

**MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS, NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
INFORMATION NOTE**

Date: August 15, 2018

File: 280-20

CLIFF: 241534

PREPARED FOR: Honourable Doug Donaldson, Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development

ISSUE: Grizzly Bear Guide Outfitter Transition Project - Establishing a Transition Opportunities Fund

BACKGROUND:

On December 18, 2017, the decision to end grizzly bear hunting was announced by the Government of British Columbia. Ending the grizzly bear hunt impacts some guide outfitter businesses and government has committed to exploring transition opportunities with guide outfitters to keep their businesses viable and contribute to rural economies.

In early 2018, the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development announced a transition project for guide outfitters in British Columbia and communicated information to guide outfitters about the project. In March 2018, the ministry began an engagement process with the guide outfitters impacted by the grizzly bear hunt closure.

Michael Burwash, Associate Director of the Wildlife and Habitat Branch, is leading the transition project with support of an internal inter-agency working group (economists, lawyers, and legislative and policy experts). Phase 1 engagement process was initiated in March 2018 to inform options that could mitigate impacts of the decision and achieve three objectives: (i) business viability, (ii) business certainty, and (iii) new skills and training. Results of engagement will be shared with affected guides at the same time as informing the guides of next steps.

s.12; s.13

DISCUSSION:

s.12; s.13; s.14; s.16

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Attachments:

Appendix A - Executive Summary of Engagement Report, Transition Support for Grizzly Bear Outfitters

Appendix B – Grizzly Bear Guide Outfitter Transition Opportunities Fund Work plan

Appendix C – Draft Letter to guides

Contact:

Tom Ethier
ADM, Resource Stewardship
Division
250-356-0972

Alternate Contact:

Jennifer Psyllakis
Director, Wildlife and Habitat
Wildlife and Habitat Branch
250-387-5657

Prepared by:

Michael Burwash
Associate Director, Wildlife
Wildlife and Habitat Branch
250-371-6269

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ALAN DOLAN
& ASSOCIATES

Community Engagement,
Facilitation, Communications

Executive Summary

Engagement Report Transition Support for Grizzly Bear Guide Outfitters

Alan Dolan
May 29, 2018

On December 18, 2017, the decision to end grizzly bear hunting was announced by the Government of BC. Ending the grizzly bear hunt impacts some guide outfitter businesses and government has committed to explore transition opportunities with guide outfitters to keep their businesses and rural economies viable.

In early 2018, the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development announced a Transition Project for Guide Outfitters in British Columbia and communicated information to guide outfitters about the project. In March 2018, the Ministry began an engagement process with the guide outfitters. This report describes that engagement process.

In this report, the term “guide outfitters” refers to those who hold a Guide Outfitter Licence (GOL) or a Guide Territory Certificate (GTC) or both, as well as the two guide outfitter organizations — Guide Outfitters Association of BC (GOABC) and Wildlife Stewardship Council (WSC).

The Ministry sent out 118 letters to all holders of GOLs and GTCs who were involved in the guiding of grizzly bear hunts. The same letter was also sent to the GOABC and the WSC. The letter invited guide outfitters to provide input on how the Ministry could support them as they transitioned away from guiding grizzly bear hunts. The letter prompted them to address three outcome objectives: business viability, business certainty, and skills and training. It encouraged guide outfitters to contact the Associate Director of Wildlife via email, letters or telephone with their input. The Ministry also met with representatives from the GOABC and WSC.

Content of the emails, notes from meetings, and notes from the phone calls were organized, summarized, and analyzed. The responses were sorted into two main sections — comments on how the change was impacting the guide outfitters and comments on how guide outfitters believed the Ministry could support them.

A total of 61 responses to the letters to guide outfitters were received from all over the province, which represents a response rate of 52% (61/118). The breakdown of responses by GOL holders, GTC holders, both GOL and GTC holders, and guide outfitter organizations, is shown in Table 2. An additional 11

letters were sent by non-grizzly bear guide outfitters, bringing the total number of responses to 72. Responses from non-grizzly bear quota holders probably occurred because the GOABC re-sent the Ministry letters to all guide outfitters.

A comparison of the input from the small sample of outfitters who did not have grizzly bear quota with those that did have grizzly bear quota or the guide outfitter organizations, found few differences in the responses, so data analysis was conducted on the entire sample of 72.

Respondents gave a range of input on how the closure of the grizzly bear hunt is negatively impacting their businesses. In decreasing frequency of being mentioned, the responses were:

1. Direct financial impact
2. Devaluation of the GTC asset
3. Removal of grizzly bear predator
4. Loss of primary target species
5. Personal impact on families
6. Loss of trust in government
7. Question hunt closure
8. Increase in problem bears
9. Impact on employment
10. Impact on provincial economy
11. Poor wildlife management

Respondents also gave a range of input on how the province should support them in the wake of the closure of the grizzly bear hunt. In decreasing frequency of being mentioned, the responses were:

1. Financial help
2. Convert to eco-tourism, including bear viewing
3. Re-open hunt
4. Retraining
5. Increase quotas of other species
6. Legislative and policy changes
7. Help develop other income streams
8. More funding for management
9. Reduce costs for licences and fees
10. More public education
11. Full economic impact analysis
12. More regional management
13. Allow ownership of main camps

14. Government buy-back GTC

15. Marketing assistance to GOABC

The groupings of responses were described in more detail and some personal quotes from respondents were included.

DRAFT

**Grizzly Bear Guide Outfitter Transition Opportunities Fund (GOTOF)
Work Plan**

1.0 Context and Mandate

On December 18, 2017, the decision to end grizzly bear hunting was announced by the Government of BC. Ending the grizzly bear hunt impacts some guide outfitter businesses and government has committed to explore transition support opportunities with guide outfitters to keep their businesses viable and contribute to rural economies.

s.12; s.13

2.0 Phase 1 Engagement

In early 2018, the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development announced a Transition Project for grizzly bear Guide Outfitters in British Columbia and communicated information to guide outfitters about the project. In March 2018, the Ministry began an engagement process with the guide outfitters impacted by the grizzly bear hunt closure.

The direction given by Minister Donaldson was to engage with the grizzly bear guide outfitting sector on: business viability, business certainty, and skills and training.

The Ministry sent out 118 letters to all holders of GOLs and GTCs who were involved in the guiding of grizzly bear hunts. The same letter was also sent to the GOABC and the WSC. The letter encouraged guide outfitters to contact the Associate Director of Wildlife via email, letters

or telephone with their input. The Ministry also met with representatives from the GOABC and WSC.

A total of 61 responses to the letters to guide outfitters were received from GOL holders, GTC holders, both GOL and GTC holders, and guide outfitter organizations, which represents a response rate of 52% (61/118).

A key finding of the Phase 1 engagement process was that guide outfitters made a strong request for financial support to transition from guiding grizzly bear hunts, along with policy and wildlife management recommendations. This work plan primarily focuses on the financial support aspect.

3.0 Project Team

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5.0 GOABC administrator role

It is proposed that the province engage with GOABC and develop a contract for it to administer the GTOF using the eligibility criteria developed by the province. FLNRORD, with assistance from the Evaluation Team, would liaise with GOABC on an ongoing basis to assist with the eligibility criteria, the application process, and to ensure financial oversight.

6.0 Budget

s.12; s.13

7.0 Workplan

s.13

CONFIDENTIAL

8.0 Timeline Overview

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Reference: 241534

Draft letter to guide outfitters, GOABC and WSC

Dear XXXXX: -Distribution List

Thank you for participating in the engagement process for the Transition Project for Grizzly Bear guide outfitters. I appreciate the open communications on this sensitive topic and respect the personal information shared regarding the impact of the grizzly bear hunt closure decision.

A total of 118 letters were sent out to grizzly bear guide outfitters and 61 responses were received, which represents a response rate of 52 percent. The responses were from 11 grizzly bear Guide Outfitter Licence (GOL) holders, three Guide Territory Certificate (GTC) holders, and 45 who were both GOL and GTC holders. The Guide Outfitters Association of BC and Wildlife Stewardship Council were contacted separately also provided responses. An additional 11 letters were received from non-grizzly bear guide outfitters, bringing the total number of responses to 72.

Respondents provided a range of input on how the closure of the grizzly bear hunt is impacting businesses, ideas for how the province could provide support to mitigate those impacts, and general comments regarding wildlife management. This information is summarized in a report titled: "Engagement Report - Transition Support for Grizzly Bear Guide Outfitters," which is attached. The report, which was produced by an independent consultant, presents "grouped" results and does not include personal information linked to specific individuals.

Government has now approved a mandate to develop a financial support fund to assist grizzly bear guide outfitters with transition options. We will engage with your associations to confirm process and next steps necessary to make financial support available and expect to provide information to individuals early this fall. At the same time, we are further exploring policy and program actions that will contribute to overall improvements to wildlife management and the guiding sector.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact project lead Michael Burwash, Associate Director of Wildlife by email at Michael.Burwash@gov.bc.ca or by phone at 250 371-6269.

Yours truly,

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Guide Outfitters of British Columbia

Jennifer Psyllakis
Director

pc: Michael Burwash, Associate Director, Wildlife, Wildlife and Habitat Branch

**MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS, NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
INFORMATION NOTE**

Date: August 24, 2018

CLIFF: 241544

PREPARED FOR: Honourable Doug Donaldson, Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development

ISSUE: Houston Forest Products' Rail Spur Access

BACKGROUND:

On August 3, 2018, District of Houston Mayor Shane Brienens met with Minister Donaldson to discuss a number of community concerns related to rural development and community transition following the closure of the West Fraser – Houston Forest Products sawmill in 2014.

During the meeting, Mayor Brienens indicated that an ongoing dispute over the use of a rail spur between the CN main line and the Houston Forest Products sawmill site is preventing the District of Houston from developing nearby industrial lands. The Mayor is interested in finding ways for the ministry to support its efforts to allow access and promote bringing new commercial or industrial businesses to that area.

DISCUSSION:

The Houston Forest Products sawmill site (the sawmill site) is located at the west end of the District of Houston in an industrial area serviced by highway, road and rail. The rail is a spur from the CN main line, which crosses several private farm and industrial properties before it reaches the sawmill site.

s.13

The District of Houston is exploring the potential for developing industrial lots along the rail spur. Allowing rail access to those new industrial areas is needed in order to support these efforts.

CONCLUSION:

s.13; s.16

Contact:

*ADM: Dave Peterson
Rural Development, Lands and
Innovation
Phone: (250) 387-1057*

Alternate Contact:

*Sarah Fraser, Executive Director
Rural Development Unit
Phone: (778) 698-7253*

Prepared by:

*Brad McRobert, Regional Manager, Bulkley-Nechako
Regional Economic Operations
Phone: (250) 847-0856*

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DM	TS	Aug 30 2018
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