



Fraser River Peacemakers

September 12, 2017

2:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Sumas First Nation Community Hall
Abbotsford

FRP Board Attendance: Rod Clapton (Acting Chair), Leigh McCracken, Ed George (3:28), Marvin Rosenau (3:48), Bobbi Peters, Tim Sucic-Ex-Officio (via conference call)

Guests: Fred Helmer (FRSA), Les Antone (LFFA EC), Murray Ned (Sumas First Nation – LFFA ED), Kevin Garner (Union Bar First Nation), Const. Alistair Peers (RCMP), Terri Bodman (FVSS),

Admin: Don Simpson

Chief Dalton Silver (Sumas Welcome)

1. Agenda review

Rod provided a review of the agenda.

Decision: Agenda approved as presented.

2. Review July 25, 2017 minutes

A brief review of the action and decision items of the July 25, 2017 FRP meeting notes resulted in the following action items

Action: Review and verify the FRP Communications Committee membership composition.

Recommendation: Defer approval of July 25, 2017 meeting notes to next FRP meeting.

3. FRP – Australian Recreational Contingent meeting report

Rod provided an overview of the meeting of FRP representatives (July 28, 2017) and the Australian Recreational Contingent who recently attended the World Fishing Conference in Victoria BC in July 2017.

Some of the notable points are below:

- There were no Indigenous members of FRP present and was clearly an issue with the Aussies and an embarrassment for the FRP members attending.
- The meeting was held during the fishing seasonal openings of the First Nations of the area who unable to attend. The timing (of the meeting) was not right for First nation participation.
- If there is a “next time” it would benefit all if there was planning conducive to optimize attendance.



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4. Update on the National Recreational Fisheries Award (NRFA) – Leri Davies

Rod provided a chronology of events and progress as it pertained to the FRP-NFRA award planning process resulting in the following points:

- An email from Leri Davies (Strategic Media Relations Advisor/Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Pacific Region and assigned NFRA FRP award coordinator) was received by Rod on September 11, 2017.
- FRP needs to continue to apply pressure in finalizing plans for the award ceremony.
- FRP should not lose sight of “Celebrating” accomplishments and awards rather than focusing on issues and negative aspects of the process.
- Terry Beech MP Burnaby North - Seymour (and Parliamentary Secretary to the Federal Minister of Fisheries and Oceans the Honourable Dominic LeBlanc) has been identified as the potential presenter. Rod has had recent communications with him and/or his office and states he is a “good guy”. Terry submits there are many bureaucrats hiding under their desks as a result of the last administration (Harper Government).
- NFRA award planning process continues as work-in-progress.

5. 2017 Fraser River Peacemaker’s Review and Vision for Future

Rod opened the discussions with a brief review of FRP and its accomplishments over the last couple of years. The following key points were made:

- FRP has been involved for the last seven to eight (7-8) years now. It has proven to be durable.
- Congratulations to those who are still at the table and at work between meetings for and on behalf of FRP.
- However, there is a current and growing apathy in both the Recreational Sector and First Nations toward FRP and its processes/activities.
- Some in the Recreational Sector is seeing the FRP as being way too First Nations oriented and not addressing Recreational Sector issues including 2017 Recreational Sector in-river fishing opportunities. Huge issue for the Recreational Sector and elements that support the Rec fishing.
- The need to convene (FRP meetings) at other venues throughout the region as was once done in the early years must be revisited.
- FRP accomplishments were reiterated, but momentum and participation has slowed over last couple of years. There is a need for action: What do we need to do? What is the long-term FRP strategy? There is a need to break status quo soon.



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- There is a First Nations' Cultural Center at Kwantlen First Nation that is a good venue and Les Antone (LFFA EC member) extended its availability for FRP meetings.
- A mention of Rod fishing (methods) to the school district as an opportunity for FRP to assist or coordinate fishing experience to the process of teaching fishing to the kids.
- The public's perceptions (with respect to First Nations' fishing) are not correct. First Nations are not out 24/7 on the river killing everything. Communications of bad or wrong information is fuelling the conflict experienced by all on the river and in social media.
- Race-based issues snowball into real conflict issues both on the water and in the general public.
- FRP can teach rod fishing methods and also relationships and ethics on getting along as they know the regulations for sport (rod) fishing. More people may be willing to participate at FRP as a result.
- There are a couple of key items that need to be clarified with respect to First Nation participant's at FRP. LFFA EC members are not decision-makers or spokes persons for theirs or other First Nations in LFFA. The Rights and Title Holders are each First Nation where decisions are made.
- There is an emerging opportunity for FRP to attend (at a Tier 3 level) an LFFA Forum as an agenda item for the purpose of information sharing and discussions between FRP as an organization and the delegates of LFFA. Collectively pursue development of a plan (for FRP going forward).
- "Future stewards" was a term mentioned that described kids as the future generation to take up fishing. Rod Clapton's daughter is the Vice-Principle of the Langley Fundamental Middle School.
- The BC Fresh Water Fisheries Society (FWFS) has direct resources for the education of kids to fishing methods, gear, and experience.
- The FRP Terms of Reference were referred to and the primary interest of FRP is to reduce conflict, to achieve orderly fisheries, and to promote getting along on the river while fishing together. Also a reference was made to regional or Area-based FRP.
- Examples do exist where both sectors fish together at the same time and in relatively the same areas and get along. The Saturday, September 8, 2017 FRSA-coordinated Demonstration fishery is an example where there were First Nations drifters in the same area and no conflict arose for the entire day.
- There was an expressed need to revisit FRP direction.
- A reference was made to the discarded male Pink salmon at or near the confluence of the Harrison River and the Fraser River. Bad optics will always occur from time-to-time.



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- What is the “elephant in the room?” FRP needs to work with LFFA to ensure FRP is not just a bunch of white guys directing First Nations and others how to behave. Need to work together as a group and not a bunch of individuals.
- So how do we determine the future of the Fraser River Peacemakers?
- The beginning crisis back in 2009 where then Chief Willie Charlie was shot in the face ending a serious conflict between First Nations and Recreational Sector fishers that resulted in the convening of very concerned people to develop a process to deal with conflict. Thus the development of the ad-hoc dialogue table - Joint Sport Fishers and First Nations Working Group.
- There was lots of work 2010 onward toward building relationships between First Nations and the Recreational Sector. Organizations evolve, so it is possible that the FRP has fulfilled what can do. First Nations may not be on board with the FRP and its mission.
- There was a reference made to specific Sumas First Nation issues and the ORR call in process and/or RCMP processes. Lack of resources contributed to the failure of those processes in that case.
- FRP needs to be on the river or at least first responders to a conflict issue. Maybe FRP has done all it can after the first conflict. Need to identify resources to support proactive activities such as education, collaborative events and festivals.
- Fisheries planning is not an item to be developed at this table (FRP) or Tier 3 (First Nation to NGOs, other non-Aboriginal interest groups), but planning for fisheries is conducted at Tier 1 (First Nation to First Nation) and Tier 2 (First Nation to Government of Canada as represented by DFO) levels.
- First Nations are the Rights and Title holders that engage for any fisheries planning process. The Lower Fraser Fisheries Alliance (LFFA) is a coordinating body not a Rights and Title Holder as a First Nation is.
- LFFA has no mandate to speak for any First Nation; therefore LFFA must be cognizant and sensitive to not speak for any First Nation or group, or individual First Nation person.
- A reference was made to a pending Coded Wire Tag (CWT) program that is an opportunity for both Recreational and First Nation fishers to work together on science of Lower Fraser salmon. CWT may not be an easy project, but will wait for the input from Dave Barrett of the M&C Panel.
- FRP may not be the table to cover all of the issues discussed today.
- FRP had its beginning in not good circumstances. The trend of the Fraser river fishery is deteriorating rapidly into dire straits.



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- FRP has had true leadership and needs to continue to focus on working together.
- The Recreational Sector is a very diverse group with varying capacity, but not disorganized.
- The Recreational Sector had hoped (2017) FRP would provide solutions to the issue of \$0 from no fishing opportunity from a typical annual \$100M regional economy.
- A reference was made to the inception of the Fraser River Sport-Fishing Alliance (FRSA) "Save Salmon for All" not just the Recreational Sector.
- River fishermen need to work together to deal with DFO for in-river opportunities. There needs to be work to curtail bad behaviour on all parts.
- A chronology of species reduction included Sockeye, Chinook, and Steelhead over the last several years. A reference was made to the massive run in 2010 and all of the issues erupted and went unresolved. Now we have nothing.
- We need to all respect each other.
- The future of our heritages on the Fraser River is in the hands of DFO who is in position to ruin all hope of regaining a respectable fishery.
- Over time there has been a steady reduction of opportunities for the Recreational Sector on in-river fisheries ending in 2017 with "0"... nothing at all. This is unacceptable for many.
- There needs to be a working relationship with First Nations on the Fraser River to develop opportunities. A reference was made to a "Status Quo" letter from DFO.
- Fred Helmer and Rod Clapton on behalf of the Fraser River Sport-Fishing Alliance (FRSA) is seeking Fraser River Peacemakers' support to work towards a Recreational Sector fishing opportunity to go fishing.
- A reference was made to the Sockeye fishing (Recreational) as a real issue, but after ten years with working with DFO the issue of DFO concerns have not been resolved.
- A reference was reiterated to the "Sockeye Avoidance Demonstration Fishery" of Saturday, September 8, 2017 where both bar fishers and First Nation drifters fished in the same area with no conflict. The FRSA is here to stay and commends FRP for their nine-year history and determination to stay the course.
- Many recreational Fishers have had a lifetime on the Fraser River and its tributaries of fishing experiences both good and bad. We need to collectively work together.
- A reference was made to Monitoring & Compliance and the need for true monitoring for all.
- The call for FRP to support the FRSA and their call for an immediate opening on the Fraser River for a Recreational Fishery.



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- All FRP participants have been asked collectively for organizational-level support of FRSA's call for a fishery ASAP.
- It was mentioned that FRP should be aware of "scope-creep". The real issue for FRP is to secure consistent year-over-year funding to support FRP initiatives.
- The NFRA – FRP Award and the support of Terry Beech MP is an opportunity to springboard FRP and its advancement.
- A reference was made to early in 2017 and a DFO conference call (presumably with the Recreational Sector) and the evoking of "Zone 1" management. And the reference continued to include the Sport Fishing Advisory Committee (SFAC) and Sport Fishing Advisory Board (SFAB) processes. FRP needs to evolve as a table for all Fraser River fishers.
- Some First Nations are not happy with the communications and lack of communications with Fraser River Peacemakers and the recent actions on and off the river. A reference was made to the communications strategy of FRP.
- FRP really needs to celebrate accomplishments before considering dissolving or other drastic actions.
- All sectors have had a very challenging year. So, if FRP sees its hope for a future they need to seriously review the past both good and bad.
- First Nations FRP participants cannot concur with the request for support of an Immediate Recreational fishery on the Fraser River and at the FRP table.
- It was suggested that the request be read at the LFFA EC table for their review and recommendations.
- The September 8, 2017 Demonstration Fishery was not Fraser River Peacemakers, but ad-hoc and spur of the moment by Recreational fishers (FRSA).
- FRSA at the table concurs with the conclusion that FRP is not the table to be seeking First Nations' support or other decisions.
- The suggestion to bring issue to the LFFA EC must be clear that it is the Fraser River Sport-fishing Alliance (FRSA) as a Recreational Sector organization NOT the FRSA request for support for an immediate Recreational fishing opening on the Fraser River.
- From the point of view of over forty years on the Fraser River the FRP is a very important process. Reference to 2010-2014 and Sturgeon fishing – everyone was happy, but in years of low-abundance such as 2016 and 2017 the potential for conflict is very high. Frustration leads to anger, and anger leads to conflict.
- Future years of low abundance will continue to be both a challenge and a test for FRP.



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- First Nations concur that the true nature of September 8, 2017 “Protest” fishery, was a Demonstration fishery. A reiteration of the request for support at the FRP table is not in the participants to decide or agree. First Nations also need to test DFO on their management of in-season opportunities. It is a challenge to those at FRP to consider the request for support.
- The notion of conflict on low abundance and high abundance years being correlated is not fully acceptable. Conflict occurs in all times of both high and low abundance years regardless of opportunities
- The area that most are involved with is from Port Mann Bridge and upstream. DFO has imposed the management of First Nations’ fisheries in a management region called Above Port Mann (APM). There are twenty-five (25) First Nations in that region and development of a fisheries plan is very challenging at the best of times.
- If there is no consensus (within First Nations) of a fisheries plan, DFO will impose a plan ... take it or leave it.
- Terminal fisheries are another issue all by itself and another planning challenge for First Nations.
- A reference was made to an email from Sheldon Evers (DFO) Resource Manager from the region and the low catch-to-date relative to pre-season allocations (not negotiated) across all species. There are a lot of people who have not reached what they need.
- A reference was made to the Low Abundance Exploitation Rate (LAER) established by DFO Technical staff to ensure conservation goals of weak Sockeye stocks are met. Even with the LAER, First Nations are able to retain those Sockeye that are caught and un-releasable (mortally wounded) from eight inch Chinook fisheries.
- Pinks and Chum still remain to materialize in the Fraser River.
- The above state of First Nations for 2017 is the background where First Nations’ Leadership would have to view the request from the Recreational Sector for an immediate in-river opening.
- The September 8, 2017 Demonstration Fishery format has been considered and agreed to “in principle” by DFO earlier in the year at the SFAB level.
- The former GVRD now the NVRD has a “Fishing Finale” at the 2-Bit Bar near Fort Langley on September 30, 2017. Macmillan Island (Kwantlen First Nation). A reference to Fraser Valley Aboriginal Fisheries Society (FVAFS) was made. Also “Orange T-Shirt Day” in reference to Williams Lake event at the residential school.
- Peacemakers are encouraged to “stay-the-course” and persist in seeking common ground and working together.
- A further reference was made to a “new model” as the present “status quo” FRP is not working.



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- The concept of conservation is variable between sectors and groups. All need to be aware that if we continue to focus on harvesting there will be no fish left for the future. Not good. A reference to non-compliance fishing (by all) was made. Education is key for all to understand conservation.
- Compliance and accountability even when Leadership is encouraging compliance such as 8" mesh only, or no Flossing, some still do. If there are no consequences; non-compliance will continue. There is a need to address and act on non-compliance issues.
- A reference was made to Andy Olsen and the "Port Alberni model" between First Nations and the Recreational Sector that seems to be working. Perhaps FRP can seek if the model is available and doable in the Fraser River area.
- The First Nations' management areas of Below Port Mann (BPM), Above Port Mann (APM), and Harrison Fisheries Authority (HFA) needs to engage in "out-of-the-box" activities with the Commercial Sector in the room too.
- Even if FRSA and FRP are completely separate, the "outside-looking-in" perspective is not so clear and not all see the separation.
- The full needs of First nations extend beyond just having fish, but being on the river, preparation for all of the support activities and family and community involvement around fishing are equally as important. Recreational Sector instances of conflict have been hard to take at times and FRP is a good table to "Air all that out".
- Both Ed George and Leigh McCracken are on the Lower Fraser Sport Fishing Advisory Committee (SFAC) and Upper Fraser Sport Fishing Advisory Committee (SFAC). They have tabled to FRP the notion of participation at those processes.

Action: Distribute "Getting Past the Blame Game" Study document has been made available to FRP and posed as useful for FRP to use going forward. Also distribute these notes ASAP to group.

6. Other a) _____ b) _____ c) _____

7. Next meeting?

October 10, 2017 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm at Chawathil First Nation – (To be confirmed)

8. Adjournment