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Community Engagement Framework

Burns Lake Community Forest Ltd. (BLCF) is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Comfor Management Services Ltd. (CMSL). CMSL is the sole shareholder of BLCF; therefore, the CMSL Board also acts as the Board for BLCF.

Under CMSL's Articles of Incorporation, representation of one director from each the Office of the Wet'suwet'en (OW), Wet'suwet'en First Nation (WFN), and Ts'il Kaz Koh Nation (Burns Lake Band or BLB) are appointed to the Board of Directors. There are also three seats reserved for members of the public at large. Appointed Board members receive a monthly stipend.

Board members represented by each respective community attend monthly Board meetings where details of operational and financial strategies are reported. Each community representative can express their views and concerns, as well as provide feedback for implementation. The Board is responsible for setting the strategic vision and mission of Burns Lake Community Forest.

The Village of Burns Lake (VBL) is the sole shareholder of CMSL that appoints all Board members based on the recommendations of each First Nations group, Village Council, and community members.

Through our management plan and other actives, BLCF has committed to multiple key performance indicators (KPI's) to support the broader social, economic, environmental and legal resources goals specifically. In addition, BLCF is committed to abiding by the *United Nations Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, *ILO Convention 169*, and Section 35 of the *Constitution Act (1982)* rights within their sphere of influence, included the right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) and the Principles and Criteria required to be Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified.

BLCF has a broad community outreach and engagement program. This document will highlight the key areas of these strategies and embody a commitment level to support our relationship with the Lakes District and the community of Burns Lake, while meeting the needs of the Community Forest Agreement K1A and third-party certification.

The purpose of this document is three-fold:

- Outline key commitments for engaging with Community members on the proceedings of the Community Forest Agreement K1A licence management and developing broad community outreach and engagement program
- Support the requirement of upholding Indigenous Peoples (First Nations) Rights and Community Relations for Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Certification; and
- Outline criteria for engagement on
 - Information sharing

- Communication and engagement strategies
- Completing two, five and ten-year forest and operational planning
- Acting together to manage the values of the community forest for the community

Engagement with the Public and Community at Large

- BLCF hosts an Annual General Meeting every fiscal year to report out on activities of the Community Forest Agreement K1A license and seek feedback on management activities, including high conservation values;
- BCLF attends community events annually, such as the Lakes District Fall Fair, Christmas Craft Fair, Burns Lake and District Chamber of Commerce Business Excellence Awards and other events for opportunity to share information and engage the public;
- BLCF annually holds the Open House BBQ event at the community forest office;
- Through local printed news, Facebook, Twitter, and website, BLCF ensures open and transparent communication of all proceedings of the community forest regularly;
- BCLF staff and contractors participate in the National Forest Week event held annually in late September. On occasion, BLCF has been the hosting committee in the community forest for this event in the Nadina District.
- BLCF supports open, transparent and inclusive contract award and bidding opportunities (ie: Contract and Bidding Policy)
- Every 3 years host a contractor’s community engagement session to solicit feedback on supporting local and small contracting opportunities (Next scheduled 2020- This will effectively coincide with the expire of the Select List supporting re-works if required.)
- Develop a field session “A day in the K1A Community Forest walkabout” to support community interaction, engagement and involvement.
- Explore opportunities for community involvement and engagement opportunities (i.e.: Hosting BCCFA AGM)
- A dispute resolution process that is in place (Appendix A) that is facilitated through our FSC Group Manager for our certification. In addition, there are other avenues to solve disputes within FSC through the Certification Body Dispute Resolution Process from their Accreditation Body (Accredited Services International) if you disagree with an audit result and also the Forest Stewardship Council Dispute Resolution Process.

Engagement with First Nation communities

BLCF is committed to abiding by the *United Nations Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, *ILO Convention 169*, and Section 35 of the *Constitution Act (1982)* rights within their sphere of influence, included the right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) and the Principles and Criteria required to be Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified. A detailed First Nation communication and engagement strategy details the extent of these commitments.

Appendix: Dispute Resolution Process

GRIEVANCES AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION

While it is Ecotrust Canada's (FSC Group Manager) goal to address concerns before they develop into serious conflicts, it is recognized that this may not always be possible. Our policy is to resolve any conflicts in an expeditious, effective and amicable manner with our Group Certificate members like the Burns Lake Community Forest. This document outlines the procedures followed in order to deal with complaints raised by either third parties or group members. In addition, there are other avenues to solve disputes through the Certification Body Dispute Resolution Process (Accredited Services International) and the Forest Stewardship Council Dispute Resolution Process.

9.1 Handling Grievances

The following procedures will be followed by EC when handling grievances.

- a. All complaints will be logged in the Complaints Register as per:
 - Date received
 - Name and address of complainant
 - Details of the complaint
 - Person responsible for responding to the complaint
- b. Ecotrust Canada's Group Manager oversees the Complaints File.
- c. A party expressing verbal complaints will be encouraged to place the complaint in writing. If the complainant does not wish to do so, the Group Manager will document the complaint.
- d. The Group Manager will notify the complainant about Ecotrust Canada's Grievances and Dispute Resolution procedures.
- e. If appropriate, the documented complaint will be distributed to the party which it was lodged against.
- f. If the complaint is lodged against Ecotrust Canada, then the Appeals Committee will be responsible for resolving the complaint.
- g. The Appeals Committee is comprised of one Ecotrust Canada staff member not involved in the day to day operations of FM Group, two group members, elected by the group, and an alternate. The committee arrives at decisions by a majority vote.
- h. In the case that a complaint is raised by a First Nation or indigenous person, Ecotrust Canada will appoint an aboriginal person to sit in the Appeals Committee as the alternative member. This person will be chosen by the board of Ecotrust Canada, and will assist the Appeals Committee in employing culturally appropriate processes.
- i. The person or company against whom the complaint has been lodged will be given an opportunity to give their perspective on the complaint. This is to be done preferably in writing, but may be done verbally.
- j. Ecotrust Canada will provide a written response to the complainant within 14 calendar days of receiving the complaint.

9.2 Dispute Resolution

The following procedures will be followed by EC when handling disputes.

- If a grievance cannot be resolved through the steps above, the Appeals Committee will be asked to review the case and propose a resolution. The committee will render a decision within 30 calendar days of the appeal being received.
- If the Appeals Committee cannot facilitate a resolution, the two parties will enter into a binding arbitration process, using a third-party arbitrator agreed upon by the two parties.

9.3 Records

All correspondences will be filed in the FM Group's Complaints Register. Details including date of resolution, all courses of action chosen and justification of action will be documented in the Complaints Register.