NICCRD FMLT Meeting #32 –Minutes
October 7, 2020 1:00 – 3:00 pm
Conference Call via MS Teams

Attendees: Jon Flintoft (Co-Chair), Andrew Ashford (Co-Chair), Mike DesRochers, Ione Brown, Charlotte Mellstrom, Jenn Peschke, Kai Sonnenburg, Paul Barolet, Gary Gallinger, Robert Zeigler, Megan Hanacek, Christina Mardell, Tyson Berkenstock, Kim Lefebvre, Amy Beetham, Cyndy Grant (facilitator)

Guest: Jessica Garrick

1. **Welcome & Agenda Review** – Andrew

2. **Adopt June 25, 2020 Meeting Minutes and Review FMLT Action Items**
   Minutes were circulated July 13, 2020. No comments were received
   https://www.for.gov.bc.ca/ftp/DNI/external/!publish/FMLT_Information/Meetings/Meeting%2031_June%2025,%202020_Minutes.pdf

Action Generated	Issue	Responsibility	Due
January 30, 2020	Large Cutblocks under VILUP Working Group: The working group will provide the final edited draft guidance document to Amy for circulation to the broader FMLT prior to the next meeting in April.	Working Group	April 1, 2020 *Revisit at January 14, 2021 FMLT*

Table 1: FMLT Action Items Summary

Kim reviewed context of the document. She and the group are hoping to get endorsement of the group. Andrew indicated that he had some additional context to share and would do so later in the meeting. After the meeting he will review with Jon and Cyndy and give members a set time for further input, that will go to the working group. Once the WG get comments, they will meet to review and respond; Kim committed to convening the working group to consider/review comments as a group and set up opportunity for a focus group to revise document. Summary of comments and responses will be presented at January meeting.

3. **DNI First Nations Advisor Update** – Jessica Garrick
   Heiltsuk have had cases of Covid-19 recently; they are not currently accepting referrals.
   They will update Jessica, who will pass this along to licensees.
   Nuxalk are in a similar situation.
   Most referral staff in other nations are working from home, but there have been delays.
   Kwakiutl FN had an election for 4 counsellors.
   Namgis election is in December for 5 counsellors
   Quatsino election in December for Chief and all councillors.

Kwakiutl FN is using Trailmark for accepting and reviewing referrals, etc. If sending referrals to the Kwakiutl, contact Jessica for information about the Trailmark platform. Coastal FNs are being very cautious about having people come into their communities. They ask that visitors self-isolate 14 days prior to visiting.
Mask and curfew protocols are in place for some nations. To understand and follow protocols, you are best advised to contact nation before planning to visit.

4. **Coast Operational Issues Forum (OIF) Update** – Andrew

Old Growth Strategic Review – rolled out on September 11th along with Part 13 deferral areas, and Special Tree Regulation. There were many comments on Engage BC that Garry Merkel and Al Gorley worked into the 14 recommendations – no Action Plan has been developed yet and likely won't be until after the interregnum period. In deferral areas, old growth harvest will be prohibited. There are no deferral areas in NICCRD. One of the deferral areas has been exempted pending further FN consultation. (Walbran – South Island).
Special Tree Protection Regulation – effective immediately. Diameters generally exceeded those listed in Licensees' Big Tree Policies. Looking at protecting approximately 1500 trees provincially. Regulation requires protection of 1 ha around the special tree (56 m radius circle). Some exemptions will be considered by Regional Executive Director: road deactivation, etc. There is no minimum height, so the current interpretation is that stumps with that diameter are also subject to this regulation. This could affect second growth harvest opportunities. Government is working to clarify if stumps were intended to be included or not, and considering how best to clarify if they are not the target of the regulation protection. If blown down, tree ceases to become a Special Tree (need to be upright). Gary brought up woodlots, and the fact that the impact would be proportionally greater. There may also be the need to "buffer the buffer" to ensure the Special Tree is protected. Windthrow prevention fits the "pruning" allowance for the supporting trees.

PHARM – Alan Rudson spoke about 7 instances where his staff have tested appraisal. 1/7 had stumpage billed, 3/7 got stumpage rebate. Regional revenue crew is willing to field review blocks in advance to assist licensees with understanding. There have been no Pharm cutblocks in the district to date.

Log Handling tenure application and review process – Licensees are looking for consistent, predictable review process. Trouble is that there are multiple sets of values, marine impacts, First Nations concerns, various improvements, other tenures – making it difficult to have a single process where the inputs are exactly the same. Ultimately, a

good quality application receives prompt attention and tends to have quick review. There have been some recent cases where debris (boats, camp waste, etc.) was found on the ocean floor at the time of termination; removal was at significant cost. This has resulted in increased security deposit. The interregnum period has paused the work of policy development around log handling tenures, but there is some work being done among the resource districts to give guidance to licensees – Stand by...

5. **Covid-19 Impacts –** All – Impacts to Work, Operational Planning, Operations, Development, FN Consultation

   Ione – working at home; having many virtual meetings; few in-person meetings. Not much change in work life – still able to have field trips with 1 or 2 people. Hard to meet with First Nations – understand that natural resource conversations not as high a priority for First Nations - they are concentrating on their communities' health and well-being.

   Jon – initially engineers and foresters started to work from home. Logging crews continued to work with social distancing in place, with protocols and PPE. Regional District and Town got a supply of hand sanitizer up to businesses, which was helpful. Modifications to office to allow for social distancing; WFP has invited more staff back. Office still closed to public. Make appointment if coming into office, you will be asked to fill out a questionnaire. Pace of work has not suffered. Understanding that First Nations have re-prioritized. Working with NICC – some adaptations, but working well. Completed spring tree planting at beginning of COVID-19 outbreak.

   Kai – similar. Travel restrictions to meetings. Limiting numbers in trucks and boats. Adhered to camp rules set by province. Planting was early, with crews in place as family units – went smoothly – finding accommodations was challenging. IFP rented a resort, which added a few costs, but there were no delays or wasted stock. Have re-hired a number of staff in the past few weeks.

   Robert – similar. A few logistics around transportation put in place for trucks, helicopters, etc. Camps and food protocols in place as well.

   Christina – One FN is not supportive of local camps so BCTS ran crews by helicopter. Good communications with FN is critical when planning work.

   Andrew – Resource District office is open limited hours (11-4) and by appointment. Limits to number of people in meeting rooms, arrows direct staff to limit contact. The office is at 50% staff capacity. We have maintained business continuity.

   There are some stimulus dollars for out-of-work crews. Let Andrew know asap in order to write proposal and get approvals in place before March 2021.

   See Jessica's update – folks have noticed that referrals have slowed down considerably with Covid. FN are putting projects on hold. FN councils are dealing with health and well-being of members; resource management is not the highest priority at the moment.

6. **On the Radar –** Andrew

- Interregnum period up to October 24 for Provincial Election
- FRPA Changes – on hold during the interregnum period. If there is a return of NDP government, these changes could go ahead this fall at the earliest.
- Old Growth Strategic Review: Deferral Areas, Recommendations, Action Plan, Special Tree Regulation
- Great Bear Rainforest Act Review, FSPs – Coastal First Nations and government are reviewing GBR, EBM outcomes. Landscape Reserve Design process is meant to be completed by January 2021. FSP compliance is expected at that time. Will likely not be time for government to change legislation before then. We are not sure of the outcome, but expect eNGOS and First Nations to be tracking this. Communications plan being developed.
- MaMu, NoGo – once interregnum period is over, review and consultation will continue. Ione met with Regional biologist; who mentioned there would be a district working group. Andrew has not heard of this.
  Christina mentioned District Implementation Team that would help to spatialize the LUO and section 7 for MaMu. Andrew will look into District working group concept and let the team know. Andrew checked in with Darryn McConkey. Darryn plans to form these working groups when they get to the public review stage of WHA development. (i.e. it has not happened yet, but is planned for)

- Chief Forester's Reports – TFL reports go to TFL holders. TSA reports are distributed. Andrew shared the TSA reports.
- Large cutblocks. Andrew thanked the working group for the guidance document. Andrew noted that it may be reasonable to expand the guidance to address all jurisdictions in NICC (i.e. not just the enhanced forestry zones). Large cutblocks (or functionally large cutblocks are also being designed in Special Management Zones under VILUP and in the GBR where EBM applies. Andrew showed a PowerPoint which introduced many complexities around large cutblocks. (attached to the minutes)

  Kim said that other regimes were considered, and the working group tried to incorporate them into the guidance document but didn't want to be too prescriptive. Some group members did not want to include any considerations beyond the legal minimum. Tried to focus on meeting current legislation. The impacts of large cutblocks are varied and difficult to understand.

  Paul commented that the stewardship approach to blocks with a predominantly even-aged management regimes provide no template for natural disturbance (temporal and spatial) in the NDT1 based on the Coast Information Teams 2003 publications.

  https://www.for.gov.bc.ca/tasb/slrp/citbc/b-NatDist-DornerWong-May03.pdf

Another key point is the notion that the Biodiversity Guidebook (BDG) and Landscape Unit Planning Guidebook (LUPG) have been recognized as being outdated especially for the NDT1. The science applied in 1995 to support the BDG in the NDT1 used fire modelling and even aged management and large openings which as pointed out by Daniels and Gray (2006) is not plausible such that they refute the scientific approach applied.

https://jem-online.org/forrex/index.php/jem/article/view/542

On this note, the Old Growth Panel review comments regarding the LUPG and BDG cite inconsistent implementation across the Province and intent of the BDG not fully understood. A number of recommendations are made regarding implementation advice including to replace or update the BDG/LUPG publications. Refer to pages 59-60.

https://engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/563/2020/09/STRATEGIC-REVIEW-20200430.pdf

Paul also mentioned an analysis of patch sizes by the Forest Practices Board 2009 looking at large blocks recognized that adjacent was not clearly defined when coalescing adjacent cut-blocks into larger blocks.

https://www.bcfpb.ca/reports-publications/reports/biodiversity-conservation-during-salvage-logging-in-the-central-interior-of-bc/

The FPB applied a "Harvest-only" and a" Harvest-Plus" patch size analysis. Harvest-only includes blocks that have touching boundaries, "Harvest -Plus" recognizes that openings have ecological influences into the adjacent forest, and that even if separated by small strips of timber (100 m or less) – should be considered as adjacent when considering a patch. The latter process yields a much different patch size analysis.

Given all these concerns regarding large blocks Stewardship request **60 days** to review and provide feedback to the FMLT.

Ione – in January, perhaps we should have a broader discussion about large cut-bocks. Hard to incorporate all the complexities into a single guidance document. Old Growth Strategic Review community groups may be a good forum to discuss regional management strategies. Andrew agreed to include the presentation with the minutes so licensees can prep for Jan meeting. Attached with minutes.

7. **FREP District Results** – PDF attached

8. **North Island TSR** – Paul – Data Package is currently in the review period. The next steps: FAIB will be going through comments received on the Data Package. Those who

submitted comments may or may not get response from FAIB before they move on to the analysis.

9. **What's going on out there? What is keeping you up at night?** Around the table discussion of top of mind issues/interests.

Kai - Glyphosate application petition – Megan understands this is coming from Powell River. Article from Powel River Peak (https://www.prpeak.com/news/anti-pesticide-organization-appeals-to-powell-river-city-council-1.24160308 https://pesticides.cauzio.org/en/actions/glyphosate-en?gclid=CjwKCAjwiaX8BRBZEiwAQQxGx381wBSEmL8efkvbY_Kn54DNd7aF--v7i9AgXIPGG6X-dBWSYYbfPxoC0YUQAvD_BwE)– need to respond within 60 days.

10. **Next Meeting** – January 14th – full day. Large Cutblock forum in the morning.

11. **Closing and check-in** – Andrew

MS Teams seemed to work well. Maybe have parking lot for "over time" topics.