

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, January 13, 2022

PRESENT: Chair Shane Brienen – via Zoom

Directors Gladys Atrill – via Zoom
Mark Fisher– via Zoom
Dolores Funk
Tom Greenaway
Clint Lambert
Linda McGuire– via Zoom
Annette Morgan– via Zoom
Bob Motion
Chris Newell – via Zoom
Mark Parker
Jerry Petersen
Michael Riis-Christianson
Sarrah Storey – via Zoom – left at 12:00 p.m.
Gerry Thiessen

Staff Curtis Helgesen, Chief Administrative Officer
Cheryl Anderson, Director of Corporate Services
John Illes, Chief Financial Officer
Deborah Jones Middleton, Director of Protective Services – arrived at 10:50 a.m.
Taddea Kunkel, First Nations Liaison – via Zoom
Jason Llewellyn, Director of Planning
Wendy Wainwright, Executive Assistant/Recording Secretary

Others Eamon, O’Donoghue, Associate Deputy Minister, Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development – left at 11:24 a.m.
Lori Borth, Regional Executive Director, Omineca, Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development – left at 11:24 a.m.
Ken Nielsen, General Manager, Chinook Community Forest
Mike Hykaway, Assistant Deputy Minister, North, Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development – left at 11:24 a.m.

Media Eddie Huband, LD News

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Brienen called the meeting to order at 10:35 a.m.

AGENDA

Moved by Director Atrill
Seconded by Director Parker

NRC.2022-1-1

“That the Natural Resources Committee Agenda for January 13, 2022, be approved.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MINUTES

Natural Resources
Committee Meeting Minutes
– November 4, 2021

Moved by Director Lambert
Seconded by Director Atrill

NRC.2022-1-2

“That the Natural Resources Committee Meeting Minutes of November 4, 2021 be approved.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

DELEGATION

MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS, NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT – Eamon O’Donoghue, Associate Deputy Minister: Old Growth Deferral

Chair Brienen welcomed Eamon O’Donoghue, Associate Deputy Minister, Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development.

Mr. O’Donoghue provided an overview of the Province of B.C.’s Old Growth Deferral.

He spoke of the following:

- The Garry Merkel and Al Gorley Report “A New Future for Old Forests”
 - 14 Recommendations
 - Recommendation 6 Immediate Response to Ecosystems at Very High Risk
 - Old forests protected/deferred from development
 - Short term temporary deferral announced by Province November 2, 2021
 - Engage with First Nations regarding the proposed at-risk old growth map developed by the Technical Advisory Panel
 - Technical Advisory Panel (TAP)
 - 5 people
 - Conservation focused panel
 - 2.6 Million ha.
 - Three categories of old growth forests
 - Large treed
 - Rare
 - Ancient
 - 500,000 ha. of the 2.6M ha.
- TAP Model map
 - Not an operational map
 - Field guide being developed and will be available shortly
- Government to Government discussions with First Nations and the Province
 - Province gave 30 day timeline
 - Challenging to meet timeline
 - Provide outreach to all 204 First Nations communities across the Province
 - Received significant response from First Nations
 - 13 First Nations have said ‘yes’ to deferrals as presented in the technical advisory group
 - Approx. 13 indicated ‘no’ to the deferral as they are already managing the forest
 - Approx. 50% no response or need more time
 - Capacity is a challenge for many First Nations impacted by emergency events – (flooding and wildfires)

DELEGATION (CONT'D)

MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS, NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT – Eamon O'Donoghue, Associate Deputy Minister: Old Growth Deferral (CONT'D)

- The remaining First Nations have indicated not interested in Technical Advisory Committee map
 - Interested in old growth forests and are currently managing or want a new management plan
- Carrier Sekani Tribal Council
 - Involved in land use planning with the Province
 - Will address old growth through that process
- Other First Nations indicated they want new processes or will address through current land use processes with Province
- Lake Babine Nation
 - May consider old growth through resiliency process
 - Expect some First Nations may have new deferrals
 - Some indicated they want the Province to remove deferrals immediately
- Update will be provided to Provincial Cabinet at the next sitting
- Will work through remainder of old growth strategic review and remaining 13 recommendations in the Gorley/Merkel Report
- 2.6M ha. will not be deferred in its entirety
 - Deferral will take place only where First Nations agree
 - Will await Provincial Cabinet response
- Province will work with First Nations based on their response back to FLNRORD
- Number will change as more nations engage in the process
- Other two categories of old growth forests
 - Rare
 - Ancient
 - Government may seek a longer-term deferral
- Dynamic file – a lot of confusion on behalf of licensess
 - Can proceed with cutting license currently in place
 - Only BC Timber Sales proposed sales currently deferred from harvest.

Discussion took place regarding:

- BC Timber Sales
- Tariffs
- Pressures on the forest industry
- Old growth deferral within RDBN
 - Currently no specific deferral requests explicitly
 - A number of existing processes
 - Carrier Sekani Pathways Forward 2.0 Agreement
 - Lakes Resiliency Project
- Overlapping traditional First Nation Territories
 - Strength to Claim
- Impacts from Provincial initiatives/announcements
 - Economy
 - Socio-economic
 - Division within the Province
 - How will forestry based communities move forward?
 - Provincial plans may assist individual people and not the larger community
- Provincial worker transition supports
- Challenges in the forest sector across the Province
 - Mountain Pine Beetle
 - Wildfires

DELEGATION (CONT'D)

MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS, NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT – Eamon O'Donoghue, Associate Deputy Minister: Old Growth Deferral (CONT'D)

- Diversifying forestry
 - Value from fibre
 - Examples in the region
 - Continue advocacy
- Forestry policy challenges
 - Some changes to make fibre more available
- General public engagement and community participation
 - Confusion regarding the Province's Old Growth Deferral
 - Need to find a way for public engagement in the process
 - Address public concerns
 - Public uncertainty creates public unease
 - A well-informed community is better
 - Province considering longer term communication/public engagement strategy
- Mr. O'Donoghue spoke of using a simple one-page communication
 - In the past FLNRORD has utilized web-based tools for communication
 - Encouraged communication with Assistant Deputy Minister Mike Hykaway, Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development
- Communities wanting to work with the Province on value-added opportunities
 - If there is a process to allow participation encouraged engagement
- Challenges of differing approaches to Old Growth deferrals
- Local Governments have a strong voice
 - Advocating through the Union of B.C. Municipalities
- Encouraged Province to include Local Government in the process with government to government discussions with First Nations.

Chair Brienens requested FLNRORD provide updates monthly to the Committee.

Chair Brienens thanked Mr. O'Donoghue for attending the meeting.

REPORTS

Input Request on the Design of Skeena Region Roundtable Moved by Director Atrill
Seconded by Director Funk

NRC.2022-1-3 "That the Committee receive the First Nations Liaison's Input Request on the Design of Skeena Region Roundtable memorandum."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The following questions from the memorandum were discussed:

- What are the main objectives for the overall Roundtable process that are important to your organization?
 - Capacity
 - RDBN First Nations Liaison
 - Reconciliation starts at the beginning (on the ground)
 - Elected Official engagement
 - Differences across the region
 - Recognition that communities have different views moving forward

REPORTS (CONT'D)

- What should be the focus of the initial meeting to ensure a successful process going forward?
 - Require data
 - Rationale moving forward
 - Socio-economic data to illustrate impacts to communities
 - Same foundational understanding
 - Defining what will be included under Natural Resources
 - Enough time to work towards an agreement going forward
- How often should the Roundtable meet and for how long?
 - Every 4-6 weeks
- What are some key topics your organization would like to discuss at the initial meeting?
 - Start conversations at the beginning of the process
 - Local government inclusion from the beginning
- Clarity is required regarding who will be participating
 - Need to ensure First Nations inclusion
 - Important to work together
- What is your organization's preference for receiving material related to the meeting (e.g., by email, shared document site)?
 - Shared document site
- Any other information or comments you would like to provide?
 - Local Government participation in Province's government to government discussions with First Nations
 - Impacts to communities and lack of community engagement.

CORRESPONDENCE

Burns Lake Community Forest Ltd. – Harmonizing Stumpage Policy for Community Forests Moved by Director Funk
Seconded by Director McGuire

NRC.2022-1-4 "That the Committee receive the Correspondence from the Burns Lake Community Forest Ltd.- Harmonizing Stumpage Policy for Community Forests."

(All/Directors/Majority) CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Write a Letter RE: Harmonizing Stumpage Policy for Community Forests Moved by Director Riis-Christianson
Seconded by Director Funk

"That the Committee recommend that the Board write a letter in regard to the concerns and impacts of Harmonizing the Stumpage Policy for Community Forests."

(All/Directors/Majority) CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The following was discussed:

- Village of Burns Lake Letter regarding Harmonizing Stumpage Policy for Community Forests
- Increased cost for Community Forests to operate
- Loss of community benefits
- Community Forests Tabular rates

- First Nations Woodland Licenses – MPS (market-based timber pricing system)

CORRESPONDENCE (CONT'D)

- Provincial Government's policy intention to harmonize stumpage policy for community forests with the policy from First Nations Woodland Licenses
- Many Community Forests are area based
- Community Forests and wildfire mitigation works
- Bring forward for further discussion with Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development at a future Natural Resources Committee meeting.

Canfor Calls on BC
Government to Rethink Old
Growth Deferral Process
-Together we can Protect Our
Forests and Workers and
Communities

Moved by Director Lambert
Seconded by Director Atrill

NRC-2022-1-5

"That the Committee receive the Correspondence – Canfor Calls on BC Government to Rethink Old Growth Deferral Process – Together we can Protect our Forests and Workers and Communities."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Director Atrill
Seconded by Director Lambert

NRC.2022-1-6

"That the meeting be adjourned at 12:08 p.m."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Shane Brienen, Chair

Cheryl Anderson, Director of Corporate Services