

2016 BCCFA Conference

May 26 – 28, 2016

Lake Cowichan, BC

SESSION NOTES

Over 150 delegates attended the annual gathering of the BC Community Forest Association (BCCFA) May 26-28th in Lake Cowichan. The conference was jointly hosted by the Cowichan Lake Community Forest Co-operative (CLCFC) and Pacheedaht First Nation. Twenty two local and provincial organizations contributed as sponsors for the event which attracted a record number of delegates.

The conference was well received by those attending. One participant summed his experience by saying, “The event demonstrated that community forests are making a strong commitment and connection to the forestry land base and economy, and returning real and tangible benefits to the communities served. They deserve the support received from Government.”

The three-day event was held in the community facilities in Lake Cowichan and included a bus tour into local forest operations with stops at special features in the area. Professional development sessions addressed technical and policy aspects of community forests and all delegates benefited from the networking opportunities and from hearing about the success factors and challenges of other community forests.



A highlight of the event was a banquet where a traditional feast was prepared by the Pacheedaht featuring local seafood. Forests Minister Steve Thomson, started the evening off with the news that an invitation to apply for a long term Community Forest Agreement has been extended to the CLCFC and the Pacheedaht who have

formed a joint venture called Qul:yit. CLCFC has been operating the province’s first forest co-operative for more than 20 years under a licence that is about to expire.

Minister Thomson also announced the creation of a new \$10,000 grant to be given annually to the community forest that best exemplifies the values exhibited by the late Robin Hood and the community forest program. Robin Hood was president of the BCCFA for 9 years. The announcement of this new award is recognition of the significant contribution he made to the

development of community forestry in BC, and for his vision and passion for leveraging the community forest to create local and social economic opportunities.

This document is a compilation of notes taken at the field trip and workshop sessions of the 2016 BCCFA Conference. They are intended as an overview of the sessions and a supplement to the PowerPoint presentations that were made by many of the speakers. To see the presentations go to <http://bccfa.ca/2016-bccfa-conference-and-agm-may-26-28-lake-cowichan/>. For more information or questions on any of the material here, please contact smulkey@bccfa.ca.

Thanks to June Ho and Michael Pang, UBC Summer Interns for the note taking.



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Day 1 May 26, 2016 – Field Trip

Stop 1 – Forest Workers Memorial - Steve Lorimer

The Forest Workers Memorial Park was built by the Cowichan Lake Community Forest Cooperative (CLCFC) to honour all forestry workers, including those who worked on the railway, in the Cowichan Lake area. Legacy funds from the Lake Cowichan and District Credit Union funded the major portion of the project with donations from the Forest Co-op, the Town of Lake Cowichan and other forestry companies in the area. The site features local shrubbery, three yellow cedar carvings depicting different aspects of the forest industry, benches surrounding the memorial bricks with names of the honoured individuals along with a fountain.

Stop 2 – Forestry Kiosk – Patrick Hrushowy, Cowichan Lake Community Forest Cooperative (CLCFC)

Profits earned from the CLCFC go back to support local community initiatives such as museums, scholarships, public facilities for pedestrians, parks. The community's ideas for funding go to the board. Jobs are created that wouldn't have existed without the community forest. A key goal is keeping logs local for processing. News releases and local media are a part of frequent communication with the community.

Stop 3 - Cowichan Lake Timber - George Donnelly



It is a band saw mill with a chipper. They own an old bark peeler that has a limit of 36" maximum butt diameter. They use about 2 truckloads a day, and focus on second growth Douglas-fir and hemlock. They ship their product internationally to Japan, China, Australia, Belgium, Israel, Philippines, USA. Products include 8x8s and 12x12s that will be sold to Alberta or Eastern Canada. CLCFC contributes to their log supply along with Timber West. Their biggest issue is getting enough logs. As a result, they are highly dependent on Timber West for supply.

Stop 4 - Cowichan Lake Research Forest – John Russell

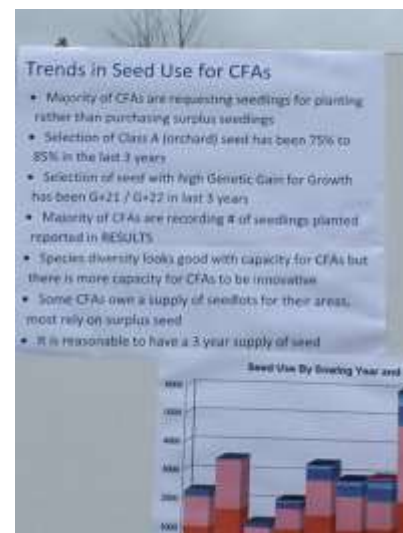
Genetic research has been done in this research forest since 1950s. Research looks at gene conservation, shifting in elevation and latitude of seed origin, seed use, breeding, and growth volume production along with research on pest and pathogen resistant seed. There is research being conducted on deer resistant cedar focusing on high content terpene, a smell and taste that deer dislike and research has shown seedlings with terpene have a higher survival rate.

Susan Zedel, Seed Resource Specialist, Tree Improvement Branch, MFLNRO

Susan offered information on the trends on seed use by CFAs.

Stop 5 CLCFC Community Forest Plantation – Steve Lorimer and Tom Jones

We visited a 20-year-old CLCFC plantation that is free to grow. The site has a 50 year rotation, and the site index is 35.



Stop 6 - Avatar Forest with boardwalk

Stop 7 Lunch at Port Renfrew Beach – Traditional Territory of the Pacheedaht

Stop 8 Michael's Bark Stripping Demonstration

The Pacheedaht First Nations have signed an agreement with the local logging companies to strip the bark before the trees are logged. Stripping from live trees produces the right kind of product for traditional products such as headdresses, baskets, and rope.

Stop 9- Post civilization habitation

An abandoned community was reforested. Research planting was conducted on the site with 4 different density stands, 250, 500, 750, and 1000 stems/ ha.

Day 2 May 27, 2016

Khowutzun Community Forest Showcase - Margaret Symon, RPF

See the presentation on the BCCFA website

With a membership of almost 4,600+ people, the Cowichan Tribes is British Columbia's largest single First Nations community. Khowutzun Development Corporation was founded to provide overall business management to the Khowutzun group of companies and to facilitate business development on behalf of the Cowichan Tribes. They were awarded a community forest in 2004.

Khowutzun Forest Services (KFS) has a goal to build capacity in the forest sector while respecting culture and heritage. The Cowichan people are experiencing hardships such as unemployment, poverty, a large young population. KFS contributes by providing training and employment in tree planting, stand tending, training, firefighting and pesticide application.

Currently, the community forest is 1284 ha with an AAC of 10,000m³. Multiple local values include the Cowichan River which is important for recreation. The Site Index is 30-40, site series is cwhxm1/2 with some cwhmm.

Cowichan Tribes is a combination of 7 tribes at the south end of Vancouver Island. The population was 15,000 at one time, but due to diseases transmitted from colonization the population went as low as 1,000. Currently population is 4600+ and they are one of the largest FN groups in BC.

Conflicts in the KFS Community Forest include Illegal trails, fire ignition, firewood theft, Illegal tree bough collection, and shooting signs. A gate is being considered to prevent these situations however, there is a recreational river nearby, so open access is important. They have worked with the Ministry to put up better signage.

Gainful employment, training, forestry career pride are all a part of the CFA goals to improve lives of Cowichan members.

A Forest Practices Board Perspective on Community Forest Stewardship - Tim Ryan, Forest Practices Board

See the presentation on the BCCFA website

The Forest Practices Board has a mandate to serve the public interest as the independent watchdog for sound forest and range practices in British Columbia. Through their audits and investigations they have examined subjects including meaningful community consultation, access management, community watersheds, and reasonable incorporation of tourism values into forest harvesting, all issues that CFAs must deal with in spades. This session focused on CFAs, their challenges and opportunities to get out of the box on long term stewardship.

The Board conducts independent and objective assessments licensee compliance with FRPA, and the appropriateness of government enforcement. They conduct 10-12 audits annually. They recommend not enforce and work to improve policy, guidelines, and forest practices.

Audit results of CFAs show their performance is on par with major licensees. Thirteen CFAs were audited over the past eight years. All but three had a clean audit with two of the 3 demonstrating a quick willingness to address the issues that were cited.

Concerns involving Community Forest Tenures revolve around logging, visual quality impacts, recreation/tourism impacts, water impacts, and landslide risks.

Tim discussed the recent FPB reports that are relevant to CFAs and the recent report on the limitations and challenges of the Forest Stewardship Plans.

The forest stewardship plan may be unclear in its commitments. The Objectives are not measureable – who, what when, where? To be consistent with government objectives, updates are necessary. Should firefighting be a part of stewardship plans?

If users (the public) expect the board to be helping them, the board needs to find a way to educate users on respectful practices on the site. They observe good practices of companies and use it as leverage with others. There is often a lack of feedback even after notable practices are presented by the board. Another major challenge is maintaining good practices in the midst of climate change.

The Shareholder-Corporation Contract – A Tool for Strengthening Cooperation and Accountability Michael Litchfield, Lawyer and Susan Mulkey

See the presentation on the BCCFA website

In community forestry we know the benefits and the conflict that can be avoided when all parties understand and follow through on their respective roles and responsibilities. In this session we learned about a new extension report which provides guidance on the need for and the content of an agreement which specifies the roles of all parties and articulates their respective powers and accountability.

The team is working towards a narrative document that explains the concept and rationale for the contract, a contract template and a guide to the template. The full report will be available in September.

A Business Case for Long Term Investments in the CF Land Base – A Panel Discussion

Panelists Jeff McWilliams, RPF, Blackwell and Associates; Allan Powelson, FLNRO Harvesting and Silviculture, Stand Management Leader; Erik Leslie, RPF Harrop Procter CF; Ken Day, RPF, Alex Fraser Research Forest

Community Forest Indicator #17 demonstrates the investments that community forests are making in enhanced stewardship, incremental to legal requirements. The panel offered some ideas for opportunities that will leverage reasonable return on investment.

Ken Day – Road Planning



Ken focused on the return on investment and other benefits of turning attention to road planning, maintenance and liabilities. His advice to CFA holders included the following:

- If unstable, roads are a liability for example worker safety risk, not useful, slows transportation, environmental risks
- Spend enough but don't overspend. Think about weather conditions and climate change
- But you also need to factor in opportunity costs such as trees that could have been planted there instead of having the road

- Plan access network before planning cutting blocks for good distance and safety
- Avoid having roads wandering from block to block
- A road at the centre of a cutblock is useless
- People constructing roads aren't those maintaining them so long term financial costs of roads are too often not considered enough

Jeff Williams – Resource Management Framework

See the presentation on the BCCFA website

Jeff offered a big picture view of the opportunities CFAs have for silviculture investments in general and ideas for how to proceed with business plans.

Focus on integrated knowledge and strategies - roads matter too, not just silviculture.

Ask - What are your timber objectives?

- A. Maximum **yield**
- B. Maximum **value** of forest production

What determines wood quality?

- A. How trees are grown, knot size, growth
- B. Trade-offs are inevitable so plan for it

Value (\$) comparison shows greater difference between species than yield (size) comparison. At age 50, if you grew Douglas-fir and western red cedar mixed stands, Douglas-fir stands are bigger than the cedar although cedar is worth more. Thus, having mixed stands may not be the right direction for an economic objective. A holistic point of view is important in meeting a community forests' objectives.

Alan Powelson – Tracking Silviculture Investments and Future Impacts

See the presentation on the BCCFA website

Alan presented a tool for recording progress of silviculture investments and future impacts. There is a need to communicate to public that such investments are important socioeconomic benefits of the community.

Eric Leslie – Climate Change

See the presentation on the BCCFA website

Erik described the planning the Harrop-Procter Community Forest is undertaking to address climate change.

Why - Management plans need to be tailored for climate change. Values at risk from climate change include water, timber supply, infrastructure, jobs, biodiversity.

Where? Risk assessment

- Identify where the sites are that are worth investing in
- Invest strategically in areas with lower risk
- Sometimes you're resisting impact or you may be realigning to something more appropriate for your values
- Prioritize WUI, salvage, and conversion

How? Silviculture/operations strategy

- Before talking about which species to log, think about logging methods
- Partial cutting as a good investment is questionable for them due to a blowdown in 2008
- Avoid high risk investments like cedar and Sitka spruce and go for larch and douglas-fir
- Critical to assess short term shareholder pay out vs. long term investments

BCCFA Annual Update – Jennifer Gunter

See the presentation on BCCFA Website

Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations Key Initiatives Report and Update - Emma Neil, Senior Timber Tenures Forester, and Doug Stewart, Director, Forest Tenures Branch

See the presentation on the BCCFA Website

**Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations Tenures,
Competitiveness and Innovation Division - Dave Peterson, Assistant Deputy
Minister**

Healthy diverse forests → good production → good community globally

The Forest Enhancement Society of BC - Wayne Clogg, Chair

See the presentation on the BCCFA website

Established in February 2016, the Forest Enhancement Society (FES) has a mandate to:

Advance environmental and resource stewardship in BC's forests by:

- i) preventing and mitigating the impact of wildfires
- ii) improving damaged or low value forests
- iii) improving habitat for wildlife
- iv) supporting the use of fiber from damaged and low value forests
- v) treating forests to improve the management of greenhouse gases and

To advocate for the environmental and resource stewardship of BC's forests.

The Society wants to find a mandate of broad focus, not just for wildfires. They have been busy establishing the organization and meeting with stakeholders to get their input. They also needed to figure out an updated business model because it affects resources and the staff.

The Society will rank and identify projects. Planning will require cooperation and working closely with the landlord (MFLNRO). The highest priority projects will address multiple objectives. 2016 is the year to test different projects, different aspects, and different timber types. The society is interested in projects on community forests. But realistically, the society cannot fund every project

Some projects that are of high priority:

- Have multiple objectives (i.e. Rehabilitation, wildlife restoration...)
- Strong First Nations and community support
- Implemented quickly, including consultation
- Committed funding partners

- First with broad strategies
- Doesn't need FESBC Funding of CFA tenure obligations

Manager's Meeting – Jennifer Gunter, Erik Leslie

This session began with introductions and listing of burning issues related to CFs, which later will be ranked and discussed. The discussion gives the BCCFA staff and board information and ideas that the Association can help address.

Brainstorming of issues & topics:

1. Interface: Wildfire, Visuals, MPB
2. Forest Enhancement Society & Landscape Level Fire Management
3. Public Access, Recreation, Commercial Recreation, Roads, Vandalism and Theft
4. Non Status Roads
5. AAC Too High
6. Strategic Planning
7. Biomass, Debris Piles, Waste and Markets for Waste, Waste and Residue
8. Species at Risk
9. Certification
10. Stand Rehabilitation & Forests for Tomorrow
11. Overlapping First Nations Territories
12. Pulp Contracts
13. Pipelines

The group agreed to focus on public access, biomass & waste, and community engagement.

Public Access

- Crown Tenure holders, including CFAs, do not have the right to restrict public access (i.e. Putting gates on roads)
- Safety during operations is a concern
- Sometimes users of trails and roads lack respect for logging operations and workers
- Potential solutions can be found through working with recreation clubs, communication & education, including using social media
- Good signage is important
- Cheakamus CFA has co-management agreements with commercial recreation tenures.
- Involve the local visitor centre & chamber of commerce in helping to spread the word about where there are active operations that should be avoided.
- Vandalism can be counteracted with education, and one manager suggested putting up signs that say "trail cameras in use"

- With respect to vandalism, CFA holders need a more streamlined system for reporting vandalism & criminal activity
- Firewood theft is a constant issue for some CFAs
- Question came up about firewood permits
- Action: BCCFA will circulate info on firewood permitting again.

Waste, Residue and Biomass

- Waste piles as issue for many
- Generally, the public doesn't like seeing waste piles burnt, would like to see more utilization
- How can we use the fibre? District heating is one possibility
- Logging residue utilization pilot project. Bill Bourgeois is looking for CFAs that want to get involved
- Nakusp CFA working with Celgar to bring in a mobile chipper. The logger is paid more to sort waste & keep it clean
- Mention of a Washington State company that collects waste in the bush
- Rehabilitation – can generate carbon credits – this is being promoted in the US
- What part can Forest Enhancement Program funding play?
- Can FFT funding play a role? How about fltcs and itsls?
- In Nova Scotia, there's collaboration with colleges to create a market for the low value wood

Community Engagement

- How do you get people more involved in the CFA?
- Community events & celebrations
- Meet with community groups on their turf. Don't expect them to just come to your meetings
- Social media, surveys, meetings, big events, food, open houses
- Door to door visits – especially with those directly affected like water users
- Involve schools: teachers and children
- Tree planting with schools & community groups
- Organize hikes in the CF
- Ask for feedback, forest managers especially should do this
- Know that retired and self-employed tend to be those that can attend open houses & meetings
- Promote the CF & organize events during National Forestry Week in September every year

Board Governance Meeting – Michael Litchfield, Susan Mulkey

The Shareholder Corporation Contract

Michael took questions on the presentation given earlier in the day.

- Confidential board information can be kept from shareholder
- Shareholders should know the general board financial direction but not necessarily the details
- If shareholder demands to see the details, seek legal advice
- For CFAs seeking legal advice an option is to approach a law firm directly and make a deal with them and offer a long term contract with a flat rate.
- An alternative is self-learning. It is possible to ask a lawyer to show you how to do something on your own. This is the BCCFA's idea to create the new extension tool of the Shareholder Corporation Contract where a CFA can work with the Guide and do a lot of the work. There are a number of simple things many times lawyers are asked to do, but a group can learn to do.

Conflict of interest

There are ways to avoid conflict of interest. Create well developed policies (See the Community Forest Guidebook II) and be able to demonstrate what was done to properly prevent conflict of interest. CFAs should have director liability insurance. Local government has a good model for how to prevent conflict of interest.

Tax Exempt Status

- Alberni Valley CFA has recently received a CRA ruling that their CFA of which the municipality is the sole shareholder is tax exempt. They had been paying taxes as well as the logging tax to the ministry. They have received a refund and the only cost was the fee for their accountant to file the request for a ruling.

Contingency funds (Managing risk)

- Community forests have long-term planning horizons and must have sufficient contingency funds to support keeping the doors open when not actively harvesting or when markets are down.
- Silviculture accounts must be properly maintained, road and other liabilities must be considered, and innovation for long term sustainability must have investment.
- Often the shareholder does not understand the necessity of budget items in a CFA. Must educate the shareholder about the due diligence of budget considerations.

- Shareholders do have rights to bring motions into committee/force a committee
 - If there is a large body of money, they may be able to force a committee and have access to funds.

Day 3 May 28, 2016

BCCFA Annual General Meeting – Jennifer Gunter, Erik Leslie

Members - See Draft Minutes of 2016

Building the Case for CF Indicators

See individual presentations on the BCCFA website

The 18 Community Forest Indicators tell the story of how important community forests are to their communities, to the province and to the public. In this session we heard about some innovative projects happening on community forests, how those projects are translated into the annual survey and into the collective story of community forest benefits.

Indicator #13 Proactive Management of Wildfire Hazard – Westbank, Dave Gill

- Westbank fire crew also trained to brush and plant
- Consulted with neighbours
- Harvesting, selective cutting around the community
- The cost is \$7,000/ha
- Improving air quality is a goal

Indicator #3 Community Contributions – Tumbler Ridge, Duncan McKellar

- At Tumbler Ridge, removing just pine is a problem
- Constant conversation with townspeople to negotiate Tumbler Ridge areas to be harvested
- Planning to get recreational areas, inactive trails developed
- Chipping \$1000/ha

Indicator #12 Investments in Recreation & #17 Investments in Forest Stewardship – Nakusp, Francis Swan

- Planning for operations in western toad habitat involves working with archaeologists, visual quality, and Native field reviews

- 2015 protest by Wilderness Society
- The forest is not just managed for the toad but also for archaeology and water

Indicator #11 Public Engagement – McLeod Lake McKenzie, Stephanie Killam

The CFA has public advisory group (PAG) that works very well. The PAG is a focal point for keeping people informed and for communicating their issues and making recommendations to the CFA board. The general public can attend and talk at the PAG Meetings but cannot vote.

Indicator #17 Investments in Forest Stewardship & #12 Investments in Recreation – Lower North Thompson, Harley Wright

Job Creation Program is a partnership with the provincial government. Funding is provided to organizations to assist with local projects that provide useful work experience and skill enhancement opportunities to eligible job seekers to help them obtain sustainable employment. The building of trails for horseback riding was at the start of job creation programs. Individuals in the program are trained until they are capable and confident. A new aspect of the program is to train people at a saw mill owned by the CFA. Revenue made from the lumber will pay for the training expense.

LNTCFS has established a Forest Stewardship Fund. A sum of money is invested in the fund each year for the purpose of managing low value stands for future productivity. Where harvesting of these stands would likely run at a loss, the Stewardship Fund enables tending the stand for the future.

Indicator #7 Investments in Intensive Silviculture – Alberni Valley - Chris Law

Alberni Valley CFA manages for the priorities of recreation, water and visual quality. The age class distribution makes it hard to find AAC. They have a program to target increased planting on richer sites. Big leaf maple is a strong competing species. To develop a solution to this problem, they have been experimenting with specific brushing and thinning treatments.

On the issues of meaningful community engagement, Chris reports that the most important thing in resolving or even avoiding conflicts is to let the public know ahead of time about what you are doing and to get their input on the proposals. Record their input and let them know what you did with their comments. There is much conflict between recreation groups so have them discuss their wants and needs with each other.