

## NORTHEAST ROUNDTABLE – MEETING NOTES

**Date:** June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021  
**Time:** 9:00 AM – 2 PM  
**Location:** Virtual MS Teams

### Attendees:

#### Government:

- Jason Lawson (FLNRORD)
- Shayla Blue (FLNRORD)
- Tyler Annand (FLNRORD)
- Shane Ford (FLNRORD)
- Tara Forest (MIRR)
- Lisa Brock (FLNRORD)
- Emma Lirono (FLNRORD)
- Amélie Mathieu (FLNRORD)
- Anna Regnier (FLNRORD)
- Naomi Saukila (FLNRORD)
- Joelle Scheck (FLNRORD)
- Michael Huck (FLNRORD)
- Ian Curtis (FLNRORD)
- Katie Connah (FLNRORD)
- Bryan Mitchell (FLNRORD)
- Scott Schilds (FLNRORD)

#### Municipal:

- Kathleen Connolly (DC Chamber of Commerce)
- Brad Sperling (PRRD)
- Dan Rose (PRRD)
- Carol Newsom (District of Chetwynd)
- Allen Courtoreille (Mayor of Chetwynd)
- Moira Green (District of Taylor)

#### First Nations:

- Jim Webb (WMFN)
- Naomi Owens-Beek (SFN)
- Ryan McKay (SFN)

#### Stakeholders:

- Andy Ackerman (NE Stakeholders)
- Jim Little (NE Stakeholders)
- Clinton Gould (Louisiana Pacific)
- Mike Whalley (Resource Municipalities Coalition)
- Tanya Goertzen (Shell)

- Darryl Kroeker (FSJ Trappers Association)
- Gerry Paille (BC Wildlife Federation)
- Mark Phinney (Canfor)
- Lynda Neufeld (ConocoPhillips Canada)
- Barry Holland (North Peace Rod and Gun Club)
- Wayne Sawchuck (Muskwa Kechika Management Area)
- Geoff Morrison (CAPP)
- Krista Phillips (CAPP)
- Tim Burkhart (Y2Y Conservation)
- Wade Pruett (TC Energy)
- Scott Fraser (Dawson Road Maintenance)

## Meeting Reference Materials Available Online at [NE Roundtable website](#):

- June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021 Roundtable Agenda
- Site C Old Growth Management Area Replacement
- LRMP Presentation
- FLNRORD Organizational Update
- Caribou Recovery
- Winter Motorized Recreation Management Plan
- North American Caribou Workshop – Restoration
- Caribou Conservation Breeding

## Welcome, Agenda, Minutes

- Jason Lawson as facilitator welcomed, territorial acknowledgement, and MS Teams info
- Materials provided on website for review by roundtable members

## 1. Site C Old Growth Management Area Replacement

- Lisa Brock provided an update on Site C Old Growth Management. [Presentation](#) and reference material uploaded to [NE Roundtable website](#).
- Comment: Why is the site selection restricted to the South Peace?
  - Answer: BWBSMD, there was a certain percentage needed for that unit. Certain number of hectares and are looking to replace those areas impacted somewhere else in the unit.
- Comment: Is this designation of something that is already on the landscape?
  - Answer: Yes, it's a redesignation.
- Comment: IN CPA, from WMFN's perspective the use of these hectares could well be used to address this objective of expeditiously recovering caribou habitat and populations within the

existing CPA area. Approach is incompatible with the objectives of reconciliation, and WMFN wishes to engage with the province on it.

- Comment: Is it likely that the polygons will be stricken by OGMA inventory:
  - Answer: Province will be keeping the existing polygons and amending the areas that are impacted. What will remain are still large polygons.

## 2. Fort St John Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) Presentation

Ian Curtis and Shayla Blue provided an update on the FSJ LRMP. [Presentation](#) uploaded to [NE Roundtable website](#).

- Comment: Who are the SDMs for the LRMP:
  - Answer: More information will be released when we roll out the draft Terms of Reference. Leadership from the Provincial ministerial level, and the Chief's of the partner First Nations.
- Comment: Who is the planning table:
  - Answer: Technical Planning Team is representatives from the Province, local municipalities, PRRD, and participating Treaty 8 First Nations
- Comment: Will there be an opportunity for the sectors to reach consensus on the updated plan? The sector/stakeholders should be given an opportunity to provide a consensus comment and agree, that's the strength of the LRMP.
  - Answer: Province thinks this is a compelling suggestion. This process has a chance to set a precedent that can stand the test of time and would like to encourage stakeholders and public to bring their ideas so that they can consider and them into the planning process.
- Comment: One of the things is that the governments have made a commitment to reconciliation. The last LRMP worked well for local governments and industry, and it failed to protect the rights of First Nation representatives. The Crown has chosen to shift how things are organized and committed to working with FNs to ensure the next LRMP does not fail in achieving reconciliation. WMFN wants those who expressed concern about the lack of decision making to see how this plays out and suspend judgement.

## 3. FLNRORD Organizational Update

Jason Lawson provided a quick update on FLNRORD's Organizational Update.

- Comment: Can the Province share a re-organization chart?
  - Answer: The Province will take this back, staff haven't seen a new re-organization chart. There is, however, an organization chart for the Together for Wildlife that Gerry Paille will share with the group.
- Comment: What is the business about shifting responsibilities and creating a new ministry regarding forestry and natural resource operations

- Answer: There has been a Lands and Resource Secretariat established to study and analyze what has been
- Comment: Were stakeholders engaged regarding what's working in terms of a restructure?
  - Answer: It was an internal and external engagement process by select groups.
- Comment: Released draft action plan on DRIPA, is there someone to bring that document to this group – and aware of this document, and FLNRORD's plan to adopt those within the action plan.
  - Answer: Will follow up, don't have information right now

## 4. Caribou Recovery

Joelle Scheck provided an update for Caribou.

- Comment: What is being done to improve calf survival rates. Do we have a plan to monitor the challenges these calves face? It sounds like the Province is fairly sure about adult caribou mortalities but don't know a lot about calf mortality.
  - Answer: The majority of calf mortality occurs during the summer months, upwards of 80% of calves can be killed due to predation. Wolves are the most significant predator in terms of loss, but there are other predators including wolverines, eagles, and bears.
- Comment: There was a study in NE BC, and there have been others in Little Smokey. Preventing the movement of predators on linear features helps, but it is likely not enough.
  - Response: Caribou habitat restoration is one of a suite of management tools that needs to be employed in herds prioritized for recovery. The study that Jim cited (from the Alaska Hwy News) was very small and based only on one year pre- and post- restoration treatment using remote camera monitoring.
- Comment: In terms of First Nations participation, Tahltan have provided an incentive to remove Grizzlies in their territory.
- Comment: The Limestone Quarry at Hole in the Wall was approved because it wasn't in significant Caribou habitat. Why would it then be in the partnership agreement and how is the area being determined as not significant?
  - Response: It is a part of the Caribou Agreement Area, but it may be in a zone that allows for that level of development. The zones and mapping can be found at the back of the Caribou Partnership Agreement document.

## 5. Winter Motorized Recreation Management Plan

Bryan Mitchell provided an update on winter motorized recreation. [Presentation](#) uploaded to [NE Roundtable website](#).

- Comment: Who wrote the motorized vehicle draft management plan?
  - Response: RCS, completely informed by provincial technical staff, WMFN, SFN, and staff from Environment and Climate Change Canada.
- Comment: There has been a total disregard for other stakeholders in the development of this plan:

- Response: The four governments came forward to establish a plan to effectively protect Caribou, maintain use of the backcountry for winter motorized recreation and support the development of recreation designations
  - The South Peace Snowmobile Advisory Committees recommendations report was an important piece of information that was used to attempt to find the checks and balances needed on such a project to accomplish the objectives set out in the plan. Unfortunately, the recommendations of the SPSAC were not entirely adopted into the draft management plan due to conflicts with the recovery of caribou. However, the information in the report is essential to understand the impacts of draft measures on the recreation sector where they differ from the SPSAC.
- Comment: Concerned Citizens for Caribou Recovery and BC Snowmobile Federation removed support when saw the draft management plan, they do not feel like their concerns were heard.
- Comment: Is Recreation going to be considered an industry, and if it is, what are the implications of that?
  - Response: Can't speak to this, not an expert. The Province can connect with those who may know this information and will report back.
- Comment: Please do not consider the NE Roundtable of Public Engagement, what are you going to do about these stakeholder groups pulling their support? Government needs to treat stakeholders better. People are quite frustrated with the draft plan and how they feel like they've been treated. It's not going well. The Province needs to reconsider how they are engaging with the key stakeholders and major client groups they've lost support from.
  - Response: Province appreciates the recommendation to continue engagement.
- Comment: You have lost the trust of the government; it will be a major issue for the Province to solve.
- Comment: Who is involved in making recommendations to the decision maker?
  - Response: Final Recommendations to BC decision makers are made by the Caribou Recovery Program. The draft management plan was developed in collaboration with representatives from the four partner governments, who have expertise and subject matter in caribou, and related biology/ecology.
- Comment: Did you consult the Caribou Monitoring Unit at University of Alberta?
  - Response: No, the Province did not consult individuals of the caribou Monitoring Unit. However, researchers at that organization have completed research available to the public. The Best available science has been used to inform the development of these draft measures.

## 6. North American Caribou Workshop – Restoration

Scott Schilds provided an update on the North American Caribou Workshop. [Presentation](#) uploaded to [NE Roundtable website](#).

- Comment: Are there any places in Caribou Recovery areas that have objectives for linear feature densities across the Province?

- Response: The CRP has not set objectives for linear feature densities elsewhere in the Province to date, though it is being considered in the Northeast and elsewhere. There is a different habitat and region in the Northeast, and with that a different context to consider. Setting goals like this is more important here than they are in the southern regions. We are hoping to set habitat objectives through the ongoing herd planning processes, which may take the form of target densities, or other similar measures. Habitat restoration needs to be implemented in concert with other protection and management initiatives.
- Comment: Is road decommissioning part of the plan, and if so, will it affect recreational travel?
  - Response: Yes and no, it's a good question. Road decommissioning is when you have a tenured/active road turned off and removed. BC is not removing tenured roads and trying to not remove access for recreation and travel related to recreation. In the future, there may be a requirement for licencees or proponents to decommission roads they used, but as it stands right now the Province is not interested in shutting down roads that are actively used.
- Comment: Are the trapline owners consulted in this process?
  - Response: Yes, trapline owners are contacted and given the opportunity to engage. The Province identified 40km of eligible roads and removed 8km do to the noted initiatives.

## 7. Caribou Conservation Breeding

Amélie Mathieu provided a presentation on Caribou Conservation Breeding. [Presentation](#) uploaded to [NE Roundtable website](#)

- Comment: What is the cost of the program?
  - Response: Cost of construction is estimated at 8-10 million. The yearly operational budget is estimated at 700-900k, depending on whether animals are released that year or not.
- Comment: Gerry Paille, president of the BC Wildlife Federation, expressed concerns regarding the use of conservation breeding to support caribou recovery in BC. He expressed that the examples of successful conservation breeding programs used during the presentation were too distant from the reality of caribou. He added that he worries conservation breeding will be used without addressing the underlying causes of caribou decline and wondered how long it will take to know whether the Jasper or Québec caribou conservation breeding programs are successful.
  - Response: Conservation breeding must be used in conjunction with other conservation measures. It does not replace habitat protection/restoration, disturbance reduction or predator control, but complements them. Population modeling has shown that more intensive population management, including conservation breeding, is needed to prevent further losses of caribou herds.

Successful caribou recovery will require the full commitment of BC to caribou recovery. Conservation breeding alone is not the solution, but it can help.

## 8. Other Business/Suggested Topics

- Comment: Will there be an update on the proposed Frac Sand Mine in the Groundbirch area?
  - Response: Everything is still on hold, no change from last update. Still waiting on engagement from the company with the Community Pasture Association. From FLNRORD's perspective it's still on hold and awaiting on the proponent.
- Comment: A significant portion of the Peace Boudreau Protected Area will be removed due to Site C, is there a plan to replace this area with other protected areas?
  - Response: The Province does not have a response yet, but this issue has been brought forward. We will look to see if we can attach relevant information to the meeting minutes or next meeting.
- Comment: Stakeholders are interested in an update on Hunting regulations and would like to inform the Province to communicate to interested parties.
  - Response: Provincial staff will reach out to Fish and Wildlife staff in order to get more information to provide a potential update and share information.
- Comment: The ministry is full of young staff, and with that there is a lack of corporation/business memory.
- Comment: Will September meeting be in person?
  - Response: Province can't answer this right now, but the hope is to have a hybrid meeting.
- Future meetings dates: **September 29, November 24**
- **New Agenda topics:**
  - **Potential: Peace Boudreau Protected Area**

## 9. Next Meeting

- Next meeting: **September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2021**