

NORTHEAST ROUNDTABLE MEETING MINUTES

Date: September 29th, 2021

Time: 09:00 – 11:45 AM

Location: Virtual MS Teams

Attendees:

Government:

- Jason Lawson (FLNRORD)
- Shayla Blue (FLNRORD)
- Tyler Annand (FLNRORD)
- Chris Cooper (FLNRORD)
- Kelly Cook (FLNRORD)
- Jennifer Eichelberger (FLNRORD)
- Ian Curtis (FLNRORD)
- Carmela Arevalo (FLNRORD)
- Joelle Scheck (FLNRORD)
- Tara Forest (IRR)
- Dale Morgan (IRR)
- Rene Simard (IRR)
- Elizabeth Johnson (EMLI)
- Chris Pasztor (EMLI)
- Aviva Jones (FLNRORD)
- Maria Faria (EMLI)
- Anna Regnier (FLNRORD)
- Chris Robb (AG)
- Brianna Meyer (AG)
- Rob Nelles (AG)

Municipal:

- Kathleen Connolly (DC Chamber of Commerce)
- Carol Newsom (District of Chetwynd)
- Allen Courtoreille (District of Chetwynd)
- Dan Rose (Peace River Regional District)

First Nations:

- Ryan McKay (SFN)
- Clarence Apsassin (BRFN)
- Jim Webb (WMFN)
- Anne Muter (WMFN)
- Linda Chipesia (IRC)

Stakeholders:

- Jim Little (NE Stakeholders)
- Mike Whalley (Resource Municipalities Coalition)
- Darryl Kroeker (FSJ Trappers Association)
- Lynda Neufeld (ConocoPhillips Canada)
- Victoria Balance – (Explorers and Producers Association of Canada)
- Tim Burkhart (Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative)
- Diana Walls (Mining Association of BC)
- Charles Friesen (LP)
- Carmen Anderson (Canfor)
- Christine Nicholls (TC Energy)
- Helen Gilbert (School District 60)
- Krista Phillips (CAPP)
- Jennifer Blaney (Ovintiv)
- Jasone Blazevic (Ovintiv)
- Darrel Regimbald (Canfor FSJ)
- Sheena Johnson (TC Energy)
- Tim Shaw (NorthRiver Midstream)
- Wayne Sawchuck (Muskwa Kechika Advisory Board)
- Scott Fraser (Dawson Road Maintenance)
- Tim McEwan (Mining)
- Martha Peden (PnG)

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

- Provincial Summary of Blueberry River First Nations [Yahey v. British Columbia, 2021 BCSC 1287](#)
- [Land and Resource Management Plan Update](#)
- [Caribou Recovery Update](#)

Welcome, Agenda, Minutes

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

1. Blueberry River First Nations Response

- Chris Robb and Brianna Meyer provided a presentation on the BRFN Decision. Presentation uploaded to [NE Roundtable website](#).
- Comment: The impacts of this decision will impact other communities and other FNs as well.
 - Response: Agreed, this court decision will impact other FNs across the Province.
- Comment: This is a small piece of Treaty 8 territory, Treaty 8 and BRFN's rights extend outside of this area as well.
 - Response: Map was provided by BRFN for specific use during the court case and is not a representation of BRFN's entire traditional territory.

2. Blueberry River First Nations Provincial Update

- Chris Cooper provided an update on the Province's response to the BRFN decision.
- Comment: BRFN has a split council, no mandate was given to BRFN's council. The council was told to speak to the community and elders, which did not happen.
- Comment: Is there capacity funding provided to BRFN to handle legal fees through negotiations?
 - Answer: Chris Cooper does not have an answer for this question.
 - Answer: Dale Morgan provided his number to discuss this offline.
- Comment: What does economic development that does not infringe on Treaty rights look like, and is it possible?
 - Answer: Yes, it is possible, its just a matter of figuring out what that may look like and working with BRFN in the meantime.
- SFN Comment: Not infringing is not going far enough, restoration is what's needed. Meaningful exercising of treaty rights is becoming challenging, and restoration should be prioritized.
 - Answer: Large scale restoration is a major topic during early negotiations. The Province expects restoration to happen.
- WMFN Comment: Jim Webb is concerned about the understanding of meaningful exercising of treaty rights amongst the stakeholders, and how that is being considered for other FNs outside of the claim area. How do we define the measure of what is meaningful?
 - Answer: FNs are the ones who define what is meaningful. The Province is hoping to get more clarity as discussions and negotiations continue.
 - WMFN Response: Maintain culture and way of life as described by the Justice in the court case summary. FNs through RSEA dialogue have told the Province that the environment has changed so much that the right to exercise meaningful rights is not possible, and that restoration activities need to occur. Are we going to address this?
 - Answer: Yes, that is the intention of the negotiation team.
- Comment: Who is responsible for leading the implications of the decision outside of the claim area?

- Answer: There is a cross-ministerial team of directors that are creating an interim decision-making guidance document for outside of the claim area.
- SFN Comment: SFN is concerned that the Province may forget other FNs through this BRFN negotiation process, and do not want things to go business as usual.
 - Answer: Clarification, when we talk about business as usual, we mean the authorizations processes like consultation and application review. The Province has not yet installed a negotiation or oversight team with each FN, nor has it reached a point where it can apply this lens of decision making across all of Treaty 8. We are not continuing to authorize activities outside of claim area as business as usual. The work that the Province does will not dictate relationships with other FNs, it will just help the Province get into a better place to inform how to work with each T8 FN. Please expect more development and information to continue in the coming months as negotiations progress.
- Comment: Please include other FNs when developing processes moving forward.
 - Answer: Acknowledged.
- Comment: Where is the certainty to invest in this area economically? Stakeholders are worried about significant exodus of working people in the area.
 - Answer: This is a top priority for the negotiation team; time is of the essence.

3. Resource Stewardship Team Update

- Aviva Jones provided a status update on Resource Stewardship team, Prescribed Burning and the Hunting Regulation Processes.
- No comments or questions received.

4. Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) Update

- Shayla Blue provided a status update on LRMP.
- No comments or questions received.

5. Caribou Update

- Joelle Scheck provided a status update on Caribou and the Motorized Plan.
- Comment: Can we see the Big River Analytics socio economic report?
 - Answer/Action: **Joelle will investigate obtaining it.**
- Comment: What happened to Caribou since the fires over the summer?
 - Answer: Caribou ranges in the vicinity of the fire haven't been surveyed since the end of March. The Quintette range will be surveyed again in March 2022 (recruitment survey). The Province hasn't contemplated any changes to range or core habitat boundaries.
- Comment: Will there be an assessment on the habitat from the fire?

- Answer: Historically the Province hasn't assessed wildfire burns; the forest may still provide habitat. Province appreciates the suggestion and will bring that back to the team to discuss.
- Comment: The depth of the socio-economic analysis on motorized vehicles and other sectors has been questioned by the caribou partnership agreement's socio-economic committee. The terms of reference agreed to by the gov and the committee were not followed, and we are looking at opportunities of how to fill those gaps.
 - Response: Acknowledged.

6. Regional Strategic Environment Assessment (RSEA) Update

- Chris Pasztor provided a status update on RSEA.
- Comment: WMFN is not as optimistic as the Province on the progress of RSEA. The only indicator that WMFN thinks is close to being done is old growth management. WMFN is concerned that indicators like moose populations are not at a state where FNs have food security, and to exercise peaceful enjoyment. Environmental livelihood is a collection of ecosystem health and social wellbeing and trying to understand that is a big task. RSEA will produce a next steps report and an outline with what to do for the next 3 years to complete the RSEA. The objective is to identify changes that need to be made to legislation, regulation, and policy and practice across the board – and create a roadmap that will allow that to happen.

7. General Discussion

- Comment: There is an ingrained way of life that contributes to discriminatory and racist behaviour to FNs. Farmers, oil, and forestry industry feels like their backs are against the wall and attacked when FNs are treated fairly because of the Yahey decision. Important to change the thought process and tackle racist behaviour so we can all move forward together.
 - Response: Acknowledged.
- Comment: TRC Day is tomorrow, it is important to recognize the Residential Schools Survivors
 - Response: Acknowledged.
- Comment: BRFN decision implies BC is not adequately managing cumulative impacts of development on FN rights. How does BC track its cumulative development? Does BC track cumulative development? Much development creates temporary impacts - trees grow back, habitat shifts across the landscape, but conversion of land to agriculture and urban lands has a permanent

impact. How will private land be affected? It seems that the assumption is, that it is 'off the table'.
But is it?

- Answer: The court case showed that the Province does not adequately consider for cumulative effects.
- Response: RSEA, UNDRIP, DRIPA, LRMP all foreshadow change that we will be dealing with for the rest of our lives which will answer this question.

- **New Agenda topics:**

- Potential: Peace Boudreau Protected Area

8. Next Meeting

- Next meeting: **November 24th, 2021**