



**Community Futures Development Corporation
of Central Interior First Nations**

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Report on Community Capacity Building Forums

April & May 2007

Introduction: In 2006 the First Nation Forestry Council supported the ‘Phase I – First Nations Mountain Pine Beetle Impact Assessment Program’ to gather information on the severity and range of impacts in traditional territories throughout the central interior plateau of BC. Ninety-nine (99) First Nations (100%) determined to be within the MPB impacted areas completed the assessment and identified priorities for their communities. Those priorities include the following:

- 42% see Fire Protection and & Fuel Management as a priority;
- 42% see Land Use Planning / Stewardship as priorities including:
 - Harvest & Restoration (20%)
 - Habitat preservation (12%)
 - Land development (10%)
 - Inventories (7%)
 - Non- Timber Forest Resource inventories (4%)
 - Mapping (3%)
- 31% see economic development, employment & training as priorities.

The First Nation Forestry Council reviewed the Phase I - FN MPB Impact Assessment final report and developed a range of initiatives designed to involve and assist communities to address locally defined priorities.

The CFDC of Central Interior First Nations (CFDC of CIFN) was commissioned as the delivery agent for three (3) components of this range of programs including:

- Best Practices - Developing an inventory of First Nations led activities that address the identified priorities. This inventory is intended to promote sharing of things that work at the community level and stimulate a dialogue among impacted First Nation communities. Each First Nation submitting a summary of a Best Practice or an ‘Issues Paper’ will receive a \$2,500 contribution in support of participation in capacity building. The submissions will be posted to a web site for easy access contact information. Best Practices were to be submitted at the community forums but those First Nations not attending a forum have until June 14, 2007 to have their submission included in the inventory and access the \$2,500 payment;
- Phase II – Responses to First Nations MPB Impact Assessment – Community developed and supported ‘deliverables’ will be incorporated into a contribution agreement providing \$30,000 to the First Nation. It is understood that these funds will not be sufficient to completely address identified priorities but groups are encouraged to use funds for leverage to access additional resources to allow for planning and implementation of priorities identified during Phase I. Operating dates for this component are from May 1, 2007 through to November 30, 2007. A report on deliverables must be received by Nov. 30, 2007 to trigger the final contract payment;
- Partnership Incentive of \$10,000 per First Nation is designed to encourage people to work together to generate common solutions to common issues and provide some



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leverage for First Nations to get potential partners to bring their resources to the table. Memoranda of Agreement (MOAs) outlining common interests and targeted solutions must be supported and signed by at least 3 interest groups to trigger a \$10,000 payment to an identified coordinating group or the participating First Nation.

The FNFC supported a series of six (6) Community Capacity Building Forums through April & May 2007 in an effort to:

- Roll out the Phase I Impact Assessment Report and verify the findings with the impacted First Nations;
- Solicit and gather an inventory of Best Practices to be shared among First Nations;
- Identify complimentary funding sources and resource agencies with mandates to assist with planning, implementation and capacity development at the community level;
- Promote the FNFC initiatives for 2007;
- Streamline and provide support for the contracting and documentation process with the goal of getting the funding to the communities with an appropriate sense of urgency.

Activities: Community Capacity Building Forums were promoted by the CFDC of CIFN to Chief & Council of 103 First Nations now deemed to be ‘impacted’ by the MPB infestation and to the 99 contacts who completed the 2006 Impact Assessments. Posters announcing the Forums were distributed via Email and Fax and phone calls were made to ensure people had access to emerging information. Local and regional resource agencies were recruited to make presentations and local contacts provided assistance in arranging appropriate venues and dates.

Community Capacity Building Forums were held as follows:

- Kamloops – April 4 & 5, 2007
- Ft. St. John – April 11 & 12, 2007
- Cranbrook – April 13, 2007
- Williams Lake – April 16 & 17, 2007
- Terrace – April 26 & 27, 2007
- Prince George – May 2 & 3, 2007

Agendas allowed for presentations from local and regional resource agencies that could provide support for the identified priorities. Each Forum provided:

- An overview of the 2006 Impact Assessment Report;
- Information and documents on the FNFC Initiatives for 2007;
- Ecosystem Stewardship Planning (ESP) as a ‘Best Practice’ for Land Use Planning. John Ward, on behalf of the FNFC, presented at each forum;
- Fire Protection and Fuel Management information from the First Nations Emergency Services Society (FNESS). Harry Spahan presented at all but one forum;
- A showing of the ‘When The Forest Bleeds’ video;

Presentations from resource agencies and funding sources at 1 or more of the Forums included:

- Southern Interior Mountain Pine Beetle Working Group – Gordon Borgstrom – Ministry of Forests & Range.
- Southern Interior Development Initiative Trust – Ron Baker;



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- CESO – Bob Dixon
- New Relationship Trust – Nathan Matthew
- First Nations MPB Initiative – Dan George

Information on these presentations was provided to forum attendees when the presenters were not available; Additional information provided on local resources included:

- Northern Development Initiative Trust
- Cariboo – Chilcotin Beetle Action Committee
- Omineca Beetle Action Committee

Participation: The six (6) Community Capacity Building Forums provided 11 days of structured dialogue and information sharing for:

- At least 130 participants (196 participant days);
- 74 First Nations were represented (contact has been made with the remaining 29);
- At least 14 Tribal Councils were represented;
- A core of 4 presenters at each forum with an additional 5 agencies making presentations;

Impacts: Promotion of the 2007 FNFC Initiatives has generated (to May 25, 2007):

- 57 Best Practices submitted with distribution of \$142,500 to contributing First Nations;
- 14 contribution agreements signed off resulting in \$336,000 being sent to First Nations;
- 1 Partnership MOA being signed and the transfer of \$30,000 to the First Nations.

Daily communication with the remaining Impacted FNs is generating drafts and feedback towards completed documentation.

Issues & Recommendations: While comments about levels of resources being made available included some frustration about big dollar announcements from Government vs. small budget opportunities being identified, people were generally pleased that the FNFC was supporting First Nations communities. Common issues identified at each forum included:

- Pay the Stumpage or Burn: Stumpage rates related to community protection and fuel management were seen as prohibitive and a barrier to participation in the salvage harvest;
- INAC permitting processes for such harvests were seen as unacceptable in the face of risk assessments;
- The lack of local resource agency contact information and difficulty accessing such info;
- Poor access to complimentary funding;
- The end of the Federal fuel management program;
- The need for assistance with fuel management planning;
- The need for assistance with Land use planning;
- The need for assistance with economic development;

Recommendations: A general consensus from the forums identified:

- The need for a ‘Champion’ to take the stumpage issue to the table of both Federal & Provincial senior policy makers:



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- The need for continued provision of centralized support for First Nations dealing with MPB impacts;
- Need to develop and enhance relationships with Northern Development Initiative Trust, Southern Interior Development Initiative Trust, Omineca Beetle Action Committee, Cariboo Chilcotin Beetle Action Committee & Southern Interior Beetle Action Committee;

The Community Capacity Building Forums were well received by the target audiences.

They accomplished the objectives of establishing an inventory of Best Practices, Involving the communities and promoting the 2007 FNFC Initiatives.

Resources are reaching the communities in support of their 'Phase II- Response' to the MPB Impact Assessment.

Work is beginning to happen at the community level.

Work continues to ensure all MPB Impacted First Nations have access to available resources.

Notes compiled by bv. May 25, 2007.