



North Island Woodlands Advisory Group 2001 Annual Report

North Island Woodlands Advisory Group was created solely as part of a public advisory process required by Weyerhaeuser seeking certification by CSA Standard Z809 on a Defined Forest Area within the company's North Island Timberlands Division. Weyerhaeuser remains committed to maintaining certification under that standard and under the ISO 14001 on the same DFA. Both certifications were achieved in May 1999 and details of NIWAG activities in 1999 and 2000 are outlined in preceding annual reports.



In 2001 NIWAG held 10 regular meetings and one special meeting to deal with issues relating to the certifications, including consolidation of three operations into one within the DFA. In March, NIWAG members participated in a three-day workshop, held in Parksville for all advisory groups within Weyerhaeuser's BC Coastal Group. They also took part in a half-day workshop in November, and in two field trips.



Most annual reports recite a list of actions taken and results achieved. NIWAG has used this format for some years and while the accuracy of the lists is not in question, somehow the reports miss answering perhaps the most important question: Why do the 15 or so members of NIWAG keep on devoting their time and energy to this process? There must be something going on that meets the needs of all involved - the company, NIWAG and the individuals who make up NIWAG.

For Weyerhaeuser, having a permanent, stable and diverse volunteer advisory group, which has become educated about sustainable forest management, forest certification and the forest

industry and acts as an effective communication process, is a major asset. Weyerhaeuser's commitment to the sustainable-forestry certification process is shown by the support the company gives NIWAG and those employees who work directly and indirectly with the advisory group.

As a group NIWAG has come together as a dedicated and knowledgeable advisory body. All members have shown a high level of commitment, demonstrated by consistent attendance, intense effort to learn about the complexities of forestry, and a willingness to tackle sometimes-difficult issues. The company supports NIWAG with the resources it needs to carry out and sustain its advisory role, and it has shown it listens to and acts on NIWAG's advice.



Individual NIWAG members communicate both at and between meetings. Issues brought forward by individuals (who represent a wide variety of community-based interests) are appropriately dealt with, thus encouraging NIWAG members to stay involved. Requests for information are

fulfilled, including some from individuals, which are not necessarily shared by the group as a whole. Any member has access to Weyerhaeuser's North Island Timberlands' assistance.



Significant discussions from the year included:

- Three-day workshop in Parksville: NIWAG members brought forward the need for this meeting to Weyerhaeuser, and over 50 people attended, fully sponsored by Weyerhaeuser. NIWAG, West Island, North Island, Port McNeill, Stillwater and Queen Charlotte Islands advisory groups were well represented, and Weyerhaeuser staff from Nanaimo and Vancouver facilitated. Certification consultant and expert Robert Prescott-Allen gave a most memorable presentation on the nature of sustainability and his method for assessing the well being of communities.
- Special meeting on the consolidation of the three operations within North Island Timberlands into one: Ongoing tensions

between Weyerhaeuser and its unionized employees were addressed in an informational meeting addressed by company and union representatives.

- Half-day workshop: NIWAG members gave extra of their time to wrestle with several issues and indicators that had been in the "parking lot" for a while. Discussions centered on the indicators in the Multiple Benefits to Society section of the Sustainable Forest Management Plan.
- Two field trips (June 2 and October 27): NIWAG members were given a close-up view of specific sites and techniques used in sustainable forest management.
- Municipal award: North Island Timberlands won the District of Campbell River's Environmental Award for the Company of the Year, with NIWAG specifically mentioned as one of the reasons for the selection.



The above describes NIWAG's activities for 2001 – what could be called the meat and potatoes. What provides the "sizzle" of the steak is the continually evolving and growing level of trust and communication between individual members of the group and company representatives, as very busy people return month after month to attend the regular meetings and devote additional time to field trips and special events and work to stay on top of the issues.

The "sizzle" is in the people and in the approach to dealing with an old problem – how to have effective public input on land-use issues. NIWAG operates by deliberately taking the time and trouble to include all perspectives. There is an exchange of views and ideas, but in a managed manner to facilitate discussion. The process is constantly evolving, designed to keep the group moving forward.

Not constrained by conventional thinking or a hierarchical power structure, NIWAG remains balanced both in membership and in process. Despite some widely divergent standpoints, members treat each other respectfully, and even when intense issues surface at the table, a dash of humour can ease the tension.

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