

BV Community Resource Board – Final Minutes

Apr 18, 22 – Virtual Meeting

Present: Bob Mitchell, John Fisher, Eric Becker, Sue Brookes, Ron Vanderstar, Ted Vanderwart, Jeff McKay
Guests: Tara Dunphy (Resource Manager) FLNR:EX <Tara.Dunphy@gov.bc.ca>; Cam Bentley (Resource Operations Manager, Nadina-Skeena Stikine District) FLNR:EX <cam.Bentley@gov.bc.ca>, Anne Hetherington, Allan Baxter (PIR), Ingrid Farnwell, Len Vanderstar (lvanderstar1761@citywest.ca), Glen Buhr (Stewardship Officer) (glen.Buhr@gov.bc.ca)
Regrets: Christoph, Matt
Chairs: Jeff
Recording: Sue

Next Meeting: May 16, 2022

Meeting called to order at 7:05pm

Everyone present introduced themselves.

Organizational

Review of minutes.

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

Agenda - Ron suggested adding time to talk about our social licence versus non profit status and how this will affect Ministry funding going forward.

For a full list of acronyms please check

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

F&W: Fish and Wildlife Reserves

FOI: Freedom of Information

WHMA's: Wildlife Habitat and Management Areas

Section 16 & 17 and sometimes Section 15: Land Act designations for the purpose of wildlife and habitat conservation

TSR: Timber Supply Review

Guests

Ingrid Farnwell was the only guest we didn't hear from. She is a contractor for the BV Research Centre working on a WHMA lands program.

1. Len Vanderstar, regarding the cancellations of conservation lands.

Len is a consulting biologist, land use planner, founding committee of the steering committee of the BVCRB and more! Anne Hetherington came to support Len, she has been before the Board before and is a retired habitat biologist.

The presentation is available on line please contact us for the link.

Highlights:

- Len offered clarification on the difference between administered lands and non administered lands. Non administered lands include Section 16's and 17's and these lands are in a temporary holding designation until there is more certainty for their longevity.
- Ptarmigan Plateau is an example of a Mountain Sheep WHMA Designation.
- The LRMP was legalized under the HLPO in December of 2000.
- WHMA's were officially designated as Section 16 and 17's under the Land Act in March of 2010.

- A higher value WHMA is Canyon Creek; a Chinook, Steelhead and Coho spawning ground.
- Some higher value WHMA's like Canyon Creek were later redesigned as Fish and Wildlife Reserves in 2017 and there was an official document offering guidance on how to manage these lands available to staff.
- Len showed a slide of Land Use Planning units. The LUP's were legalized under the HLPO in 2008.
- In April 19, 2019, the Director of Authorizations, Skeena Lands cancelled all WHMA, Fish and Wildlife Reserves in the valley without adequate consulting with staff.
- Len recounts the history of this event from the perspective of Ministry staff.
 - in 2015 a memo was circulated to staff requesting a cursory examination of about 1600 of these WHMA's
 - no WHMA or F&W Reserves were identified as no longer required
 - the 2016 recommendation to keep these designations was not acknowledged by Authorizations
 - Section 4.3.1 of the Land Act indicates that prior to cancellation of land conservation reserves or withdrawals consultation staff will be provided with a rationale to keep or cancel the reserve
 - the staff recommendations to maintain WHMA's were not followed
 - there was no notice to staff regarding the withdrawn status of these lands
 - these decisions were made prior to a public consultative process as well
- Len mentions Authorizations and Skeena Regional Management refused to publicly share the rationale for cancellations. This is not in the spirit of conservation.
- Len teamed up with the Skeena Wild Conservation Trust to request rationals, requiring 2 FOI requests that cost taxpayer money to file.
- According to the Director of Authorizations:
 - there was not sufficient rationale to keep the designations
 - these WHMA's and F&W Reserves should be kept as GAR orders
 - The Bulkley LRMP will pick these up through the land status process. A land act designation gets plotted on a GIS layer in a database called Tantalous. If it shows up then the parcel can be cross referenced. However once removed as a designation these reserves blink out of the Tantalous database. You can go to a separate GIS warehouse (the SLRMP) to find the existence of these parcels on a map but this just isn't common practice.
 - there is "no requirement to discuss withdrawals or cancellations with the public"
- Implications:
 1. We now notice dirt bikes on the WHMA on Call Ridge, next to Call Lake.
 2. This jeopardized judiciary rights to title and claims of the OW.
 3. This caused the stop of capacity funding for a parallel consultation process with the OW to do a traditional use study of these areas before looking at moving some of these lands to other designations.
 4. This was disrespectful to adjacent landowners and the LRMP historical process and the current CRB Board.
 5. In May 2021, the Auditor General released a report on conversation lands management, making several recommendations.
- Recommendations of Len and other community members:
 - they want a legal interim designation for these lands
 - they want the reinstatement of the conversation lands capacity money mentioned above
 - they want full implementation of the Auditor General's recommendations

- they want to improve the effectiveness of designations for wildlife, in fact they want to ask for Provincial investment to acquire new lands for wildlife stewardship
- they also want a public group to comprehensively review these cancellations

General Discussion:

- Len's map shows the January 8, 2008 SLRMP layer which is out of date. An in depth workshop to define the SLRMP boundaries with agriculture and range lands is missing from the map, there exist updated mandates for these guidelines.
- A WHMA is unique because it allows for an overarching long term plan focused on conservation but also in considers other users.
- Just because something isn't required doesn't mean it's not needed.
- How do we work collectively to ask for reinstatement.
 - Cam encourages the public to go through the formal channels.
 - What is the formal route by which to address this issue?
 - A letter to the Red?, CC Cam, Bobby Love.
 - Len will send his presentation and recommendations to the regional Executive Director Tues April 23rd, 22.

Asked of the CRB:

- What would the CRB like to ask of the Skeena Region, how would we like to see the process unfold?
 - We were flatly refused the reinstatement of these designations.
 - Bobby Love came to the BVCRB Sept. 21, 2020, at that time he laid out with whom he consulted and how the rationale was established, look up our minutes.

Action Item*** Ron will contact the Kalum PIC to share this presentation

Action Item*** schedule more discussion on this for a next meeting topic

2. Cam Bentley, District Manager Skeena Stikine Natural Resources District

- supporting Telkwa Caribou offset discussion
- brief recap referring to an email string from Directors dated April 5, 2022

3. Glen Buhr, as the Stewardship Officer, Stikine Natural Resource District

In 2019 West Fraser said they would honour the 2019 WHMA and F&W designations and they would honour the LRMP, he welcomes discussion anytime.

Glen's presentation is "Exploring "10% LRMP Re-Balance" Volume Offsets for Telkwa Caribou WHA Implementation".

From the presentation, the Overview:

- 10% LRMP balance concept - 2006 Bulkley HLPO Preamble, and subsequent clarifications
- Bulkley TSR3 timber supply impact statement for Telkwa Caribou WHA
- Excerpts from Karen Diemert letter to PIR stating government commitment to find offsets, and overall and periodic caps on amounts being sought
- List of agreed-to and de facto offset generating categories.
- List of offset proposals that have been accepted, not accepted, or are planned/pending. Current offset credit picture
- Exploring questions

General Discussion:

- the October 2020 Telkwa Caribou GAR Offsets document is Version 7

- it's hard to find the offsets for the Caribou
- some clarifications were offered as to why the offsets were necessary, for example: forest health due to pine beetle damage
- the Board recognizes the effort of Glen in preparing his presentation. The industry has done good work tracking and presenting the numbers

Q: What about narrowing the road right of way, landings and boarding areas. These shouldn't be counted as a trade requirement thus saving THLB capital or contribution requirements.

Q: What about other offset budget resetting? This budget is based on the existing THLP land base, events and removal of lands from this land base requires the offset budget be reset. Reengaging in land use planning means just that, everything needs to be on the table for discussion again.

Also impacting the offset budget:

- selective harvesting
- silviculture: fir grows under the canopy of spruce, you get more volume from an area the same size than a pure fir stand
- partial logging studies show that you can increase volume yields and therefore reducing offset requirements
- 3-10 - managing the landscape corridors like approved in the CRB decision matrix would see increased volumes
- conservation concerns
- cultural and heritage commitments

Anne comments: If we could include variances in valuations we could do a much better job maintaining timber yields and protecting habitat.

Glen suggests: using harvest yields from COREs to make up offsets. There was an audible NO in response.

4. Tara Dunphy, Resource Manager, Skeena Stikine Natural Resource District, Cell: 250-643-7127

Tara has a slide show showing the "FLP process in the Bulkley – a forward look". She also shared how a Lakes project is going.

- Tara lists a 10 year land use planning cycle with goals and challenges.
- Forest Landscape Planning is part of the the Forest Range Practices Act. It is currently under review to improve range lands and align it with the UN Declaration for the rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- Forest stewardship plans do not include some information so sometimes multiple plans can apply to the same areas. FSP's are expected to help with:
 - trail and recreation commitments
 - wildfire resiliency
 - capacity to manage wildlife and habitat and species at risk
- FSP's are part of a hierarchical process:
 - they spatialize the AAC
 - 11 FURPA values are now woven into 5 key objectives
- the end goal? To build a set of landscape management strategies able to deliver some future 'desired' forest state??
 - the pilot FSP project in the Lakes includes a conflict resolution process
 - the Province is meeting at a government level to define FSP's in this pilot

- eventually there will be opportunity for local boards or citizens to review some documents and input via participation on technical working groups, topics might include recreation, grizzlies and water, to name a few.

Comment from the Board: It sounds like the Province is carrying on business as usual.

Tara mentions something about a TSR being undertaken in the Bulkely, there is a mechanism which could suggest recommendations for change. Not clear.

Comment: the HLPO was only to do with forestry operations, it has nothing to do with a number of values not in the HLPO, it is not a holistic land use plan.

Comment: the government is already failing on commitments to report on the Bulkley TSA every 5 years **like it said it would** so what meaning does this pilot have?

- Allan: the less we presume about the Province's intention to meet existing commitments the better. Instead what are the Board's indicators of success and what are the signs and symptoms of ????
- Anne: started work in the Lakes District in the 1980's. She mentions challenges measuring success include identification of benchmarks and historical patterns. We just can't keep making the same mistakes.
- Anne: timber supply reviews do not include habitat structural monitoring. We need to look at compatible values versus conflicting values.
- Directorial comment: You cannot use a clear cut model as a foundation for business as usual. You must incorporate models that incorporate structure retention otherwise we just won't have biodiversity. Use patchwork or other non clear cut models.
- David Daust has recommendations for managing second growth structure and habitat growth.
- Directors comment on monitoring: you must have effectiveness monitoring. Is the habitat responding the way we thought it would? Is the population using the habitat like we thought they would? The Province needs to support this.
- Cam mentions a possible TSR in the Bulkley and how there may possibly be synergy with the LRMP going forward.

Guests departed at 9:25pm

Financial Report

There is Approximately \$12 500 in the bank.

Tabled: The Province is requiring society status now before providing funding. We have not received funding this year due to our governance under social licence.

Action item*** Should the Board apply for society status? This has been tabled for now but by fall we need to consider this.

Action item*** Ron to confirm Town Hall for the next meeting.

Closing Discussion:

- tighten up chairing to keep guest comments relative to their presentations
- there seems to be no interest by the Province in trying something new, whether it's a test or pilot
- Cam seems in control of all outward Provincial Forestry messaging
- one comment from last month's meeting that there is a low literacy level in forestry was callous. One Director wrote a note to the guests indicating so.

Seymour Ridge

In February and March there was a new direction for the management of wildfire risk for Seymour Ridge. This was the result work by a Director and the Province. Adam Burdett and Curtis Paul's new silviculture plan, proposed in the March CRB meeting, didn't honour that effort. In fact, the alternate plan which was mutually agreeable, was overridden with a flat NO from the Province. Another example of the Province's inability to honour contributions from the BVCRB and manage the values in the LRMP.

- Perhaps we need some further government communique.
- The Nordic Ski Club, the BV Naturalists and others are going to experience a large loss. Their timber, trails and naturalist values will be negatively impacted if the prescription isn't changed.

Serb Creek - still on hold

Meeting adjourned at 9:44pm.