



NORTHEAST ROUNDTABLE SESSION 5 Meeting Notes

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Northeast Roundtable Session 5 – Meeting Notes

Type of Meeting:	In-person	
Date: Time: Location:	Tuesday May 7, 2019 9:30 am – 2:00 pm The Stonebridge Hotel, Fort St. John	
Meeting Handouts:	 Agenda Boreal Caribou Presentation Northern Mountain Caribou Presentation Treaty Land Entitlement Land Selections Update Presentation 	
Attachments:	Appendix A – Attendees Appendix B – Boreal Caribou Presentation Appendix C – Northern Mountain Caribou Presentation Appendix D – Treaty Land Entitlement Land Selections Update Presentation	

1.0 Introductions

The meeting commenced at 9:30 am. Two Worlds Consulting (TWC) welcomed participants and acknowledged the changes made to the meeting timing and agenda. TWC reminded participants of the Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct for the Roundtable meetings. Participants introduced themselves and the group or organization they represent. See Appendix A for a list of meeting attendees.

2.0 BC Government - Opening Comments

The Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNRORD) and the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation (MIRR) provided opening comments for the meeting and made a Treaty 8 land acknowledgement. TWC provided a brief outline of the agenda for the meeting.

FLNRORD presented a brief history of the topics covered at the Roundtable meetings, and an overview of how the Roundtable will evolve over time in relation to other initiatives in the province. FLNRORD confirmed that their Ministry would be leading the Roundtable process moving forward and would cover more initiatives in the region. MIRR will continue to attend the Roundtable and will provide Treaty Land Entitlement (TLE) updates. The Roundtable will continue to be funded by MIRR, FLNRORD, and the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources.

FLNRORD requested Roundtable participants to provide feedback on their priorities for the Roundtable sessions going forward including issues/topics and operational considerations. Following this request, participants shared their comments regarding key topics of interest. The topics were discussed at the end of the session and prioritized by participants before the meeting concluded.

Comments provided by the participants regarding priorities are listed below.

- Develop a better engagement process for land management moving forward; discuss the land management process.
- The Roundtable can work to generate group knowledge on creating effective engagement processes.
- Ensure and demonstrate that the Roundtable process is relevant and taken seriously.
- Engage on an inclusive basis (everyone should be engaged).
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- Ensure that questions raised by Roundtable participants are answered and follow the principle of reporting back. (This has been demonstrated with the reporting back component of the TLE process.)
- Provide information on the cumulative acres of land impacted under the TLE process.
- Review the Roundtable Terms of Reference, mandate and vision; include the history around this process in the review.
- Increase awareness and education regarding Treaty 8 Nations.
- Have the Roundtable play a leadership role in providing cultural education, information and training.
- Explore and discuss the path towards reconciliation.
- Share information and discuss BC OGC's audit mechanisms, structure and regulatory responsibilities (linkages to FLNRORD).
- Determine Northern Mountain Caribou Recovery Planning Consultation process.
- Receive updates on the formation of the provincial and federal Joint Science Committee.

3.0 Boreal Caribou

FLNRORD presented on the status of boreal caribou in the region. See Appendix B - Boreal Caribou Presentation.

Boreal caribou have been in decline since the 2000s. Boreal caribou prefer muskeg soil, in lower areas, such as bogs and other nutrient rich areas with slow moving water. Management of the species in northeastern BC dates back to 2002. There are 8,800 square kilometers which cannot be logged, and 8,400 square kilometers where trees cannot be cut without a permit in accordance with the *Forest & Range Practices Act* (FRPA). In order to achieve 60% recovery for boreal caribou, 65% of the range will need to be undisturbed.

In 2011, a research and effective management board was established. The Implementation Plan for the Ongoing Management of Boreal Caribou in British Columbia was prepared and engagement on the draft Plan was undertaken. The report did not meet federal expectations and the Canadian Parks and

Wilderness Society (CPAWS) was involved in court action concerning the report. The report has not been viewed publicly since engagement took place. Additional reports have been produced to demonstrate how government is taking action to support the species. A federal action plan has been released with the goal of supporting provinces with adaptive management for climate change and its effects on caribou, protecting critical caribou habitat, and exploring Section 11 conversations. The Province is engaging with the Fort Nelson First Nation (FNFN) on boreal caribou through a recovery planning committee. There is also the Medzih Action Plan Fort Nelson First Nation Boreal Recovery Plan. Due to the decline of caribou in the area, wolf culling is taking place.

Comments and questions raised following the presentation on boreal caribou are listed below.

- How is the caribou decline in the area occurring?
 - An increase in the rate of predation is taking place in the region. Caribou are bycatch for wolves. Caribou are present in the linear disturbance areas where wolves are also present, leading to an increased predation of caribou. A map of disturbances where caribou are impacted by increased predation was presented.
- FLNRORD advised that FNFN is part of a collaborative technical planning process.
 - Engagement with other Nations was highlighted as a priority, creating partnerships for implementing the plan before broad government engagement takes place.
 - A completed socio-economic baseline study identified many vacant buildings.
 - The Northern Rockies Regional Municipality completed a socio-economic study for trees and presented an opportunity cost study to the provincial government.
- Can more detail be provided on the reduction of moose herds for caribou conservation?
 - This method was identified as a management lever. From conversations with First Nations, Nations expressed that they want conservation, but not at the expense of moose populations. First Nations in the South Peace region have experienced low levels of food security resulting from moose harvesting, and do not support increasing moose harvest for caribou conservation. Treaty Rights will be affected and must be taken into consideration regarding this issue.
 - It was stated that this method could be considered in areas where wolf culling is not effective. In response, concern was raised about decreasing moose populations as they are already lower than they have been historically. FLNRORD stated they would investigate this issue further.
- What will the boreal caribou consultation process look like moving forward; for example, including conversations with the BC Wildlife Federation, recommendations to the province, and whether or not recommendations will be adapted locally?
 - FLNRORD stated that the Roundtable would be the venue for input into the boreal caribou engagement process.
 - The need for engagement and listening was highlighted for participants to have confidence in the process.
- Is there a plan to maintain the target of 65% undisturbed caribou habitat? Is burned habitat included in this target?
 - The interdependence of processes and species was emphasized.
 - Burned habitat is included in this target. The target is generated from a model that is expanded across Canada.

- What discussions are taking place to reclaim linear disturbance areas?
 - British Columbia, as a leader in caribou reclamation, has implemented a large restoration process to reclaim seismic lines. A series of functional restoration projects are being piloted, and funding is available at the provincial and federal level for caribou restoration projects. Workshops are to be held to identify priority areas for restoration.
 - SFN provided information on a reclamation trade show being held on May 16th, 2019.
- Is the Pink Mountain herd related because they travel down the Alaska Highway?
- Reclamation for the oil and gas industry was identified as a topic for future discussion. An independent review board was requested to monitor the oil and gas industry. Integration between the BCOGC and FLNRORD was suggested as a mechanism for audits.

4.0 Northern Mountain Caribou

FLNRORD presented on the status of northern mountain caribou in the region. See Appendix C - Northern Mountain Caribou Presentation.

FLNRORD advised that there was limited monitoring for these herds, although they are of special concern. The federal government hopes to ensure they do not become at risk. All herds will require herd plans, and herd planning will begin in approximately one year. The Graham herd and Pink Mountain herd are being addressed through the LRMP process. The Graham herd has a 40% mortality rate as of two years ago. Work is being done to increase the number of telemetry collars, with a full census to take place over the next few years. Wolf control has been initiated in the Pink Mountain area, with 99 wolves removed to date. Some existing legislative planning processes are in place, many falling within the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area (MKMA).

It was noted that there is confusion for the public between Local Population Units (LPU) and herds. Further, terminology used between the provincial and federal governments requires clarification. For example:

- herd plans versus LPUs; and,
- ecotypes versus designatable units.

It was suggested that a concordance table be created for reference and clarification of terms.

The point was raised that once the federal government gives a species a threatened designation, hunting of the animal can no longer take place. It was stated that a joint science committee between the federal and provincial governments will be developed as part of Section 11. Updates from the joint science committee were identified as a potential topic for future Roundtable meetings.

The Boreal Caribou Knowledge Consortium and technical committee have been established. Participants identified the need to examine how scientists on these committees are part of the government decision-making process. Examples of this scenario include disagreement between scientific conclusions during committee meetings, and the disconnect between scientific findings from the Province's scientists and information disseminated at stakeholder discussion meetings. FLNRORD stated that provincial scientists provide recommendations, based on their findings, to decision-makers. Participants responded that

decisions are not solely based on science but also on political factors.

5.0 Treaty Land Entitlement Update

A general update was presented by MIRR as well as one specific to the Treaty Land Entitlement (TLE) land transfer process. See Appendix D - Treaty Land Entitlement Land Selections Update Presentation.

MIRR advised that most of the recent engagement has focused on Doig River First Nation (DRFN) and Blueberry River First Nation (BRFN), with open houses taking place with Charlie Lake and Red Creek residents in May 2019. An engagement session is tentatively planned for Fort St. John. MIRR stated that they are committed to bring information back to the DRFN and BRFN communities. Third party and tenure holder engagement is ongoing, in addition to developing responses to questions raised during the open houses. Local government meetings are continuing to take place throughout May 2019.

MIRR acknowledged work was still underway on broad topics from previous sessions: Treaty 8 background, reconciliation commitments and process, if municipal taxes (grants in lieu from the province infrastructure e.g. pipelines on crown land) will be impacted when lands are transferred in fee simple to a First Nation, understanding the overall land quantum being transferred, parcel overlap, and access either to the lands transferred or to the lands beyond for recreational users.

For West Moberly First Nation (WMFN), similar engagements are occurring. The next steps include:

- May 2019 First Nations consultation and tenure holder engagement on amended and newly added parcels (WMFN presented additional and amended selections on March 6th, 2019); and,
- May 2019 WMFN TLE selections will be presented to the Northeast Stakeholder Roundtable via email and/or meeting.

Saulteau First Nations (SFN) have presented land parcels of interest to MIRR. MIRR is currently evaluating the maps and examining overlapping tenures. MIRR will sit down with SFN to identify all encumbrances. The provincial and federal governments are working together on finalizing the parcels.

MIRR will continue to engage tenure, lease, and licence holders to resolve encumbrances. MIRR will continue to respond to and consider site-specific interests submitted by stakeholders and the public, accepting comments while public meetings are ongoing. An engagement record will be kept for decision-maker review. Finally, the Roundtable will be continuously updated.

Comments and questions raised following the TLE update are listed below.

- Is there is a connection between TLE and the LRMPs (are lands being considered for transfer through the TLE also being considered at all in the LRMP Planning process)?
 - TLE is not connected to any other land use planning processes. TLE is only connected to Treaty Rights.
- What is the quantum of all lands being considered for transfer under all processes (Nationrelated land transfers and conservation processes).? A participant listed the different land management and transfer regimes in the region, highlighting that some lands will be transferred to Nations fee simple, such as the Site C land transfers. Some lands in question will be

transferred to First Nation as reserve lands, some will provide for First Nation management of resources, and others will become protected areas.

- MIRR provided estimates for shortfall lands (8,500 hectares) and additional lands (39,000 hectares). These estimates include totals for five First Nations.
- MIRR stated that a map will be created for those initiatives across the Peace region. For Site C land transfers, the maps and corresponding numbers are being determined.
- MIRR advised that they would work with FLNRORD to bring more information, including total land estimates and corresponding maps, to the Roundtable.
- It was stated that the Peace Moberly Tract would be under the SFN agreement.
- Additional information was requested for the proposed Peace-Boudreau protected area.
- Participants requested that more information be delivered to stakeholders in order to understand the broader context of land use in the region.
- MIRR commented that NE BC is about 17 million hectares, 400,000 hectares of which is private land. The sums of 8,500 and 39,000 hectares of land which are proposed to be transferred to First Nations are a small sum in consideration of the big picture.
- SFN's need for land access was highlighted.
- Do Prophet River and FNFN want to be involved in the TLE process?
 - MIRR stated that FNFN has a sizable existing reserve and previously went through a land process with the federal government. They have no TLE requests.

Lunch Break

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6.0 LRMP Update

A discussion was held on the Fort St. John Land and Resource Management Plan (FSJ LRMP) and the process for updating the plan. The What We Heard Report for the LRMP will be posted on the govTogetherBC website. The key themes and questions regarding the LRMP discussion are outlined below.

- Transparency was highlighted as critical to the FSJ LRMP process. Stakeholders and the public want to be informed regarding current plans. Lessons learned from the caribou engagement process were emphasized.
- The provision of opportunities for meaningful engagement was identified as critical to the process. The LRMP is still at the beginning of the land use planning phase, and no planning has commenced. Opportunities need to be available, and there needs to be reasonable expectations for engagement and feedback to have influence over the outcome.
- Industry, such as oil and gas and other associations, require the process to be structured and defined. This is necessary so groups know where they fit into the process, and where and how their feedback can be integrated.
- In terms of next steps, a draft Terms of Reference (ToR) will be developed for the land use planning process. Currently, no draft exists; however, planning discussions have been held with BRFN. The central points of these discussions have focused on how LRMP governance will be

structured. Process steps will need to be defined over the next two years. A plan for moving forward is currently in discussion internally and with First Nations.

- \circ $\;$ The Province will continue to work with First Nations.
 - BRFN are involved in drafting the ToR.
 - The Province is also working with Doig River First Nation.
 - The Province will reconnect with Halfway River First Nations.
- Once a draft ToR is complete, there will be an opportunity for public engagement and feedback. The public will be involved with the design of the process.
- It is anticipated that the next public event will be held in mid to late fall. Baseline data and background information are currently being gathered to present to the public at the first event. The province is working to capture all information that stakeholders are contributing.
- There is a two-year timeline for the planning process, starting this summer.
- A participant asked if there are plans to consider the Dawson Creek LRMP. There are currently no plans to do so, although adjacent LRMPs in need of updating have been identified.
 - Updating the overall modernized land use planning process for the province is of increasing priority.
- A participant noted they felt that the FSJ LRMP may act as a template for other land planning processes in the province. As such, it was suggested that the plan should be simpler and the maps smaller to assess what planning is still needed as land use zoning issues still exist.
- The Roundtable will be the method of engagement moving forward. Updates will continue to be provided, however repetitive, in order to keep participants informed and to answer questions.
- The LRMP team has expanded. Two new FLNRORD staff have been hired permanently and will be relocating to Fort St. John. There are also two existing staff members working on the LRMP.
- A participant asked whether the decision-making process will be consensus-based. It was stated that this has yet to be determined; however, it will not be a multi-stakeholder consensus process. First Nations will be involved in the process before decision-making, and the public will need an opportunity to provide meaningful engagement.
 - Concern was raised around a lack of consensus-based decision making. Without this method, marginalized groups and perspectives are easily cut out of the process.
 - The Province will work to ensure that engagement is meaningful; however, they are not sure what the engagement method will be. The Province would like to have discussions with individuals and groups to explore options. The Taku land use planning process was given as an example of successful and meaningful engagement.

7.0 Inventory Results

FLNRORD presented an update on moose and deer species inventories, providing a high-level summary of species surveys conducted in four management units (7-45,7-34,7-33,7-21b/7-22) during the summer of 2018. FLNRORD outlined the process for constructing species inventories and reviewed the survey results by unit. Low calf/cow and bull ratios for species were highlighted and attributed to different causes in different management units, from harvesting and predation pressures to loss of habitat.

FLNRORD stated that a survey had not been conducted since 1998, with the exception of a 2006 survey which was conducted using inadequate methodology.

A participant noted that low numbers in one management unit could have been attributed to a cow moose hunt which occurred after 1998 for three to four consecutive years. Also, habitat has changed dramatically since 1998. The Province is working with BRFN to discuss and identify causes for changes in the moose population.

FLNRORD reviewed the results in detail by management unit, with key points and discussion items outlined below.

7-33: Fort St. John/Dawson Creek Area

There are an estimated 6,000 moose in the area, with a density number of 1.18/km, and good calf to cow ratios. This may be due to the amount of private land in the area.

- It was asked why variance for the estimated population number was so large. This was due to the limited amount of helicopter time available for the contracted crew (determined by funding).
- A participant asked if grizzly bear checks, or checks for other predators, were performed when low calf to cow ratios were observed. It was suggested that bear studies be conducted in the future to address low breeding numbers. As bears hibernate in the winter, wolves are most likely the predator. There are few wolves in the area relative to other areas. Bear studies further north in the Chinchaga area may be conducted.

7-45

Most cows in this area had calves. In central BC, research is being conducted, including collaring of calves and mortality checks. There are wolves, cougars, and bears in the area, with wolves being actively monitored.

7-21b/7-22/7-32

In this area, FLNRORD is looking at how many moose are present in caribou habitat. This area is at a higher elevation where moose are not likely present, but where caribou habitat exists instead. The density number is 0.19/km², as anticipated for the area. This information will contribute to caribou management planning.

7-21b and 7-22 have a light industrial footprint. The inventory results are consistent with numbers from WMFN for area 7-32. Moving forward, there will be significant shale gas activity in the 7-32 area, increasing disturbances. It was noted that 7-32 has the best moose habitat of the management units and the best habitat generally located south of the Peace River. According to the British Columbia Moose Management Plan, 39 bulls per cow is not sufficient (low density starts at 0.2).

7-34

Area 7-34 has seen substantial moose decline (approximately 61%) since 1977. The area was surveyed three years ago; however, there has been disturbance since. Over the last three years, moose have declined by 20%. Disturbances from Site C, oil and gas, and logging will need to be offset. Since these recent major disturbances in the area, moose have seen a 60% decline, and continue to decline. Further,

cougars and winter forestry in the area are not ideal for moose. Interest was expressed in learning the number of acres cleared since 1997, when the Oriented Strand Board (OSB) plant opened. Capability models are used to assess habitat suitability (where suitability is the area's current state, and capability is the potential to sustain moose).

Discussion

- It was stated that another survey was undertaken to confirm fawn survival, and that most bucks are gone after hunting season.
- It was suggested that landowners become involved in the annual count.
- In terms of the time scale for management plans, FLNRORD advised that there was flexibility, aiming for a game management zone scale. A participant highlighted that First Nations, in the context of low food security, are beginning to advocate for management at the wildlife Management Unit scale. Any scale larger than that is not appropriate for the hunting preferred.
- Regulations for hunting and wildlife management were discussed. Further, a participant stated that there is an influx of non-local resident hunters from other regions, leaving local resident hunters frustrated by crowded hunting. It was stated that WMFN have advocated that the priority for licensed hunting at the local level be allocated first to resident hunters.
- Fires were highlighted as an issue, leading to increased local hunting pressures, and destroying habitat.

8.0 Next Meeting, Agenda, and Action Items

Participants expressed frustration around the change of the Roundtable meeting date and subsequent changes in the agenda, expressing that consistency was important.

The Province acknowledged the frustration and stated that the scope of work for future meetings was being determined. A date for the next Roundtable meeting would be provided at a later time once the procurement process for Roundtable facilitation has been completed.

In lieu of action items, Roundtable members were asked as they departed to prioritize key topics going forward by indicating a 1, 2 or 3 (on the wall poster) next to the topic identified at the beginning of the meeting. This way the Province may go forward with agenda development that maintains a collaborative and responsive approach to the needs of the Roundtable membership and the Province.

APPENDIX A – ATTENDEES

Northeast Roundtable Session No. 5 – Attendees

Name	Organization	E-Mail	
Wayne Sawchuk	Wayne Sawchuk and Muskwa-Kechika Adventures	wsawchuk@pris.ca	
Jim Webb	West Moberly First Nations	jwebb@incentre.net	
Cam Paterson	FLNRORD cam.paterson@gov.bc.ca		
Michael Huck	FLNRORD michael.huck@gov.bc.ca		
Tammy Watson	Saulteau First Nations landsmanager@saulteau.com		
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Jim Little	NE Stakeholders Group	ers Group mackeno@xplornet.ca	
Lisa McArthur	Saulteau First Nations	sfntrep@saulteau.com	
Kathleen Connolly	Concerned Citizens for Caribou Recovery kathleen@dawsoncreekcha		
Clinton Gould	LP Building Products	clinton.gould@lpcorp.com	
Mary Doyle	Saulteau First Nations	mdoyle@@saulteau.com	
Christy Mulholland	BC Oil and Gas Commission	christy.mulholland@BCOGC.ca	
Karrilyn Vince	FLNRORD	karrilyn.vince@gov.bc.ca	
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Chris Cvik	District of Hudson's Hope	cao@hudsonshope.ca	
Darrell Regimbald	Canadian Forest Products Ltd.	darrell.regimbald@canfor.com	
Dan Rose	Peace River Regional District	dan.rose@prrd.bc.ca	
Cheryl Montgomery	Fort St. John Chamber of Commerce	info@fsjchamber.com	
Gerry Paille	BC Wildlife Federation	gpaille@me.com	
Karen Goodings	Peace River Regional District	kgooding@pris.bc.ca	
Sue Clarke	BC Hydro	sue.clarke@bchydro.com	

APPENDIX B - BOREAL CARIBOU PRESENTATION



BRITISH COLUMBIA **Boreal Caribou Background** Boreal Caribou reside in the large peatland complexes of the northeastern oou Distribution corner of the province. sh Columbia Population estimates indicate Boreal Caribou populations have declined since the early 2000s Caribou Conservation Status: Red Listed (S2) imperiled by British Columbia Threatened on Schedule 1 of the Species Nº8 at Risk Act .















BRI COL	ITISH UMBIA	Habitat Disturbance				
Range	Range area (km2)	Total linear disturbance (km)	Disturbance Density (km/km2)	% disturbance (total herd area)		
Calendar	5,411	14,191	2.56	61%		
Chinchaga	13,903	37,769	2.72	96%		
Maxhamish	7,775	13,341	1.57	68%		
Snake-Sahtaneh	12,301	58,028	4.70	79%		
Westside FN	8,664	18,978	2.18	78%		
Total	48,054	142,307	-	-		
*Does not include low-impact seismic						









APPENDIX C - NORTHERN MOUNTAIN CARIBOU PRESENTATION



Northern Mountain Caribou

Prepared for: NE Roundtable May 7, 2019

Today's Presenter:







Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development





Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development

Herd Name	Year of Estimate	Sub-population Estimate	Sub-Population Trend
Pink Mountain	2018	350	Declining
Graham	2016	230	Declining
Muskwa	2018	450	Declining
Gataga	2001	340	Stable
Frog	2010	250	Unknown
Rabbit	2007	1000	Unknown
Liard Plateau	2017	150	Unknown



Northern Caribou Recovery and Management Actions

Herd Planning

- Fort St. John TSA
- Fort Nelson TSA

Current Actions & priorities

- Habitat Protection
- Data collection
- Wolf Control
 - Pink Mountain 18/19
 - Potential expansion to Graham





Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development

Northern Caribou Recovery and Management Actions

- Historic Plans and Unique Legislation:
 - Graham River IRMP
 - Code Pilot SFMP
 - Pre-tenure Plans
 - LRMPs
 - MKMA



Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development

Thank-You Questions?

APPENDIX D - TREATY LAND ENTITLEMENT LAND SELECTIONS UPDATES PRESENTATION

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