

BRIEFING NOTE FOR DECISION

DATE: May 5, 2022

PREPARED FOR: Honourable Katrine Conroy, Minister of Forests

ISSUE: Approval of the Forestry Worker Supports and Community Resiliency Council Terms of Reference.

RECOMMENDED OPTION: Option 1 – Approve the Terms of Reference for the Forestry Worker Supports and Community Resiliency Council with membership as noted in Appendix 2.

BACKGROUND:

- On November 2, 2021, government announced its intention to work in partnership with First Nations to defer harvest of 2.6 million hectares of B.C.'s most at-risk old-growth forests.
- To mitigate the impact of old-growth deferrals on rural workers, businesses and communities, the Ministries of Forests (FOR); Jobs, Economic Recovery, and Innovation (JERI); Advanced Education and Skills Training (AEST); and Labour (LBR) are implementing a suite of Forest Worker and Community Support (FWCS) programs.
- In addition, the province is creating the Forestry Worker Supports and Community Resiliency Council (Council) to provide guidance on the development of the FWCS programs and advise on innovative, long-term economic opportunities in B.C.
- The Council will be chaired by the Parliamentary Secretary of FOR and consist of a minimum of 7 and up to 14 members representing broad sectors of B.C. including: Local government, Indigenous communities, forest sector and labour representatives, academics, and non-governmental organizations.
- A Terms of Reference for the Council (Appendix 1) has been developed which proposes a term of one year with the possibility of extension.

DISCUSSION:

The Council's proposed mandate is to advise the province on support for forestry workers and communities affected by old growth deferrals. Specifically, Council will advise on the following items:

- Advise the province on the implementation of the Old Growth Strategic Review, Recommendation 14: *Supporting forest sector workers and communities as they adapt to changes resulting from a new forest management system.*
- Inform government's vision for resilient, thriving communities through the development of innovative and forward-looking economic development and diversification initiatives.

To achieve its mandate, the Council will be asked to:

- Advise on the implementation of new and existing FWCS programs including the Bridging to Retirement Program, Forest Employment Program, Skills Training for Job Pathways, Industry Innovation Program, and Rural Business and Community Recovery Initiative.
- Provide strategic advice on stakeholder engagement in impacted, forestry-dependent communities needing to diversify their local economies.
- Provide feedback and advice on government initiatives including the Community Transition Rapid Response Teams and the Worker Training and Job Opportunity (WTJO) office to address barriers and identify new opportunities.
- Prepare summary reports on recommendations and advice provided to the Minister and additional topics at the direction of the Minister.



Through the Council, government will engage in consultation with key individuals representing Indigenous Peoples, forest sector workers, licensees and local enterprises, non-government organizations, the business sector, communities, and economic regions. These stakeholders have the knowledge and expertise to provide recommended actions for those forestry workers and communities impacted old growth deferrals. Ministry staff will work closely with AEST, JERI, and LBR to ensure close collaboration on the creation and ongoing support for the Council.

There are fourteen recommended Council members identified by FOR, AEST, JERI, and LBR staff (see Appendix 2 for a list of prospective Council members). Staff worked closely with the Ministry of Finance (CABRO), given its role in advising on the creation of external advisory councils.

OPTIONS:

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RECOMMENDED:

- Option 1

☒ Approved / Not Approved

Signature

June 3, 2022

Date

Honourable Katrine Conroy, Minister,
FLNRORD

Attachments:

APPENDIX 1 – Terms of Reference

APPENDIX 2 – Prospective Membership List

PREPARED BY:

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REVIEWED BY:

	Initials	Date
A/DM	EO'D	May 8, 2022
DMO		
ADM	SF, MS	May 4, 2022
Program Dir/Mgr.	LH	

APPENDIX 1: Terms of Reference**Forestry Worker Supports and Community Resiliency Council
TERMS OF REFERENCE****Background**

In recent years, communities have faced several challenges including severe wildfire seasons, flooding events, the COVID-19 pandemic, and reductions in timber supply. In addition to providing immediate supports to worker and communities impacted by these events, the province wants to support communities in diversifying their local economies and creating jobs to achieve the vision of a thriving, resilient B.C.

An independent, strategic review of B.C.'s old-growth forest management practices was released in 2020. *A New Future for Old Forests* called for significant changes to provincial forest management practices as part of improving the protection of old-growth forests. This Report included 14 recommendations that the province has since committed to implementing. This includes supporting workers, businesses and communities economically impacted by old-growth protection as outlined in Recommendation 14: *Supporting forest sector workers and communities as they adapt to changes resulting from a new forest management system*.

In November 2021, the province announced its intention to work in partnership with First Nations to defer harvest in 2.6 million hectares of B.C.'s most at-risk old-growth forests. To mitigate the impact of old-growth deferrals on workers, businesses and communities, the Ministries of Forests (FOR); Advanced Education and Skills Training (AEST); Jobs, Economic Recovery, and Innovation (JERI); and Labour (LBR) developed a suite of Forest Worker and Community Support (FWCS) programs.

This suite of programs includes immediate, short-term supports for impacted forestry workers, businesses, and communities as well as the development of long-term economic diversification initiatives that support a vision for thriving and resilient communities. These new initiatives will focus on industry innovation, infrastructure development, and economic growth, as well as the creation of a Worker Training and Job Opportunity Office (WTJO) – an office that will bridge and leverage cross-ministry strategic collaboration to drive forward long-term economic resilience.

To support the development and implementation of the FWCS programs, the province is creating the Forestry Worker Supports and Community Resiliency Council (Council). The Council will provide guidance and advice to the Minister of Forests (the Minister), and the Ministries of AEST, JERI, and LBR on the development of new initiatives and improvements for existing programs. In this work, the Council will support the province in ensuring forestry workers and communities impacted by old growth deferrals have the opportunities for long term economic resilience in B.C.

Mandate:

The mandate of the Council is to:

1. Advise the province on the implementation of the Old Growth Strategic Review, Recommendation 14: *Supporting forest sector workers and communities as they adapt to changes resulting from a new forest management system*.

2. Inform government's vision for resilient, thriving communities through the development of innovative and forward-looking economic development and diversification initiatives.

To achieve this mandate, the Council will:

- Advise on the development and delivery of new FWCS programs related to industry innovation, infrastructure development and economic diversification in communities.
- Advise on program improvements for existing FWCS programs including Bridging to Retirement, Forest Employment Program, Skills Training for Job Pathways and Rural Business and Community Recovery Initiative.
- Provide strategic advice on stakeholder engagement in impacted forestry-dependent communities needing to diversify their local economies.
- Provide feedback and advice on government initiatives including the Community Transition Rapid Response Teams and the WTJO to address key barriers and identification of innovative economic opportunities.
- Prepare summary reports on recommendations and advice provided to the Minister related to items listed above.
- Advise on additional topics at the direction of the Minister.

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Roles and Responsibilities:

The Minister will:

- Appoint the Council Chair.
- Appoint members to the Council based on criteria of experience, diversity, regional and sectoral representation.
- Ensure that the Council fulfils its mandate by:
 - Communicating with the Chair about Council activities.
 - Sharing information about Council activities with other relevant Ministers as needed.
 - Review reports, advice, and recommendations received from the Council and action at their discretion.
 - At their discretion release documents and advice received from the Council.

The Chair will:

- Communicate on behalf of the Council to the Minister.
- Prepare meeting agendas in consultation with members and Council Secretariat
- Chair meetings
- Monitor members' conduct as it relates to the Council's Guiding Principles and the General Conduct Principles for Public Appointees set out by Government.
- At their discretion, invite guests to attend and participate in Council meetings.

Council members will:

- Bring their knowledge, perspective and experience and will take a constructive approach to discussions and reaching consensus on advice, guidance, and recommendations.
- Stay informed about the issues facing their region/sector but will not represent Nations, organisations, political parties, or consult with communities/stakeholders on behalf of the Council.
- Under the guidance of the Chair, liaise with relevant stakeholders to ensure regional and sector interests are accounted for in the recommendations and advice provided to the Minister.
- Attend and participate in all scheduled Council meetings given sufficient prior notice.
- Provide a report to the Minister within six months that outlines its perspective on the progress and implementation of FWCS programs including advice/recommendations for improvement.
- Provide a report to the Minister within 12 months on forward-looking economic development advice/recommendations that support economic recovery and diversification in impacted communities.
- Provide further reports at the request of the Minister.

The Ministry will:

- Provide Secretariat support to the Council.
- Facilitate internal engagement and collaboration with relevant ministries (in particular JERI and LBR).
- Report to relevant Ministers on advice and recommendations received from the Council.
- Provide public communications support.

Appointments and Terms

- The term of the Council is for one year with the possibility of a one-year extension.
- Council members will serve a minimum of one year term.
- Council members and the Chair will be appointed by the Minister.
- Council members will be appointed through a Minister's letter.
- The Minister may choose to end Council's activities at their discretion.

Membership

- The Council will represent diverse interests and perspectives including those of First Nations and Indigenous communities, forest sector workers, licensees and local enterprises, non-government organizations, the business sector, communities, and economic regions.
- The Council will have a minimum of seven and up to fourteen members, appointed by the Minister, who represent broad aspects of B.C. society with varied areas of expertise to include at least one representative from each of the following groups:
 - Local governments including rural and remote community representation.
 - Indigenous community and organization representation.
 - Business community representation.
 - Labour representation.
 - Forest industry representation.
 - Academic representation.
 - Non-profit representation.
- Members will be recognized as leaders in their community or sector and will provide advice, as well as champion agreed upon actions within the groups they represent.
- Council membership will be voluntary. Members will assume their responsibilities without salary or remuneration for their time associated with meeting their duties.

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Standards of Conduct:

- Provincial appointees are expected to meet high standards of conduct which enhance and maintain public confidence in the operation of B.C.'s public agencies, boards and commissions.
- Council members agree to act in accordance with the Council's Guiding Principles.
- Council members agree to comply with the General Conduct Principles for Public Appointees set out by the Government.

Per Diems and Expenses:

- Council members are eligible to claim reimbursement for their travel expenses as per the approved B.C. government expense guidelines unless expenses are otherwise covered.

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BRIEFING NOTE FOR INFORMATION

DATE: May 27, 2022
PREPARED FOR: Honourable Katrine Conroy, Minister of Forests
ISSUE: Update on Dike Condition

BACKGROUND:

- After the catastrophic atmospheric river events last fall, there is heightened awareness and concern among communities regarding dike infrastructure.
- Under the *Dike Maintenance Act*, local dikeing authorities are responsible for maintenance, repairs, and upgrades to their dikes. The Province provides access to funding programs, updates design guidelines, authorizes changes, and has the authority to order repairs when required.
- There are over one hundred dikeing authorities that own, operate, and maintain over 1,100km of dikes and other flood infrastructure in B.C.
- The overall cost to upgrade all existing dikes to current Provincial standards is estimated at between \$7 billion and \$14 billion.
- The Provincial Flood Emergency Plan establishes roles/responsibilities across government and external partners for flood preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery.

DISCUSSION:

Since November 2021, Ministry staff have been working closely with Emergency Management BC and dikeing authorities, with an emphasis on assessing infrastructure condition, constructing temporary works, and preparing for spring freshet.

In the last two months, regional staff engaged dikeing authorities to gather information on dike conditions prior to freshet. Dikeing authorities also provided information on actions they are taking on preparedness and response coordination. s.13

The Ministry recently completed a dike crest elevation survey of all regulated dikes. These elevations were recently compared with several flood scenarios to help identify vulnerable dikeing areas along the lower Fraser River. This data has been shared with dikeing authorities to help guide preparedness and response to spring freshet.

Many regulated and orphan dikes do not meet current design standards, and watersheds across B.C. have been impacted by fire and a changing climate. As such, strengthened seasonal preparedness and response coordination activities are important to complement flood protection systems (including dikes) in our integrated flood risk reduction approach.

NEXT STEPS:

- Regional staff (Deputy Inspectors of Dikes) are in regular contact with diking authorities.
- Detailed reviews of dike repairs continue as local recovery plans are completed and permanent works are undertaken in accordance with Provincial standards.
- Continued engagement is planned towards a B.C. Flood Strategy, which will articulate a provincial vision, outcomes, principles and flood management priorities.
- Priority topics for the B.C. Flood Strategy include flood governance and flood risk reduction approaches, including dikes.

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REVIEWED BY:

	Initials	Date
DM	RM	May 31, 2022
DM, LNRO		
Associate DM		
ADM	MA	May 30, 2022
ED	RE	May 26 2022
Program Dir.	TW	May 26 2022

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