

**Fort St. John Results Based Pilot Project
Public Advisory Group Meeting #72
Wednesday, May 28th, 2025
Northern Grand Conference Centre**

PAG Meeting (Open to Public) 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm

Meeting Attendance:

Participants

Name	Interest	Phone	Email
Andrew Tyrrell	Canfor	250-787-3665	andrew.tyrell@canfor.com
Ethan Brandt	LP	250-261-3619	ethan.brandt@lpcorp.com
Sarah Curtis	LP	250-261-3451	sarah.curtis@lpcorp.com
Sam Asirifi	BCTS		
Sara Rowe	Doig River First Nation	250-793-0993	srowe@doigriverfn.com
Chris Maundrell	Prophet River First Nation		

PAG Interest Representatives and Alternates

Name	Interest	Phone	Email
Dave Harris	Range	250-827-3503	dharris@pris.ca
Jim McKnight	Environment / conservation	250-785-9758	jimk01@telus.net
Budd Phillips	Recreation	250-793-4735	
Darryl Kroeker	Rural Communities	250-219-0798	dkroeker@pris.ca
Ray Ensz	Trapping	250-793-2825	1052mill@gmail.com

Other

Name	Interest	Phone	Email
Gail Wallin	Facilitator	250-305-9161	gwallin@wlake.com
Joelle Ward	Advisor		
Anna Regnier	Observer		
Mike Bridger	Guest – WLRS		
Duncan Blagdon	Guest – WLRS		

Meeting start: 6:00 pm

1. Welcome and Introductions [AT, GW]

- Land Acknowledgement

2. Review of meeting agenda and meeting protocol [GW]

- Agenda approved as proposed.

3. Review of Meeting #71 draft summary, action items and approval [GW]

- Draft summary approved by PAG as emailed on **5/7/2025**.
- Corrections or errors for meeting summary – none
- No objections to meeting summary.

Actions from last meeting not completed are listed below and to be addressed.

Action	Responsibility	STATUS	Comments
1. PAG would like to have more info on public comment process for tenure transfers	Government Representative	DONE	Update from Yvonne Parkinson relayed to PAG at May 28 th Meeting.
2. Ensure that the SFMP addresses wildlife friendly fences	Participants	DONE	
3. Shayla Blue to distribute PAG vacancies to NE Round Table	Shayla Blue/Ethan Brandt	Planned for June 3rd	
4. Categories to be sent out to PAG group to remind folks what we are recruiting for.	Ethan Brandt	DONE	Email sent to PAG.
5. Emily to refer colleagues who may be interested in joining PAG to Ethan and Andrew	Emily Pollington	DONE	

1. Got word back from Yvonne Parkinson at FOR – she provided the following info:
 - When the Ministry of Forests receives a request for a tenure transfer, how will the public know if there is an opportunity for public input? If something is posted on the public input website how would the public know that the information was there?
 - o Often the District Manager and Regional Executive Director will reach out local officials to notify of a transfer. First Nations will be notified through the consultation process. The provincial website will be updated and is the location for submitting comments.
 - If a tenure is transferred, is a percentage of the AAC or the tenure returned to the

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government?

- No. The legislation has been updated to provide a public interest test in addition to a market concentration test. There are no provisions in the Act to take volume or cancel tenure through a transfer process.
- How long does it generally take the Minister to make the decision? In general terms what might be the time period from the time the company submits the request to the time the Minister releases his decision?
 - General process can be 3 to 6 months.
- 2. Marking as done – added provision in SFMP.
 - **C:** Not really complete. The Cattlemen were not consulted on previous email from the government – Cattlemen would like to consult with First Nations and have the Range Department act as a referee so we can solve this. There was a recent zoom meeting between Cattleman's association and Range on Range's proposed wildlife fencing standards. Cattleman's association is not on board with Range's fencing standard proposal.
 - **A:** There remains the commitment in plan at the moment is to consider wildlife friendly options. This issue appears to be higher level with Range. We currently are operating under the old fencing specs in the current SFMP.
 - **C:** Yes, still operating under old fencing specifications. New range fence specification provided by range was totally unexpected and does not currently work for Cattleman. There is a concern about the ability to keep cattle in, and the ranchers are on the hook when the cows escape.
 - All confirmed that the provisions in SFMP are sufficient but recognize that there are currently some operational issues exist with the wildlife friendly fencing specifications that Range has currently proposed.
 - **ACTION** - Joelle Ward will follow up to ensure there are plans for communication between Cattleman, Range Branch, and First Nation between standards to resolve the operation concerns the Cattlemen have with the proposed wildlife friendly fences.
- 3. Ongoing – will see if we can have representation on next NERT meeting.
- 4. Completed – sent out list with PAG invite update on May 7th.
- 5. Completed – unfortunately they were not able to make it this evening.

C: We may have missed action – Moose enhancement that was outlined at December meeting, where are we on this?

- **MP:** Stay tuned, will be addressed as part of this meeting

4. SFMP #4 Focus Session (70 min)

- **Questions or comments on management plan**
 - Range Comments from Cattleman's Assoc:
 - Focused on Range. Several Cattleman's members duly noted that there was a two-year lag time when a natural or man-made range barrier was removed to when it was replaced. This is not acceptable in our opinion, as cattle can be out yearly and breaches in barriers can cause them to turn loose.
 - The harvesting of aspen and suckering of aspen causes a loss of forage, and for 30 years you have no grazing. Might not be an issue on crown land outside the ALR. Is an issue on the ALR land. When another industry comes in and takes forage from ALR it has consequences.
 - Taking these comments into consideration and can discuss further later in the meeting.
- **Biodiversity and Wildlife**
 - **CWD Structure (AT)**
 - Change from referencing just "CWD piles" to "CWD pile equivalent"

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structures". Retain one CWD pile equivalent structure per 5 hectares.

- A CWD pile equivalent structure can be a linear pile or windrow corridor 10m long, or 1 CWD round pile.
- Provisions to ensure that all CWD are not in linear piles. No more than 50% of CWD volume can be in linear piles.
 - **Q:** 10m linear, but how high?
 - **A:** Around 2-3 metres high. There is variability in what we can do. They can't be too high because it may be a barrier to wildlife. Can have periodic breaks in corridors too so animals can move. Can't be too low so that animals can't access the pile in the winter.
 - **ACTION** – Andrew to send out fisher team info to PAG.
 - No issues from PAG, happy to see us moving forward on this.
- **Protection of Sites of Biological Significance (AT)**
 - New indicator
 - Emphasis on wildlife features that require protection in the gap analysis of the SFMP3
 - In the plan it is defined what site of biological significance is, and the target and indicator dictate that all identified sites of biological significance are to be protected with a management strategy when logging and roadbuilding occur.
 - **Q:** What kind of buffers are we looking at?
 - **A:** Varies with type of feature, there are some minimums to take note of:
 - Significant mineral lick - min 100m reserve.
 - Stick nest - protection of the tree containing the nest and additional retention in surrounding habitat.
 - Pileated woodpecker - 100m buffer in active nest, no felling of tree within 3 years of occupancy.
 - **Q:** Is incorporating two trails part of what defines a significant mineral lick?
 - **A:** There is direction from but yes trails are part of it. The focus is on protecting the integrity of the lick.
 - **C:** There is a provincial program on identifying and protecting mineral licks that may be helpful for guidance for the participants.
 - **Q:** What is going to be the obligation for identification of pileated woodpecker nests?
 - **A:** We have guidance and people in the bush trained to identify these features and we will have protections in place for them.
- **Migratory Bird Risk Reduction (AT)**
 - New indicator to avoid incidental take – incidental take is the inadvertent destruction or harm to migratory birds or their nests or eggs (industrial and not industrial).
 - The indicator stipulates that each participant will have practices to avoid incidental take and will employ those practices.
 - The practices utilized by the managing participants will utilize a risk matrix ranking system based on forest type that estimates nest density, and report on annually.
 - Pre harvest review measures can be taken out and prescribed in SLPs
 - Timing restrictions (avoidance)

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- WTPs over highest ranked habitat
 - Increase tree retention
 - Other options
 - **Guidelines of Species at Risk and Species of Management Concern (SC)**
 - Conditions in extension letter included a requirement for provisions for moose habitat. Managing Participants had previously had a discussion of the moose management checklist proposal, which we heard was not desirable. Rather than applying moose management to a portion of the DFA, we are now applying it to the whole DFA and including it in our Guidelines for Species at Risk and Species of Management Concern.
 - Changed title and changed indicator to include moose.
 - Redefined effected cutblocks – previously had only cutblocks that had characteristics that suggest it could provide suitable habitat for SAR, now includes moose capability and suitability.
 - **Q:** This is a stand level measure, that is a large area, where there is overlapping species, what species would take precedence between moose and other species of risk?
 - **A:** We have a suite of management principles that we can choose from.
 - **Q:** Has the map shown been correlated with moose concentration from province?
 - **A:** No, this is from the Wildlife Infometrics report, and we are just looking at the habitat.
 - **Q:** Are you going to update with new VRI and the fires?
 - **A:** We have not done that. Suitability could change. Capability would not change in this instance. We are kind of caught in the middle here. This is a good point, and we need to figure out how to get a better disturbance layer.
 - **C:** Is this from a Canfor study?
 - **A:** No, this study was conducted by Wildlife Infometrics in 2018.
 - Some administrative changes with other Species at risk – one or more SAR management guidelines.
 - With moose, there are 6 mandatory management guidelines, and 1 optional that can be chosen from. These are in detail in the document.
 - **Q:** Great, but keep in mind that when we are talking about these targets and indicators, we are focused on how many we are meeting and not really monitoring. I think it would be good for the government to explore how effective some of this management is.
 - **C:** Moose inventory through treaty 8 wildlife moose. Most surveys showing moose decline over most areas. Forestry could be part of the problem, hunting could be part of the problem, predation could be part of the problem. We need to be conscious that we need to continue to monitor inventory and get a handle on what we are doing to decline habitat.
 - **River Corridors (SC)**
 - We have increased the major river corridor areas substantially in SFMP 4. This is about identifying larger streams (S1 in the past), and within 100m of RMZ, you could only have 1ha openings.
 - Added some S2s and S3s and extended some existing streams.
 - No major changes to the intent of the indicator.
- **Changes to indicators since last meeting**

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- **Class A Parks and Protected areas (SC)**
 - Changed from Class A Parks, Ecological Reserves, and LRMP Designated Protected Areas.
 - Needed an area to capture additional areas identified in other management plans and agreements.
 - Will likely change further from Class A parks to just Parks and Protected Areas
 - No comments from PAG, approved.
- **Cut Control (SC)**
 - Administrative change – aligned to reflect true cut control periods within the regs.
 - Changed to reflect reality.
 - No comments from PAG, approved.
- **Availability of Information on SFM (CA)**
 - Changed name and to include specifically annual report and the audits. More clarification.
 - No comments from PAG, approved.
- **Timber Processing (CA)**
 - Originally wanted to remove this indicator because it did not make sense due to current conditions but heard the PAG wanted reporting done still.
 - Changed indicator from target indicator to reporting indicator.
 - Report on:
 - All the volume that comes across scale locally,
 - Total scaled volume if timber originating within the DFA
 - Total volume of timber originating within the DFA processed within the DFA
 - Total volume of Timber originating within the DFA processed outside of the DFS
 - **C:** There is an implication that this is a closed circle. There is wood leaving the DFA from oil and gas. We need to recognize that this does not include potential volume being logged in DFA that does not get processed in the DFA – this would be timber not harvested under the pilot project (oil and gas).
 - **ACTION** – MP will ensure there is clarification that this is not all-inclusive numbers. Does not include oil and gas industry.
 - **C:** There is a way for the government to track this.
 - **C:** This is a real concern.
- **Deletions to Forest Area (CA)**
 - Commitment to keep the amount of road we have under a certain threshold.
 - Change of target from .6 to .14% CFMLP
 - Table updated to reflect latest timber review.
 - No comments from PAG, approved.
- **Reforestation Assessment (CA)**
 - Reforestation assessed on a cut year by Participant. Everything harvested in one year goes into the mix, and all passes or doesn't. Certain minimum thresholds that need to be met for Target Merchantable Volume.
 - Concerned that we would hit targets due to less intensive tending management (no aerial herbicide, minimal spot herbicide)
 - Heard some concerns when we brought this up to the planning team.
 - Raised bar for deciduous TMV to 95% of maximum predicted merchantable volume attainable on both coniferous and deciduous areas,

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- **Q:** Why are you not combining participants?
 - **A:** We decided not to as a group, it was not necessary.
- **Q:** What is the timeframe on TMV?
 - **A:** 15 years from cut year.
- No comments from PAG, approved.
- **Analysis indicators – current state discussion**
 - GIS analysis indicators are still waiting for significant analytical work to be done. BCTS and LP have picked up GIS support. Results are being produced, we are getting them now and will talk to the planning team and circulate them back to the PAG.
- **Open forum for feedback on core components**
 - Re: Range Comments – range barrier removal replaced in 2 years and aspen suckering.
 - **A:** We do have range action plan provisions in SFMP. Spirit and intent is to confer with interested stakeholders and FN at FOS level. This is the opportunity for concerns to be raised.
 - **C:** Seems to be no concern over forage or crown land grazing, especially in the south peace.
 - **A:** The principle is still in the SFMP, but the participants and any rancher that have overlapping tenures have the opportunity to have dialogue and come to a mutually beneficial agreement. We encourage the cattleman's membership to look at the FOS and have a close look at blocks that may affect their interests.
 - **C:** Confirming what is in the SFMP is fine but there is an opportunity for improvement in general.
 - Re: Range barriers – there was 2-year provision to allow re-entry into areas without having to destroy and rebuild the repaired range.
 - **ACTION** – look at two-year range barrier requirement and see if it can be decreased.

5. Break (10 mins)

6. Guest Presentation – BC Caribou Recovery Program 2024 Update (40 min)

- Duncan Blagdon – Population Monitoring in the Northeast
 - Presentation provided overviewing caribou populations and ecotypes, collaring and monitoring methods, and results.
 - **Q:** Is there a target for bull numbers for recovery?
 - **A:** No, but for the purposes of hunting, need about 40 to support harvest.
 - **Q:** does the lack of industrial activity in the MKMA correlate to increase in populations?
 - **A:** No baseline so we cannot compare but can extrapolate that the low disturbance would have a positive effect on population.
 - **Q:** What happened to the Burnt Pine population?
 - **A:** They did not make it, but we have discovered that another herd is using the area that the Burnt Pine population once did.
 - **Q:** How does the GPS collar location work into the sampling method?
 - **A:** For recruitment we go straight to caribou, but for mark resight we are blind.
 - **Q:** Is there an opportunity to help with the Fecal sampling program, e.g. FN Guardian program?
 - **A:** Potential ability, but there is a more intense, systematic sampling strategy. It is very difficult to get results from just a few samples.

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- Michael Bridger – Wildlife Specialist – Regional Wildlife Biologist working in Caribou Recover Program – Oversees the predator reduction programs to recover caribou.
 - Presentation provided on predators, predator-caribou interaction, predator reduction, and caribou and moose response to predator reduction.
 - **Q:** What part of the province have you been culling cougar in?
 - **A:** Southern areas near Shuswap's.
 - **Q:** Do bears not figure as significant predators to cull?
 - **A:** We see that bears always will be and have been predators, but usually at a steadier state. Whereas wolves and cougars respond positively to landscape changes and there are increases in predation.
 - **Q:** Do you have an idea, with habitat left (as destruction is still continuing), how can you come to a reasonable population expectation?
 - **A:** With carrying capacity, we can make estimates, but it is difficult to know the exact targets. The goal is self-sustaining, so growing and not declining. It is hard to know what the number really is as habitat restoration takes a long time.
 - **C:** Lots of discussion at the [Fort St. John] Rod & Gun Club about the moose harvest availability. Seems that there are a few indications that different government agencies need to discuss amongst themselves to solve this issue of moose overpopulation.
 - **A:** There is discussion going on between government agencies. There is difficult to move the needle on this issue because the very politicized nature of licensed moose harvest up in this area. Need to continue spreading the message of a win-win situation between moose and caribou.
 - **Q:** At what point, for forest recovery, should we expect to see the impact of linear feature restoration? Is there going to be a point where we can point to the effect of the linear feature restoration?
 - **A:** I think less about linear features, but more about polygonal features as far as impact due to the long-term moose habitat increase. Long term monitoring of this is on the to-do list.
 - **Q:** How much per wolf does it cost to cull wolves in NE BC? Or how much since 2015 has been spent on wolf culling.
 - **A:** Each year it can be up to \$4-5k per wolve. The expense is due to costs associated with remote locations and the methods required for large scale culling. We have not seen other methods as effective so long term.
 - **C:** Creating some incentives for ground trappers to cull wolves would go a long way to get the numbers down.
 - **A:** The areas we are trying to work in are very difficult for logistics, ground trapping will work more in the boreal area, but it is challenging for the most part.
 - **Q:** Is the reforestation program focused on reducing linear features?
 - **A:** Primarily, that is how it started but is has expanded to target reforestation of wildfires as well as linear features. There is also work in the Donnie Creek fire areas by the Ministry of Forests.

7. Q&A Sesson; Feedback on meeting [GW]

- It was a very informative and engaging meeting.

Thanks everyone for coming and for meaningful participation. Attendance and consistency is very appreciated!

New and Ongoing Actions

Action	Responsibility	STATUS	Comments
Shayla Blue to distribute PAG vacancies to NE Round Table	Shayla Blue Ethan Brandt	PLANNED	Darin Hancock (LP) will relay info to NE RT on behalf of managing participants on June 3 rd .
Follow up with Range regarding wildlife friendly fencing proposals and communication between Cattleman's Assoc, Range, and FN.	Joelle Ward	NEW	
Send out info on the Fisher Team guidance for CWD indicator to PAG.	Andrew	NEW	
Managing participants will include provisions in Timber Processed in DFA indicator that speak to the fact that the numbers reported in the Annual Report are not all encompassing of all timber movement in the DFA and do not account for oil and gas timber harvest.	Managing Participants	NEW	
Look at two-year range barrier requirement in SFMP and see if There is opportunity for improvement.	Managing Participants	NEW	

Meeting end: 8:45 pm