

HEALTHY FORESTS-HEALTHY COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE

A CONVERSATION ON BC FORESTS

Coordinator's Update Report

May 1, 2012

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The following are the first quarter of 2012 accomplishments in advancing the initiative:

- **2011 Activities Report** was completed, posted on the HFHC website and distributed to key parties, including politicians, influencers, supporters and volunteers with an offer to meet to discuss the report and answer any questions. Key related actions taken were:
 - Update meetings on the report were offered to the four main political parties (BC Liberals, NDP, BC Conservatives, BC Green Party); to date only one accepted (i.e., NDP)
 - Executive and senior staff of both the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations and the Ministry of Environment were updated on the 2011 Activities report as was the Forest Practices Board
 - Special effort was made to inform local Governments of the 2011 Activities results with some taking note of their applications to local conditions
 - 10 presentations were given to interested groups and offers extended to others; three additional presentations are scheduled for May
 - Presentations to community groups provided an opportunity to encourage communities to take action in getting prepared to influence forest management decisions regarding local forest lands; some have acted on the opportunities
 - Distribution of the 2011 Activities Report has generated several more communities asking for a Community Dialogue Session so their views can be considered; discussions with members of these occurred regarding how the fall 2012 community workshops may provide an opportunity to meet these needs but also build on last year's results
 - Urban and Rural Media were informed of the 2011 Activities Report and additional information available upon request; some "pick-up" occurred, primarily with rural newspapers

- **2012 Activities Plan** was completed and used as a basis for:
 - Organizing both expert and community workshops and communication opportunities with communities and interested parties
 - Soliciting funding from potential partners
 - Communicating the activities and requirements for 2012 to supporters and volunteers

- **Fund Raising** was aggressively undertaken with success significantly greater than experienced in 2011, indicating growing support for HFHC. More approvals are expected as a number of funding organizations have approval deadlines occurring after the first quarter of 2012. Although more funding has been received and more expected this year than 2011, the costs of delivering the 2012 activities are also higher. Consequently, volunteers and in-kind contributions will continue to be a mainstay of the HFHC initiative and coupled with the available funding will allow delivery of the intent of the 2012 Activities Plan. Almost all the in-kind contributions included in the 2012 Activities Plan have been confirmed. The remaining contributions are associated with the Community Workshops and have not been investigated yet due to HFHC priorities. However, there is optimism they will be realized. The communities were very supportive in 2011 and it is expected this will continue in the fall of 2012.

- **HFHC Partners** have increased since 2011, now totaling 19 ranging from academic institutions, NGOs, foundations, a union and professional associations; more are expected as funders are confirmed. Some of the additions include organizations previously supportive but decided to become partners (e.g., Association of BC Forest Professionals, Consulting Foresters of BC, BC Fraser Basin Council). The CIF continues to be the primary partner, providing in-kind support and member volunteer assistance. In addition, there are a number of supporting organizations who have agreed to distribute HFHC information to their members and networks, thereby, greatly extending the communications opportunities.

- **2012 Activities Plan Implementation** began in earnest in February with the following priority actions taken:
 - Planning of Expert Workshops, intended to provide innovative and practical recommended actions to address the 2011 issues, with the hosts and topics confirmed and implementation teams being created
 - Guidelines for the delivery of the Expert Workshops have been developed to ensure the outcomes are consistent with the needs and issues received in 2011
 - Workshop delivery will be delayed until late June compared with the mid-May proposed target due to other commitments by host organizations and confirmation of funding; however, this will still allow consolidation of the recommendations over the summer in time for distribution to the fall Community Workshops

- The TerraWeb initiative at UBC has agreed to help with the video taping of summaries from each of the Expert Workshops for posting on the HFHC website and providing another mechanism for communication of results to communities and interested parties
 - An initial enquiry with communities regarding interest in hosting a Community Workshop enquiry has been sent with some early commitments; Workshops are intended to provide community input to the Expert Workshop recommendations, in the fall of 2012; it is expected sufficient community sessions will be held to provide a local perspective on the recommendations from the Expert Workshops; further enquiries will be forthcoming in early summer or late spring as time permits and funding confirmed
 - Communities are beginning to action the local priorities identified in the 2011 Community Dialogue Sessions; a section in the HFHC website has been created for them to share these ideas and actions with other communities
- **HFHC related issues**
 - HFHC has been very active in communicating the results from the 2011 Activities as they relate to the Government option to log within forest reserves as an option to ameliorate the downfall in mid-term timber supply for the hard hit Mountain Pine Beetle (MPB) epidemic areas.
 - A letter to Ministers Thomson and Bell was sent communicating the inconsistency of this option with what communities informed decision-makers through the Community Dialogue Sessions and recommending either the option be removed or a public consultation process be established
 - The letter along with many from others and the media reports changed the Government position from “no process” to a commitment for a “public process” on the options being considered by Government; this is consistent with the identified community needs that more influence on forest management decisions are wanted by communities
 - Interviews by the Coordinator were requested regarding this issue and held to bring forward the community and expert views obtained during the 2011 activities
 - A new section within the HFHC website (i.e., Dialogue) was created to post newspaper articles, letters and opinions on the logging of forest reserves and other potential issues to provide a compendium of information for interested parties and an option for sharing views as long as they were consistent with the HFHC Operating Principles
 - During the dialogue on this issue, Mayors of forest dependent communities within the MPB epidemic area are making comments regarding the need for long-term community resiliency actions compared to short-term expedient

actions, thereby, reinforcing the identified wants and needs of the communities participating in the 2011 Community Dialogue Sessions

- As issues related to HFHC initiative arise, a similar approach as taken regarding the logging in forest reserves will be implemented

- **Collaboration**

- Collaboration has continued with organizations and initiatives with a common interest in the future of BC forests
- New agreements to share information have been established
- An introductory meeting among professional organizations, extension organizations, university students and academics was held to investigate the interest in working collaboratively to deliver forestry and forest management capacity assistance to communities as one means to increasing local knowledge and help in delivery of one of the community needs issues; the attendees agreed on collaboration; more conversation will occur as time allows

- **Communications-Media**

- Website – Social Media
 - An update of the website was conducted to make it more appropriate for communicating the 2012 activities; changes will continue to occur as improvements are identified by the Website Team or users and contributors.
 - Facebook and twitter communications have been expanded to service the interested parties who prefer the social media tools
 - Unsolicited briefs on topics related to the HFHC initiative have been received and requested to be posted on the website; this service has been accepted, provided they meet the HFHC Operating Principles
 - A database of partners and interested parties is being developed for use in distribution of HFHC materials
- Media
 - A media contact database has been created and continually updated for distribution of HFHC information
 - The media database was used to communicate the availability of the 2011 Activities Report, press releases and other documents, such as the letter to Ministers Thomson and Bell regarding the issue of potential logging in forest reserves

If anyone has questions or comments on this update, please contact Bill Bourgeois (wwb@telus.net) directly or through the HFHC webmail (info@bcforestconversation.com)