

# BVCRB-Bulkley Valley Community Resource Board

## Final Minutes

Date: Mon. Jan 18, 2021, Skype

Present: Bob Mitchell, Matt Sear, Jeff McKay, John Fisher, Eric Becker, Sue Brookes, Peter Crawford (PARKS) Scott McMillan (PARKS, e-mail: Scott.McMillan@gov.bc.ca), Cam and Jevan

Absent: Bryan, Ron and Christof send regrets

Chair: Matt

Recording: Sue

Next Meeting: Date Feb 15, 2021

## Introduction:

Matt called the meeting to order at 7:05pm.

Matt introduced guests.

No Agenda additions

November 2020 minutes were approved with corrections to spelling and notes from Bob, all in favour.

Bryan has officially resigned, though he is always welcome to sit in. Matt will request Bryan submit Director nominations if any.

## Financial Report:

- none given

## Cronin Trail access into the Babine Mountains Provincial Park

**Presentation by Scott**, Senior Park Ranger in Tweedsmuir area

- refer to the attached presentation notes
- The Cronin access along the 3000 road was established under Section 6 of the Park Act. The intent was to give BC Parks the ability to manage park access from that road. The Babine Park Mountain master plan predated the LRMP. The road was never built to current standards, it's first 7km has standing water, improper ditching, wood box culverts and some slope stability issues. The first failure of road was early in the year 2000, the creek was diverted into the forest! Beyond 7km there is slumping, and a no motorized vehicle rule, 3 permits are allowed per year for snowmobiling.
- an alternate route for park access is a good section of road built by PIR 12 km past the 3000 Road.
- The LRMP direction is to manage the trail according to the master plan, this new route has significant deviation. Parks has already spent over \$100000 with McElhanney on bridge designs over Cronin Crk but fear costs to maintain or reroute the existing access all the way to the mine site might be prohibitive. The master plan objective of goat herd conservation isn't at issue, the issue is increased access.
- We are only 1 of the stakeholders already consulted others include the Lake Babine Nation and PIR.

## **Discussion:**

- The mountain bike community would likely support either option. Directors don't see any issues that would impede either improvement.
- Directors ask and suggest:
  - o upgrading the existing road to say 4 km then putting in a small parking lot
  - o what does the access mean to people
  - o the Moricetown Cronin Trail is out of scope, this isn't in the park, we or Parks could apply to have it covered under Section 6 then enforce restrictions on it ie no summer motorized access.
  - o maintaining access to Higgins Creek is valuable, it's a horseman trail. (Scott mentions one foot bridge has been removed because of deterioration.)
  - o more conversation required within the board

## **Responses:**

- BC Parks and Rec. have not monitored the impact of the snowmobilers. There was only really one group that goes yearly.
- The Victoria Bason trail could connect to Higgins, this connection would provide hiker access. Another access through the lookout would also be accessible to horseman.
- Horseman usually don't need road access for up to 10 years after decommissioning a road.
- Decommissioning involves pulling the bridge at Cronin Crk and returning the creek to a firm bed.

## **Orange Rd.**

- Peter indicated there may be a new gate on the Orange Road this summer, between the Onion Rd. parking lot and Rudphler Creek. This is a Section 6 parcel under the Parks Act. It's a line of access to the Park with no summer motorized use allowed on the road (with exception of exploration).
- There is alpine damage outside the park nearby.
- The current ditch limits larger vehicles but dirt bike access remains. The new gate would be quite low down in the grade to protect against vehicles. Parks expect push back from the users, already signage gets removed often.

## **Telkwa Caribou GAR Order - Timber Supply Impact Offsets,**

### **Jevan and Cam present:**

- a letter between PIR and FLNRO, setting up of the WHMA will be circulated by Matt
- This presentation is a report on how they are going to implement the WHMA
- The CRB is seen as a mechanism to help inform when the Province needs broader public process.
- this GAR dates back to 2015.
- FLNRO has been working on implementing Caribou conservation measures which resulted in an implementation of a sub alpine caribou wildlife habitat range.
- the WHMA spans the Bulkley R. and Morice R. TSA's.
- the reason for the WHMA was management of access over the Telkwa Range.
- the Caribou WHMA shifted the balance of timber harvesting from the land base.

- legal opinion was that Geoff and Cam can seek amendments to the HLPO so long as its minor.
- PIR is the largest licensee in the TSA and most affected by the implementation of the WHMA status. The Telkwa Range was considered a no harvest area of roughly 30 000 hectares.
- the LRMP is premised on a socio-economic balance and denotes a 10% impact on available timber supply when making conservation and land use decisions
- FLNRO HLPO has that 10% balance established, whether this is still a relevant value for use in the HLPO is questionable, the HLPO came after the LRMP and the LRMP didn't consider how the 10% would be used specifically in the HLPO process
- HLPO only deals with forestry planning not other values in the LRMP

### **Discussion:**

- Is there some accounting, showing the loss of harvest, change of biodiversity levels, wildlife value impacts, offsets if any - what are the figures around how these things will be affected by harvesting. Caribou is not the only pressure on the land base, there are other values.
  - o the response was another question how do these individual topics affect the strength of the whole plan?
  - o West Fraser and PIR talked briefly about how they were going to get an accounting. They advanced some principles around how do they maximize some all of the values when you talk trade offs. There are other values managed in other areas - some principles were developed around how and where they could do that in this case. None were shared.
- What are the suite of values?
- How effective has the LRMP been - is there accounting here? There are no baseline figures and no figures now - have certain values been maintained since the 2005 State of the Forest for example. There needs to be some kind of accounting do we have the data to establish whether the plan was effective?
  - o response - we got corridors and maps that show harvesting, we got 0 stage targets and others with regard to forest health, health of adjacent areas, we got landscape units - there is raw data, we've got the data to suggest we are following the plan as established
- Are the numbers showing the protection of biodiversity?
  - o we haven't really tested this. FLNRO was to measure forest range effectiveness and the environmental leadership initiative (ESI) was a suite of objectives that was developed to monitor how designations are doing. This is happening with first nations communities somewhere.

### **Recommendation:**

- the board asks you to please provide some analysis on how Telkwa Range values are affected as well as Caribou health
- Jevan or Cam want to also account for unnamed risks...? how? They mention that the WHMA is timed to periodic re-evaluations of herd health and presumably other factors - is it every 10 years? What else is a factor?
- Yes FLNRO will let us know some of this accounting and maybe it will be a public process.

## Review of the Section 16, 17 WHMA

- November 18, 2020, the board send a letter requesting the status of land protections for the Wildlife Habitat Management Areas
- Jevan's comments: when he is adjudicating an FSP in the area of a WHMA he is looking at history and whether the management is consistent with the LRMP introduction.
- What does someone do if they want to log unoccupied crown land ? Jevan's response: All harvesting has to be done under an FSP.
- FLTC's may not require an FSP as these are harvesting blocks less than 2000 cubic meters of wood
- Do operators have access to a database that tells them this is a WHMA? Jevan said their eco system biologists are taking a look at these small scale salvage scrim's but did not indicate whether there is information available to the public on land reservations or status'.
- According to Jevan and Cam there are quite a few checks and balances in place but none were specified.
- A Land Act Designation would be more accessible information for the public.

## Canfor block update

- A Director is to requesting the Board to endorse a waiver of fees for an FOI Request for all documents related to the Reisetter Creek cut block.
- **Action Item\*\*\*** Christof to draft the letter and the board will vote on the motion.

## General Discussion

- How do you find old growth, 200yr old spruce or 500 old trees on the West coast? Provincial discussions are on going.
- mention of Alberta coal projects

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 pm.

### ACRONYMS:

TSA: timber sales area

THLB: Timber Harvesting Land Base

BCTS: BC Timber Sales

THLP: debenture?

WHMA: Wildlife Habitat Management Area

WMA: Wildlife Management Area

LUP: Landscape Unit Plan

HLPO: Higher Level Plan Objectives

FLTC: Forestry Licence to Cut

GAR: government actions regulation

FOI: Freedom of Information Request