

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO

FORESTRY COMMITTEE MEETING
(Committee of the Whole)

Thursday, September 5, 2019

PRESENT: Chair Brad Layton

Directors Gladys Atrill
Shane Brienen
Mark Fisher
Tom Greenaway
Clint Lambert
Linda McGuire
Mark Parker
Bev Playfair
Jerry Petersen
Michael Riis-Christianson
Gerry Thiessen
Kim Watt-Senner

Via- Teleconference Rob Newell, Electoral Area "G" (Houston Rural)

Director Absent Dolores Funk, Village of Burns Lake

Alternate Director Darrell Hill, Village of Burns Lake

Staff Curtis Helgesen, Chief Administrative Officer
Cheryl Anderson, Manager of Administrative Services
John Illes, Chief Financial Officer
Deborah Jones-Middleton, Director of Protective Services
Jason Llewellyn, Director of Planning
Wendy Wainwright, Executive Assistant

Others John Pousette, Provincial Bark Beetle Coordinator, Office of the Chief Forester Division, Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development
Ken White, Entomologist - Skeena, Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development

Media Blair McBride, Lakes District News

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Layton called the meeting to order at 11:05 a.m.

AGENDA

Moved by Director Greenaway
Seconded by Director McGuire

F.C.2019-3-1

"That the Forestry Committee Meeting Agenda of September 5, 2019 be adopted."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MINUTES

Forestry Committee Meeting
Minutes – June 6, 2019

Moved by Director Petersen
Seconded by Director Greenaway

F.C.2019-3-2

“That the Forestry Committee Meeting Minutes of June 6, 2019 be approved.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

DELEGATION

MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS, NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT – John Pousette, Provincial Bark Beetle Coordinator, Office of the Chief Forester Division and Ken White, Entomologist, Skeena – Update re: Overview of the Provincial Bark Beetle Situation and Bark Beetle specific to the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako

Chair Layton welcomed John Pousette, Provincial Bark Beetle Coordinator, Office of the Chief Forester Division and Ken White, Entomologist, Skeena, Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development.

Messrs. White and Pousette provided a PowerPoint Presentation.

Bark Beetle Activates in the Skeena Region

- Monitoring
- Harvesting
- Record Keeping
- 2018 Flight Lines
- Omineca Region vs. Skeena Region 2013-2018
- Other Beetles
 - o Mountain Pine Beetle
 - o Western Balsam Bark Beetle

Spruce Bark Beetle Outbreak

- Why Spruce Beetle now?
 - o Weather changes in the Mackenzie and Prince George areas
- 2018 Spruce Beetle Mortality
- Current Actions
 - o Annual Beetle Summit-November
 - o Community outreach and public engagement
 - o Forest health funding – Landbase Investment (LBI) account – surveys
 - o Direction for licensee Spruce Beetle Action Plans, monitor and evaluate performance
 - o Support continuing research on shelf life of bark beetle killed timber
 - o Improve licensee hauling and storage behaviors
 - o Funnel traps and trap trees.

Mr. White provided an overview of the provincial funding for forest health allocated to the Omineca and Skeena region of \$2.01M. The funding is apportioned to aerial overviews, monitoring and a minimum amount for research.

Chair Layton brought forward community leader concerns in regard to stumpage and sawmill curtailments. Small-scale salvagers have a willingness to harvest spruce beetle trees but because of current stumpage rates, it is not economical to harvest the timber. In the past trap tree programs were implemented by the government to utilize the fiber and mitigate the impact of the spruce beetle. Mr. Pousette noted that in the Prince George Timber Supply Area licencees have been requested to move their harvesting into spruce beetle areas to mitigate the impacts.

DELEGATION (CONT'D)

Mr. White mentioned that a new person has been hired in the Smithers FLNRORD District office to facilitate small scale salvaging for the Skeena region. Discussion took place in regard to personnel in Prince George for the Omineca/Prince George region to address small scale salvaging.

Chair Layton brought forward concerns in regard to the impending shortage of timber supply and the importance of addressing the spruce beetle. He noted the Province's duty to manage the forests for the public and on the need for on the ground action for spruce beetle to address the potential impacts. Mr. Pousette commented that the Chief Forester takes into consideration a number of factors and values in the overall health of the forests. There are a number of values to consider in regard to the challenges of the spruce beetle along with challenges in accessing the spruce beetle killed timber in the Omineca region.

Discussion took place in regard to market impacts to harvesting and addressing spruce beetle timber.

Director Atrill questioned the impact of the aspen leaf liner in regard to the overall forest health. Mr. White noted that monitoring is taking place in regard to the aspen leaf liner and other factors impacting the aspen. He mentioned that there are a number of factors that can impact the timber that are difficult to foresee. Mr. White referenced the timeline and impact of the Mountain Pine Beetle. He noted that climate change and a number of factors such as other beetles can't be predicted. Director Thiessen spoke of the impacts of weather to the overall forest health. He brought forward concerns in regard to the monies that are being removed from the region from forestry and the investment in forest health is not enough. The importance of adequate funding for forest health was discussed.

Discussion took place in regard to:

- significant small scale salvaging of fir beetle in the Prince George Timber Supply Area
- harvesting on the landbase in Sweden – intensive forestry
- B.C. - extensive forestry
- Cruise based and scale based salvaging
- Spruce beetle stands are more diverse stands vs. the pine stands of the Mountain Pine Beetle
- Trap tree program
 - o Approvals for the program are very lengthy and not timely
 - o Requires further resources
- Further funding resources is required for forest health
- Forest health funding is apportioned from the Landbased Investment Strategy funding.

Chair Layton thanked Messrs. Pousette and White for attending the meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE

Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations And Rural Development -Invitation to Collaborate with The Province of BC – Lakes Landscape -Level Planning Pilot Project – An Introductory Letter

Curtis Helgesen, CAO spoke with the consultant of the Lakes Landscape – Level Planning Pilot Project in regard to scheduling a meeting for September 30, 2019 from 3:30-4:30 pm. The Consultants will be meeting with stakeholders throughout the week. Discussion took place in regard to requesting a meeting later in the week of September 30 to October 4, 2019 and extending an invitation to the Lakes Timber Supply Community Advisory Committee. An alternative meeting date was suggested for Thursday, October 3, 2019.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Interior Forest Renewal Engagement – A Regional RDBN Voice

Discussion took place regarding:

- the importance of completing the Interior Forest Renewal Engagement feedback forms
- Concerns and frustrations in regard to the structure of a number of the engagement sessions
 - o inconsistent formats and reporting after the meetings
- The only meeting Chair Layton received reporting afterward was the Smithers meeting
- The importance of engagement sessions that are consistent and provide reporting out.

Chair Layton spoke of bringing forward the issue to the Honourable Doug Donaldson, Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development at the 2019 UBCM Convention. Director McGuire noted the importance of speaking with Eamon O'Donoghue, Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development.

Director Brienen spoke of regionally working to ensure that timber remains in a community for processing. He spoke of the impacts to the District of Houston and its community members when the mill closed in Houston in 2016. Director Brienen mentioned the forest downturns that have taken place in the past and impacts of mill closures. He spoke of the importance of working together during the challenges but to continue to work as forestry recovers to ensure that the challenges do not reoccur and long-term plans are in place to mitigate issues. Director Brienen noted the importance of continuing to work as communities and with government during favourable times to ensure the long-term economic viability of forest communities and the need to learn from the past.

Director Brienen spoke of the need for reforestation education. Chair Layton suggested having FLNRORD staff to speak at a future Forestry Committee meeting in regard to reforestation. He also included the need to understand volume and area based harvesting and returns on silviculture.

Forestry Policy Engagement Sessions

Moved by Director Brienen
Seconded by Director McGuire

F.C.2019-3-3

"That the Forestry Committee recommend that the Board write a letter to Eamon O'Donoghue, Assistant Deputy Minister providing feedback in regard to the inconsistent format and reporting afterwards of the Interior Forest Renewal Engagement Sessions held throughout the region."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

2. Chair Layton – Update from Geoff Recknell, Regional Executive Director, Skeena, Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development

Chair Layton provided a brief overview of the e-mail correspondence from Geoff Recknell, Regional Executive Director, Skeena, Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development. He identified the need to speak to Coastal GasLink in regard to the utilization of fiber on pipeline right of way. The B.C. Oil and Gas Commission is scheduled to meet with the Board on October 10, 2019.

Chair Layton spoke of the complexities of the tariff fund and stumpage issues.

The lack of engagement to changes to the *Forest Range & Practices Act* and the challenges from lack of capacity and resources in regard to Range staff within FLNRORD was discussed. Director Parker will bring forward the concerns to the Minister of Agriculture.

DISCUSSION ITEMS (CONT'D)

3. Mountain Pine Beetle Funds (Resolutions to FCM & UBCM and background information)

Drafting a letter in regard to the Mountain Pine Beetle Funds was discussed. Staff will draft a letter and provide a template to RDBN partner municipalities wanting to address the lack of funds that were not provided to communities impacted by the Mountain Pine Beetle.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Director Lambert
Seconded by Director Brienen

F.C.2019-3-4

"That the meeting be adjourned at 12:34 p.m."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Brad Layton, Chair

Wendy Wainwright, Executive Assistant