

7. Wetzin'kwa believes there is a disconnect between the BVCRB and the LRMP. What was meant by that statement?

Recent old growth deferrals strategies and First Nation engagement regulations are easier to manage than non legal stakeholder values in the Community Forest. Legal documents fixing values on paper would be helpful to Silvicon, historical record, or oral history isn't sufficient for management purposes.

8. How is Wetzin'kwa going to do things different in the future?

It all depends on First Nation engagement. The BVCRB will be invited to technical working groups. Provincially there is something called a 7 generations plan but it wasn't clear how this or landscape level processes would inform WCFC land use planning in future.

9. How will you minimize impacts on long term timber supplies? This referred the statements regarding more fibre usage in the future. Is there going to be more volume harvested? Aurora answered she didn't know.

A Timber Supply Review (TSR) process seems to get more representative AAC. TSR is an easily manipulated concept. What is the hidden agenda? Does Wetzin'kwa want to conserve an existing forest structure or do you want to convert it to a highly productive spruce stand? There is no point in landscape or land use planning unless there are legal protections, monitoring and compliance objectives.

Action Items*** Aurora will get back to us on:

1. a percentage breakdown of what was planted
2. what air quality sensors or monitors are standard in the BC Wildfire Service Standard Weather Station, Wetzin'kwa ordered (if any)
3. a carbon modelling document recently established for trading carbon credits

2. Treasurer Report

\$11 000 in the bank. Some web hosting and domain billing is incoming.

Society Status: Now the consensus is to hold off on filing for this status. We are not going to get funding from the Province until we are a society. How are Cheryl Brown and the Kalum PIC coping? If there is a project requiring our funding then we may need to hustle and get status.

3. Other Business:

The Burns Lake planning pilot should be including an evaluation of the success of previous planning processes either in the area or around the Province. Are they doing this research? Do they know that in the past there was a specific management matrix that applied to stand types in landscape corridors. This was based on the principals of structure of maintenance. The Province met objectives initially but totally lost the intent of landscape corridors because they didn't follow the principles. How is the Province possibly going to improve on something when they haven't analyzed the effectiveness of what they've done previously? We as planners failed miserably on those corridors - we don't know if they are effective or not.

Action Item** All Directors consider contracting out a preliminary study to analyze the effectiveness of management of a landscape corridor and protection of one value.

1 - choose the land base

2 - choose the value

3 - draft the RFP to include how they would assess the value and definitions of success

3 - hire a small contractor

4. **Friday's Meeting with the EAO**

Discussion:

- There seemed a general resistance to answering questions.
- There appears no interest in hosting a public meeting so it will have to be a public initiative, if one is to happen.
- How can the EAO not be in conflict when the Province is a paid consultant on the project and the EAO?
- There were errors with some things said by the EAO.
- Some comments made by public are hard to discover on the website. Finding the answers on the website to those comments is even lengthier. One Director is waiting for some links from the EAO connecting his comments with answers.
- Early summer we may get the EAO's assessments.
- 'What Matters in our Valley' may be holding a public meeting. What structure will they use?

Check out the application and comments received to date:

projects@eao.gov.bc.ca

5. **Future Guests:**

Action Items***

Tyee Mountain WHMA: Jeff spoke with Curtis Paul they are not available to present until later into 2023

FLP in Burns Lake: Matt will ask Tara Dunphy to come again, Jeff will follow up on this.

Offset generation and tracking: We would like Matt to invite West Fraser Foresters to present.

6. Member Recruitment

What about asking the Silvicon GM to elect staff or suggest potential board members?

Action Item**

Sue get a quote for a 1/4 page ad for the on line version of the Interior News.

7. Decorum

Directors were involved in a brief discussion about behaviour.
It was tabled for now.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm.

Next Meeting Date: To Be Determined.