

# **CANFOR LOGGING PLAN FOR WEST TROPHIES: PUBLIC MEETING 2 OF 9**

## **NOTE: MINUTES APPROVED BY PARTICIPANTS**

### **UPPER CLEARWATER REFERRAL GROUP**

#### **MEETING NOTES**

29 JULY 2015 AT TROPHY LODGE: 7:00 PM – 10:15 PM

Referral Group:

George Briggs, Tay Briggs, Tom Dickinson, Trevor Goward, Roland Neave, Ryan Papp.

Canfor: Al Andersen, Stefan Borge

Taking notes: Ellen Ferguson

NOTE: For convenience, FLNRO is referred to here as MOF.

1. Introductions. A Andersen is Canfor Operations Manager. Has been here for 2 years & came from Prince George. S Borge is Canfor Planner and came here in March 2015.
2. T Goward provided brief history, noting that the community's concerns date back to the 1990s. The perceived lack of response to identified concerns has resulted in anger in the community. Essential that all interact in a more positive way.
3. T Briggs spoke of the events that led to the establishment of the Guiding Principles. Started with Slovan's logging on Trophy that caused major watershed damage to Fage Creek. (May 26, 1992 - Fage Creek flooded, taking out the road.) In late 1990s, MOF - SBFEP identified plans to establish woodlots on the Crown land in the Upper Clearwater; MOF was clearly not prepared for the community response. It was obvious that the guidelines of the LRMP were not adequate and a Local Use Plan was needed. To this end, MOF hired a facilitator and a dedicated team of local volunteers spent 2 years identifying values. In 1999 the Guiding Principles were signed off by MOF DM Jim Munn.
4. G Briggs elaborated on the Public Input process that resulted in the creation of the Guiding Principles. Noted that multiple uses of the Crown lands were identified: water, tourism, wildlife. The valley was divided into 7 areas, A through G, with G being from Grouse (Moul) Creek to Spahats Creek. Slovan had logged up to 1700 m elevation in the late 1980s. After long negotiation, local consensus provided for 3 woodlots. MOF DM Jim Munn had asked that residents look at all issues and he congratulated participants on the Guiding Principles on May 19, 1999, noting that this document represented a "a new level of understanding and trust" and provided "balance with which we all can live". He commented that Area G had already been "heavily impacted" and noted that future work MUST respect wildlife and water values. Recent meetings with Canfor representative D Dobi have not shown respect for identified concerns with water quality, quantity, and time of flow.

T Goward noted that people who were initially adamantly opposed to any and all woodlots in the valley eventually agreed to their establishment, but in exchange expected to be granted a meaningful voice in future logging here. "Otherwise it needs to be asked what we got in exchange for all our good will, trust, and nearly three years of intense negotiation". He pointed out that the Guiding Principles cannot not be construed as 'not-in-my-backyard'.

T Briggs has put together a record of engagement from 2011 between Canfor and the Referral Group. She noted that D Dobi of Canfor initially refused to meet with the Referral Group and wanted to meet with 1 designated person only. Anyone wishing to read the record of engagement in detail, please contact Tay Briggs for a copy: 250-587-6444.

5. R Papp spoke on the Upper Clearwater residents' position regarding Canfor's initial logging proposals. He became involved in the process in 2011/12 in response to surprise developments from Canfor. People are upset and angry, feeling that Canfor is not living up to the terms of the Guiding Principles.

He noted the correlation between the high elevation logging activities and the washouts experienced on the creeks that drain from the western slopes of Trophy. Published costs of millions of dollars in infrastructure repair and disaster relief costs. Creeks impacted have been Spahats, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Canyon, Fage, and Grouse (Moul).

After the March 2012 meeting between Canfor and the Referral Group, an information sharing session was provided to valley residents. Note that the mandate of the Referral Group is simply to carry information back & forth between valley landowners, Canfor, and MOF. Although MOF DM Rick Sommer admitted that logging "may have been a factor" in the many washouts, there were still no changes made to Canfor's logging plans.

The Referral Group is struggling to maintain a position of respect in the eyes of the community, who are adamant that large-scale industrial logging is NOT acceptable under the Guiding Principles. Residents wanting more impact have established an Action Committee, citing issues of legal liability, and suggesting civil disobedience, public outcry, and extremely negative publicity.

G Briggs showed photos of Area G, indicating the various creeks, the existing cut-blocks, and the appalling damage to the Fage Creek drainage. He provided copies of the pictures to Canfor.

6. T Goward spoke of the meeting with D Dobi of Canfor in March 2012; transcripts of that meeting are available from Tom Dickinson (250-574-5813).

Specific points agreed to by D Dobi:

- a. Canfor is aware of a link between logging and decline in the numbers of mountain caribou;
- b. no visual management plans -- or, if there are any, Canfor is not bound to adhere to them;
- c. in regards to water quantity, quality, and flow: Canfor has no way of knowing what will happen;
- d. Canfor's plans to log Area G are on-going. This is not a one-time thing. They will keep logging until every tree available to Canfor under the law is removed.
- e. there are no plans to log differently adjacent to the Wells Gray Park boundary;
- f. Area G encompasses all the area from the road to the Park boundary;

T Goward also noted that MOF has not lived up to its commitments to the Guiding Principles, e.g., the Referral Group had not been contacted prior to Buck Hill being logged in preparation for mining of lava rock.

R Neave brought forward serious concerns with water resources. T Briggs advised that there are 43 water licenses in Area G. R Neave's personal concern is Shook Brook, which starts at the Park boundary & flows through his property. Water license has been held by that property since the 1960s for domestic and irrigation, and the Neaves have been an independent power producer since 2002. The creek supplies all of their own electricity with a surplus to sell to BC Hydro. Having cost \$50,000 to install, he is most anxious to protect his investment. He has 13 years of hydrological data, noted a very stable flow, and in all that time there has only once been insufficient flow to maintain the system.

T Dickinson noted that the letters sent by valley residents to MOF and Canfor all expressed a common concern regarding hydrology.

T Briggs noted common theme of concern expressed by the tourism operators is visuals; another area of great concern is the mountain caribou.

There are over 100 landowners in the valley, some with numerous parcels of land under separate title. T Goward noted that we are “people of strong opinions and strong convictions”.

T Dickinson spoke of the land gifts that have been made to TRU, and how value judgements were made to establish the 7 Areas of the Guiding Principles.

7. Canfor’s latest plans for Area G were addressed by S Borge and A Andersen. S Borge stated that Canfor is still looking at timber development but assured the Referral Group that they are also weighing considerations of terrain, water, and wildlife. The concerns expressed are valid.

A Andersen advised that Canfor has done some layouts and cruising, and they are now at the stage of needing to hear concerns and to learn the issues. Canfor is not meeting due diligence if not “on the ground”. He noted that the previous logging could not be defended as good practice.

8 & 9. General Discussion/Additional Items:

T Goward noted that the Guiding Principles were established to ensure that the disaster that befell Fage Creek could not happen elsewhere. He also noted that, since the Principles were signed, there has been a mountain pine beetle epidemic and a serious decline in the mountain caribou population in this area. He asked for Canfor’s view regarding the Principles.

S Borge stated that Canfor would work within the parameters of the Principles to the best of their ability but they still need some clarification.

T Goward and R Papp both noted that Canfor’s president/CEO had gone on record in the media stating that Canfor would respect all local land use plans. If Canfor doesn’t adhere to this, what then?

A Anderson questioned how to get to the same page -- how to work together (or not).

T Goward admitted that some of the Principles are somewhat “wishy-washy” reflecting the atmosphere of trust at the time -- but valley residents have a right to expect meaningful input into future logging in the valley. The plans for Area G cannot satisfy Canfor’s wants alone.

R Papp noted that the Referral Group still needs to meet with MOF to ensure they still have the same regard for the Principles as when they were signed off by DM Jim Munn. He is concerned that the Principles are threatened by a breakdown in communication between the 3 parties involved.

R Neave had asked his lawyer to assess the Principles as a legally binding document and was told yes, it is legally defensible.

T Briggs commented that other local land use plans may also be challenged, and the Forest Practices Board may need to verify the validity of all such plans. So many conflicting users and too many time-wasting expensive processes -- hence the need for consensus and compromises in an effort to address all values.

R Papp spoke on the intent of the Guiding Principles document and the bond of trust between the parties.

T Dickinson noted that, when the Guiding Principles were established, MOF was working for us, the community. Now it appears that MOF is more a proponent of industry.

T Briggs said that the local land use processes were set up to avoid conflict -- but the present lack of communication is leading straight to what the process tried to circumvent. People need to know that their concerns will be addressed.

G Briggs spoke about the mountain caribou “orders” -- which were then downgraded to the point where winter habitat was destroyed.

S Borge asked for responses to Canfor’s logging plans as shown in 2012, and was told that the Referral Group was not allowed to have the maps.

T Goward pointed out that no response can be made until we know what is actually planned.

T Briggs noted that the Referral Group’s mandate is simply to carry information from Canfor to the people, and then report to MOF. However, responses from MOF have not been forthcoming and at no time has the Referral Group been able to allay anyone’s fears by stating that Canfor has responded to concerns.

R Papp is concerned that the definition of “salvage” has changed since the Guiding Principles were signed off.

A Andersen said that Canfor needs to examine the hydrology maps WITH the people who have concerns. They need to talk with the people who are involved.

Although there is not a “timber shortage” Canfor does not have a big quota area (only TFL18) as the rest of their timber comes mainly from competitive bid. Area G is a volume-base license.

R Neave asked if it was possible to “trade” Area G for another area of less controversy, and T Goward responded that the mayor of Clearwater had approached MLA Terry Lake about this, and had been told no.

G Briggs noted that the beetle-killed trees are now falling and no longer are the fire hazard of red-attack. He is concerned that, with no disturbance for 12 years (last of the beetle kill) new trees are growing up -- and they will be destroyed if Canfor goes in to the area to remove the dead & down wood.

10. Next Steps:

T Goward noted that people are feeling unfairly treated by MOF and asked if Canfor would attend a meeting with MOF and the Referral Group – subject to further discussion.

A Anderson and S Borge need to talk over the issues that have been brought up, and are feeling a bit “stuck” at the moment. They understand the 3 years of frustration but if there is no common ground it will be tough to solve. Rumours (subcontracting, etc) don’t help and the relationship needs fixing.

G Briggs and A Anderson had a discussion regarding standards (ISO, CSA).

Both S Borge and A Andersen offered people the opportunity to come to their offices to talk about concerns.

T Goward suggested that Canfor should be working with the Wells Gray Action Committee (250-674-8255), which is actively working to resolve this issue. The mandate of the Referral Group is only to gather and exchange information.

T Briggs asked for clarification on the Stakeholders' Referral 2015 map, and did all the polygons mean that the entire hillside would be logged from the road to the Park boundary?

S Borge wasn't sure why D Dobi created these polygons but assured the Referral Group that Canfor would never log most of this area. He is working on a map that can be shared.

T Briggs pointed out a large orange-coloured block high in the Grouse/Moul drainage, on extremely steep hillside, and asked if there were any plans to helicopter log.

A. Andersen stated that block would definitely not be logged and that helicopter logging does not figure in Canfor's plans.

T Goward suggested that one test of Canfor's respect for the guiding principles would be the degree to which their harvesting plans for Area G 'look different' from harvesting plans elsewhere.

11. T Goward called for the meeting to adjourn at 10:15 PM and thanked everyone for attending.