

Community Forest Project – Follow-up Public Meeting
February 15, 2005, 4:00pm, Community Meeting Room, District of Sechelt

Bill Hubbs	Gertrude Pacific
Linda Williams	Rick O’Neill
Claude Boisvert	Trudy Dening
Debbie Osler	Daniel Bouman
Ray Parfitt	Barry Poole
Kevin Davie	Ken Sneddon

Kevin Davie reviewed a map of the Sechelt Peninsula with areas outlined that Ministry of Forests has identified as available and that could provide the 20,000cubic meters per year AAC for the Sunshine Coast Community Forest.

He noted that:

- the District plans to negotiate with the Ministry of Forest for a larger area based on the uneven age class of the timber available in the identified areas,
- to avoid logging in controversial areas for the first five years, the Community Forest would require a large area to draw timber from.

Attendees were given the opportunity to comment on areas that should and should not be included as operational areas of the Community Forest. Chapman/Grey and Hidden Grove were identified.

Areas Identified as of Concern:

Hidden Grove

The Hidden Grove area was identified as an area that should not be included in the Community Forest.

Chapman and Gray Creek Watersheds

Discussion points:

- preliminary calculations for an application indicate that the Chapman Creek watershed area would not be available to log for a long period of up to approximately 60 years because of immature stands,
- the right of the Ministry of Forests to grant licences in the watershed reserves (established in 1924) was questioned.
- it was commented that the watershed areas have been withdrawn/withheld from Timber Supply Area,
- if the watershed becomes part of a Community Forest, and the Community Forest loses the licence if unable to meet the AAC requirements, the watershed area could then be made available for other forest licences,
- the Province would revoke a Community Forest Licence for not meeting AAC requirements,
- if the watersheds are not in the Community Forest Licence, the watershed areas could be offered to other operators by BC Timber Sales,

- questions were raised regarding the impact of the draft SCRD/SIB Watershed Accord, seeking management authority over the watershed, on the authority of the Community Forest to operate industrial activity in the watershed. The District had requested a copy of the accord and was told it was unavailable or in draft.
- there could be community support for recreation and woodcraft activities in the watershed if the areas were under a Community Forest Licence.

Alternate Areas to Replace Areas of Concern

Areas in the Halfmoon Bay/Homesite Creek area, which have more diversity in the species.

Southwest face of Mount Elphinstone. It was noted that the community of Roberts Creek is concerned with protection of 1500 hectares of area between Wilson Creek and the B & K logging road in this area. It was also noted that this area has significant volume of timber than could be selectively logged in keeping with excellence in forest practices that could be supported by area residents.

There was general agreement that based on community consultation to date, the District of Sechelt should approach the Ministry of Forests to negotiate for:

- a larger area for a Community Forest within the Port Mellon to Egmont area, and if the Licence must include the watershed, that no timber value be calculated on that area, so that inclusion of the area will not jeopardize the ability of the Community Forest to achieve the AAC.

If the watershed areas are to be included in the Licence, the District should inquire if a Community Forest could lease areas to other groups (eg: lease watershed to the SCRD to achieve greater management authority for the SCRD over the watershed).

The District should stress to the Ministry the requirement for broad community support of the application, and state that the community does not want to see industrial activity in the watershed. Therefore, some accommodations regarding inclusion of the watershed must be made, or the community will not support the application

Concerns regarding Consultation

Process must continue and be expanded to include

- SCRD support for the application as representatives of the people of the Sunshine Coast and the group responsible for water quality
- Residents of other areas if Licence area is to be expanded into such areas as Mount Elphinstone

K. Davie noted that Chief Feschuk of the SIB indicated in December, 2004 that the areas identified for the Community Forest Licence do not conflict with the SIB's licence areas.

Business Plan

It was noted that the Business Plan is not yet available. It was noted that a Forest Stewardship Plan would be prepared in consultation with the community after the Application has been accepted.

Concerns regarding Tenure/Ability to Manage the Area under the Community Forest Licence

To clarify concerns regarding the tenure and rights of a Community Forest Licence , it was agreed that Linda Williams, supported by Debbie Osler, would draft a list of questions to be answered in writing by the District Forester, including

- is a Community Forest Licence equivalent to a TFL or is it a probationary area based tenure,
- clarification of a Community Forest's authority to manage the land on which the licence is held,
- clarification of the right of the Ministry to issue licences in a watershed reserve.

Meeting adjourned at 6:05pm.