



WHISTLER

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF FOREST & WILDLAND ADVISORY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, May 11, 2016, STARTING AT 3:00 P.M.

In the Flute Room

4325 Blackcomb Way, Whistler, BC V0N 1B4

File: 8221.03

Name	Meetings to Date: 4
April meeting cancelled	
Present:	
Gordon McKeever, Chair	4
Arthur DeJong	4
Derek Bonin	3
Claire Ruddy (AWARE - March)	2
Rob Davis	2
Candace Rose-Taylor	3
Regrets:	
Steve Anderson, Councillor	2
John Hammons	2
Johnny Mikes	3
Craig Mackenzie, WORCA	3
Recording Secretary	
Heather Beresford, RMOW	3

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Moved by R. Davis

Seconded by C. Rose-Taylor

That the Forest & Wildland Advisory Committee adopt the Forest & Wildland Advisory Committee agenda for May 11, 2016 with the approved changes to the order of the agenda items.

CARRIED

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Moved by D. Bonin

Seconded by C. Rose-Taylor

That the Forest & Wildland Advisory Committee adopt the Forest & Wildland Advisory Committee minutes for March 9, 2016.

CARRIED

VERBAL REPORTS

3. Updates

Council: N/A

AWARE:

- AWARE rep is observer at RMOW Trail Planning Working Group, and requested that other non-trail building groups comment on the plans, e.g. FWAC.
- Steve Rochetta, MOE grizzly bear biologist to be invited to autumn TPWG meeting.

WORCA: N/A

RMOW:

- Two FWAC positions advertised, only one response. Council to review on May 17.
- Trail Planning Working Group – focus on signs in 2016
- Callaghan fuel thinning project continuing
- Brio fuel thinning underway (May – June)
- FWAC Access Management Plan – finalize and submit for June 7 Council.

Cheakamus Community Forest:

- Cheakamus 16 road building started in late March.

4. Canadian Wilderness Adventures Tenure Expansion Application

Presentation by Jake Belobaba, RMOW Senior Planner

RMOW received crown land referral for expansion to Canadian Wilderness Adventures' (CWA) tenure area. SLRD reviewing a complementary proposal from CWA due to expiration of Temporary Use Permit for rezoning and OCP amendment to approved existing development.

Issues re: (1) scale of proposed accommodation and commercial use. Proposal precedes the recommended sub-area plans and exceeds scale of Backcountry Resort definition in SLRD Regional Growth Strategy. (2) Lack of integrated planning with other operators and users of the valley. (3) Wildfire risk not adequately addressed or mitigated, (4) concern over carrying capacity of Callaghan Valley and potential conflicts with public recreation; (5) potential conflict with Cheakamus Community Forest operations.

FWAC Discussion:

- Scale of offerings indicate a significant scaling up of visitor numbers.
- Concern that other commercial operators may also make similar requests. With no integrated planning, impacts on Callaghan valley would be significant.
- Wildfire risk extends to Whistler

- Public enjoyment of Alexander Falls will be negatively affected if proposed zipline installed past it.
- Increased commercial use places more perceived limitations on ability of public to enjoy Crown land. Maintaining public access to Crown land is necessary but public can feel intimidated when encountering commercial operators.
- Increase in mechanized activities could affect non-motorized and nature-based public uses, e.g. 3 off road skills areas proposed. Also at odds with Whistler 2020.
- Concern that tenure expansion being requested before zoning and OCP amendment approved.
- Habitat values compromised. Habitat fragmentation will increase with this proposal. Grizzly bears are known to be in the area and it is a designated recovery area.

MOTION: That the Forest and Wildland Advisory Committee recommends that Council strongly oppose the Crown Referral for the expansion of Canadian Wilderness Adventures Commercial Recreation Tenure for the following reasons:

- The commercial accommodation component of previously approved and proposed facilities is inconsistent with the Regional Growth Strategy.
- A master plan of uses in the Callaghan Valley has not been completed and is essential to reviewing Commercial Recreation proposals of this type. Accounting for and balancing existing and future recreational, economic and environmental values is essential.
- The proposed activities and facilities are not coordinated with the activities and operations of the Cheakamus Community Forest and may conflict with or jeopardize forestry operations specifically in the areas of:
 - ✓ Wildfire prevention
 - ✓ Shared use, access and maintenance of road and trail systems
- Commercial recreation areas overlap established public recreation areas, in some cases introducing mechanized and more intensive uses which may create user conflicts and negatively impact public access to crown land.
- The significant growth in mechanized recreation is in conflict with Whistler 2020 policies on limiting mechanized use in wilderness areas specifically the 4x4 skills tracks located near significant nature-based activities such as lakes.
- The intensity of the proposed Canadian Wilderness Adventures facilities may become the status quo for wilderness areas surrounding Whistler
- The Callaghan Valley is experiencing significant recovery of Grizzly Bear populations and expanding commercial recreation tenures in the area may jeopardize this recovery.

5. FWAC Field Trip Debrief

- FWAC encouraged that CCF including fuel thinning in the harvesting plans.
- Encourage more cable logging systems rather than ground based logging to minimize impacts to the ground and protect the soil and water.
- Consider thinning second growth stands by removing approximately two thirds of the stems and one third of the volume resulting in the retention of the most dominant trees that have the greatest potential for growth and to sequester carbon into the future
- Trees retained need to be protected from scarring to optimize growth and maintain tree health
- Discussion re: planting more deciduous to reduce fire risk.
- FWAC appreciated the open discussion with the CCF foresters, very informative

6. Landscape Fire Model Update

Presentation by Tom Cole and Bruce Blackwell (on phone)

CCF hired B.A. Blackwell to re-run the Burn P3 model based on proposed harvesting plans. How would fire behavior be affected by harvesting? Maps show existing fuels and post-harvesting fuels, and then model determines how much the fire perimeter would be changed if suggested treatment done. Model re-run suggested significant reductions (~50%) in area burned after harvesting done.

The CCF Forest Stewardship Plan includes Interface fire management areas but not currently included in the fire models or fuel management plans. Low and moderate retention harvesting can reduce fire risk if certain standards are followed.

The concentration of ignitions in the corridor will likely increase with the increase of human activities, but is traded off with increased detection and suppression ability.

The proposed areas for fuel treatments matches the fuel types and areas that need protection.

FWAC was asked to consider where the CCF should scale up operations.

The assumption in the model is that treatments will provide benefit for 20-25 years. But Kadenwood was initially treated 8 years ago and there is no significant infilling so efficacy is likely longer than assumed.

Tom to provide maps on Dropbox.

OTHER BUSINESS

Future Agenda Items:

- MOF Visual Quality Objectives (confirm timelines with MoFLNRO)
- MOF Fire Management Plan (confirm timelines with MoFLNRO)
- Whistler Blackcomb Update (June)
- Draft report on CCF activities (July)

ADJOURNMENT

That the Forest & Wildland Advisory Committee adjourn the May 11, 2016 meeting at 5:02 p.m.

CARRIED

CHAIR: Gordon McKeever