

Brief to the ICNRC meeting
Bill Shephard, Chair, Regional District of Mount Waddington

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Background: Key issues affecting land use and resource management in any area, are human settlement and community development. The type and location of settlement and the capacity of settlements to accommodate a variety of activity, is a major factor in the lifestyle and character of an area. In the matter of the Central Coast Study area, the provision of settlement options in the remote Coastal Area would provide a framework for moving ahead with responsible natural resource related development, focussing on Forestry, Fisheries, Aquaculture and Tourism.

It is suggested that a series of development plans could be prepared, in consultation with North Island/ Mainland community, in cooperation with the First Nations Community to address the following planning objectives:

- to perpetuate local natural landscape and environmental values found in the area.
- to provide settlement options for people employed in the area;
- to facilitate responsible exploitation of natural resources in the area;
- to encourage investment by government, corporations and individuals in the area;

Before European settlement, the Central Coast had a large native population which had developed a complex settlement network and social framework in the area. Consolidation of native settlement in centers such as Port Hardy, Alert Bay, and Bella Bella reduced the number of traditional coastal native settlements in the area. Some of the original native villages were adjacent to the logging settlements. Some were not. All of these sites had a long tradition of place and habitation and all will play an important role in the upcoming land treaties that the various First Nations will be negotiating. With the new native community government mandates that are being legislated, there will be challenges in developing joint settlement frameworks for the inclusion of outsiders in existing and traditional native communities. Similarly there will be challenges in financing, developing and operating community services.

The Central Coast Study area has experienced population exodus in the recent past. Before consolidation of logging activities there were a large number of independent logging communities and camps located in a number of locations. These settlements were more or less permanent communities with some schools and limited commercial services. Many of the original logging settlements were on floats and were moved from camp to camp as work or circumstances dictated. Much of the present day forest industry is accommodated on floating camps, as well.

As forestry activities move beyond the harvesting of old growth timber, there will be a great deal of forestry work in the area. Forest upgrading, selective thinning and harvesting, road maintenance will become more and more important and there will be more and more employment opportunities for residents of the area. Recent Forestry tenure policy changes at the Provincial level, will open up opportunities for the local communities to develop a vested interest in local forests. As salmon farming and other aquaculture activities expand in the study area there will be many local employment opportunities. Similarly, tourism will provide employment and settlement options for a variety of people; - some at remote locations, but others at traditional community centers where there are services and settlement options.

Given the numerous historic communities in the area, there are plenty of technically satisfactory site options for settlement in the area. The limiting factor to residential site selection is the potential availability of rudimentary services at a settlement site and economies of scale in establishing those services.

This brief will attempt to outline desirable remote community land policies, services, and standards, and will attempt to address the need for a policy framework for settlement in or adjacent to existing Native Reserve communities or traditional community sites that are inactive.

1/ Existing Communities and the Resource Base:

Before European Settlement on the Coast, all settlement was located, on shore, at sites that were chosen for their aspect to the weather, to traditional food supplies, and to their defensibility from hostile raids that were experienced from time to time. All permanent sites were accessible by traditional canoe and dwellings and ceremonial buildings were oriented to the water front. Settlement patterns included moving to and from seasonal, resource harvesting campsites around the major village centers. As the treaty process goes forward, the native community will be seeking to reactivate interest in traditional village sites and re-establish a presence in the area.

In the early 20th century, as commercial fishing and logging was developed, settlement became oriented to Administrative centers that were established to deliver social, religious and industrial goods and services to the remote coast. Campbell River, Alert Bay, Bella Bella, and Bella Coola, were the important pins on Federal and Provincial maps. Other centers became more and more dependant on those communities and in the sixties and seventies, many native villages were abandoned and the residents relocated to the established administrative centers and larger urban settlements on Vancouver Island and the lower mainland .

The logging industry of the early part of the 20th century was oriented around independent logging firms accessing quality timber from the water edge. Most of the camps were on floats and could be moved from job to job as circumstances warranted. Most of the loggers hired out of Vancouver; the camps were temporary and, for the most part the people were transient. A few families set up their own float houses in the area. A few people attempted to develop agricultural

land or establish commercial service to the transient work force. Since the logging industry has consolidated and become oriented to truck logging, the floating camps have been used to accommodate crew and staff, and industrial buildings to service the equipment have been established on shore, usually adjacent to the booming grounds. Extensive road networks have been established throughout most of the coastal area and the major islands of the study area.

As forestry activities move beyond old growth harvesting and as the native community acquires forest resources through the land claim process there will be more opportunities for local settlement oriented to the forest industry. This settlement will tend to occur at traditional native communities, particularly where there is access to the forest road network, - communities such as Kingcome inlet, - and at some of the more permanent forestry camps and booming grounds - communities such as Scott Cove / Echo Bay, Drury / Acteon Sound, Rivers Inlet, etc. If the opportunity for settlement exists, some forestry and logging staff will opt for family residence close to work sites.

The commercial salmon industry, in the early 20'th century, was oriented to salmon canning and salting. These practices required major plant and equipment and a fairly large, seasonal, work force. Canneries were constructed in many traditional native community sites, and elsewhere, to take advantage of salmon runs in the local area and to use the local work force that was available. Virtually all of this infrastructure is gone or is derelict and abandoned and the salmon fishery is oriented around processors and fishermen who operate outside of the area and only visit the Central Coast during fishery openings. In the last decade, salmon farming has resulted in considerable farm development in the Remote Coastal area; this settlement will continue as further aquaculture farm sites are created by the lifting of the Provincial moratorium on new salmon farm sites, and the proposed development of shellfish aquaculture..

As finfish and shellfish aquaculture expand, and other aquaculture activities are developed in the Central Coast, there will be demand for settlement options for crew and staff. Increasingly, the commercial salmon fishery, if it follows the direction that has been followed in Alaska, will be oriented to enhanced runs of salmon harvested as terminal fisheries, often at traditional native community sites. These enhancement activities will require more or less permanent residents to operate and maintain the hatcheries and other equipment As the fish and shellfish aquaculture industry expands and the industry becomes oriented to a "seafood approach" to the market, there will be more opportunities to operate year round, in the remote communities.

The tourist industry in the study area has, traditionally, been oriented to sports fishing and to boaters who cruise the area in the summer.. Most of the lodges and marinas in the area operate for several months in the Summer and close during the Winter. Some of the lodges are located on old cannery sites or in traditional logging service centers such as Sullivan Bay, Echo Bay, and Minstrel Island. Some of the lodges are floating, self contained, barges, usually retired by the forest industry, that are moved to the fishing areas in the Summer and stored in protected moorages in the Winter. Some are established on old titled parcels that have been available, for

sale, in fee simple. Facilities are usually left with maintenance staff for the Winter although retail and services such as post office and fuel dock are continued in the off season.

In the past fifteen years, adventure tourism, whale watching, and kayaking have become more and more popular. Several of the abandoned native communities, in the Broughton Archipelago, have been reactivated to accommodate tourists who wish to experience and learn about native traditions and lifestyles, Helicopter access to the spectacular scenery and wildlife areas of the Coastal Mountains has allowed helicopter oriented tourism to become established and to expand. Given the spectacular scenery, and the excellent outdoor recreation in the area, the tourist industry will expand and create a demand for settlement options for people in the industry and for vacationers who wish to establish vacation homes in the area.

Community Site Selection

As stated, above, the traditional native community sites probably afford the most suitable options for community development in the study area. These sites, developed over thousands of years, are the most desirable and convenient places to settle on the coast. If the bands who own these sites wish, and if a satisfactory administrative and property framework can be developed to accommodate a variety of activities, these sites could be developed as "urban" communities in the area, serving all aspects of fishing, aquaculture, forestry, and tourism. Two existing native communities that are potential community sites are Kingcome and Owikeeno.

Traditional logging communities, in strategic locations, that have taken on a role as residential and tourism centers are other candidates for settlement expansion. Some centers, such as Echo Bay have existing native settlements nearby. Most of these centers concentrate their development in the form of float houses and floating, marine oriented, infrastructure. Suitable backshore area would have to be available for such a site to become a practical long term settlement option. Three communities fitting this category in the Southern study area, are Minstrel Island, Echo Bay/ Scott Cove, and Sullivan Bay.

Remote Community Function

Remote communities in the Central Coast area should provide a residential option for people who work in the area, as well as for people, including First Nations, who settle in the area as a residential preference. There should be opportunities for single family dwellings, for mobile homes and modular dwellings, and, subject to demand and decisions at the community level, for multi - family dwellings. In the interest of conserving land and taking advantage of limited settlement lands most of the settlement should take place at low urban density with a pedestrian orientation to the entire community. There should be a continuation of the floating dwelling option in most of the communities.

The remote community should provide a basic package of utility, commercial and social services to the residents:

1. Education. K to 8 school facilities should be available in the remote community, as well as support for home schooling and technical and other courses from the School District and the Community College. It may be practical to have "School Boats" like school busses to serve extended settlements near the community centers where schools are located.

2. Commercial Most small communities have a general store / post office with a fuel dock and a few other marine services. Arrangements should be developed to allow remote commercial establishments to handle a variety of goods and services, including liquor sales, banking, insurance, etc. Many of these services will require cooperation from agencies and businesses that traditionally conduct or regulate business in these fields.

3. Industrial Industrial facilities should be located in such a manner that environmental impact is minimized. This is particularly true of petroleum products. Barge ramps and loading facilities should be maintained in or adjacent to communities and there should be commercial mooring space for all types of marine sea and air traffic. Where forest companies have established service facilities for the repair and maintenance of logging equipment, it may be possible to arrange for use of these facilities by other industries or to establish shops, warehouses and other industrial facilities on forest industrial sites.

4. Health and social services Many remote communities receive scheduled doctor's visits from the Port McNeill Medical Clinic. This system of medical service should be expanded to include medical facilities and trained first aid staff in individual communities. This could involve a community health person who is responsible for local health related activities and liaison with regular visiting doctors and the B.C. Ambulance service. It could also involve the establishment of modest community health centers which could be used as a clinic / meeting center for visiting health and social service personnel.

5 Recreation and Social Organization

Remote communities will have to work on establishing recreation and social activities on a volunteer basis: - using existing community facilities such as schools; sharing facilities that are owned by adjacent First Nations; developing community wide organizations that work at involving everyone in the community.

Infrastructure for Remote Communities:

Water, sewer, electricity and communication technology in remote communities has evolved from extremely primitive to modern technology standards in the last twenty years. Air transportation has also advanced to the point where there is daily, scheduled, air services to many remote communities - weather permitting. Commercial surface transport by water taxi, crew boat and

barge is available on a competitive basis throughout the area, as well as a large, informal, private fleet of speed boats, fish boats and other water craft. As technology improves service to remote communities will become more practical.

Water service

Practical water service in most remote communities usually consists of connection of surface water sources to individual users with 50mm plastic pipe, and, depending on the availability of electrical power, a pressure system in the individual residence. Water quality depends on the source and the potability of the water varies considerably; - from site to site and from season to season. Water shortages often occur in the dry summer months. Small chlorination plants or UV treatment are used to bring water quality up to provincial potability standards where required.

Water standards for small remote settlements should follow accepted engineering standards for quality and supply but should allow for practical adaptation of conduit sizes and stand pipes rather than conventional 150mm distribution systems and fire hydrants. Assistance should be given to remote settlements to establish well systems, rather than surface supplies to avoid the necessity for water treatment, which is a major operating problem in remote areas. Fire protection for safety and to provide economical fire insurance should be a consideration, as well.

Sewer Service

Most sewer service in remote communities consists of septic tank and deep, salt water, outfalls. There are a wide variety of package treatment plants available on the market, some requiring electrical service, others, operating passively by gravity. Most remote sites, because of climate, terrain, and topography will not support land based sewerage treatment facilities such as septic disposal fields or lagoons. Many older installations are raw sewage outfalls to the low tide mark!

Depending on availability of electrical power, septic tanks with a community, Septic Tank Effluent Pumped systems are probably the most environmentally suitable and practical sewage disposal system for remote and isolated communities. This system should include a single, deep water outfall with access to regular testing and service. Because of the low volume of sewage in small, remote, communities, there should be minimal concern about Biological Oxygen Demand and Total Suspended Solids in the effluent. If a deep water outfall is not practical, septic tank effluent could be partially aerated before disposal. If critical marine habitat such as an estuary or shellfish beds are adjacent to a community, the outfall should be located to eliminate possibility of contamination, and the quality of effluent closely monitored.

Electrical Power Supply

Most remote power supply in remote communities is by diesel electric generator. In some cases, the community owns and operates the generator; in others, individuals are responsible for their own power. There are a few developed hydro sites in the remote areas and these are of an obvious advantage to the settlements where they are located.

As solar and wind power improves, it will become simpler to supply electrical power to remote communities. Community electrical systems should be designed and operated, on a metered, user pay principle, so that maximum power demand is served and brownouts and other problems of reliability are minimized. It may be necessary to regulate electrical appliance use and installation in communities where there is limited power supply.

Electronic communication

Advances in electronic communication are improving telephone and other voice communication to remote communities in leaps and bounds. Satellite communication and other electronic advances will make communication to the remote communities as convenient and reliable as it is in major urban centers in the near future. The question will be cost and accessibility to everyone in the community.

Surface Communication

One of the key resources in the remote community is the community wharf, which must serve both marine and air traffic. With reductions in senior government support for wharves and harbours, it is essential that remote communities have the ability to maintain the facilities and control the operation of their port facilities. It is essential to have convenient and efficient access goods and people who arrive in the Central Coast: via the Island Highway to Port McNeill or Port Hardy; via the Chilcotin Highway to Bella Coola; or via the Central Coast, B.C. Ferry service. Remote communities must also have the ability to land helicopters; - usually somewhere near the center of the community.

Most of the roads in remote centers are developed by the forest industry for access to the woods. Road development in the remote settlements is usually very rudimentary, and there are few vehicles beyond vehicles owned and operated by the local forest company or their contractors. Although there should be an emphasis on pedestrian access in remote communities, there should be a developed "street network" of roads accessing all of the buildings in the community and connecting to the community wharf / harbour. This road network should be graveled and maintained so that it is passable in the rainy season. Innovative maintenance arrangements will have to be organized in remote communities.

Community Government

Because of the small size of the communities it will be necessary to develop local government that will relate to the Regional District and still allow local residents to solve their own problems

and deal with the day to day operation of the community. Area based service bylaws will cover the operation of the hard services, such as sewer and water. These bylaws and operating policy processes will have to be set up to build and improve on existing services to a point where operations are at the level desired. It will be important to keep hard service costs to reasonable levels. It will be important to have a simple land use bylaw for the community that allows for orderly expansion and allows the local community to control its own destiny.

In cases where a community is developed in partnership with a First Nation on a traditional village site, new arrangements will have to be organized, - putting the land and services under the ownership and control of the Band in question and representing the non native residents through a modified "strata ownership board" with a contractual relationship with the "landlord". Again, simplicity of operation and strict economy should be the main principles followed in establishing and operating hard services.

Land tenure

If a local community program is to succeed in the Coastal Community, it will be necessary to develop secure tenure of land and water for settlement.

The preferable option for tenure is fee simple tenure with conventional title for lots developed in cooperation with individual communities and their residents. Strata title, as indicated above, could be used as a title vehicle, and would have to be used on Native Lands, unless First Nations develop a land tenure system that would grant some kind of fee simple mechanism.

Conclusion:

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this session. We have some exciting opportunities in the North Island, and we have creative people who are willing to work with academic and government agencies to move ahead in a responsible way. As the CCLRMP process winds down, and long term senior government land use designations are made I hope that a settlement based planning initiative can go ahead. The Regional District, through our Regional Plan, and local planning initiatives, is certainly willing to be part of the process.

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