

Southwest Island Public Advisory Group (SIPAG) Meeting Minutes

1. Call to order

Chris Harvey, Environmental Programs Advisor, called the 2nd meeting of 2006 to order, of the Southwest Island Public Advisory Group, at 4:42 p.m. on **April 5th, 2006** in Shaker Mill Restaurant, Lake Cowichan, BC.

2. Members

Present:

- Tom Jones, Pacheedaht First Nation
- Vince Callander, Local business
- Tim McGonigle, TFL 46 Worker
- Sandy Peters, Valley Fish & Game Club
- Dennis Martel, Wilderness Watch Committee
- Jim Humphrey, Chamber of Commerce
- Pat Weaver, Lake Cowichan Town Council,
Cowichan Lake Community Forest Co-operative

Support (TJG):

- Mark Carter, Operations Planner
- Teresa Burton, Recording Secretary
- Chris Harvey, Environmental Programs Advisor

Regrets:

- George Williams, Ditidaht Band
- Kate Miller, Cowichan Tribes
- Ted Burns, Fisheries Biologist, currently away
- April Choquette, TJG Executive Assistant

3. Meeting Agenda

Chris Harvey presented the agenda for the meeting.

4. Reviewing minutes from Previous Meeting

Chris Harvey apologized she forgot to bring copies of the previous meeting minutes held February 22, 2006 and will ensure to distribute them later. Chris generally reviewed the meeting topics and the resulting action items from the February meeting.

Distribute copies of previous meeting (February 22, 2006) minutes to all SIPAG members. <i>Environmental Department April 31, 2006</i>

5. Current Events / Management Issues

Chris asked the members if they had current events or management issues to deliver.

- Membership News: Harry Williams has changed positions at Cowichan Tribes so is no longer able to participate as a SIPAG member. Kate Miller will continue as member representing Cowichan Tribes.
- Dennis Martel said the Fish & Game Club has started their “woods” garbage cleanup and initial efforts went to just one massive dumping site on TimberWest property in Honeymoon Bay. The site has drained their budget as they delivered 1400 kilos to the dump and spent \$175.00 of their \$500.00 budget. The Club feels CVRD dumping fees are advancing illegal dumping practices.
- Dennis Martel, said Wilderness Watch & Conservation Officers responded to a call of a dying elk found between Shaw Creek and Heather Campsite, where the elk was found with barbed wire wrapped around his antlers and head. Conservation Officers tried to tranquilize the Elk so they could move it to a nursing facility but it was too infected and unhealthy. How the barbed wire came to be wrapped around the elk is a mystery. Last summer, every 3 days, they responded to reports of an elk with rope wrapped around it, but never caught up to it.

6. Forest Stewardship Plan Overview

A Forest Stewardship Plan (FSP) Overview presentation was given by Mark Carter and Chris Harvey. The following topics were discussed and questions asked by SIPAG members:

- Overview began by summarizing new Forest & Range Practice Act Legislation and the transition from old Legislation (Forest Practices Code – FPC), results based legislation
- Notably, the Forest Stewardship Plan replaces the Forest Development Plan, maps no longer indicate planned road construction & harvest locations they only show the areas where road building and harvesting will take place.
- Similar concept as the one used to develop the SFMP, that is objectives set by government, licensees have to indicate their results and strategies consistent with those objectives. Some objectives approved under the Forest Practices Code are carried forward and still in effect, for example ungulate winter range.
- Vince Callander asked how long it now takes to get approval to log. Mark Carter explained a cutting permit still has a 30 to 60 day approval timeline.
- Dennis Martel asked if new legislation affected the Annual Allowable Cut (AAC). Mark Carter replied no.
- Mark Carter added that under the new legislation you can develop management strategies which give opportunity to be innovative, but you really have to do your homework and provide rationale to prove that the new practices would still protect forest resources to the same degree. Chris Harvey added that for the most part, under this new plan, planning and operations will be consistent with those we practiced under the Forest Practice Code.
- The four methods used by government to set objectives (higher level plans, set in legislation, enabled by legislation and grandparented) were provided with examples of each for the TFL.
- Definitions and examples of Results and Strategies were given, as well as examples of practice requirements that the licensee must meet.

- Tom Jones asked who is checking to see if we meet our commitments and legislative requirements? Chris Harvey replied that the new legislation results in an expansion of the Ministry of Forests, Compliance and Enforcement Department.
- Vince Callander asked why do salvage contractors have to apply to the company and the company apply to government for each salvage job. Why not have approved Salvage Cutting Permit to cover approval for the TFL? Mark replied that the main reason is that salvage is taken out of the allowable annual cut assigned to the TFL tenure.
- Dennis Martel asked, if employment opportunities will improve? Mark Carter replied likely not but we are optimistic that this new plan will decrease the planning work load. However the due diligence work load may counter this
- The contents of Forest Stewardship Plan maps were reviewed and the draft map shown for the TFL, including the Forest Development Unit and legal designations.
- The Forest Stewardship Plan review and comment requirements were reviewed. A Ministry of Forests brochure "Be Heard: Get Involved in FSP Review" was distributed.

7. Forest Stewardship Plan Details

Some of the details of the Forest Stewardship Plan and Forest Practices and Range Act cover indicators for the SFMP deferred to discussion this year.

Coarse Woody Debris

The Coarse Woody Debris (CWD) indicator was deferred for discussion until this year as there are new requirements under the Forest Practice and Range Act. The Value (Variety & pattern of ecosystems and ecosystem processes at the landscape level) and Objective (Structural diversity at the stand level) were reviewed.

- The new legislative requirement for CWD was reviewed; an indicator, target and variance based on legislative requirements was suggested by Chris Harvey.
- The group generally agreed with the suggested indicator as any deviation would be a deviation from legislated requirements, however there was much discussion regarding how this requirement would be implemented. Mark Carter commented that he thought normal operations would have no problem meeting these requirements
- Dennis Martel said the experience from running Firewood Permits we generally see only small logs so he can't see how you could meet the requirements. The group did not feel that an indicator for CWD was necessary at this time and agreed that this indicator can be deleted from the SFMP.

Delete CWD indicator (#1-3) from the SFMP
Environmental Department August 1, 2006

Invasive Plant Species

Next reviewed were Invasive Plant Species and the proposed measures developed for the Forest Stewardship Plan. The Value (Native flora and fauna) and Objective (Maintain natural diversity of native flora and fauna) were reviewed.

- It was noted that responsibility to manage for Invasive Plants is a new requirement to the forest industry, it was formerly governments' responsibility.

- Members discussed several alternative indicators and targets for this value, including # compliance charges against (failure to comply with proposed measures), % site occupation by invasive plant species, either on a site by site basis or across the defined forest area. Some of the constraints of measurement were discussed and Tom Jones suggested that silviculture surveys may be a potential solution for measurement.
- It was agreed that further discussion needed on this topic is required, Chris Harvey suggested further consultation with the forester and drafting a potential indicator and target to be presented at the next meeting.

Present draft Invasive Plant Species indicator at next scheduled meeting.
Environmental Department August 1, 2006

Hardwoods

Next reviewed were hardwoods and the proposed management under the Forest Stewardship Plan. The Value (Native flora and fauna) and Objective (Maintain natural diversity of native flora and fauna) were reviewed

- Chris Harvey said the forester had several discussions with the Ministry of Forests and Range regarding the management of hardwoods, however they are still hesitant to accept them as crop trees and for the most part still regard them as competitive brush. However, they have accepted a higher level of ghost trees on site (trees we are allowed to leave on site without requiring brushing treatments).
- Mark Carter explained that Teal is currently looking at harvesting hardwood stands (and reforestation with hardwoods). He explained that hardwoods are not considered in the allowable annual cut and therefore if we can establish a track record for harvesting these sites, we may be able to increase the allowable annual cut. There are several challenges to this goal so we are starting with one block this year. As well, hardwood markets fluctuate.
- Tom Jones asked if we could create an indicator such as target of 25 stems per ha of hardwoods? Chris replied that the difficulty with this commitment is that we are not actively managing hardwoods, they are present naturally. While it is recognized that they contribute to the site ecologically and culturally, we would not actively plant hardwoods if a site did not meet the target. Tom asked if perhaps there was a low number that could be used as the target that the forester was comfortable with? Chris replied that she would refer the suggestion to the forester and get back to the group. Perhaps if the target was an average over several cutblocks it would reflect site conditions and management style

Present draft hardwood indicator at next scheduled meeting.
Environmental Department August 1, 2006

Sites of Special Significance

The Sites of Special Significance indicator was deferred for discussion until this year as there are new requirements under the Forest Practice and Range Act. This indicator was developed under two sets of Values (Rare or unique biological features such as karst topography, caves, mineral licks, etc./ special sites) and two Objectives (protection of rare or unique biological features at the local level/ Manage rare or unique sites of ecological, geological, historic, or cultural importance in a manner that recognizes their special qualities) which were reviewed.

- Chris Harvey noted the various ways that special sites are managed under the Forest Stewardship Plan (cultural heritage resources, old growth management area, wildlife habitat areas, resource features). Further to this management, incorporation of special sites into stand level reserves (wildlife tree patches) is common practice.
- The group unanimously agreed that tracking location & data for special sites was very important. Mark Carter commented that GIS mapping linked to a comments or text box would be the best way to track this indicator. Members agreed that a potential indicator with a target to response do all inquiries regarding sites of special significance would potentially work.
- Tom Jones asked about encompassing monumental cedar in this indicator? Tom explained the background – the importance of establishing an inventory record for Cedar, the Pacheedaht First Nations (Pacheedaht) would like to see a process to quantify the preservation of cedar trees for future cultural use. Teal is currently in the process of locating and counting these trees with the specified characteristics. Teal will propose a cedar indicator to the Pacheedaht and when they are satisfied with the indicator it will be referred to SIPAG and incorporated into the SFMP.

Present draft sites of special significance indicator at next scheduled meeting.
Environmental Department August 1, 2006

Present draft cedar indicator to the Pacheedaht First Nation.
Environmental Department August 1, 2006

Fisheries

Management of Fisheries Sensitive Features: Chris suggested we defer discussion on this topic until we have a guest speaker on fisheries/ forestry interactions. She will try to contact Ted Burns for a June or July meeting.

- Mark said the TFL has 3 Fisheries Sensitive Watersheds assigned by government and that this is out of the 10 that they have designated provincially. He also said that you can see the recovery of these rivers from past efforts under the Coastal Watershed Management requirements.

Discuss Fisheries Sensitive Features indicator at next scheduled meeting.
Environmental Department August 1, 2006

8. FSP Review & Comment

- The Forest Stewardship Plan includes TFL 46, T0910 and Cowichan Lake Community Forest Co-op's Mt. Bolduc Licence area. The plan is currently in draft form but is planned for 60 day public review and comment period beginning approximately April 7th.
- Please provide written comments to Mark Carter if there are any concerns.
- There will not be open house viewing held in the surrounding communities. The FSP will be available for viewing at Teal's office and on the web.

9. Next Meeting

Chris will contact members when date for the next meeting is set.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:05 p.m.