

NICCRD FMLT Meeting #33 –Minutes
January 14, 2021 9:00 am – 12:15 pm
Conference Call via MS Teams

Attendees: Jon Flintoft (Co-Chair), Andrew Ashford (Co-Chair), Christina Mardell, Ione Brown, Charlotte Mellstrom, Jen Peschke, Kai Sonnenburg, Murray Estlin, Gary Gallinger, Robert Zeigler, Megan Hanacek, Tyson Berkenstock, Kim Lefebvre, Jon Lok (joined at 11am), Cyndy Grant (facilitator), Amy Beetham (minutes)

Regrets: Paul Barolet, Emmarie Leeson, Mike DesRochers

Guests: Darryn McConkey, Warren Warttig

1. Welcome & Agenda Review

Jon welcomed everyone to the 33rd meeting of the FMLT and reviewed the agenda.

2. Adopt October 7, 2020 Meeting Minutes and Review FMLT Action Items

Minutes were circulated November 5, 2020. No comments were received.

Table 1: FMLT Action Items Summary

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January 30, 2020	Large Cutblocks under VILUP Working Group: The working group will provide the final edited draft guidance document to Amy for circulation to the broader FMLT prior to the next meeting in April. <i>Cyndy Grant emailed the Final document for FMLT Review from the working group September 29, 2020.</i>	Working Group	April 1, 2020 <i>Completed September 29, 2020</i>
October 7, 2020	FMLT Members to provide comments on the recent document directly to the working group. Further FMLT discussion of large cutblocks planned for next FMLT meeting. <i>FMLT decision to park this project while other provincial / regional level processes are underway.</i>	FMLT	January 14, 2021 <i>Completed January 14, 2021</i>

Large Cutblocks Discussion: Andrew notes that beyond our FMLT, work on this topic has been happening at the Coast Area research group and EBM Implementation team, and includes looking at areas within the enhanced forestry zones under the Vancouver Island Land Use Plan (VILUP), the current Great Bear Rainforest Order (GBRO) review, and provincially as part of the *Forest and Range Practices Act* (FRPA) review specifically Forest Planning and Practices Regulation section 64; involves looking at large cutblocks in the context of the current legislation and professional rationales; they are seeing a variety of resources (patch size analysis, biodiversity guidebook, land use planning guidebook, etc.) being used by forest professionals and inconsistent interpretations and guidance; Andrew believes that the work that the FMLT Large Cutblocks under VILUP working group was targeting is being undertaken and potentially superseded at a broader level as the guidance needs to reflect a scope broader than just enhanced forestry zones under VILUP.

Andrew suggests we park our FMLT work on large cutblocks as these other review processes proceed with the work they are doing, and then see if we need something more to come from FMLT once that provincial/regional level work is in place; Ione agrees this is the wise choice and is glad this is being

looked at, at a broader level; Kim also agrees this makes a lot of sense; Jen notes if there is more information related to the coastal area that becomes available, it would be nice to keep that conversation going here at FMLT so it can be applied sooner

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

- Andrew noted that the last OIF meeting was held virtually on Dec.2 shortly after the new provincial government was in place
- New Ministries: The Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development is going to be divided into two new ministries; there is no information about when or how this division will occur; business lines in the ministry are being reviewed; the Honourable Katrine Conroy is the new Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development, and the Honourable Nathan Cullen is the new Minister of State for Lands and Natural Resource Operations; we have no definitive information about when the ministry split will occur; Andrew is pleased that they are taking time to ensure a logical and systematic transition and is hopeful that district operations will all land together under one of the new ministries
- Licence of Occupation: licensees raised expectation of consistency of submission, review and decision standards; district managers have been working together on a draft letter of expectations which will be shared with OIF soon
- Forest and Range Practices Act (FRPA)* Review: an update was provided by Rachel Pollard and Julius Huhs: seeking mandate confirmation from the new government including the regulations to enable Bill 21 (forest operations map (FOM), forest stewardship plan changes, etc.) tentatively scheduled for Mar-June 2021; Phase 2 Forest Landscape Planning Regime (silviculture, roads) has not yet been approved; FOM – purpose is to increase public awareness and ability to move forward with social licence, will show cutblock and road approximate location, 30-day advertising, completion of a final report to summarize public comments received and any changes made, a final map; FOM expected to be valid for 3 years, allowing related cutting permit and road permit submissions; expecting a FOM web tool / platform, useful in shared landscape units / timber supply areas (TSAs), public awareness tool; this work is being undertaken by the Chief Forester's office; expect there will be a transition period once the regulations are enacted
- Performance Area Land Management: Jim Hackett spoke about the planning collaboration between licensees in a shared TSA, and making information available to the public
- Western Hemlock Looper: Forest Entomologist Babita Bains spoke about the 10-15 year outbreak cycle; an outbreak is being experienced in the Fraser TSA and they are expecting high mortality, some discussion about whether this infestation will migrate to other areas including Vancouver Island
- Professional Governance Act Implementation: Rebecca Freedman spoke about the legislation implementation in 2021, redrafting by-laws, they will regulate the regulators such as the ABCFP; there was a question about whether the defined right to practice goes forward – yes, but the *Forester's Act* will be repealed; new statutory requirement to promptly report another registrant when they are not following the by-laws - it will not be enough to have a conversation with that professional

Gary – in the interior Okanagan Similkameen, there is an online tool that all the licensees use and is hosted by Forsite (<https://maps.forsite.ca/oktsa/>); Andrew notes the Kamloops District has the same kind of tool (https://maps.forsite.ca/kamloops_tsa/)

4. **Marbled Murrelet Land Use Objectives and Forest Planning and Practices Regulation Section 7 Notice**

- Presentation by Darryn McConkey; Senior Ecosystems Biologist, FLNRORD West Coast Region
- Darryn is available later for any follow-up questions or discussion
- consultation on the Land Use Objectives Regulation Order (aspatial) initiated September 2020 and extended to February 12, 2021: draft order, schedule tables and maps, review and comment aid
- mapping from low-level aerial surveys, using the best available data; some maps used corporate data from Western Forest Products
- Section 7 Notice – relates to spatially mapping 80% of the habitat (Wildlife Habitat Area and Old Growth Management Area (OGMA) targets); this new notice will rescind the old notice and will set targets and allow flexibility provisions
- next steps: develop timber harvesting land base (THLB) impact tracking and accounting policy: 12,000+ hectares of suitable habitat in draft OGMA's on Vancouver Island and southern mainland coast; old growth deferral areas and any linkages to marbled murrelet habitat, need to make sure we are tracking the implications of implementation
- THLB Impact Estimates: more impacts on south coast and less on Vancouver Island; initiative applies only to provincial Crown Land; impact estimate has generally decreased with new and better information
- need to complete an implementation guide
- will set up district working groups to support implementation and develop proportional targets within forest stewardship plans (FSPs); the dataset can be used to develop a default approach for smaller tenure holders; government has decided that small tenures will also contribute to meeting this initiative
- Stewardship Baseline Objectives Tool (SBOT) demonstration: ArcGIS dashboard for data visualization, provides a snapshot of habitat availability and levels of protection relative to minimum thresholds and targets.

Discussion:

- Andrew asked who can access SBOT? Darryn says the hope is to make this public facing once the Land Use Objectives Regulation Order is issued but it will depend on the corporate data, in the meantime there will be a government-only access SBOT; not sure of the process to make this public-facing
- Christina – is there a way to do screenshots of the SBOT to help tenure holders with the public review and comment phase? Darryn says the same information is in the data provided with the consultation, the SBOT was planned to be used to support implementation and working groups; Christina believes this tool would be useful to her review; Darryn will take this concept back for discussion with his group and will follow-up with the district; who is the district contact? Have not determined the make-up of the district working groups at this time; likely Kyle Rezansoff will be our district contact, but this will be confirmed once the order moves ahead
- please contact Darryn with any questions or follow-up discussion / feedback; he would like to have a meaningful and informed consultation
- Andrew notes that a new Section 7 Notice will trigger a requirement for FSPs to be updated

5. **On the Radar** – Andrew, All

- Great Bear Rainforest Order (GBRO) Review- at the 5 year review mark, there is commitment for a Government to Government (G2G) review and one of the processes being looked at is the landscape reserve designs (LRDs) (spatializing old growth retention) and a due date is coming in a few weeks; this is an awkward conversation for a number of licensees, and licensees did not get a full five years to develop these as different tools and guidance rolled out over time; there is some concern that different groups may assert the licensees are not in compliance with the GBRO and some environmental organizations believe that all operations should stop until compliance is achieved; this LRD situation is being looked at at the G2G table; there are unaligned first nations (not participants at the G2G) and conversations with those groups are occurring as part of the review
- Forest Stewardship Plans (FSPs) – Andrew says sometime this summer he will sit down with his stewardship team to look at any legislative changes, expectations of a schedule and a turnaround time; there are 12 FSPs that will require review; the review process can be iterative with licensees, and he has a reciprocal expectation of prompt responses within government and with licensees; reminder that the FOM is not part of the FSP; FOM relates to being able to submit cutting permits and road permits; Lone is interested in the Forest Landscape Planning Regime; Andrew says we will be moving to this regime from FRPA and there will be a Forest Landscape Plan (FLP) for each management unit and will be Ministry-led in collaboration with First Nations for Timber Supply Areas, and will be licensee-led for area-based tenures; it will be a spatial representation of where timber harvesting can happen, can't happen, or can happen with certain conditions; a separate process will be a harvest schedule of 3-5 years; this is awaiting confirmation from the legislature; there have been 5 pilot FLPs initiated in the province – they have yet to be publicly announced; Andrew can arrange a separate update from the Chief Forester for this group as a separate meeting; the transition to FLPs in all management units will take several years; currently, there is not enough capacity to absorb an immediate transition to FLP within government and industry so expect a longer transition period (perhaps up to 10 years) in some places that will necessitate the continuation of FSPs in the meantime to provide for continuity as the transitions unfolds across the province; Lone wonders if there is any appetite to change landscape unit boundaries?; Andrew has not heard any intention to do this, has heard about requests to amalgamate some management units, there is complexity that needs to be sorted out; Cyndy – any schedule of Management Units developed yet?; Andrew – has not seen this, but expect prioritization and roles within government and a framework is being developed and licensee interest in participation will also likely influence this as well; Megan – in terms of input from stakeholders, or neighbouring members of the public, how are those comments going to be prioritized and considered and will these be publicly available under FOM?; Andrew does not believe comments will be made publicly available, not designed to make it available broadly
- Systems Upgrade: All Forestry and many Land Act Applications will be unavailable from 4 pm Jan.22 – end of the day Jan.31
- North Island Social Media – Jon saw some twitter posts over Christmas, seems like there has been a spotlight on our local area; Andrew saw Facebook concerns related to harvesting next to the highway 19 between Port McNeill and Port Hardy, in relation to Treaty rights; Jon has seen posts related to yew trees and large trees; National news coverage of local issues - so letting everyone know there are folks looking around out there and social media is being used; Do FMLT members engage on these types of posts? Megan says it depends on who you are working for and whether you are in a position to advocate with a fact-based discussion and she has engaged but it can be a bit of a rabbit hole and she has been blocked on occasion; most FMLT members are bound by work to not engage as they may appear to be representing their employers; suggestion to start creating articles for news agencies

- Impact of recent weather events: impact (slides), blowdown and salvage opportunities; this has been an intense winter for storm events on the North Island; district staff took a flight in November and found extensive windthrow in the Marble River area (recreation site severely impacted) and other areas ranging in size up to 40 hectares; lots of interest in marine salvage from recent landslides; fisheries in Piper/Nekite have been compromised; Kai is also seeing increased landslides and windthrow in the North Island but not as severe down in Campbell River; Robert is aware of some slides in Doc Creek; Jen is not aware of any slides in Bonanza, just some windthrow; Lone has seen minor windthrow in the Marble portion of the community forest and roads seem to be holding up well
- Mineral Exploration – likely a result of the updated analysis and inventory, there has been active exploration in TFL 6; Christina has noted that new mineral claim holders are showing up for her in terms of the referrals to stakeholders, and several instances where the claim is transferred to another entity (but no responses have been received)

6. **Marine Planning Partnership (MaPP)** – Presentation by Warren Warttig, Vancouver Island North and Central Coast stakeholder representative
 - there have been recent meetings (December) for marine planning – much of it was administrative, Christina Mardell was there as well
 - process has been going on since 1998; the Federal government has targeted to finalize marine planning in the region this year
 - outcomes of MaPP to advise the final federal Marine Planning Area (MPA) team
 - there has been very little public outreach so far, and this may begin later in fall 2021
 - stakeholder engagement opportunity coming up this March / April
 - goal to establish Phase 1 sites by 2025
 - Christina recommends providing any new log dump information spatially into the database so that it is captured for the process; it is not clear how heli-drop sites will fit into the MPA process
7. **What's going on out there? What is keeping you up at night?** Around the table discussion of top of mind issues/interests.
 - Andrew: keenly interested in how the two different ministries are going to land and what that will mean to the district and different roles within the district; lots of speculation occurring about the old growth report in the absence of seeing any details or an action plan yet
 - Amy: interested in the division of FLNRORD into two ministries and the changes to FRPA
 - Charlotte: Landscape Reserve Designs (LRDs) – a lot of work to get done in a short amount of time
 - Murray: looking at workload this year and have a new team member starting; knotweed project on the Nimpkish River
 - Gary: Great Bear Rainforest Order review – looking forward to this
 - Cyndy: thinking about the Ministry shifting and the strategic old growth review and where that is heading, and FRPA changes
 - Lone: legislation changes are top of mind this year including the *Governance Act* and how that will change our day-to-day professional lives; cumulative effects – landscape level planning
 - Jen: change and trying to stay on top of it and involved including FRPA, FSPs, landscape level planning; Covid 19 and spring planting

- Kai: had a mild panic attack when reporting yew inventory and cross referenced that with special tree regulation and found some over the size - luckily before the act came into force but need to keep a focus on this operationally moving forward
- Kim: worried about what happens with old growth and new legislation and impacts to rural communities
- Christina: especially hard to think of all the changes coming: LRD, FRPA, landscape level, it is like a snowball and expect multiple forest stewardship plan amendments and concerned about how to develop blocks amidst all these changes
- Megan: Private Managed Forest Land review; working with BC Assessment; at the Provincial Level – wildfire response, marine planning and impacts to log transport; Federal *Migratory Birds Act*
- Jon L: the human factor and complexity and the Covid 19 layer on top; complexity of business and burnout given the current conditions
- Robert: similar theme as everyone else, concerns about keeping the flow of wood going and maintaining the related employment, how will these initiatives impact our global competitiveness?
- Jon F.: still excited about the changes that are happening, but frustrating as well

8. Next Meeting

- given current Covid 19 conditions, agreed to push the regular spring field trip to the fall
- next meeting (virtual) is planned for April 13
- potential topics: public engagement and developing news articles / identifying potential topics (Andrew will bring some ideas from a scan of the 2010 Forestry Capital articles); anything new related to large cutblocks such as resurrecting CRIT for large cutblocks

9. Closing and check-in

- good meeting and good to check-in with everyone; good topics; interesting to hear about the Western Hemlock looper in the Fraser TSA; learned a new acronym (SBOT) and post-FRPA was an interesting term to hear; thanks to those who set up these meetings, still good virtually; very valuable