

## NORTHEAST ROUNDTABLE – MEETING NOTES

**Date:** June 14, 2023  
**Time:** 09:00 -12:00  
**Location:** Virtual MS Teams

**Attendees:**

**Government:**

- Jason Lawson (WLRS)
- Shayla Blue (WLRS)
- Melissa Stewart (WLRS)
- Kelly Cook (WLRS)
- Aviva Jones (WLRS)
- Anna Regnier (WLRS)
- Naomi Saukila (IRR)
- Susan Campbell (IRR)
- Sanjay Tewari (WLRS)
- Daryl Struthers (ENV)
- Darius Low (FOR)
- Marianne Johnson (FOR)
- Susan Campbell (IRR)
- Sheri Connolly (FOR)
- Tara Forest (IRR)
- Stephen MacIver (FOR)
- Heather MacRae (EMCR)
- Heather Onstage (WLRS)
- Tim Turner (EMLI)
- Melanie Webster (FOR)
- Angie White (WLRS)

**Municipal:**

- Kathleen Connolly (DC Chamber of Commerce)
- Bev Vandersteen (FN Chamber of Commerce)
- Dan Rose (PRRD)
- Brent Taillefer (Mayor of Taylor)
- Brad Sperling (PRRD)
- Jim Lequiere (City of FSJ)

**First Nations:**

- Jim Webb (WMFN)
- Tamara Dokkie (WMFN)
- Ryan McKay (SFN)
- Tammy Brown (WMFN)
- Catherine Piedt (HRFN)

**Stakeholders:**

- Jim Little (NE Stakeholders)
- Athena Andritz (LP)
- Mark Phinney (Canfor)
- Elizabeth Abbs (Summit Lake Resident)
- Johnny Mikes (MKAB / CPAWS)
- Helen Gilbert (School District 60)
- Julie Bourdon (Petronas)
- Peter Andreasen (Mining)
- David Luff (MKAB)
- Krista Phillips (CAPP)
- Stephanie Killam (MKAB)
- Gerry Paille (BC Wildlife Federation)
- Craig Sutherland (MKAB)
- Jeffrey Spenst (Pembina)
- Jonathan Buchanan (AMEBC)
- Rob Smith (Pembina)
- Tim Burkhart (Y2Y)
- Wayne Sawchuk (MKAB)
- Antonio Pega (LP)
- Andy Ackerman (NE Stakeholders)
- Carmen Anderson (Canfor)
- Alanna Brunet (LP)

**Welcome, Agenda, Minutes**

Opening words and First Nations acknowledgements: Jason Lawson

Introductions: Shayla Blue

**Wildfires in NE**

- Heather MacRae
  - 2023 Wildfire Overview Presentation
    - Prince George Fire Center has 47 active fires as of now (most in BC) as of 6pm June 13.
    - 261 in BC were caused by people, 143 Lightning, 30 unknown.
    - 75,577 ha burning by June 14, 2023.
    - Donnie Creek fire 487,509 ha on track to be the biggest in BC history. (Update- It is now)
    - Alerts: 30 Local Authority & 7 First Nations  
Orders: 23 Local Authority & 4 First Nation  
Communities affected: 8 Local Authority and 6 First Nations.  
This is extremely high for this early in the season.

- Mapping. Please do not share with outside users, only meant for government and stakeholders (not social media).
  - Username: copuser1
  - Password: embccop1
  - <https://www.arcgis.com/index.html>
- Donnie Creek fire has a loss of a lot of black spruce, this is an all-season fire, rain will not help with this fire, fire of note for the entire province for the year.
- Boundary Fire and Red Creek is still burning, but under control for the season.
- Kiskatinaw Fire caused evacuation of Tumbler Ridge, possibly lose some protected area in Bearhole Lake.
- Discussion:
  - Q: Are there discussions about salvage logging happening?
    - R: There was no one on the line that was able to comment on this.
  - Q: We heard from Ministry of Forests that they are going to clean up the blow down that happened in Red Creek in the fall. BC Wildfire said we are in direct danger due to the blow down. So why can't we get this done right now? We need to get it cleaned up asap because we are at risk of fueling fire.
    - R: Jason is going to let FOREST know of this concern.

## **North Area Wildlife Strategy**

- Heather Onsrge – Introduction of the North Area Wildlife Strategy
  - High Level Overview of the North Area Wildlife Strategy (NAWS) Program. Program will focus on wildlife including components of Habitat Stewardship. – Covers the whole north area: Skeena, Omineca and Peace regions.
    - The strategy will help streamline our work, provide guidance/direction to our staff and partners.
    - It's intended to be collaborative.
    - We are drafting a multi-year workplan that will identify immediate, mid-term and long-term objectives.
    - Assisting regions with the coordination of the 2024/26 regulation change proposals and will lead the coordination across the north for the next reg cycle.
    - NAWS is undertaking status reporting for each region creating a baseline of our current programs and inventories. Will identify gaps and produce recommendations to be addressed. Planning for this to shared with members of the public and stakeholders.
    - Coordinating/ identifying opportunities to improve the current hunting system/process.
    - [Moose Hunting report](#) for last hunting season can be located on the NE Roundtable website.
  - Discussion:
    - Q: Will the general public be included? To date they have been left out.

- *R:* We are planning on hosting a number of stakeholder workshops. We are in the process of hiring a communications manager and opening up the line of communications. We are also working on getting our regional wildlife committee (RWAC) up and running.
- *Q:* When do stakeholders get to have input? So far collaboration has not been collaborative. It has been informed after decisions have been made. What process changes are being made to rebuild trust with stakeholders?
  - We are planning to hold focused wildlife workshops, there will be opportunities to bring ideas, ask questions, provide input at those workshops.
- *Q:* What's new? We have been asking for this initiative for a long time, how is this going to interact with Aviva's group?
  - Several different wildlife working groups yet we are all one big team, the idea is to not create more work but rather increase efficiencies. The T4W program is a major component of our work and will help us prioritize our work through those actions. NAWS will streamline our work.
- *Comment:* There could be some opportunities where these fires are burning to study caribou.
  - *R:* Heather has noted this.
- *Q:* The Muskwa Kechika Management Area has its own wildlife plan, has the gov noticed?
  - *R:* We are in the early stages of developing this program. I have made note to reach out to your group to make sure you are involved.

Heather's Contact: [heather.onsorge@gov.bc.ca](mailto:heather.onsorge@gov.bc.ca)

## **Together for Wildlife**

- Aviva Jones – Presentation on Together for Wildlife in the NE
  - Treaty Wildlife Working Group – 6 Treaties and 4 Ministries – One of our big initiatives out of the court case is Wildlife inventories.
    - Moose Inventories – [Moose Summary Report](#). The province had capacity to do two, and we reached out to the nations, and they offered to help so we were able to do more. Planned out 11 inventories, 4 cancelled, 3 done by FNFN, 2 by BC, 1 by HRFN, 1 by PRFN. All reports are available and undergoing peer review process (not to the public yet).
    - [Collaborative Hunter Survey](#) – partnership program between WLRS, Nations, Conservation Officers.
      - Next steps are to update the survey for next year and offer Chronic Waste Disease sampling.
  - Discussion:
    - *Q:* Do you have a 7B total licenses harvested?
      - *R:* Total in the Peace Region is 465 (72%) harvested, hunters 2614.
    - *Comment:* I don't think a year of data is evidence, we would not support an increase in the LEH.

- *Comment:* My frustration that we extended the LEH to 2026, in my experience there is more moose now than there has ever been, and I can't even hunt moose on my land if I don't get a limited entry. If we can't hunt on our property then I don't see why we should let others hunt on it.

## **Land Use Planning with Treaty 8 First Nations**

- Presenter: Jason Lawson & Tim Turner
  - [PowerPoint regarding Land Use Planning](#)
  - Working with First Nations on operational/industry restoration and development plans in 2023 and 2024. This type of planning is new to government. Currently starting to work with BRFN , HRFN and SFN.
  - Discussion:
    - *Q:* How will the sectors be involved with the new land use planning processes?
      - *R:* There will be engagement and it is recognized as part of the planning process. We are codeveloping with the respective First Nations and are really in early stages of understanding and scoping out the plan and what we need to do to advance.
      - *R:* We are meeting with the PNG industry, but not meeting independently – we want to make sure the information is from BC & Nations jointly, not just BC. In regard to FORESTS we are working with them and FN to have joint sector engagement as well.
    - *Comment:* We are hearing from the public about people being affected by this, government needs to get ahead of it. You need to put in your stakeholder engagement in now, not afterwards. Rumors will fly.
    - *Comment:* We have heard a lot of comments from landowners. People are running hot right now, there isn't true intended conversation. I can't stress how important it is to do this carefully.
    - *Comment:* You need to have people at the table at the get go and not down the road. Please stop until you have a plan.

## **Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation**

- Tara Forest
  - Powerpoint on Land Transfers Update. *Will be posted to the NE Roundtable soon.*
    - MIRR recently updated information on the govTogether website to reflect that TLE Agreements have been signed and providing a more detailed table showing land parcel information (maps and KMZs for Google Earth). The asterixis (\*) in the table represent where engagement has closed, and the hyphens (-) indicate where parcels have yet to be identified and engagements will be taking place in the future, text without an \* or - indicates engagement currently underway. To easily find the govTogether webpage for northeast land transfers, just Google "northeast land transfers," also located at this address:

<https://engage.gov.bc.ca/govtogetherbc/engagement/land-transfers-in-northeast-bc/>.

- West Moberly First Nations has submitted an addition to their Moberly Lake Golf Course, the “Moberly Lake Golf Course Addition, “Golf Course Addition” parcel. The Golf Course Addition parcel is located immediately adjacent to the golf course (#1), is 14.15 ha in size, and has been selected as a part of unselected outstanding land quantum because it includes the water license for the golf course operations.
- Discussion:
  - Q: Will there be any changes due to the wildlife activities with proposed land transfers?
    - R: The Province and Blueberry haven’t talked about the wildfires in relation to parcels as it’s pretty new; if there are any changes we will share updates with the Northeast Roundtable.

## **Ministry of Forest Permitting**

- Marianne Johnson – Status of permitting process
  - Working on WLRS on Cumulative Effects processes and how to work it into decisions.
  - Things are slowly moving to decisions with some decision having now been made.

## **Caribou Update**

- Shayla Blue on behalf of Joelle Ward and Mike Huck
  - Going to cabinet this month for endorsement of the Boreal Caribou Protection and Recovery Plan
  - Started executive briefings on a draft land use objectives package for the Partnership Agreement to get cabinet endorsement in the Fall to engage with the public.