

MEMBERS SPEAK

Maureen Brinson—Campbell River Chamber of Commerce

As a member of NIWAG and a representative of the Campbell River and District Chamber of Commerce I continue to bring any members concerns to the table. Change is one of the constants at the table over the past year. The staff of Cascadia have worked hard to maintain and meet our set of Indicators. Sustainability in our Defined Forest Area is critical in maintaining a healthy economy in our community. As a representative of the business community I feel that it is the responsibility of all of us to contribute to, support and monitor the forest companies working in our Defined Forest Area to ensure the 3 legs of sustainability (environment, social and economic) are balanced. Certification is one of the ways we, as a community, can have input and monitor forest companies to make sure they are doing their part for sustainability. Forestry plays an important role in our community and keeping our Defined Forest Area sustainable is important to keeping our Community prosperous and growing.

Morgan Ostler, Regional District of Comox-Strathcona

The constant change in forest tenure ownership is creating uncertainty among NIWAG members. This creates even greater concerns among staff, crews and contractors. I would appreciate a clear statement from the new owners of what the plans are for the amalgamation of Cascadia and Western Forest Products.

Bill Harrison, Seniors' Representative

It is a new challenge for NIWAG to take on additional activities with B.C. Timber Sales. At this time I do not report to any specific community group, but I am available to speak on the work of NIWAG.

We continue to update and improve on Indicators. It has always been my view that one of the important functions of NIWAG is that a cross-section of the community is aware of the ongoing issues of one of the major economic drivers of Northern Vancouver Island; and is in a position to help and assist the industry to gain certification. This certification is important for the ongoing viability and sustainability of our local communities.

Heidi Schrader, Village of Sayward

NIWAG has worked on Indicators during 2005. To the Village of Sayward, NIWAG means sustainability. It is important that we keep up with the critical inputs to NIWAG and the forest certification process. I joined NIWAG late in 2005, so I do not yet know how the certification process and third party auditing works for Sayward. I hope to find out in 2006.



Workshop – January 2005

Message from the Chair

I was privileged to act as the Chair and Facilitator of NIWAG for 2005. With rapid change in the Coastal Forest Industry and the urban growth of the area, the 6year tenure of NIWAG brings a sense of maturity. This is reflected in the commitment of NIWAG First Nation and Stakeholder representatives in grappling with the serious issues of forest and community sustainability, worker safety, and corporate responsibility.

Changes to our Defined Forest Area, new corporate ownership by Cascadia, Island Timberlands and B.C. Timber sales, and a new CSA Certification standard have kept NIWAG busy with change. The softwood lumber situation, along with changing world markets for softwood lumber continue to affect the forest economy and NIWAG has not seen any 'belt loosening' in the industry. We continue to find better **Indicators** to measure our various Stakeholder and First Nation **Values**.

The NIWAG table continues to be a microcosm of the greater struggle and transition within Coastal Communities and the Coastal Forest Industry. Hopefully 2006 will bring more certainty to us all.

The NIWAG table is more than a forum for Forest Certification, it is a place of learning, communicating and debating forest management related issues. I am proud to have been asked to facilitate and chair NIWAG again in 2006. I appreciate the open and honest sharing of knowledge, concerns and solutions offered by all of the NIWAG members and look forward to continued improvement towards Sustainable Forest Management and Sustainable Communities in 2006.

All photos courtesy of Ron Frank.

For More Information:

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NIWAG 2005 ANNUAL REPORT

North Island Woodlands Advisory Group (NIWAG) is an independent body providing organized and regular input to the development, implementation and ongoing improvement of Cascadia's Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) system at North Island Timberlands.

Input comes from a range of First Nation and Stakeholder representatives from the surrounding Communities including Sayward and Campbell River, Comox and Cape Mudge. The Canadian Standards Association Z809 (CSA Z809) **forest certification** forms the core of NIWAG's activities.

The land base on which NIWAG advises Cascadia is called the Defined Forest Area (DFA) in the Forest Certification Process and includes 230,000 Hectares of lands including Block 2 of Tree Farm Licence 39 and private lands at Iron River.

The strength of this process lies in the auditing of the process by 3rd Party Auditors to ensure compliance with agreed measurables, which are called Indicators. NIWAG currently has 46 indicators measuring a range of items from variable retention harvesting to the flow of economic benefits from the DFA in an attempt to measure continued improvement in Sustainable Forest Management and to truly reflect the Community Values expressed by NIWAG.

To date, NIWAG has successfully passed all audits and continued to express not only the values of our Communities as reflected by the 13 stakeholder and First Nations representatives, but concerns regarding issues which are still in process.



NIWAG Field Trip—May 2005

North Island Woodlands Advisory Group

Field Trip – May 2005



MEMBERSHIP

In 2005 the following First Nation and Stakeholder Groups were regular and participating members of NIWAG:

- **Chief John Smith/Art Wilson** First Nations/Hamatla Treaty Society
- **Bill Harrison** Seniors' Representative
- **Heather Pate*** Community Member at Large
- **Rick Wangler** United Steelworkers Local 1-363
- **Maureen Brinson** Chamber of Commerce
- **Richard Glover** Sayward Fish and Game Club
- **Morgan Ostler** City of Campbell River
- **Dorian Dereshkevich*** Forest Contractors to Cascadia
- **Shawn Jensen*** Suppliers to Cascadia
- **Quentin Dodd** C.R. Environmental Committee
- **Clay Carlson** Timberline Secondary School - Education
- **Mayor Heather Sprout*** Regional District of Comox-Strathcona
- **Bill Matthews** Regional District of Comox-Strathcona
- **Councillor Doug Dyson*** Village of Sayward

*(Indicates NIWAG members who left NIWAG during 2005. Many of the members were displaced by Municipal and Regional elections while others left their respective stakeholder groups or moved out of town.)

Observer Status:

- **John Andres, R.P.F.** Ministry of Forests

Cascadia Staff:

- **Cindy Fife, R.P.F.** Responsible for the Public Advisory process to Cascadia since 2004.
- **Don Carlyle** Human Resources Manager
- **Randall Dayton, R.F.T.** Area Engineer, NIT
- **George Nyman** Manager, NIT
- **Michel deBellefeuille, R.P.F.** Regional Certification Coordinator

Administrative Support to NIWAG:

- **Agnes Goldstone** Recording Secretary/Administrative
- **Ronald Frank, R.P.F.** Facilitator/Chair

In 2005 the Tlowitsis First Nation left the Hamatla Treaty Society and as a result there are now two First Nations representatives to the NIWAG table: **Chief John Smith** for the Tlowitsis First Nation and **Art Wilson** for the Hamatla Treaty Society.

ACTIVITIES

During 2005 NIWAG held 10 regular meetings, 1 field trip, 2 Saturday workshops to develop and review indicators and one small but very enjoyable Christmas Party.

NIWAG held the most successful community outreach to date with a kiosk at the Pier St. Market in Campbell River.

KEY ISSUES AND CHALLENGES FOR NIWAG IN 2005

2005 was a year of great change within the Forest Certification Process and to our Defined Forest Area (DFA).

Alienation of land base: New provincial legislation allowed for the Provincial Government to 'take-back' 20% of the Allowable Annual Cut of Tree Farm Licence 39, Block 2, and approximately 20% of the land base. Most of this harvest and its supporting land base was given to BC Timber Sales (BCTS) to manage. A smaller percentage of it is being shared among First Nations allotments, Woodlot Licencees and Community Forests. We are currently in transition with the land base in the Upper Eve River and the Tsitika River in the process of being removed from the DFA.

NIWAG is working with BCTS to develop a table to address their needs.

The sale by Weyerhaeuser of its Vancouver Island lands, private and crown, led to two new companies, Island Timberlands and Cascadia Forest Products Ltd.

*At the time of publication of this report, Western Forest Products Inc. has acquired Cascadia Forest Products Ltd.

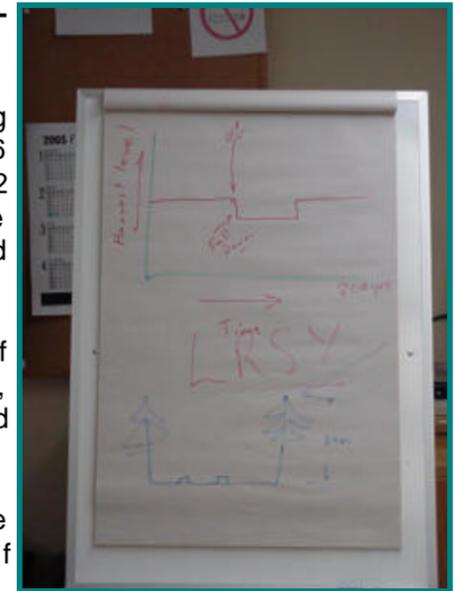


Field Trip—May 2005

Transition to the new CSA Z809-2002 Standard

In 2005 NIWAG began converting from the original CSA Z809 1996 Standard to the new 2002 standard. This transition will be complete by the end of 2006 and started with:

- a) more linear organization of the Values, Goals, Objectives, Indicators and Targets of NIWAG;
- b) standardizing of the NIWAG Terms of Reference, and:
- c) addition of Public Participation Indicators to measure Stakeholder and First Nations Satisfaction with the NIWAG CSA Certification Process.



Workshop – Nov. 2005

Similar to the Communities associated with the Defined Forest Area and North Island Timberlands, NIWAG also struggled with the changing dynamics of the forest industry. Some of the salient and more effort-demanding issues to NIWAG were:

1. Safety—NIWAG continued to work on a Safety Indicator to reflect the clear Value (all workers getting home safely); Establishment of a Provincial Forest Worker Safety Review and Provincial Forest Safety Ombudsman was seen as supportive to this initiative which is now focusing on finding an Indicator.
2. Rumors of the sale of Cascadia to Western Forest Products were circulating and adding to the uncertainty at the NIWAG table at the end of the year.

In summary, NIWAG found 2005 to be another year of dramatic change in the Defined Forest Area, NIWAG Forest Certification and the forest industry in general. The strength of the NIWAG table was clearly demonstrated as we 'pulled together' on difficult issues demanding significant consideration, time and energy.