

Community Forest Project – Follow-up to January 29, 2005 Public Meeting
February 2, 2005, 9:30am, General Meeting Room, District of Sechelt

David Bakewell	B. Hubbs	Robin MacGregor
B. Pearson	Gertrude Pacific	Jason Herz
Rick O’Neill	Al Mulholland	Linda Williams
Brad Benson	Claude Boisvert	Trudy Dienes
Debbie Osler	Daniel Bouman	Andrea Goldsmith
Cam Reid	Ray Parfitt	Barry Poole
Pete Markovick	Ken Sneddon	Kevin Davies

Kevin Davies reviewed the Sunshine Coast Forest Area Map and outlined the possible areas on the lower Sunshine Coast that could be offered to the District of Sechelt as a Community Forest that would meet the timber profile and qualify as the economic unit of 20,000 cubic meters annual allowable cut.

He noted that:

- the Chapman and Gray Creek Watershed are potential areas that may be offered
- the District received timber volume and mean annual increment information last week and is working to evaluate and verify the information
- the District will be requesting a meeting with the Ministry of Forests to begin discussions on area selections next week,
- the District does not want to take controversial areas such as the watershed if it will be forced to harvest them to keep the project profitable,
- the District’s initial position is to request as large an area footprint as possible, to allow for management of sensitive areas and resources in a way that meets community concerns while maintaining economic viability for the project.

Concerns:

Where the Community Forest Licence areas are located

The need to respect efforts made to protect the Chapman/Gray watershed and the Elphinstone Land Use Review Process and the views of all Sunshine Coast residents regarding watershed protection.

It makes little sense to select areas to be protected as a reserve in the Community Forest Licence area as the licence is based on timber volumes. If there is a timber volume in a reserve, there will be less allowable cut available to make the Community Forest project economically viable.

Discussions should be held with the Sechelt and Squamish First Nations regarding their plans/claims in the area. A copy of a document on forest resources from the Squamish Band was provided for information.

Concerns were raised about having Community Forest licence areas in other jurisdictions (SCRD).

Need to develop trust that the District of Sechelt will reject the Ministry of Forests offer if it will require harvesting in areas that the community would like to see protected.

How a Community Forest Company will operate

Wherever a Community Forest Licence is granted, the District should make a commitment to the Sunshine Coast community that excellence in forest practices will be pursued.

Concerns were noted over the type of tenure a Community Forest Licence entails. Concerns were raised regarding statements made in a letter dated November 4, 2004 from the Assistant Deputy Minister of Tenures Branch of the Ministry of Forestry. A copy of this letter will be provided (L. Williams). K. Davie noted that all discussions with the Ministry have been that Sechelt is being offered an area based AAC tenure for a probationary period of five years that could be renewable.

Governance structure and representation of other elected bodies (i.e. SCRCD) on the Board. It was noted that a corporate structure, with a Board of Directors was proposed to protect the taxpayers from liability.

Concerns were noted that corporate structure is not always a guarantee of protection of the taxpayers investment.

Board Membership and responsiveness. If community involvement is to be by Advisory Group, the Advisory process must be binding, and the decision making process be open and transparent.

Support was voiced for working to obtain Forest Stewardship Council Certification, which supports the pursuit of excellence in forest ground and management practices, rather than ISO or CSA certification which do not impose the same level of standards.

Support was also voiced for investigating certification models developed in Scandinavia, and perhaps developing our own model from other examples.

Suggestion to review at Harrop-Proctor Community Forest model, Creston, Esau (sp?) Forest Products (A. Goldsmith to contact A.Carr for information) for ideas on models for operations and community involvement.

Need to develop a statement of goals and guiding principles that will include “commitment to manage resources for the benefit of the community and the recognize timber and non-timber values of forest resources” to instill trust in process.

Application Process

It was noted that there is a provision for the application to be submitted by March 12, 2005 and submit details on areas not yet finalized, such as the public consultation process and broad community support, within 90 days

District agreed to hold regular meetings (Tuesdays, 4pm, General Meeting Room) to discuss process on application (i.e. area selection, development of guiding principals, board structure, community involvement). First meeting February 8, 2005, 4pm.

Email addresses of interested parties recorded for exchange of information.

Meeting adjourned at 10:55am.