



**Southern Interior  
Forest Extension  
& Research Partnership**

**Sharing Solutions and Management  
Models for Community-Based  
Tenures in British Columbia**  
A Workshop Summary  
and Discussion Paper

**File Report 99-6**

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### Presenters:

Bronwen Beedle	BC Ministry of Forests
Wolfgang Haider	Simon Fraser University
Charlene Higgins	Shuswap Nation Tribal Council
Peter Street	Nipissing Forest Resource Management (Ontario)
Jordon McKay	BC Ministry of Forests
Brian Nyberg	BC Ministry of Forests
Steve Spalding	Consultant
Alan Thorne	International Forest Products Ltd.

### Facilitators:

Chris Hollstedt	Southern Interior Forest Extension & Research Partnership
Chris Ortner	Forest Renewal British Columbia
Kathie Swift	Southern Interior Forest Extension & Research Partnership

### Resource people:

Craig Sutherland	BC Ministry of Forests
Kelly Loch	BC Ministry of Forests
Dwayne Clark	BC Ministry of Forests

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This one-day workshop, involving 48 people, served as a forum for information and idea exchange regarding the possibilities for community-based forest tenure on crown land in British Columbia. Speakers from First Nations organizations, research, government, and the private sector discussed the limitations of the existing tenure system and shared opportunities and challenges of a community-based model. Two panel discussions followed the plenary talks. In the afternoon, breakout groups discussed the adaptability of new tenures, how to involve the community in decision-making, and the role of learning and adaptive management in moving towards sustainability. Questions on how to measure the success of community-based models surfaced frequently throughout the day; recommendations for assessment tools and processes were offered.

The workshop demonstrated a shared desire for a diverse system of forest tenures in British Columbia. It showed there is an increasing interest in direct community involvement in decision-making and accountability regarding resource management. How these interests will be addressed remains the task of the people of this province over the coming months and years.

Important variables identified at the workshop regarding tenure reform include:

- The types of tenure arrangements and their legal implications,
- Management criteria for these tenures and who will have the authority to determine them,
- The level and mode of First Nation involvement in determining the new tenure system, management criteria, and evaluation criteria,
- How to measure the effectiveness of management on different forms of tenures,
- The level of tolerable risk for the government in “letting go” of management of new tenures,
- Systems to gather and evaluate public input and to allow for local accountability.

The challenges are not small. Fortunately for British Columbia, every jurisdiction in the world deals with issues relating to land tenure. There are many examples of processes and arrangements that we can learn from. It behoves British Columbians to devote considerable effort and resources on this topic. Future forums can help us continue the debate and create solutions that fit the needs and circumstances of this province.

## 2. MORNING PRESENTERS

*Bronwen Beedle*, Assistant Chief Forester with the British Columbia Ministry of Forests, opened the workshop by asking three questions: “What do we mean by community? What tenures are available? and What is sustainability?” She discussed various definitions of “community” and concluded that a community essentially defines itself.



The definition of community needs to include a shared community vision and objectives, as well as administrative accountability.

Three key issues have led to increased public demand for more community control of forests: a desire to manage forests for local objectives; a desire to control forest practices relating to timber harvest, and a desire for management practices that reflect non-timber values.

Three existing tenure form examples available to municipalities and other communities were discussed: tree farm licenses, volume-based forest licenses and woodlot licenses. These options have limitations for communities that desire managing for objectives beyond those outlined in the Forest Act. The new community forestry tenure pilots are designed to consider alternatives and address these limitations.

The background of the new community forestry tenure pilot program was described and community forests were defined as “a means to maintaining forest-related community life styles and values, providing jobs and revenue that contribute to community stability.”

Community forests can form the framework for sustainability. The framework depends on inclusion of indicators, some of which were identified and discussed by Beedle. For example, area-based tenures invite long term commitment that encourages long term investment. Communities working together to achieve common goals and objectives are more likely to achieve broad public support for forest management. This helps communities address their own economic and social objectives, which in turn stabilises and vitalises communities.

Maintaining public support and interest over the long term so efforts do not focus on a small group of people with a limited agenda remains a challenge for communities. A second challenge is how to measure success as public values change over time.

During panel discussions, Bronwen Beedle responded to a question regarding how the B. C. government is complying with the international agreements regarding First Nations issues. She said that there are several ways that First Nations are getting involved (licenses, joint ventures, and community forest tenures) and that joint ventures seem to offer the best opportunities for involvement. Capacity continues to be an issue, not just for First Nations communities, but for all smaller communities with limited human resources.

In response to a question about the differences in types of communities, she said that the provincial government established the community forests as pilots to look at --among other things--the issue of how different communities define themselves and how the provincial government will deal with those differences.



**Wolfgang Haider**, Assistant Professor, School of Resource and Environmental Management, Simon Fraser University, described analytical tools used in assessing social and economic dimensions of resource management decision-making. He stated that resource management can and should include social science research relating to values and choices. He described quantitative and qualitative research applications that test values and choices and provided an example of a tool that asks respondents to choose between trade-offs (e.g., ecological health versus unemployment levels). Haider believes that processes for open and transparent decision-making in resource management will become increasingly important in the future.

In response to a question about how to keep user group data current and accurate, Haider said that data for each user group is collected separately and is updated regularly through surveys.

Questioned about how to make meaningful decisions when choosing between “apples and oranges” in land-use planning (e.g., jobs versus protection), he said that “trade-off” research—relative preferences and relative indifference curves—provides a lot of information.

**Charlene Higgins**, Natural Resource Coordinator for the Shuswap Nation Tribal Council, discussed how tenure arrangements in British Columbia affect First Nations and offered suggestions for addressing some of their issues. Higgins began with a summary of national and international reports, strategies and decisions relating to the equitable sharing of benefits from forest use for Indigenous peoples. In British Columbia, First Nations' capacity for involvement in forest management varies widely from community to community and existing tenures do not allow for cultural and other values.

While Innovative Forest Practice Agreements (IFPAs) could offer First Nations flexibility to manage for cultural, social and other non-economic values, they currently fall short of this. They do not address the lack of access to an equitable share of benefits or decision-making power for First Nations. Further, they do not address First Nations lack of technical capacity to respond to opportunities for employment and involvement.

Higgins called for consensus-based decision-making, equal and fair sharing of benefits and access to forest resources, access to capacity-building opportunities, funding for cultural and traditional use studies and inventories, and access to quota and markets for First Nations products.

In response to a question about how to promote traditional knowledge when there appears to be unwillingness by First Nations to share knowledge, Higgins responded that some of the reluctance is based on a history of negative consequences of sharing that information. The best way to deal with this issue is to have meaningful meetings with communities and to improve the equitable sharing of benefits derived from the land.



In response to a question regarding “who pays” for capacity building, Higgins said that knowledge is already there, but capacity building means finding a common language. Whoever utilises the resources should pay.

When asked for examples of co-management, Higgins offered an example from Saskatchewan where there was a co-management agreement regarding moose management.

**Peter Street**, Manager of Nipissing Forest Resource Management, offered models of innovative forest tenure arrangements in northern Ontario. He described the 1995 *Crown Forest Sustainability Act* that created the legal framework for “Sustainable Forest Licenses” on forested crown land in Ontario. Under this system, licensees are responsible for forest management planning, silviculture (including cone collection), monitoring compliance to forest practice laws, and providing economic opportunities to First Nations and aboriginal communities. A portion of revenues is held in trust to fund these activities. There can be multiple partners on the license.

Results have shown increased planning and silviculture efficiency; silviculture costs have been reduced by 20 percent since 1995. The incentive for incremental silviculture is in the form of increased AAC (i.e., If the AAC increases, they all share the benefit. If it decreases, they all share the problem). Concerns include additional costs and human resources required and the necessity of gaining the cooperation of competing companies. One of the program's criticisms is that new operators must buy out existing licenses in order to participate.

In response to a question about the role of government in assessing compliance under this system, Street said that the Ministry of Natural Resources in Ontario audits the compliance reviews conducted by the licensees. When asked a question about the issue of AAC and First Nations, he said that First Nations have access through tenure sales of unallocated timber. Street also indicated that First Nations groups are treated as businesses and are expected to perform productively and competitively.

**Jordon McKay**, with the Compliance and Enforcement Branch, British Columbia Ministry of Forests, spoke about the role of science in managing the social, environmental and economic risk associated with forest activities. Risk is managed through government legislation and regulation, planning and implementation. Scientific information can help decision-makers assess the level of “real” risk. Science can also help decision-makers test “perceived” risk (intuitive, borne of experience). Research based on scientific principles coupled with the use of experience-based judgements is the most defensible way to assess risk and make decisions.

In response to a question on determining an acceptable degree of risk to those values managed by legislation, McKay said that legislation helps decision-makers know what is acceptable and what is not. That is not to say that the legislation articulates what is



acceptable to any particular individual but rather it identifies what is legally allowed. Since legislation is passed by the Legislature it is in theory the "will of the people" and is therefore deemed acceptable.

**Brian Nyberg**, Ministry of Forests Forest Practices Branch, explained the “whys” and “hows” of a management tool called “adaptive management.” This tool is used by resource managers to continuously track the effectiveness of their management systems through certain “indicators.” Given that change and uncertainty in resource management are commonplace, resource managers must adapt policies and practices as knowledge and client demands change. Adaptive management includes regular monitoring of results against objectives such as water quality, riparian conditions, and soil conditions, or other indicators. Adaptive management includes experiments that test two or more alternatives at the same time, rather than relying solely on “trial and error” over time. He offered three web sites for more information:

[www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/amhome/introdg/toc.htm](http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/amhome/introdg/toc.htm) [www.fs.fed.us/pnw/pubs.htm](http://www.fs.fed.us/pnw/pubs.htm)  
[www.icbemp.gov/spatial/lee\\_monitor/begin.html](http://www.icbemp.gov/spatial/lee_monitor/begin.html)

In response to a question whether the community forest pilots are being monitored through adaptive management, Nyberg indicated that there is adaptive management language (concepts and terms) included within each pilot’s forestry plan. Dollars are being spent on comparing the IFPAs and Enhanced Forest Management Pilot Programs. There is a need for more money to be committed to professional learning, which is an important component of adaptive management.

**Steve Spalding**, independent consultant, was unable to attend the workshop but provided speaking notes to Chris Hollstedt. He was recently commissioned by Forest Renewal British Columbia to conduct interviews with forest managers regarding the effectiveness of the agreements, and offered his interpretation of the results of the IFPA program to date.

He believes that IFPAs are among the most interesting and potentially successful policy initiatives in British Columbia to date. They provide a mechanism for various stakeholders to come to the table together and they facilitate cooperation among a wide set of groups to solve problems. There is some confusion for Forest Service managers who sometimes feel there are restrictions on what they “innovate” and confusion regarding the requirements to qualify for Forest Renewal British Columbia funding. There is also confusion on what kinds of activities qualify for increases in allowable cut. There appears to be inconsistency among IFPAs regarding the level of involvement and the authority of the British Columbia Ministry of Environment.

Uncertainty about future funding limits the ability of IFPAs to enter into long term agreements.



*Alan Thorne*, Forest Renewal Coordinator for International Forest Products Ltd. (Interfor), Adams Lake Division, volunteered for the panel and answered questions about IFPAs. Questioned about community involvement in reviewing/endorsing IFPAs, he said that Interfor has taken a proactive approach by meeting with other licensees and the public, as well as setting up committees to seek direction and get help identifying activities for their IFPA. In response to a question about the lack of flexibility of IFPAs to provide First Nations access to new AAC, Alan stated that debate is now at a higher political level outside of the local operational activities.

### **3. AFTERNOON BREAK-OUT GROUPS**

Three breakout groups were offered in the afternoon sessions :

- A. Human Dimensions in Resource Management
- B. Tenures and Management Models
- C. Innovation, Effectiveness Monitoring and Adaptive Management

Each group responded to prepared questions about their topics--the questions for each topic are listed below. The exercise was designed to generate a list of issues and potential solutions regarding the topics.

#### **A. HUMAN DIMENSIONS**

1. Where do you involve others in decision-making?
2. When do you involve them? (before, during, after)
3. How do you involve them?
4. Do you employ any strategies for building consensus? If yes, which strategies?
5. What are the most frequent problems you encounter when involving other people in decision-making?
6. What information do you consider as particularly useful/important for a community based decision process?
7. How do you determine priority projects? What data/information/analysis requirements do you have?
8. How do you measure progress?

The public is involved in decision making through development planning process, steering committees (IFPAs), open houses, field visits, public formal processes (e.g., Committee on Resources and Environment [CORE], Land and Resource Management Plan [LRMPs]), and informal processes. Often other people are involved in setting objectives and during implementation. Input is verbal and written--sometimes captured through surveys. Sometimes seeking public input is strategic, while other times it is done in reaction to negative public feedback. Often lack of interest, limited knowledge, cultural barriers, a perception that public involvement is only token, lack of willingness to adjust one's position, and lack of balance in representation make public involvement difficult.



Clearly identifying the role of the group, providing good maps/pictures, providing well-informed resource people, ensuring adequate representation from the community and recruiting people with good listening skills increase the likelihood of success of involving others in decision-making. There was general agreement that we need support for identifying the specific goals and desires of the community and ways to measure performance on those goals. These systems are required at the local, regional, and provincial levels.

## **B. TENURES AND MANAGEMENT MODELS**

The group addressed these questions:

1. What are the tenures under which you operate?
2. Define the community that manages under this tenure.
3. Is the level of community input into decision making and accountability adequate?
4. If the level of community input is not adequate, suggest how this might be improved.
5. What are the most frequent issues with tenure and management models?
6. In your opinion, how could these issues be addressed or solved?

There is general agreement regarding the need for a wide range of tenure types to meet a variety of needs from industry, communities, labour and government. The definition of community is diverse and can either be defined by legislation or by the community itself.

There is a growing expectation of community involvement in forest management. Expecting the forest industry to have social accountability is a relatively new concept in British Columbia but is gaining momentum. However, there is no process to allow for meaningful public involvement in current tenures.

Directives from the citizens should be ends-based, not “means-based,” given that citizens are the experts in what they want, not necessarily how that should be achieved.

There is general agreement that our present legislative structure is industrial-oriented and needs to move towards a community-based model. Systems for increased community involvement are needed.

## **C. INNOVATION, EFFECTIVENESS MONITORING, AND ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT**

The group addressed these questions:

1. How often do you use science in management decision-making (often, sometimes, never) and how important is the use of science in implementing results-based planning?



2. Where could the use of innovation (new information, technologies, and techniques) improve your operations or practices?
3. What assistance and advice is available to you for resolving local problems and filling knowledge gaps?
4. What are your and your organization's internal and external barriers to the use of new information, technologies, or techniques?
5. How might these barriers be removed?
6. How do you measure the effectiveness of your management practices and approaches?
7. How familiar are you with the Adaptive Management Approach? (sort of, not at all)
8. In your opinion, what is the most effective way to measure success? (What does a win look like?)

The use of science in decision-making varies widely, from “never” to “often.” Barriers to the inclusion of science include budget restrictions, lack of time to keep up with innovations, and reluctance to operate outside one's “comfort zone.” Some people perceive that “science doesn't make it out here” and that there is too much data with too little interpretation.

Information on new technologies is generally obtained through relationships with knowledgeable people, external groups and reports. There is little information available to First Nations regarding new technologies.

Participants perceive that change in the tenure system, more flexibility in local decision-making, more case studies, and research geared towards the needs of users would enable them to include more science in their decisions.

There is a wide range of knowledge about adaptive management but no formal process for using adaptive management approaches. The *Forest Practices Code* was seen by some as a barrier both to innovation and the use of adaptive management.

#### **4. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS**



There was general agreement that dialogue with local communities will help resolve questions regarding who is responsible and accountable for stewardship and sustainable management of natural resources. A variety of tenure options is desired due to the diversity of land and resources. More transfer of responsibility and accountability to communities (i.e. less control by government) and a community-based approach to decision-making are moves in the right direction.

Government must establish high level targets and workable policies and guidelines that empower these communities to manage the land in the most appropriate way. Government should also measure success by the end result, and not by the means by which the result was obtained.

There is an important role for the research community in measuring the current development of innovative approaches. Researchers can work with the community to establish quality assurance in current practices, help establish means to measure performance and develop new innovative approaches.

Workshop participants also recommend future cross-boundary information sharing. British Columbia can benefit from the collective wisdom and experience of others.