

Southwest Island Public Advisory Group (SIPAG) Meeting Minutes

1. Call to order

Chris Harvey, Environmental Programs Advisor, called the 4th meeting of 2007 to order, of the Southwest Island Public Advisory Group, at 4:30 p.m. on **November 14th, 2007** in Shaker Mill Restaurant, Lake Cowichan, BC.

2. Members

Present:

- Tom Jones, Pacheedaht First Nation
- Vince Callander, Local Business
- Jim Humphrey, Chamber of Commerce
- Kirsten Campbell, Terra Tree
- Dennis Martel, Wilderness Watch Committee
- Brian Shultz, TFL 46 Worker
- Robert Joseph, Ditidaht Band
- Pat Weaver, Lake Cowichan Town Council, Cowichan Lake Community Forest Co-operative

Support (TJG):

- Mark Carter, Operations Planner

Regrets:

- Jack Smith, Lake Cowichan First Nation
- Sandy Peters, Valley Fish & Game Club
- Larry George, Cowichan Tribes

3. Documents Distributed to Members:

1. South Island Meeting #17 Agenda
2. SIPAG Members Contact Information (November 2007)
3. Honeymoon Bay Operation (HBO) Tracking System for Administration Tasks (Outstanding & Completed).
4. South Island PAG draft Meeting #15 Minutes (February 28, 2007)
5. CCFM Criterion 4: Forest Ecosystem Contributions to Global Ecological Cycles (copy of existing indicators)

4. Reviewing minutes from Previous Meeting

Time was given to review the Oct 3, 2007 meeting minutes. Chris reviewed the action items in the minutes and discussed the status of each:

- Completed action items: #1, 2, 3, 5 (completed for next meeting but ongoing), 6 and 14
- #4 Terms of reference sign off: Chris distributed copies of the terms of reference to those members (including alternates) that have not yet signed. She asked that they review and sign next time if they agree.
- # 7, 8, 9, 11 and 12 updates to the SFMP: Chris noted that all updates to the SFMP are filed and will be finalized with the next printing, i.e., after next year's reporting is completed
- #10 Tom did not approve draft indicator for Major culvert and bridge repair. The group discussed this indicator again. Tom commented 5 was an arbitrary number. He would like to see some kind of commitment like 100% of high risk (risk to water quality or fish habitat) are repaired within a year. Pat asked who is responsible for a meandering creek? Mark and Tom confirmed those who are responsible for the road are responsible for the creek crossing, regardless of who's area the creek flows. Mark commented that most of the high risk repairs are safety related; risk is determined by rating the hazard and multiplying by the consequence. Tom commented that in this case the indicator is regarding water so we aren't that interested in the safety aspect. Chris commented that she is hearing two questions/ issues from the discussion 1. Teal needs to clarify current procedures for inspecting and completing repairs on bridges and 2. Need to reword the indicator. Tom agreed.

Action item 17-1: Clarify current procedures for inspecting bridges and major culverts, and corresponding repair schedules. Reword indicator reflecting risk to water.

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- #13 Post harvest site deg assessments: Mark commented that Pavel is currently doing this and in general we are finding that the estimated numbers (14%) are higher than the actual numbers (10%), for the most part roads are narrower than predicted. It is important to have a fairly accurate number as there are 100's of km of road in the TFL and it adds up. Teal is starting work on their Management Plan and the Chief Forester will soon be considering this information to determine a new annual cut.

Chris asked the members if they had any concerns or comments regarding the meeting or minutes:

- Denise noted that the 2008 Indigenous Games are in Duncan or Cowichan Valley, not Lake Cowichan. Pat confirmed that Lake Cowichan will have some events but Duncan is the host
- Otherwise the minutes were accepted.

Action item 17-2: Correction to Oct 3, 2007 SIPAG meeting minutes.

Environment Department January 31, 2008

5. Review Updated SIPAG Member Contact Information

Chris collected contact information for the two alternate members present (Brian and Robert).

Action item 17-3: Update member contact info and distribute.

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6. Current Events / Management Issues

- Chris noted that the Fraser Valley Operation was recommended for certification and expect official registration in the next month
- Chris noted that the internal audit is scheduled for November 20-21 if anyone would like to join the auditors for a tour? Pat said she would like to but cannot make that date. Dennis also mention he was busy but interested. Chris said we will notify members of the external audit dates so that interested members may attend (early in the new year).

Action item 17-4: Notify SIPAG members of upcoming external audit dates.

Environment Department January, 2008

- Chris asked if the members had any current events or management issues they would like to share?

7. Member Contact List Update

Chris informed the group that Ted Burns is no longer a member. He felt it was a very good idea but he doesn't have the time to participate. He is currently living in Chilliwack. Chris noted that Dennis and Howard Smith (Sandy's alternate) recommended Art Watson as a potential member to represent fish. He has been with the Salmonid Enhancement Society for quite some time. Chris invited him to attend the meeting however they are too busy this time of year.

Action item 17-5: Invite Art Watson to attend next SIPAG meeting.

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8. Presentation Climate Change

Kirsten presented a power point presentation on climate change. The following is a summary of some of the key discussion points and questions brought up during the presentation:

Overview of Climate Change

- Brief overview of climate change, including a summary of the latest science.
- Global temperature is rising thought to be from increase in human production of carbon.
- Showed baseline temperature measurements and discussed global trends; currently the global average is ½ degree warmer than 100 years ago; used ice cores for info until recently
- Predictions are that temperature will increase 1-6 degrees in the next 100 years

- Breakdown of greenhouse gases by % water, carbon dioxide, methane and ozone
- Tom asked if the portions are by impacts or potential impacts?
- Kirsten answered no, portions are by volume; she noted there are positive feedbacks in terms of impact, for example warmer temp causes more evaporation
- Still controversy if there is direct impact between CO₂ and temperature but the general consensus is that there is a link
- Showed maps indicating average temperatures for January and July in British Columbia for today and compared to predictions for 80 years from today; group discussion focused on Vancouver Island.
- Tom asked how much variance there is around the average temperature in this prediction? Kirsten responded that these are just averages so you would still have the extreme highs and lows; she explained that this is the most likely scenario, a 'middle ground' example, i.e., it is not the worst case scenario or the best case scenario.
- Tom asked if Kirsten could give an example of an equivalent climate that Van Island will become if this model is true? Kirsten reviewed the maps and showed an area in northern interior Washington.
- Vince asked why the model was for 80 years? Where did 80 years come from? Kirsten answered that climate models can only go up to 100 years, so 80 is really a random number
- Vince commented that he didn't disagree that it was happening...Pat interjected that Vince thinks it is a natural phenomena. Vince recalled the temperatures in the 'dirty thirties'. Kirsten agreed that there is definitely natural variations, however the trend is that Vancouver Island is moving towards more interior conditions (hotter and drier). Tom commented that we may all be underwater! Robert commented that we would all be underground at that point in time!
- Good news slide; possibility that tree growth is improved with warmer weather (longer growing season, increase in CO₂ fertilization, increase in access to CO₂, etc.) all factors that contribute to big trees

Species Migration

- However, we may have new species; species migration from south to north and up elevation; showed cedar as an example, current distribution and potential future (migration off island as summers too dry). Vince commented that they found a patch of old growth cedar near Price George. Tom asked what about seepage sites? Kirsten confirmed that the model does not consider microclimates
- Can species move fast enough? They are more vulnerable to disease and pests when stressed, need habitat connections, no barriers. What can we do? Mix plantations, ensure connectivity

Impacts of Climate Change

- Impacts of Climate change? Pest may be a larger threat (e.g., events like the mountain pine beetle outbreak may become more common). Scientists put together a list of the 10 most potentially threatening pests. Pat asked if this is going to happen now or any time soon? Kirsten replied that they are potentially

threatening in the future, concerned now because they want to avoid another mountain pine beetle event. Tom asked if they are ranked? Kirsten noted that the top was ranked as the highest concern, however these were personal opinions of the scientist attending the conference. Tom commented that any tree stressed is more subject to attack.

- Fire hazard increases in the next 100 years
- Mark asked if there were any current reconnaissance for these bugs? For example Gypsy Moth? Kirsten replied that no, the idea was more that this is where we focus our efforts for the future. What can we do? Mix plantations, research pests

Carbon in Forests

- Overview of Carbon cycle. Robert asked for clarification, people respire carbon? Kirsten replied yes and trees (daytime carbon is absorbed, nighttime it is emitted).
- Graph showing whether forests are a source or a sink of carbon. It depends, have to consider different life stages, and processes but overall they are considered a sink. Events like mountain pine beetle and fire result in a source. Slide showed biggest impact by pests
- Group recalled the gypsy moth scare years ago

Carbon Storage in products

- Wood products are good sink, showed various wood products (lumber, plywood, hardboard) and compared to non-wood products (steel)
- Tom asked if the chart considered emissions from transportation, electricity to produce, etc? Kirsten replied it did and the wood products are still a sink
- Paper however is a source. Robert asked, even recycled paper? Yes, recycling reduces the carbon emissions, however still a source. It is a goal of pulp and paper industry to become carbon neutral (without purchasing carbon credits). Things like alternate energy sources. Tom said they could burn slash instead of fossil fuels. Mark said then they would be burning wood (release carbon) and still have to transport it.
- Mark asked Pat if Lake Cowichan community was thinking of banning woodstoves for home heating? She replied yes but the issue is really a health one, air quality. Tom commented it would be misguided to say the ban was for environmental reasons.

Old growth/ Rotation Age/ Rotting wood

- Old Growth on Vancouver Island has more carbon storage than younger regeneration
- Tom asked if there was a comparison with an un-harvested forest and products? Kirsten replied that that info was not available.
- Discussion regarding all the variables such as shorter rotations creating more products, carbon output from processing of products, fire releasing carbon
- Vince asked is it better to leave coarse woody debris on site to rot? Kirsten replied we don't know, it would be difficult to determine
- Tom commented that harvesting only takes about 25-35% of wood offsite
- Kirsten pointed out that when we don't have all the answers, doing a mixture of things is a good policy

Potential Indicators?

- Chris asked the group if there were any indicators they had thought of during the presentation? She commented that a couple of indications were currently being tracked for other values (i.e., utilization, long term forest products). Members reviewed existing indicators and agreed they are happy with them
- Kirsten volunteered to find out more about carbon models used by BCIT to calculate approximate level of carbon in defined forest area, later could be used to develop an indicator. Members did not show a lot of interest in going this route.
- Tom commented that roadside pile burning is a large carbon contributor; perhaps we could develop an indicator here? Except that it is a legal requirement. Mark noted they would just as soon not burn but main concerns are fire hazard (low risk in his opinion) and plantable spots for future forests. Tom and Mark agreed that piles left unburned can be good for biodiversity, small mammal habitat and generally trees will root right through the piles so it doesn't reduce growing space. Brian commented that the best solution would be to buck in the woods so that it doesn't accumulate on roadsides (all agreed). Problem is pulp market is hard to predict and fluctuates rapidly so sometimes we [teal workers] are instructed to bring it to the roadside and then the market will crash, pulp is worth nothing and then we are instructed to return to disperse wood for plantable spots. Mark commented that it is expensive and sometimes a safety issue for fallers to buck in the woods. Tom suggested an indicator around reducing the amount of piles burnt. Chris commented that we need something measurable. The group suggested 'number of piles' or 'km of roads treated'. Mark reminded the group we cannot create an indicator that goes against Teal's obligations to the crown. Tom asked can't we use this group to write a letter to the government to try and change this requirement? Mark pointed out it is a matter of liabilities.

Action item 17-6: Develop and present a draft indicator regarding roadside piles.

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9. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be tentatively set for the end of February 2008. Chris asked the group if there were any topics the group would like to discuss in the new year? She suggested we start cycling through the criteria again as it has been almost two years since we have discussed some of them and we were all new at this when we discussed the first few topics. The group agreed this would be a good approach. Chris said before we started with biodiversity, but we don't necessarily have to follow the same pattern, if there were any elements that the group preferred to discuss first? Vince asked what the outcome of our discussion concerning coarse woody debris indicator was? Chris said she couldn't remember off the top of her head but she would look up the minutes and bring it forward next meeting.

Action item 17-7: Review previous discussion regarding Coarse Woody Debris.

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The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.