
2014 BCCFA Conference and AGM Highlights

June 12th -14th Williams Lake, BC

Hosted by the Esk'etemc and the Likely-Xat'sull Community Forests



Conference participants in downtown Likely
John Stace-Smith photo

The conference was attended by over 100 people with 26 community forests represented. The results from our post conference survey confirm that the conference is a very important information sharing and networking event for people involved in community forestry. The annual event also gives prospective members the opportunity to learn about the many benefits of membership in the BCCFA. The Wells Gray Community Forest has invited us to Clearwater for next year's event so the tradition will carry forward.

Shelly Descautels from Forsite put together a "story map" of the event that uses geo referenced photos and maps. The link to the map is:

<http://forsite.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapTour/?appid=9973084f4a764b2484b926773e0ba103>

Our sincere gratitude goes out to the host communities for their great field trips and warm hospitality. Thanks also to all attendees for your thoughtful participation.

Overall the conference was a great success with something worthwhile for everyone. Next year we will schedule longer sessions, for managers and boards in particular. This means we will have to work at prioritizing topics.

A summary of each session follows. Please contact BCCFA staff for more detailed information about any of the sessions and topics discussed.

Session Summaries

*An * beside a name or a session indicates that there is a power point presentation on the BCCFA website from this speaker or on this topic. Go to www.bccfa.ca, click on Activities, then Conferences or <http://www.bccfa.ca/index.php/what-we-do/conferences/item/446-2014-conference-and-agm-june-11-14-in-williams-lake>*

Esk'etemc Community Forest Field Tour

We were greeted by **Esk'etemc Chief Charlene** before heading out to the field tour. In the forest in the Esk'etemc traditional territory, **Francis Johnson** and **Gord Chipman** offered up their approach to grasslands timber harvesting and ungulate winter range management and to the importance of meaningful First Nation consultation and the management of cultural heritage resources from the perspective of the First Nation. We walked through the open grasslands where **Cathy Koot** introduced the new Invasive Species Council of BC's pocket guide for invasive plant management in forestry and then on to a recently discovered pit house site. After a hearty and delicious lunch at the Arbor, we were treated to traditional dancing and drumming. Community forest volunteers bravely experimented with hoop dancing and we all joined in the friendship dance.

Likely Community Forest Tour

Robin Hood headed up the tour that took us to the restored Quesnel Forks ghost town under a sunny sky, a light breeze and none of the predicted mosquitos. The community forest has been a leading force supporting the restoration that features low mobility trails and detailed signage of the history of the place. The hail held off just long enough for us to get back to the vehicles and make our way to the community hall for a great lunch. We heard about the local issues around overlapping tenures and interface with placer mining, which present a major challenge. Before heading off we toured Likely's Birch Veneer plant.

BCCFA Annual General Meeting at the Xat'sull Heritage Site

Under the great log covered picnic area "on the edge" of the Fraser River, our AGM was started with a welcome from **Xat'sull Chief Bev Sellars**. Executive Director **Jennifer Gunter** presented the Presidents report and **Don Brown** chaired the formal AGM meeting. A discussion was held on membership fees and the need to raise additional revenue for BCCFA operations. Direction was given by the meeting for the board and staff to explore a new fee structure. Options include voluntary membership fees and the possibility of a levy. It was acknowledged by the chair that there is more sensitivity to explore the levy.

Operations Dinner

This adapted Manager's session was facilitated by Don Brown and Jennifer Gunter. With game 5 of the Kings vs Rangers playing overhead, there was discussion of some issues brought forward by managers. Survey results and general feedback received showed strong support for a dedicated manager's session in 2015 with a "Dear Abby" focus allowing managers to fully discuss issues of importance with their colleagues.

***MFLNRO Information Updates**

Geoffrey Klassen, Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations (MFLNRO), Tenures Branch gave the annual update of the status of the Community Forest Agreement Program and new opportunities with BCTS. **Doug Stewart** reported on the progress of the Volume to Area-based tenure Conversion consultation process. **Dave Peterson** addressed some questions on BCTS .

Fire Adapted Communities and Fire-Resilient Ecosystems Panel

In this session the panel addressed wildfire hazard management, silviculture strategies, roles and responsibilities. **Erik Leslie**, **Harrop-Procter** Community Forest explained the strengths (collaboration and information sharing) and

challenges (overlapping jurisdictions, costs, capacity) of multijurisdictional planning in the Regional District of Central Kootenay. The MFLNRO perspective and direction on Wildland Urban Interface was delivered by ***Kelly Osbourne, Planning Forester**. Kelly encouraged CFAs to participate in the FLRNO planning along with local planning, then to push for funding through sources like LBI. **Don Brown** gave the story of the District of Logan Lake's Community Wildfire Protection Plan and FireSmart 2013 Community Protection Achievement. ***Bob Gray, Fire Ecologist**, wrapped up the session with an emphasis on the need for fire hardened/resilient communities and landscapes and offered strategies which include small scale biomass utilization.

***The Significance of Community Forests in BC: Understanding our impact and potential**

With a mission to promote and support the practice and expansion of sustainable community forest management in BC, the BCCFA is implementing strategies and developing tools to communicate the message of the tangible social/cultural and local economic benefits of the Community Forest Agreement Program. These include the BCCFA Front Country Map, a tool that identifies the best places on the land base for the location of community forests and the areas of significant interest to communities and high priority areas for expansion. The Indicators Project focuses on the development of a set of economic, social, cultural and environmental indicators that will help us demonstrate the benefits of community forests. ***A presentation on the draft Indicators by Jennifer Gunter** was followed by discussion and a timeline for implementation of this summer (in time for delivery of the results in time for UBCM). A shout of thanks goes to Dwight Wolfe, Tesera Systems, for facilitating the session.

Partners and Projects

To address BCCFA strategic priorities and the needs of the members, the BCCFA is involved in a number of partnership initiatives with other organizations. In this session, we heard about a few:

- BC Forest Safety Council – Reynold Hert, CEO and Board Chair. Reynold stressed the need for attention to detail to manage all aspects of the work activity to produce wood safely. With CFAs collectively managing 2 million m³ annually, stats say there is likely to be incidents in the sector.
- FPIinnovations – Communities Project: Forest Sector Technical Support Services - Marian Marinescu, FPIinnovations. Marian and Dominik Roser explained FPI's funding opportunities for small projects to engage in innovative forestry and forestry products development.
- UBC Faculty of Forestry - Ken Day, UBC Alex Fraser Research Forest. Ken explained the partnership programs that include Extension work with BCCFA to engage with managers on help with local needs, internships which place UBC forestry students with CFs and the Capstone forest management course student projects

Forest Workers for Tomorrow - A Role for the Community Forest

In this session presenters spoke about initiatives that target important forest education, succession planning and training needs.

- ***Bill Bourgeois, New Direction Resource Management Ltd.** Bill told us about the educational outcomes from Healthy Forests, Healthy Communities, and highlighted opportunities for community forests to become involved in partnership activities including the new provincial educational collaborative initiative and National Forest Week. He stressed the leadership and sponsorship role that could be played by CFAs.
- **Jack Mc Leman, Alberni Valley Community Forest** reported on the community forest's support for a local Grade 11 forestry program secondary school program.
- ***Kathy Smith, President, Nakusp and Area Community Forest** - Post-secondary Educational Initiatives from Nakusp Community Forest. Kathy told us about a number of their educational initiatives including a partnership with Kaslo Community Forest, Selkirk College, Interior Lumber Manufacturers Association, Ktunaxa First Nation and others.

***Managing Liability and Audit Preparedness**

This was a session for managers on how to be well prepared for a Forest Practices Board audit. **Chris Mosher, CA and EP (CEA), Forest Practices Board Director of Audits and Daryl Spencer, RPF, Forest Practices Board Auditor** offered a number of tips and resources that can be found on the BCCFA website at the above address.

Directors Dialogue - A Session for Boards of Directors of Community Forests facilitated by Susan Mulkey

- **Directors Liability Insurance** - general agreement that CF should have the insurance; you are liable for events on your tenure, you need the insurance
- **Creating good governance policy:** very important but very difficult to digest; may be necessary to attack in small steps, in which case it will be a slow process; following the CF guidebook would be a good place to start
- **Good communication** between Board and staff, and a clear understanding of their respective roles; Board role is policy; if a Board member gets involved in operations, they become a volunteer
- **Board Compensation:** most CFs do not pay Board members; covering out of pocket expenses is common, and meal costs may be covered; use of conference calls to avoid travel costs is common; demographics and geography can present challenges requiring innovative approaches; whatever the solution, it must take into account local circumstances. The pitfall of paying Board members is that people will seek the positions for the money and not out of interest.
- **Conflict of Interest:** requires clear policy; see the Guidebook
- **Safety:** recommended that Board review safety policies at least quarterly; establish a Safety Committee to review safety issues with management prior to Board meetings; could also be a standing Agenda item for Board meetings; it's due diligence policy; BC Safety Council will provide some wordings to add to the Guidelines

Strategic Planning and Your CFA - Worth the Effort

In this session we heard about the strategic planning efforts and the unique approaches to engage the community in the process from two community forests. The session served to emphasise the importance of strategic planning as a tool for effective governance.

- Wells Gray Community Forest - Georg Brcko, Dave Meehan and Grant Thompson
- Lower North Thompson - Harley Wright and Mike Francis

***Social Media and the Community Forest**

Bill Layton, RPF, Zanzibar Holdings

This session seeded inspiration for community forest managers and boards to use social media for promoting their organizations and for communicating with the community. Bill stressed that CFAs have a big responsibility to communicate with the public and today this largely means using social media. 27 CFAs currently have a website. It is the core of your on-line presence; other social media will connect to it.

Annual Banquet

Donna Barnett, MLA Cariboo-Chilcotin and Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations for Rural Development started the evening off with a presentation to Tom Dall, CAO of the Village of Clinton acknowledging their newly awarded community forest. The contributions of BCCFA staff and directors were acknowledged.