



Public Notice

Economic Development:

Forestry Rejuvenation Strategy

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UPDATE

Need more information?

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The Northern Rockies Regional Municipality has been very active on working to support economic opportunities for the region, especially with regard to revitalizing the local forest industry. Below is a summary of some of the key actions that are currently underway.

Community Forest Agreement

On January 25th, 2018, a letter to Mayor Streeper and Chief Dickie of the Community Forest Partnership was received from Ministry of Forests, Land, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development Regional Executive Director Karilyn Vince, approving the 180-day extension for submission of the CFA application. This extends the application submission deadline to September 13th, 2018.

BC Timber Sales (BCTS) currently manage approximately 20% of the lands within the proposed Community Forest boundaries. The application deadline extension is necessary to allow for further discussions between the CFA partners around jurisdictional overlap with BCTS, which is required before a finalized boundary and application package is ready.

The Community Forest Partners met with BCTS in Prince George on Wednesday, January 31st, 2018 to initiate a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). A conference call is scheduled for the Partners and BCTS on March 9th, 2018 in order to gather feedback from BCTS on the draft MOU.

Pending a successful outcome with BCTS, CFA boundary map (revision #3) will be developed. A second CFA Community Forum will be scheduled to provide the community with a progress update and allow for public engagement. Comments gathered will be used as consultant IFS (Industrial Forestry Services Ltd.) completes a final, intensive analysis to check the areas and the volumes of deciduous and conifer available to the Community Forest.

Community Forest Management Plan

The development of a Community Forest Management Plan was started in late December and is about forty percent complete. The intent is to have a plan ready for the next Community Forum.

Service Provider Discussion

There has been no discussion with regard to a Community Forest Management Service Provider since the last update to Regional Council on January 8th, 2018.

Throne Speech and Follow-up Comments re: Local Processing

The 2018 Provincial Government Throne Speech made reference to the importance of the forest industry producing local jobs, a position that the NRRM has long advocated for. In a follow-up [interview](#), Premier Horgan referenced Fort Nelson's situation specifically as an example where local processing in the forest industry is essential. In response to these comments, [letters](#) were sent to the Premier and Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development to reconfirm the NRRM's position and offer to meet to discuss the matter further.

"Our forest industry remains B.C.'s single largest exporter, generating thousands of jobs throughout the province. Yet it continues to face tough challenges, from beetle infestations, to trade battles, to the worst wildfire season on record.

Your government believes in the future of forestry, and wants to see a strong and sustainable industry for years to come. B.C. will continue to fight for a fair deal on softwood lumber, and seek new markets for our forest products. And government will revitalize the forest industry's social contract with British Columbians, to ensure that the use of public timber generates good jobs in forest-dependent communities and provide fair rates of return for the public."

*-The Honourable Judith Guichon,
OBC, Lieutenant-Governor: February
13, 2018 Speech from the Throne*

Boreal Caribou Recovery Implementation Plan (BCRIP)

A meeting was held with the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development to discuss the status of BC's Boreal Caribou Recovery Implementation Program (BCRIP). This provided an opportunity for broad discussions with regard to a number of technical issues raised in the NRRM's March 2017 submission to the Provincial Government. The key components of a preliminary socio-economic impact assessment being carried out by the Province were also reviewed.

Socio-Economic Study

Regional Council approved an independent economic impact assessment of provincial boreal caribou recovery planning at the February 13th, 2018 Regional Council meeting. This study will be led by Michael Preston, of international consulting firm Stantec, and will directly examine lost economic opportunity associated with the draft BCRIP. The study will be completed by the end of April 2018.

Aspen Study: Phase 2

Marketing Study

Forest Economic Advisors (FEA) are well into their preliminary market study of potential value-added engineered wood products such as OSB siding, laminated veneer lumber (LVL), oriented strand lumber (OSL), laminated strand lumber (LSL) and Scrimtec. This work is funded by a Rural Dividend Fund (RDF) grant.

Initial contacts with potential investors have proved positive with excellent interest from two companies. One company perceives an aspen LVL product filling a vacancy in its product line. Two LVL panels (from the Aspen Study: Phase 1) were subjected to an investigation of bending and compression perpendicular design properties by FPInnovations in Vancouver which may lead to a comprehensive LVL study involving additional harvesting of logs in Fort Nelson.

Aspen Resource Study

On February 13th, 2018 Industrial Forestry Services Ltd. (IFS) in Prince George initiated an Aspen Fibre Supply Analysis Study. This study will provide a key part of a Forestry Investor Package for companies wanting to invest in a forestry-related venture in the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality. This study is also funded by the Rural Dividend Fund (RDF) grant and will be completed in March.

The IFS study is wide ranging and includes fibre flows in BC, market overview, competition for fibre, stumpage, forest health concerns and risks, fibre supply and cost, including all the delivered cost components.