

Board Update May Board Meeting in Kwadacha

November 28, 2017

Considerable work has been done on the Board's behalf since its meeting in Kwadacha last May, our Chair, Stephanie Killam, requested that this "Board Update" be prepared for you to ensure you are current with the work of the Executive advancing the direction and priorities of the Board. Therefore, the following is a synopsis of key events up to November 25, 2017.

- The Tourist Information Center at Fort Nelson requested additional pamphlets of the MKMA. They advised they were a popular item with travellers;
- Our Mining Representative, Gavin Dirom, resigned and Stephanie thanked him and wished him well in future endeavours. After some searching two candidates' profiles were submitted to the Board Resourcing Development Office (BRDO now called CABRO) for evaluation and final selection. The process has taken longer than anticipated as the organization underwent some changes in structure. We remain optimistic that the vacancy will be filled before the end of this calendar year. In addition, Stephanie will put forward recommendations for reappointments to the board that come due for March 31 of 2018.;
- We explored the option of a new financial administration service provider considering deterioration of service over the last year. However, it was the request of our ministry rep that we seek improvements with our current service provide. At the same time as this request a former service provider employee who we had dealt with before with excellent results had returned so we stopped our exploration. Since the return of the service provider employee the quality in service and timeliness of response to our queries has seen a marked improvement;
- The Wilderness Working Group continued with its task of developing a natural resource management framework after its presentation to the Board in May. Significant work was made in zoning the MKMA into a few management zones with similar wilderness qualities. Principles/rationales for the zoning were drafted and will be reviewed by the Working Group as a whole in December;
- Our Fort Nelson First Nation representative, Lana Lowe, recently resigned from the Board. Stephanie thanked Lana for her participation and wished her well. This vacancy is being worked on through CABRO in discussion with Fort Nelson First Nation. We will, in the new year send out letters to all Treaty 8 First Nations to see if anyone of the communities is interested in filling two of the three seats that are set aside at the table for Treaty 8. Treaty 8, itself, has expressed an interesting in talking with us about the possibility of them sending a representative to sit at the Board table. A scheduled meeting to be held in FS John in November was cancelled due to heavy snow conditions. We are seeking rescheduling the meeting as soon as possible;
- Prior to the Union of BC Municipalities' (UBCM) Fall meeting we requested a meeting with Minister Doug Donaldson to profile the MKMA, to describe our successes and to convey the role the Board can play with respect to Minister's mandate letter (planning and FN engagement). A

meeting was held in Victoria in October as the Minister's meeting schedule during UBCM was over-subscribed. The minister was engaged, interested and thoughtful about the history of the Board and the role it could play in the future. Stephanie will continue to keep the Minister up to date on what is happening in the MK and to meet with him as required.

- Executive met via videoconferencing three times since the May Board meeting. Its business was primarily managing the budget, oversight of the Wilderness WG's progress, finalizing the Board's Wind Resource Use Advice document, preparing for the meeting with the Minister, strategizing on increasing the profile of the Board, strategizing about signage for the MKMA, and developing a new Transfer Agreement with the Ministry that is now, because of the new Government, tied to milestones that will then generate future funding for the Board;
- We received an inquiry from an Enforcement Officer of the Enforcement Branch Environment and Climate Change Canada of the Government of Canada regarding the condition of access to the Magnus/Churchill Mine sites. This is the first time that anyone on the Executive can recollect that the Federal Government has expressed interest in the MKMA. We believe the purpose of this inquiry is for an on-site inspection by the officer to determine the extent and quality of any remediation activities that were taken. We believe the inspection(s) will occur sometime next Spring;
- A member of the Executive became aware of aerial activity in the Tuchodi area of the MKMA. It seems this is related to a goat study. This is of concern to the Executive because it is another example of the Board not being notified when activities are planned within the MKMA. This underscores the need for the Board to undertake a more aggressive campaign of raising its profile within Government and natural resource ministries (as well as with First Nations, Communities, etc.) as it is evident we have faded from the radar of many primarily because of loss of institutional knowledge (retirements, attrition, etc.) at these levels;
- The Executive's focus, on behalf of the Board, continues to be completion of the natural resource management framework. As it was requested to submit its Wind Resource Use Advice separate from the framework, representatives of the Exec and the Wilderness WG met with the UNBC Partnership and a Statutory Decision Maker of the minister in November. While the UNBC partnership are supportive of the key elements of the framework and the progress the WG has made in fleshing them out, their advice was to avoid submitting "Thresholds" as there was insufficient information and Board resources to do this work. They submitted that the question to the Board of "How much of what, where and for how long" was the wrong question for the Board to answer. Rather, the Board should describe the Values, Valued Components, Indicators, and Guiding Principles which frame the conditions under which an evaluation of a development proposal should be subjected and, as a base line, specific consideration/weight be given to the "State of Indicators" when making a development decision. There is still some work to be undertaken to fully flesh out this recommended approach which the WG will undertake in December

Regarding the previous observation of the Board fading into the background within

Government, ministries, agencies, First Nations, Communities, etc. the UNBC Partnership offered to assist the Board with reaching out to academia and the conservation network to raise the profile of the MKMA and its Board as well as becoming our champions;

- The meeting with the Statutory Decision Maker was enlightening as it illustrated how important any advice from the Board should be considered within the context of the management framework it is developing and the principles listed in the Board's draft vision statement, its definition of Wilderness and the meaning of the preamble. In other words, the Executive believes it is time to engage with senior officials in the Ministry (and other natural resource ministries) to commence the discussion on achieving a shared and common understanding of "what the MKMA is all about" (vision, preamble, wilderness definition, etc.). There was agreement on the part of the Statutory Decision Maker that there was a role for the MK Board to play in providing advice to government as we move forward on our current path. Therefore, until fiscal year end, the Executive will be working with ministry reps and the UNBC partnership to have the following meetings, whether in person or via video conference:
 1. Wilderness Working Group (target mid-December to prepare for UNBC Partnership and Senior Manager's meeting and then again late February to complete first full draft of framework for submission prior to fiscal year end (March 31, 2018)),
 2. UNBC Partnership (target February with potential of March),
 3. Senior Manager Meeting seeking "shared and common understanding..." (target late January/early February);
- With a new Government and the inevitable changes in policies and procedures, the goal of having two years of operational funding in hand was delayed. Given new reporting requirements, the Executive remains optimistic it will receive its remaining \$88,500 (some to complete this year's initiatives and the majority for fiscal 18/19). We have been asked to update our agreement with Fraser Basin Council with an eye of turning it into a multi-year agreement. We trust this will lay the foundation for moving towards the desired "two years in hand" budget scenario that we anticipated would be in place now.
- The Executive and Wilderness Working Group will work hard over the next couple of months to finish the required work and then meet once again with government to further next steps. Thank you to the Board for its support in helping us move this agenda forward.

Stephanie Killam, Chair
November 28, 2017