

**MINISTRY OF FORESTS' LOCAL RESOURCE USE PLANNING
IN THE LOWER STIKINE, BRITISH COLUMBIA: AN EVALUATION**

by

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Ministry of Forests' Local Resource Use Planning in the

Lower Stikine, British Columbia: An Evaluation

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ABSTRACT

The broad mandate of the British Columbia Ministry of Forests to carry out integrated resource planning on crown land has routinely placed the ministry in the midst of substantive forest use conflicts. Attempts to resolve these conflicts have resulted in a number of ministry-sponsored local planning activities. The purpose of this research is to analyze the Ministry of Forests' local resource use planning process and evaluate its effectiveness in resolving forest use conflicts in the lower Stikine River corridor. The study focusses on the role of planning in forestry decision making and evaluates how effectively mechanisms for cooperation and integration have been applied.

The study reveals a number of process deficiencies. Central among these are the absence of an overall watershed resource use strategy to guide local planning; failure by MOF to give meaningful consideration to essential nontimber forest uses; and, more fundamentally, a conflict of attitudes and values between the public and MOF decision makers. The strategic nature of the Lower Stikine Planning Report offered a preliminary assessment of the resource use conflicts, and responded to MOF's urgent need for a decision on a harvesting proposal. But it was inadequate to determine resource use priorities for the study area. The report would have more appropriately served as a springboard for further, more detailed planning. A number of improvements are suggested, which, if incorporated would significantly reduce the number of conflicts that arise in forest districts, and would also ensure that no important forest use opportunities are precluded in decision making. An alternative approach to resolving controversial forest use conflicts at the local level is discussed.

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DEDICATION

for gcf

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Forest Land Use Conflicts in British Columbia: Resolution?

The broad mandate of the British Columbia Ministry of Forests to carry out integrated resource planning on crown land has routinely placed the ministry in the midst of substantive forest use conflicts. There exists a fundamental criticism from native and nonnative people in local areas that little effort is made to reconcile traditional timber use with nontimber uses vital to both livelihood and simple outdoor enjoyment. The increasing competition for forest resources, and the accompanying increase in values attributed to those resources, demand that forest planning be made an integral component of forest management (Nygren, 1984, 478).

At present, the Ministry of Forests' (MOF) integrated use mandate provides no clear basis for allocation decisions (British Columbia, 1984a, F1). Consequently, tradeoffs must frequently be negotiated among a variety of interests. To support the negotiation and decision making process, MOF established a forest planning framework in 1983. The framework is intended to provide a means for resolving conflicts and producing optimal resource allocations. As a result, a number of ministry-sponsored local resource use planning activities were undertaken in local areas to resolve resource use conflicts. These areas include South Moresby, Meares Island, the Tsitika watershed, and more recently, the lower Stikine. It appears that local resource planning should contribute to sound forestry decision making because attempts are made to integrate relevant resource values in management decisions, to provide for local input, and to establish area-specific

management prescriptions to guide development. The purpose of this research is to analyze MOF's local resource use planning (LRUP) process and evaluate its effectiveness in resolving forest use conflicts in one case study area, the lower Stikine.

1.2 The Need For Evaluation

To date, MOF's integrated approach to resource planning and management has not enjoyed public confidence and support. Repeatedly, the opinion has been expressed that planning is ad hoc, lacks interjurisdictional coordination and cooperation, and is prone to political interference (British Columbia Caucus Heritage For Tomorrow, 1984b). On the technical side, methods to compare costs and benefits of alternate forest uses are poor. On the political side, concerned groups and citizens are demanding meaningful input to the decision making process and greater accountability for decisions made. Pearse (1976), in his Report of the Royal Commission on Forest Resources in British Columbia, recognized that MOF "should not be responsible for designing broader regional plans and objectives." For that purpose, he noted that "an authority with broader economic and social perspective would be more appropriate." Integration problems are being addressed by government agencies and representatives of industry, public interest groups, and the academic community on a continuing basis. The questions facing MOF over forest land uses are controversial and need attention. Evaluation of the ministry's local resource use planning process is timely to determine how resource use conflicts are being resolved and how effectively mechanisms for cooperation and integration are being applied in one case study area.

Traditional evaluation research has been concerned with the relationship between inputs and outcomes (Smith, 1975, 303). Little attention is normally given to the role of the intervening process in linking inputs to outcomes (Thomas, 1981, 91). Mitchell (1979, 263) noted the possible significance of communication, perceptions, personalities, attitudes, and motivations in accounting for the relative effectiveness of resource management decisions and warned that such variables not be overlooked. If evaluation research is to provide a better understanding of resource policies and programs, it is critical that analysis focuses on process characteristics and dynamics with the purpose of identifying which variables facilitate, and which ones hinder, program effectiveness. The case for process evaluation rests on its ability to identify, without preconceptions, how programs actually work and why outcomes are generated.

1.3 Study Objectives

This research project will document one example of a local planning effort. The emphasis is more on the decision process, or the way decisions were made, rather than on the outcome of the decision. The primary objectives are to:

- develop a normative model of the role of planning in forestry decision making, based on a review of relevant literature;
- analyse and evaluate the effectiveness of MOF's local resource use planning process in the lower Stikine using the model developed; and
- if necessary, suggest possible means of improving the planning process.

The evaluation will provide an objective appraisal of the planning process. Study findings will provide feedback to governmental planners and decision-makers concerned with improving program effectiveness.

1.4 Evaluation Design

The evaluation design was adapted from previous work by Day et al. (1977); Godschalk and Stiftel (1981); McAllister (1980); Suchman (1967); and Thomas (1981). Components of the design are illustrated in figure 1 and discussed below.

Figure 1. Evaluation Design

NORMATIVE MODEL	INFORMATION SOURCES	ANALYSIS	SYNTHESIS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• planning in forestry decision making• decision environment• decision process• decision review	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• literature review• content analysis• attitude survey• evaluator's judgement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• analytical criteria• objective assessment of planning process components	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• conclusions• recommendations

1.4.1 *Normative Model of Planning in the Decision Making Process*

The evaluation is organized around a model of planning in forestry decision making. The model is conceptualized from previous work on forest planning and resource allocation by Nygren (1984); Fox (1985); United States (1982); British Columbia (1983a); and others. Useful as an organizational tool, the planning model presents a normative statement of what forest planning and decision making should involve. Dimensions of the model include decision environment, decision process, and decision review. These dimensions are the focus of the lower Stikine planning process evaluation.

1.4.2 Information Sources

A variety of information sources were used as a basis for the evaluation: literature review; content analysis; interview and questionnaire surveys of attitudes and perceptions; and informed judgement by the evaluator. Literature pertaining to the role of planning in forestry decision making, forest planning techniques, and evaluation methods was examined. These provide the theoretical basis for the study and are discussed in detail in chapter 2.

A series of open-ended interviews focussing on perceptions and attitudes was conducted with a sample of individuals who participated in the planning process. The open interview technique relied as little as possible on prior assumptions about what was important to respondents. Questions phrased in the simplest, most direct way possible allowed respondents to disclose their perceptions of the issues in their own terms. This method allowed respondents to express opinions about events and consequences that may have not been previously apparent to the evaluator.

Survey questions concerned attitudes toward institutional and administrative arrangements, the Lower Stikine Planning Report, the agency referral process, the public involvement process, and the decision outcome. General questions were asked, and subquestions added, to ensure that all subject areas were covered with each respondent. The survey questionnaire is shown in appendix 1. In total, 22 formal surveys were conducted involving 15 in person and 7 by mail. Respondents included MOF regional and district staff, other resource agencies, licenced resource users, native organizations, and public interest groups. In addition, informal discussions were carried out with a number of local residents who did not have formal input to the planning process. The purpose of these

"on the street" discussions was to understand the sentiments of the less vocal people in the community whose opinions may not have been represented through the formal participation channels. Responses to key survey questions are shown in appendix 2.

MOF technical documents, files, correspondence, and interest group submissions were also analyzed. In combination, these information sources enabled a relatively objective and clear picture of events and issues to be compiled.

1.4.3 Analysis

Twelve analytical criteria were derived from the model and incorporated into the research questions used in the attitude survey. The criteria form the core of the model and provide the basis as to how the success of the lower Stikine planning process is judged. The analysis is an objective assessment of the planning process components and is supplemented by the attitudes of survey respondents and other information sources. Existing MOF legislation, the Lower Stikine Planning Report, the related agency referral and public involvement processes, and the decision outcome are analyzed. The model is illustrated and the evaluative criteria are discussed in chapter 2.

1.4.4 Synthesis

The synthesis attempts to integrate the components of the analysis so that a judgement can be made regarding the effectiveness of MOF's planning strategy in the lower Stikine. Closing remarks address the following questions: Was the outcome responsive to the problem? Is local resource use planning an effective way to plan a watershed? And, can the process be improved?

1.4.5 Evaluation Design Limitations

This structured but qualitative approach to evaluation is not without limitations. Subjective influences inevitably play a role in making evaluative judgements. The evaluator undoubtedly reaches conclusions which may differ from another researcher simply because background, values, and insights differ. Any bias introduced by the author will probably have less significance in the analysis than in the synthesis because the former attempts to be an objective assessment of the information sources. In the latter section, the conclusions are inevitably the author's opinion. An attempt has been made by the author to be systematic throughout the analysis of information sources.

CHAPTER 2

THE ROLE OF PLANNING IN FORESTRY DECISION MAKING

This chapter discusses the role of planning in forestry decision making. A normative model of the dimensions of the decision making process is shown. Analytical criteria derived from the model and used to judge the success of the lower Stikine planning process are listed and explained. The chapter constitutes the theoretical background to the analysis presented in chapter 5.

2.1 Planning in Forestry Decision Making

Most forest resource managers confront daily the problem of balancing legitimate land use demands that, in total, exceed the capability of the resource base. Because the demands are not all compatible, conflicts are inherent and compromise is usually unavoidable. Fox (1985, 140) points out that the process of compromise must produce a result that is consistent with the values of a democratic society. Such a process should consider the values of all interests concerned and provide a workable mechanism for reconciling differences (Emond, 1980, 13). Decision-makers must resolve not only the technical aspects of resource allocation but also questions of social priority.

Forest planning has, in recent years, been viewed as a means of dealing with social concerns associated with "what is important," "who is entitled," and "where it takes place" (Nygren, 1984, 478). The forest planner, then, plays an essential role in the decision making process. The role of the planner is to provide decision-makers with pertinent information regarding the technical and social aspects of the resource allocation problem. The decision-maker should be

presented with all courses of action that reflect the full range of social preferences and that are potentially capable of solving the problem. Full consequences of all alternatives should be disclosed.

Planning occurs under some degree of uncertainty. Undoubtedly, the ability to define choices and compare them meaningfully is a function of knowledge (Nygren, 1984, 481). But White (1978) reminds us that complete knowledge does not make the future more certain or predictable. He warns planners to be careful of "analysis paralysis" and points out that "the more information we have, the more understanding we have of the environment, the more uncertain it becomes".

Planners can best serve decision-makers by providing an "ongoing decision support system" (Nygren, 1984, 478). Less emphasis should be placed on the final product--a plan--and more effort spent on an analytical process for effectively evaluating available information and providing pertinent advice to decision-makers. If planners appreciate the underlying sociopolitical environment, acknowledge and clearly identify uncertainty and risk, and adopt an incremental, iterative approach to problem solving, their efforts can contribute to the decision support system.

2.2 Model of Planning in the Decision Making Process

Three dimensions of the decision making process are identified for the evaluation. These include decision environment, decision process, and decision review. Decision environment refers to the setting in which the decision making process occurs. Decision process refers to the planning steps and the context in which they are undertaken. Decision review refers to the final "sizing up" of the decision that is made. Each dimension is shown summarily in the model (fig. 2) and discussed separately below.

Figure 2. Model of Planning in the Decision Making Process

DECISION ENVIRONMENT

institutional arrangements
resource use policies and objectives
interest groups : objectives and attitudes
time and resources available

DECISION PROCESS

context : planning hierarchy
: information availability
: participation opportunities
: analytical tools and skills
process : formulating the problem
: developing solutions
: delineating impacts and consequences
: evaluating consequences

DECISION REVIEW

who's values are used in making judgements?
was the decision : equitably negotiated?
: democratically made?
does the decision : accommodate uncertainty?
: respond to the problem?

2.2.1 Decision Environment

Fundamental to the evaluation of a project is an examination of the environment in which the project takes place (Day et al., 1977, 174). An evaluation of the decision environment attempts to identify the conditions or variables that shape the process and that may influence its outcome. The environment for resource allocation decisions involves a number of interacting variables: existing legislation, administrative arrangements, external sociopolitical pressures, and the attitudes and values of all interest groups.

Legislative and administrative arrangements provide policy direction and resource use objectives for the resource agencies. All agencies have different jurisdictional and enforcement powers, organizational capabilities, and budgetary and time constraints. Review of these arrangements is important in understanding both the range of actions considered by planners and the final choices made by decision-makers (Day et al., 1977, 174).

Any decision making process involving public lands is inherently subject to external social and political pressures and demands. Recognition must be given to the social issues raised during the decision making process. Planners must also be aware that there exists an underlying complex political process involving many parties and therefore a variety of vested interests, attitudes, values, and assumptions. Value-laden questions of social priority and political feasibility are inevitable and, in combination, often the source of delay in conflict resolution and therefore must not be ignored.

2.2.2 Decision Process

In analyzing the decision process, the evaluator attempts to identify specific procedures, activities, and links which are critical to effective planning. A review of planning documents of a number of resource agencies indicates that there is agreement on the key activities involved in the decision process (British Columbia, 1983a; Ontario, 1980; United States, 1982). Although the terminology may differ, the decision process can be broken down into four elements: issues, options, consequences, and evaluation. Problem identification is developed from the issues; options are identified for resolving the problem; the consequences are displayed and then evaluated for the decision-maker (Nygren, 1984, 479). The strength of the decision process is a function of awareness of problem environment, adequate information, meaningful citizen and agency participation, and the availability of helpful analytical tools and skills. Examination of the decision process may reveal where process links are strong and where they break down. Judgements can then be made on those aspects related to program effectiveness or deficiencies.

2.2.3 Decision Review

Decision review is necessary to determine who has input to the decisions, who's values are used, how judgements and tradeoffs are made, and what impact the decision has on interest groups. An attempt is made to determine the influence of the decision environment and the decision process on the final decision made.

2.3 Evaluation Criteria

The model in figure 2 suggests twelve analytical criteria for the evaluation of the lower Stikine planning process. The criteria are grouped in relation to the three model dimensions. Decision environment criteria encompass external factors and conditions which shape the decision making process. Decision process and outcome criteria focus more specifically on the procedures of the decision making process. The criteria are listed in figure 3 and discussed in detail below.

Figure 3. Evaluation Criteria

DECISION ENVIRONMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* MOF's integrated resource use policy* MOF's approach to forest land use planning* terms of reference and objectives• time and resources available
DECISION PROCESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* planning hierarchy* information* participation and representation* analytical tools and mechanisms
DECISION REVIEW	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* equitable negotiation* democratic decision making* accommodating uncertainty• responsive to problem

2.3.1 *Decision Environment Criteria*

The purpose of this part of the evaluation is to document and describe the key factors that shaped the decision making process. Factors, conditions, and goals were partially inferred from existing MOF legislation and official documents. Survey respondents' attitudes were used to measure the validity of these inferences. The use of respondent attitudes as a check prevented the evaluator from attributing more formality and specificity to factors and goals than may

have existed. Questions concerned attitudes towards MOF's integrated resource use policy, the ministry's approach to forest land use planning, and the terms of reference and objectives of the lower Stikine planning process.

Illustration and comparison of respondents' objectives serve to highlight any differences in expectations and goals between the MOF and other interest groups. The institutional context and objectives of the lower Stikine project are described in chapters 3 and 4 respectively. Interest group objectives are explained in chapter 4. Respondents' attitudes towards the decision environment are summarized in the analysis in chapter 5.

2.3.2 Decision Process Criteria

Process criteria establish operational standards for the decision making process. These criteria control the effectiveness of specific procedures and activities of the planning process.

Planning Hierarchy

Planning decisions should be made through a hierarchy of planning areas whereby broad decisions are made before detailed decisions (Ontario, 1980, 6). If planning efforts for local areas are undertaken on a reactive basis, and in isolation, each area may plan for only short-term economic development and assume that other essential resource uses such as recreation and agriculture will be incorporated in other plans. Therefore, a hierarchical planning framework is desirable to guarantee overall balance and to ensure that resource use conflicts are assessed on a proactive basis at the proper planning level. Attention should be given to the significance of the issue in determining the appropriate planning level. MOF's planning framework is discussed in chapter 3 and the effectiveness

of its application in the lower Stikine is evaluated in chapter 5.

Information

Information is a critical component of the decision support system. Planners gather pertinent information in response to a given problem. Clear understanding of the issues and the ability to develop choices, compare them meaningfully, and evaluate their consequences all depend on the quality and accuracy of the information gathered. Ultimately, the quality of information has a significant bearing on the quality of the decision that is made (Nygren, 1984, 481).

But gathering only information pertinent to the problem can be difficult. In this respect, there is much to be said for an early "quick and dirty" scan of the problem, from identifying solutions to assessing their consequences, before embarking on a costly and time-consuming data collection program. This initial scan will likely shed better light on the problem and suggest what information is important, useful, and needed to avoid collection of irrelevant information which can paralyze the decision-maker. Once it is clear what information is needed, the task of data collection should include a survey and aggregation of existing resource inventories, canvassing of local concerns, and documentation of issues and management concerns (British Columbia, 1983a, 14).

Information must flow two ways in a planning process. There should be an interactive learning process between planning staff, agencies, and the public. Information will not affect decisions unless provided early in the process (Hadden, 1981, 546). This criterion aims to measure the understanding of issues, and the adequacy and timing of information used.

Participation and Representation

Within a liberal democratic system the right of the public to express its desires and to share in the decision making process at other than election times is widely accepted (Burton, 1979; Goldenberg, 1984; Macor, 1980; Ward, 1978; Wolfe, 1979). From the standpoint of equitable resolution of forest land use conflicts, the scope of the decision process must be wide enough to reflect the values and priorities of resource agencies, local governments, licenced resource users, special interest groups, and the public at large. To serve its purpose, public participation must be effective and influential and, equally important, perceived to be so (Pearse, 1986, 3).

A good starting point to develop an open decision making process is to provide formal opportunities for participation by key interests. In an open forum the issues, choices, and consequences of a planning problem can be discussed and debated. Fox (1985, 141) asserts that without such discussion, decisions are made in ignorance of their consequences, and society is subject to the tyranny of an uninformed majority. Participation facilitates mutual understanding, creative thinking, and the use of valuable local knowledge.

There are a variety of methods, ranging from consultation to extended involvement, from which the planner may choose to achieve participation. A single method approach is seldom adequate (Ontario, 1980, 21). The chosen combination should suit the seriousness and complexity of the local situation.

Participation must be a built-in process, and encouraged early at the policy level where all feasible alternatives are to be considered. Participation means that key players concerned with the planning area take an active role in the

decision making process rather than react to decisions made (Ontario, 1980, 19). It allows those potentially affected to have some say in decisions that most closely affect them and their communities before the decisions are made (Macor, 1980). If a wrong direction is taken then local people must live with, and learn from, their own mistakes.

All concerned players should be able to participate in the decision process on the basis of equality with one another with regard to access to information, analytical resources, financial support, and time to respond (Fox, 1985, 141). There should be regular feedback to the public providing early knowledge of forthcoming decisions and explaining the rationale for any decisions made.

A public agency's objective in undertaking a participatory effort may be, and often is, different from that of other groups concerned (Burton, 1979, 19). It is critical, therefore, that concerned groups have early input to the specification of goals and terms of reference of the participation effort. The role of other agency and public input into the final decision making should be clarified.

Given the multiplicity of values involved, goals cannot be specified *a priori* by planners or technical specialists. It is essential that planners design alternative means to specific ends and estimate their consequences. But it should be recognized that citizens, also, can play a valuable role in the selection of ends and in the design of means (McAllister, 1980, 36).

The effectiveness of any participation effort is affected by the manner in which the government is structured and operated to encourage it (McAllister, 1980, 36). A genuine commitment to public participation requires that government be responsive to public criticism, to public input, and public demands for information (Goldenberg, 1984, 37). In the final analysis, the true indicator of

effectiveness is public satisfaction that their contribution was used fairly in the decision making process.

In this study, the participation and representation criterion attempts to measure the effectiveness of the public involvement and agency referral processes. Effectiveness is measured in terms of appropriateness of method, provision of early opportunity, accessibility, discussion, and learning.

Analytical Tools and Mechanisms

The ability to make effective use of planning information in defining and comparing choices is, in large part, a function of the analytical tools and skills available. Regardless of the quality or quantity of information gathered, there must be technical internal mechanisms for integrating and using it (United States, 1982, 274). All information generated during the planning process must be presented to the decision-maker in a form that can be utilized for resolving the conflicts generated and designing compromise solutions, if necessary.

Some key questions should be directed at all solution sets before decisions are made (Wilson, 1985). These include: How likely are they to produce the desired result? Can they be put into effect in stages and in the extreme case could they be terminated or reversed? How likely are they to create public opposition? Is further study likely to yield better solutions, within the constraints of time and cost?

Methods capable of handling resource data, identifying solutions that respond to the problem, assessing social and economic impacts, and developing management prescriptions can contribute to effective and efficient conflict resolution. Such mechanisms provide a vital link in the decision process between

information and understanding and must, therefore, be used to the fullest extent possible.

The technical problem of evaluating noncommercial forest uses such as recreation, wilderness, and aesthetic values is noteworthy. Although these nonmarket values cannot be measured in the same way that commercial timber values can be, it does not mean that they are any less real or substantial (Pearse, 1986, 5). Forest land use decisions cannot be made solely on the basis of economic criteria. Social needs and values are equally important. But there must be some attempt to systematically and objectively define at least the relative values of commercial and noncommercial uses to guide the decision making process. This criterion is used to assess the resource analysis, forest management alternatives, evaluation of their consequences, and the appropriateness of the Lower Stikine Planning Report as a decision making tool.

2.3.3 Decision Review Criteria

Equitable Negotiation

Everyone wants to participate in decisions that effect them; fewer and fewer people will accept decisions dictated by someone else. People differ, and they use negotiation to handle their differences (Fisher and Ury, 1983, xi).

Discussion and negotiation are essential in the decision making process. All interest groups must be represented and they must be able to negotiate from positions of relative equality of right (Fox, 1985, 142). Decision-makers must consider the plurality of interests involved and give no prior preference to a particular resource use. Given that some solutions are mutually exclusive there must be room for compromise in the negotiation process.

Fisher and Ury (1983, 11) suggest that effective negotiation demands four important principles. These include: separate people from the problem; focus on interests, not positions; invent options for mutual gain; and insist on using objective criteria. Perhaps most pertinent to the adversarial nature of forest land use conflicts in British Columbia is the ability to see the situation as the other side sees it. The authors also note the value of joint brainstorming sessions. Brainstorming produces ideas which account for all interests involved, creates a climate of joint problem-solving, and educates each side about the concerns of the other (p. 65). This criterion aims to measure whether discussion and equitable negotiation occurred between MOF and the resource agencies and interested public.

Democratic Decision Making

Democratic selection of an alternative should give full credit to, and build upon, public and agency input. The final decision should reflect a consensus. If differences cannot be resolved, then decisions should be made by duly elected representatives, not by bureaucrats. This is because, in a true democracy, it is more difficult to exact accountability from resource agencies than from democratically elected representatives.

A large element of value judgement is involved in the decision making process. Value judgements of the decision-maker screen the resource allocation problem, regardless of how sophisticated or objective the manner in which the solutions and consequences are presented. Values also influence the degree to which priorities or pressures can interfere with judicious decision making. Decisions involved in accepting risk and determining tradeoffs between risks and benefits should be addressed by the decision-maker in close consultation with

local people and planners. It is important that the values and assumptions used in making judgements are clearly identified. Lastly, the decision should not run counter to the standards, sensitivities, and aspirations of the people most directly affected (Wilson, 1985). This criterion aims to determine whether the selection of the management strategy for the lower Stikine gave full credit to public and agency input, and what external factors, if any, influenced the decision making process.

Accommodating Uncertainty

Uncertainties are pervasive in decision making. Each planning effort, whether the outcome be a resource use plan or an initial assessment of a resource use conflict, is only a snapshot of a dynamic and ever-changing problem. Key assumptions, social values, or the physical, political, and economic environment may change. Any decision, therefore, should either minimize or at least accommodate the uncertainty surrounding such variables. The decision should be flexible enough to withstand any wrong assumptions made about the problem. Plans must be flexible, adaptive, and ongoing to accommodate changes in the decision environment.

Uncertainty can be reduced by further study. But decision-makers must not fall into the trap of postponing a decision until more information is gathered. Given time constraints on decision making, the postponement of a decision is very often more costly than the risk of a decision based on incomplete knowledge and understanding (Thompson, 1979). This criterion aims to measure whether the lower Stikine decision accommodated any uncertainty surrounding resource uses in the study area.

Responsive to Problem

The chosen solution must respond faithfully to the problem (Wilson, 1985). This assumes, of course, that the problem was accurately understood at the outset. Often, differences in perceptions of the problem pit outside interests against decision-makers. As a result, consensus on what constitutes an appropriate solution cannot be achieved. Differences should be openly discussed, and if possible, resolved early to ensure that everyone is thinking on common ground and working toward common objectives. The solution should meet the desired objective of the planning process without producing unexpected or undesirable side effects. Decision-makers should not so easily accept solutions on the basis of tradition or administrative ease. Every attempt should be made to test new ideas and be innovative. Those people most directly affected by the decision should be in a position to exact accountability from the decision-maker. This criterion aims to measure the responsiveness, in a broad generic sense, of local resource use planning to watershed planning problems.

CHAPTER 3

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR FOREST LAND USE PLANNING

This chapter describes the institutional framework within which forest land use planning occurs in British Columbia. The administration of provincial forests and MOF's forest management planning process are discussed.

3.1 Administration of Provincial Forests

MOF is responsible for the planning and administration of provincial forests in British Columbia. The Provincial Forest Program was initiated in the 1960s as an "initial broad zoning to establish in general terms the land base available for long-term integrated forest management" (British Columbia, 1979d, iv). Efforts to complete the process accelerated in 1979. Today the program is near completion with 138 forests designated and 1 awaiting final approval (Crover, 1986, pers. comm.). Provincial forests cover 81.5 million hectares or approximately 86% of the province's land base (British Columbia, 1985a, 25). Only 53% of provincial forest land is classified as productive, and of that, 34% is inoperable, inaccessible, or composed of noncommercial species (*ibid.*, 13). The remaining 47% of nonproductive forest land encompasses lakes, river corridors, and large tracts of alpine areas with superb wilderness recreation opportunities. Much of this nonproductive forest land is in northern British Columbia.

MOF endorses the following definition of integrated resource use:

The deliberate and careful planning of the integration of various resource uses, to interfere with each other as little as possible, with due regard for their order of importance in the the public interest in each management area, in order to achieve the optimum social and economic benefit to the people of British Columbia (British Columbia, 1983b).

The Ministry of Forests Act and the Forest Act provide the legislative base for the multiple use of provincial forest lands. Section 4 of the Ministry of Forests Act outlines ministry responsibility for integrated resource management, interagency consultation, and public involvement. Section 4 (c) defines the purposes and function of the ministry to:

plan the use of the forest and range resources of the Crown, so that the production of timber and forage, the harvesting of timber, the grazing of livestock and the realization of fisheries, wildlife, water, outdoor recreation and other natural resource values are coordinated and integrated in consultation and cooperation with other ministries and agencies of the Crown and the private sector (British Columbia. Revised Statutes. 1979a).

Under Section 5 (4) of the Forest Act, land designated as provincial forest is managed and used for:

- (a) timber production, utilization and related purposes;
- (b) forage production and grazing by livestock and wildlife;
- (c) forest oriented recreation; and
- (d) water, fisheries and wildlife resource purposes (British Columbia. Revised Statutes. 1979b).

Given the diversity of uses allowed in a provincial forest, the potential range of management emphases is wide and the variety of uses within one forest may be high (British Columbia, 1984b, 52). For example, in any established provincial forest, certain areas may be subject predominantly to timber harvesting while other areas may be retained in a natural state to meet recreation, fisheries, or wildlife management objectives. Provincial forest designation precludes creation of a park or any other single use status. Land must be withdrawn from a provincial forest if that land can accommodate alternate, higher valued single uses.

MOF has the dominant decision making authority in determining the optimal mix of resource uses within a provincial forest but must consult with other resource agencies, industry, and the public. The ministry is not bound to accept

or implement their recommendations. Resource use conflicts which cannot be resolved through the consultation process are referred to the Environment and Land Use Committee (ELUC) of cabinet. Proposals for land withdrawal from provincial forests may also be sent to ELUC for consideration.

Empowered by the Environment and Land Use Act (British Columbia, Revised Statutes, 1979c), ELUC brings together cabinet ministers with mandates pertaining to land use and resource development to act as final arbiters in conflict resolution. The Environment and Land Use Act is one of the most powerful pieces of legislation in British Columbia because it dominates all acts and regulations relating to environment and land use (Canada, 1976). The committee's mandate is to:

establish and recommend programs designed to foster increased public concern and awareness of the environment; to ensure that all aspects of preservation and maintenance of the natural environment are fully considered in the administration of land use and resource development; and to make recommendations on any matter relating to the environment and the development or use of land and other natural resources (British Columbia, Revised Statutes, 1979c).

Until 1983, ELUC's operational arm comprised the Environment and Land Use Committee Secretariat (ELUCS), Regional Resource Management Committees (RRMCs), and the Environment and Land Use Technical Committee (ELUTC). ELUCS coordinated resource data collection and analysis, prepared regional resource plans, and formulated guidelines for environmental and socioeconomic assessments of special development projects. RRMCs addressed resource conflicts of overlapping resource management jurisdictions and interests at the regional level. Their intent was to increase and improve regional decision making authority and make use of valuable local knowledge.

ELUCS and all RRMCS were disbanded in 1983. ELUTC still exists today and provides a forum for deputy ministers to deliberate on planning and land allocation problems. If the committee cannot recommend solutions, and if it does not refer the problem back to individual agencies for further information or clarification, the problem is referred to ELUC for resolution. Since 1983, ELUC has adopted a more centralized approach to resolving planning and resource allocation problems. Only issues of the highest public profile and complexity receive the committee's attention.

The Provincial Forest Program has raised a number of contentious issues since ministry efforts in 1979 to complete the designation process. Central among these is the fear that the program is little more than a "thinly disguised land grab at the expense of other ministries to secure large areas of the province for single use timber production" (British Columbia, 1984a, F22). The question of administrative responsibility has also been raised. Extensive interagency negotiations were undertaken to clarify the respective roles of ministries. As it now stands, MOF administers forest, timber, and recreation uses and range resources and the Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing administers nonforest uses such as rural settlement, rights-of-way, leases for commercial recreation ventures, and recreation cabin permits. Ministries that initially opposed the program continue to hold reservations about the equitability of decisions (ibid., F23). The Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing continues to argue that the best land allocation decisions require a neutral perspective not attainable under the current structure (ibid., F23).

It is evident from a review of written submissions to the Wilderness Advisory Committee¹ that interested people and groups throughout British Columbia feel that MOF is neglecting its legislated mandate to manage nonproductive forest lands (Peepre, 1985b; Rankin, 1986; Pearse, 1986; Fuller, 1985; and others). Dissatisfaction is also emanating from the forestry community. Eidsvik (1986) recently accused MOF of practicing multiple neglect, not multiple use. He contends that "land use decisions regarding nonproductive forest land must be based on a consideration of public good beyond timber values". A major conclusion of the Wilderness Advisory Committee was that MOF "should develop an appropriate philosophy for the noncommercial lands in provincial forests" (Wilderness Advisory Committee, 1986, 16).

3.2 MOF's Forest Management Planning Process

3.2.1 *Forest Planning Framework*

Integrated resource use priorities are determined through MOF's planning systems. The general framework is illustrated in figure 4 and discussed below.

Government priorities give direction to the preparation of ministry programs, the development of policies, and the formulation of regional resource use goals. MOF has the opportunity to influence this direction through its submission of the forest and range resource analysis every 10 years (British Columbia, 1984a).

Regional priorities are based on government policy and specify broad resource use targets for the timber supply areas (TSAs) and tree farm licences (TFLs) within the region. The preparation of forest management plans for TSA's

¹ The Wilderness Advisory Committee is a nongovernmental body, established in October 1985, charged with the task of offering advice on the problem of setting aside land for the preservation of wilderness in British Columbia.

Figure 4. Ministry of Forests' Planning Systems

PLANNING RESPONSIBILITY	PLANNING SYSTEM	PLANNING FUNCTION
Headquarters	Government priorities: Ministry's programs and procedures	Formulation of forest policy; forest, range and resource use goals
Region	Regional priorities: Forest management plans for TSAs and TFLs	Strategic integrated resource planning * timber, range, and recreation management strategies
District	Local priorities: Local resource use plans Resource development plans	Tactical integrated resource planning * integrated resource management guidelines for designated development areas • logistics for timber, range, and recreation development

Sources: British Columbia, 1983a and British Columbia, 1983b.

and TFL's is undertaken in the context of regional resource use targets. Forest management planning is the critical link between broad, largely nonquantitative provincial and regional priorities and more detailed, site-specific resource use and resource development plans.

Detailed planning at the local level is done within the context of a management strategy for a TSA or TFL. Local resource use plans and resource development plans are operational in nature, unlike forest management plans, which are strategic. In general, local resource use planning is initiated to resolve multiple resource use conflicts that arise in a designated development area. Resource development planning specifies how development is to take place. The logistics are detailed in logging plans, range unit plans, and forest recreation site development plans.

The Lower Stikine Planning Report and the related planning process are an example of local resource use planning within the ministry's planning framework. Local planning is not guided by a standard format. The methodologies, land units, terms of reference, and degrees of complexity vary, depending upon the potential for resource use impact and conflict (British Columbia, 1983a, 30). The amount of time, money, and planning effort spent is greatest for areas where resources other than timber are most valuable and environmental integrity is most threatened (British Columbia, 1985b, 13). Local priorities are considered an integral part of conflict resolution but, in some cases, regional or provincial priorities may take precedence.

3.2.2 Mechanisms for Integration

There are basically two mechanisms--agency referral and public involvement--available to MOF for integrating its resource use objectives with those of other agencies, industry, and the public. The intent of interagency and public cooperation is to negotiate a balance among various user interests. If a compromise cannot be reached, conflict resolution may be required at the Environment and Land Use Committee level of cabinet.

Agency Referral

The agency referral mechanism gives other agencies the opportunity to comment on resource allocation issues and development proposals as planning proceeds. MOF staff do the actual planning, including the development of planning options and the final decision making. Referrals are normally made to the Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing, the Ministry of Environment, and the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans. Formal provisions are made at the regional level for each agency to state its own interests and management

objectives within a TSA or TFL. In fact, of course, informal discussion occurs on an ongoing daily basis. Such interagency consultation facilitates the subsequent design of resource management strategies. At the local level development proposals for timber, range, and recreation are also referred to other agencies for comment before approval. This provides an opportunity to identify where potential resource use conflicts may arise and what mitigative measures could be taken (British Columbia, 1984a, F5).

The effectiveness of agency referral in the forest planning and decision making process was addressed in MOF's recent Forest and Range Resource Analysis (British Columbia, 1984a). It was noted that:

land use decisions are arrived at through an adversarial process rather than as a result of conformity to some overall government policy. Each agency had a mandate that belies a neutral position and these vested interests will continue to thwart land use planning until such time as clear government policy is developed to enable nonpartisan planning (p. F23).

Pearse (1986, 15) contends that the interests of each agency parallel the resource use for which it is primarily responsible, its established relations with a particular clientele of resource users, and its particular power base within the bureaucratic system.

Public Involvement

Public involvement mechanisms within MOF are guided by the policy statement embodied in the ministry's Public Involvement Handbook (British Columbia, 1981). The handbook provides a systematic framework for coordinating MOF, other resource agencies, the forest industry, and the general public in undertaking forest planning. MOF distinguishes between two principal methods of public involvement: consultation and extended involvement. Consultation methods employ news releases, fact pamphlets, working plan reviews, public meetings, and

workshops to establish two-way communication with members of the public. Extended involvement methods employ task groups, public advisory committees, and joint planning teams to examine complex resource problems in detail (British Columbia, 1981, 107).

Public involvement methods are chosen at the discretion of the district or regional manager, subject to staff and other resource limitations. The handbook lists guidelines to aid the choice. Consultation methods are typically used when the resource issues have a minor impact on the resource base; a narrow range of options are involved; a small number of people are interested in the situation; issues are urgent and must be dealt with immediately; and the public does not demand an extensive public involvement process. Extended involvement methods are typically used when resource issues have serious implications for the resource base; a wide range of options are involved; resource use interactions are complex; many public and agency groups are interested, issues are important but more planning time is available; and the public strongly requests a formal involvement program (British Columbia, 1981, 107). Extended involvement methods are used as the seriousness and complexity of the resource situation increases. These methods are intended to be mechanisms through which interested parties can influence management decisions on forest land. The public role in decision making is, of course, purely advisory.

In spite of the firm foundation of MOF's public involvement policy, which has grown over a period approaching nine years, a number of key barriers limits its effectiveness and restrict its implementation. Funding restraints and lack of political will to involve the public have unquestionably been overriding factors. Related problems include: vague public involvement goals; inadequate methods to register public concerns; inability of MOF technical staff to deal effectively with

the public; inadequate information exchange; lack of balanced representation; limited background experience of public interest groups in resource management disciplines; and the tendency for political interference in the process (British Columbia, 1980). To date, MOF has established extended involvement committees to address conflicts in the Stein Valley, Meares Island, South Moresby, Cascade Wilderness, Graystokes, and Spruce Lake in the Chilcotin. Weaknesses in all of these public advisory processes have been identified (Feller, 1982; Van der Horst, 1982; Farquarson, 1984; Helmer, 1980; Freeman, 1980).

CHAPTER 4

SUMMARY OF LOWER STIKINE PLANNING PROCESS

This chapter describes the characteristics of the Stikine watershed and the lower Stikine study area, outlines the events leading up to the planning process, and summarizes the Lower Stikine Planning Report and related agency referral and public involvement activities.

4.1 Characteristics of the Stikine Watershed

The Stikine River watershed, draining a land area of 41 800 km², is in northwestern British Columbia adjacent to the Alaska panhandle (fig. 5). The river flows through three distinct natural regions. The headwaters of the river are in the broad alpine valleys of the Tuaton–Laslui Lakes area of the Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness Park. The country in this upper region is characterized by high rolling tablelands. In the central region, 290 kilometers downstream from its headwaters, the Stikine has cut a spectacular canyon, to depths of 380 meters, through volcanic rock. In the lower reaches from Telegraph Creek to the Pacific Ocean, the estuary is surrounded by the heavily glaciated Coast Mountains.

The lower river provided historical access to the interior for the Tlingit Indians, white prospectors, fur traders, and government agents in the late 1800s (Fox and Buri, 1980). Telegraph Creek and Glenora are the only communities along the 640 kilometer length of the river. The valley has been subject to little resource development in recent decades, although some logging occurred in 1965. Today, pressures to develop Stikine resources are growing. B.C. Hydro has undertaken extensive studies to determine the feasibility of developing the river

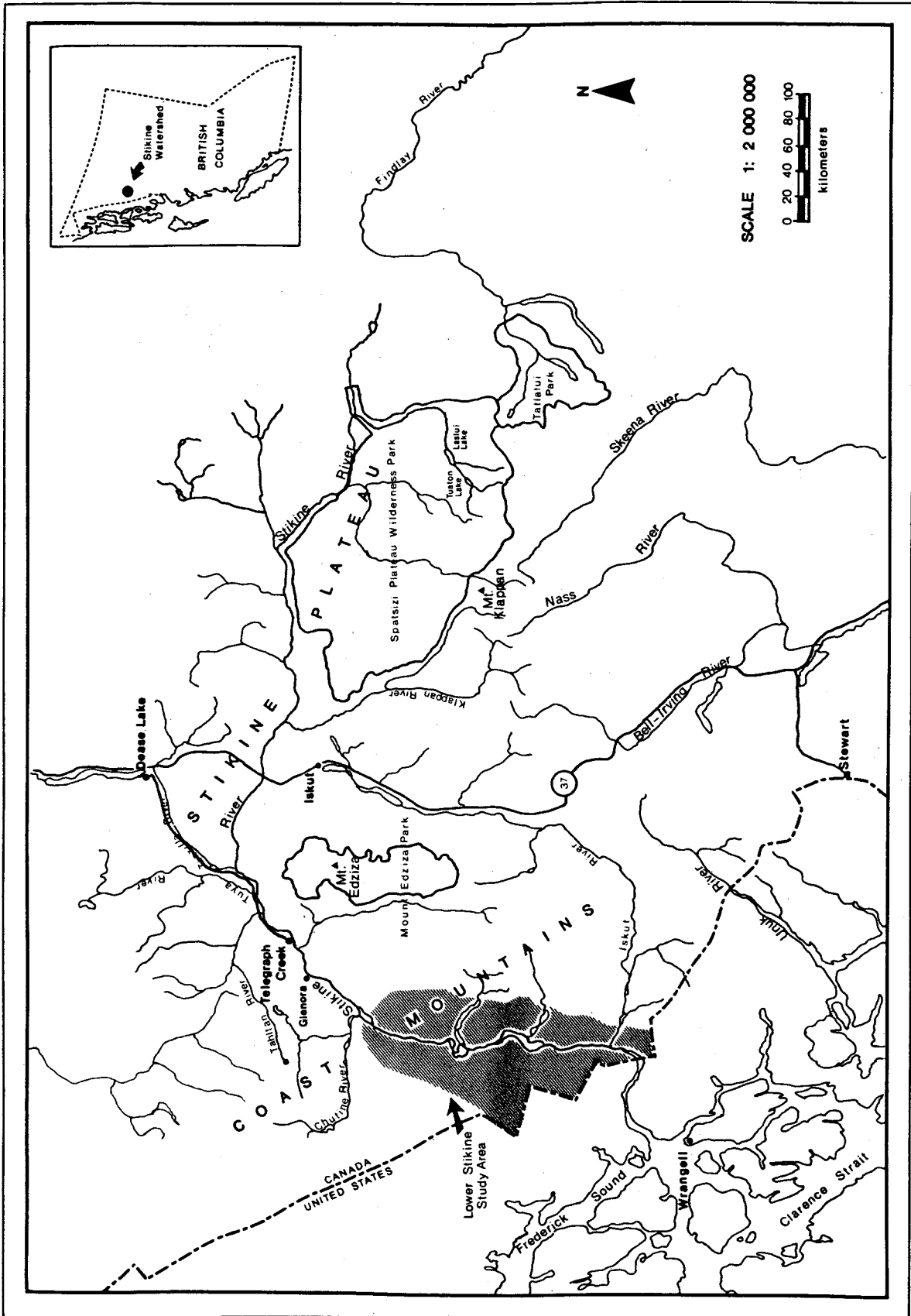


FIGURE 5 - LOCATION OF STIKINE RIVER WATERSHED

as a hydroelectric power source. Gulf Canada has proposed the development of an anthracite coal deposit near Mount Klappan on the southwest border of Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness Park. The proponent is presently undertaking studies to fulfill stage II requirements of the Ministry of Environment's project assessment process. A decision-in-principle by ELUC is expected by the end of this year (Crook, 1986, pers. comm.).

The Stikine valley is renowned for the unique wilderness experience it provides. Recreation values in the upper Stikine River are of provincial significance (British Columbia, 1982, 7). This region offers opportunities for hiking, canoeing, rafting, hunting, and sportfishing (Fox and Buri, 1980). The Grand Canyon is a spectacular geological feature of high scenic value. The heavily glaciated and rugged terrain of the lower Stikine offers an unrivalled setting for a variety of river recreation opportunities. A number of commercial tour operators offer trips downriver from Telegraph Creek and upriver from Wrangell, Alaska. The Mount Edziza Park, Mount Edziza Recreation Area, and the Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness Park, in the central and upper regions of the watershed, also draw recreationists from around the world. Current recreation use is moderate but growing (British Columbia, 1982, 7). There is a well-established pattern of use by rafters, canoeists, hunters, and guide outfitters who have travelled the river for many years. General tourism attraction to this area of the province is also growing. Tourist traffic on Highway 37 doubled between 1978 and 1982 and is now comparable in volume to that of the northern British Columbia section of the Alaska Highway (British Columbia, 1982, 7).

4.2 The Lower Stikine Study Area

The lower Stikine study area encompasses 6 600 km² of the lower reaches of the Stikine River, from the Chutine River confluence to the Canada–United States border, and extends from the valley bottom to the height of land on each side. The study area is within the Stikine Provincial Forest, the Cassiar Timber Supply Area, and the Prince Rupert Forest Region (fig. 6). The Alaskan section of the Stikine valley is within the Stikine Le-Conte Wilderness Area of the Tongass National Forest.

There are approximately 2.4 million cubic meters of harvestable sitka spruce and cottonwood in the lower Stikine (British Columbia, 1984b, 55). The remoteness of the study area from sawmills and markets, restrictions on access, environmental sensitivity, and harsh climate have prevented development of lower Stikine timber in the past. The lower river supports populations of all five species of Pacific salmon and a commercial fishery primarily of sockeye and coho. Wildlife values are high for moose, grizzly bear, and eagle (British Columbia, 1984b, 27).

4.3 Events Leading to the Planning Process

In October 1983, the Cassiar Forest District issued a timber sale licence in the lower Stikine River corridor to Hal-Pac Forest Products, a small business enterprise based in Kitwanga, B.C.. The licence provided for the harvesting of 60 000 cubic meters over two years from 475 hectares at the confluence of the Stikine and Iskut Rivers. The logs were to be boomed down river to Wrangell, Alaska and exported as roundwood to China (British Columbia, 1984b, 2).

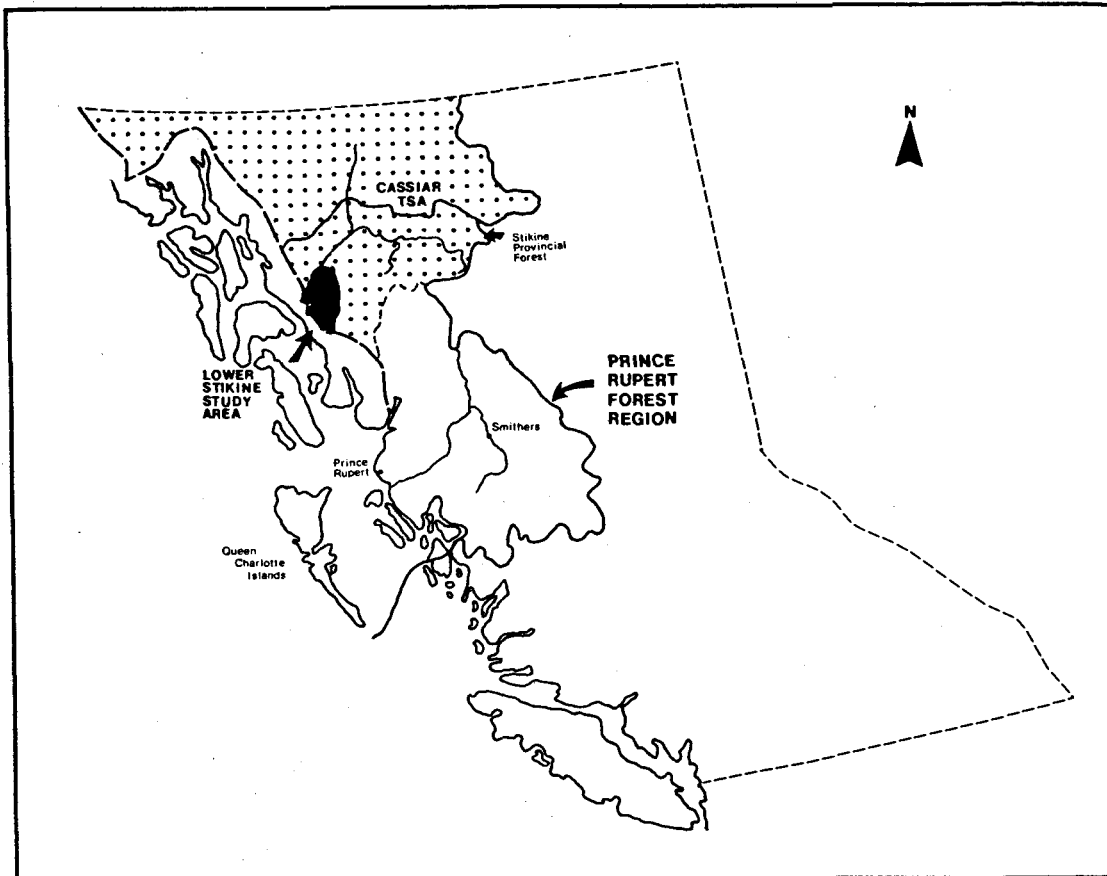


FIGURE 6 - LAND STATUS OF LOWER STIKINE STUDY AREA

At the time of application there was considerable uncertainty regarding the economic and operational feasibility of logging in the lower Stikine area. Uncertainty was due to its physical isolation, rugged terrain, and legal and administrative obstacles. After the TSL was issued, some key resource use conflicts were raised. The federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans, commercial fishermen, and public interest groups expressed concern over the impact of harvesting and river tow operations on fish habitat. A number of local commercial recreation interests voiced concern that timber extraction in the valley threatened the wilderness setting which supports the economic viability of river rafting and boating ventures.

Although it was recognized that the natural resource values of the lower Stikine warranted further examination before large-scale logging could proceed on a continuous basis, MOF was reluctant either to place an immediate moratorium on development or to commit major planning resources to a comprehensive resource use plan until logging had been proven to be viable (British Columbia, 1984b, 6). Thus, the TSL was granted on an experimental basis and it was understood that further applications would not be entertained until an initial assessment was completed.

4.4 The Lower Stikine Planning Report

The Prince Rupert Forest Region initiated a short term planning project to provide a preliminary assessment of the resource use conflicts while monitoring the feasibility of Hal-Pac's logging operation. Initiated in January 1984, the Lower Stikine Planning Report was intended as preliminary investigation of resource values and management issues specific to fisheries, wilderness recreation, wildlife, and timber harvesting. The report was to be based on existing or easily gathered information and critical information gaps were to be highlighted. The primary purpose of the planning report was to provide a technical basis for decision makers to decide whether further logging should be considered in future and whether detailed resource planning should precede development.

The Lower Stikine Planning Report is an example of local resource use planning (LRUP) within MOF's planning framework, but the report differs from the LRUP definition in two distinct ways. First, it is a preliminary evaluation of resource management alternatives for the study area; it is not a resource use plan *per se*. Second, the planning report addresses both whether resource

development should proceed and, if so, how.

Standard referrals for Hal-Pac's harvesting proposal were made to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing, and the Heritage Conservation Branch. The United States Forest Service and Alaska state Department of Environmental Conservation were also contacted. The referral procedure provided the opportunity for each agency to state its interests and management objectives for the lower Stikine. The course and timing of planning process events are illustrated in figure 7.

Figure 7. Course of Events: Lower Stikine Planning Process

October 1983	Issuance of TSL to HAL-PAC Forest Products
December 1983	Logging commences in lower Stikine
January 1984	<u>Lower Stikine Planning Report</u> initiated, project outline issued in Telegraph Creek
February-April 1984	Data collection and analysis, consultation meetings in Telegraph Creek and Iskut
June 1984	<u>Lower Stikine Planning Report</u> released
July 1984	Public meeting in Telegraph Creek followed by public review of report
16 August 1984	Public meeting in Telegraph Creek
15 September 1984	Deadline for submissions
4 October 1984	Decision on management strategy for lower Stikine
November 1984	Lower Stikine Resource Plan outline issued
June 1986	Resource plan completion expected

The public involvement program of the planning process was divided into three phases: (1) distribution of the project outline to the interested public; (2) consultation meetings with local groups in Iskut and Telegraph Creek; and (3)

public review and comment on the planning report.

Completed in July 1984, the Lower Stikine Planning Report presented three alternative approaches to forest management in the lower Stikine and outlined actions MOF should pursue in the event that further logging was considered. The alternatives included: timber emphasis, integrated timber and recreation management emphasis, and wilderness recreation emphasis (British Columbia, 1984b, 2). Each management alternative was evaluated according to four qualitative criteria: timber development benefits; recreation benefits; risk to fish and wildlife; and planning resources (British Columbia, 1984b, 38). A cursory analysis of the operational and economic feasibility of harvesting lower Stikine timber was documented. MOF drew two major conclusions from the timber analysis. First, the technical problems involved in establishing a logging camp, supplying and maintaining the operation, handling logs on the river, and complying with international regulations were not deemed to be prohibitive. Second, logging in the study area was expected to be economically viable. This conclusion was made even though the final returns to HAL-PAC from logging in the winter of 1983-84 were unknown and the economic feasibility analysis that was done, could not be extrapolated broadly over the study area (British Columbia, 1984b, 64).

No economic assessment of existing or potential recreation use was made. MOF chose not to undertake a cost-benefit analysis of logging versus recreation despite the insistence of outside interests that such a study be completed for consideration by decision-makers. Comments from other resource agencies and the public were received by MOF until mid-September, at which time the district manager of the Cassiar Forest District, in consultation with the regional manager, decided that alternative 2, integrated timber and recreation management, would provide the best land use strategy for the lower Stikine. As a result, the Lower

Stikine Local Resource Use Plan is currently being prepared under the authority of the Cassiar Forest District. The plan is intended to direct harvesting so that the management objectives for the fish and wildlife, visual landscape, and recreation resources are met.

4.5 Resource Agencies and Interest Groups

The purpose of this section is to highlight resource agencies and interest groups who provided input to the lower Stikine planning process. Respondent groups interviewed and submissions reviewed are summarized in table 1. Interest group objectives are discussed below and the major issues raised by these groups are discussed in chapter 5.

Department of Fisheries and Oceans

The federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) administers the Fisheries Act as it pertains to Pacific salmon on the Stikine River. This includes the management of a commercial and native food fishery, in addition to habitat management of all waters utilized by Pacific salmon for spawning, migration, and rearing. After receiving the referral for the lower Stikine timber sale licence, DFO requested that harvesting be deferred until planning was completed.

Parks Canada

The northwestern portion of British Columbia, which includes the Stikine watershed, is currently unrepresented in the national parks system (Canada, 1984). Parks Canada recently designated two areas in the Stikine watershed, the Spatsizi Plateau and Mount Edziza, as Natural Areas of Canadian Significance (NACS). But neither area has yet been formally proposed as a national park.

Table 1. Resource Agency and Interest Group Responses to Lower Stikine Planning Process

RESPONDENT GROUPS	NUMBER INTERVIEWED	SUBMISSIONS REVIEWED
Provincial Resource Agencies		
Ministry of Forests	7	
Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division	1	1
Ministry of Environment Fish and Wildlife Branch	1	1
Ministry of Provincial Secretary and Government Services Heritage Conservation Branch	1	1
Federal Agencies		
Department of Fisheries and Oceans	1	1
Department of the Environment Parks Canada		1
Native Organizations		
Association of United Tahltans		1
Tahltan Band Council	1	
Iskut Band Council		1
Interest Groups		
Residents For A Free Flowing Stikine	4	1
Southeast Alaska Conservation Council	1	1
Yukon Conservation Society		1
Friends of the Stikine		1
Outdoor Recreation Council of B.C.		1
Federation of Mountain Clubs of B.C.		1
Local Government and Commercial Interests		
Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine		1
Stikine Riversong Cafe and General Store Ltd.		1
Stikine River Fishermans' Association		1
Great Glacier Salmon Ltd.		1
Tahltan Trappers Association		1
Iskut Trail and River Adventures		1
Trina Anne Expeditions	1	
Local Trapper/Commercial Fisherman	1	
Private Consultants	3	1
Subtotal	22	20
Informal Discussions	7	
TOTAL	29	20

Recent studies indicate that the Stikine River would have no difficulty in meeting the selection guidelines of the Canadian Heritage Rivers System (CHRS) (Canada, 1985). The potential of the Grand Canyon of the Stikine to be designated as a Canadian landmark under the Canadian Landmarks Program has also been recognized. The designation of any park status, whether it be national park, heritage river, or Canadian landmark, can only occur with the full cooperation and support of the provincial government. As yet, that support has not been forthcoming.

Logging in the lower Stikine is perhaps most incompatible with heritage river status. The future option to create a heritage river may be forgone if the effects of logging detract from the natural, historical, and recreational value of the river.

Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division

The Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division (PORD) of the Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing currently administers two provincial parks in the Stikine watershed: Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness Park and Mount Edziza Park. The Grand Canyon of the Stikine qualifies as a candidate for a provincial park (Moore, 1984). But the prior commitments of a flooding reserve and established hydroelectric interests take precedence. PORD has stated that it will not pursue the possibility of provincial park until a decision has been made on whether or not to proceed with hydro development (Moore, 1984). The lower Stikine is not being considered for a provincial park, but it is a likely candidate for a recreation corridor.

The Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing, through consultation with resource users and management agencies, has developed the Recreation Corridors Program

to identify and manage selected recreation corridors in the province. The Stikine River corridor has been identified as a priority area for corridor designation. MLPH and MOF are presently involved in assessing the area's recreational, historical, and natural attributes for the designation process. To retain as much flexibility as possible for future park or corridor options, PORD recommended to MOF that if logging were to proceed it be done without negatively impacting the important heritage, recreational, tourism, and other resource values in the area.

Fish and Wildlife Branch

The Ministry of Environment administers the Water Act, the Pollution Control Act, and the Wildlife Act to regulate certain uses of water and land resources in the province. The Fish and Wildlife Branch is responsible for the protection and management of wildlife and freshwater fisheries. In the lower Stikine, the branch has played a regulatory role by responding to Hal-Pac's logging proposal and monitoring the logging operation.

Heritage Conservation Branch

The Heritage Conservation Branch of the Ministry of Provincial Secretary and Government Services administers the Heritage Conservation Act to protect provincial heritage resources. Ethnoarchaeological research has been carried out in the Telegraph Creek area with significant findings (Albright, 1982). To date, no heritage resource inventory study has been prepared in the lower Stikine but there is ethnohistoric reference to the occupation of at least one village trading site close to the Stikine-Iskut confluence during late prehistoric or early historic times (Friends of the Stikine, 1984). In response to the issuance of the TSL, the branch expressed concern about the extreme sensitivity of heritage resources to road building and harvesting disturbances.

Native Organizations

The Association of United Tahltans, in conjunction with the Iskut Band Council and the Tahltan Band Council, is currently pursuing a land claim that encompasses the lower Stikine study area. Tahltan people rely on the Stikine River fishery as a major food source. The Iskut Band Council owns and operates Iskut Trail and River Adventures, a recreational business which employs local people and is a stimulus to the local economy. For reasons of aboriginal title, local employment, and reliance on the the food fishery, the Tahltans have been opposed to logging activity in the lower Stikine since the TSL was issued (Marion, 1984). Tahltan spokespersons have repeatedly and firmly asserted to bureaucrats, politicians, developers, and conservationists that the Tahltans in no way are affiliated with, or share aspirations with, Residents For A Free Flowing Stikine or Friends of the Stikine. Through settlement of their land claim, the association is seeking to secure a dominant role in any future government planning or management process affecting their territory.

Environmental Groups

Substantial input and inquiries were made to MOF regarding harvesting in the lower Stikine by a number of environmental, conservation, and outdoor recreation groups. These included Residents For A Free-Flowing Stikine of Telegraph Creek, the Southeast Alaska Conservation Council of Juneau, Alaska, and the Yukon Conservation Society of Whitehorse. Vancouver-based Friends of the Stikine, the Outdoor Recreation Council, and the Federation of Mountain Clubs of British Columbia also submitted briefs and recommendations.

Local Government and Commercial Interests

The Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine voiced skepticism about the implications of Hal-Pac's short-term, export-based logging operation on the long-term viability of the local economy. Several commercial enterprises such as the Stikine Riversong Cafe and General Store Ltd. and Iskut Trail and River Adventures expressed concern about the impact of logging on the market potential of recreational use in the valley and on the wilderness experience sought by recreationists from around the world. The Great Glacier Salmon Ltd., the Stikine River Fisherman's Association, and the Tahltan Trappers' Association were apprehensive about the effects of logging on spawning and rearing grounds of the fishery and on all fur-bearing animals.

General Public

Public response to the issuance of the TSL was extensive from the northwestern communities of Smithers, Iskut, Dease Lake, and Telegraph Creek. Numerous letters expressing viewpoints on lower Stikine resource issues were also sent from outside of British Columbia. The major issues raised by interest groups and the general public are summarized in the analysis in chapter 5 and documented in detail in appendix 2.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS OF THE LOWER STIKINE PLANNING PROCESS

This chapter evaluates the effectiveness of the lower Stikine planning process. Process effectiveness is judged on the basis of the twelve criteria derived from the planning model in chapter 2. The evaluation is based primarily on the attitudes and perceptions of the respondent groups listed in table 1.

Because MOF, other agencies, and interest groups often held different perceptions of the issues discussed, responses to each question are categorized using 3 types of brackets:

- (n, %): n = total number of respondents, % = percentage of total number of respondents;
- [n, %]: n = number of MOF respondents, % = percentage of total number of MOF respondents;
- {n, %}: n = number of resource agency or interest group respondents, % = percentage of total number of resource agency or interest group respondents.

Relevant points raised in the submissions reviewed are also included in the number of respondents variable "n." Significant findings are summarized briefly in this chapter, and a more detailed account of responses is included in appendix 2. The findings presented for each criterion reflect expressed respondents' opinions. Discussion of each criterion is based on the author's opinion.

5.1 Decision Environment

5.1.1 *MOF's Integrated Resource Use Policy*

Findings

MOF [5, 71%] and resource agency {2, 50%} respondents commented that there was an honest attempt by MOF personnel to consider the perceptions and interests of all resource users. Monetary consideration often took precedence and, as a result, some resource values were compromised. Outside interests {9, 100%} and one agency representative {1, 25%} suggested that MOF gives only token consideration to forest uses other than timber harvesting. MOF was criticized for neglecting its responsibility to manage wilderness and alpine areas where timber values are low but recreation and aesthetic values are high. Concern was expressed that MOF has no established methodology to accommodate interdisciplinary demands. The common perception was that no single agency administration should be responsible for developing an integrated resource use strategy for British Columbia.

Discussion

The controversy over MOF's ability to fulfill its integrated use mandate originates in earlier decades and forest policies in British Columbia. Since the 1950s, the governmental allocation of significant portions of the forest land base to a small number of large corporations encouraged the single and exclusive use of timber harvesting. During the 1960s and 1970s, government and industry were successful in providing immediate political spin-off benefits from timber harvesting in the form of increased forest revenues and provincial economic expansion.

Today, government and industry are operating under distinctly different conditions. The present government is guiding the forest industry through a period of economic recession and declining amounts and quality of old growth timber. Public pressure to alienate more forested land for nontimber uses is increasing. The economic health of the forest industry, and therefore the province, is seen by many to depend upon the commitment of any remaining valuable forest land to timber production. Under these circumstances MOF is not perceived to be an impartial forest manager.

MOF must respond to the increasing public pressure to modify its management of lands and resources under its jurisdiction, including wilderness in subalpine, alpine, and northern areas. Appropriate actions need to be taken to indicate to the public that the ministry is committed to its integrated use mandate.

The Stikine Provincial Forest is a setting where such action could be taken. Timber values in the area are generally low (British Columbia, 1984d). Physical isolation, rugged terrain, and insecure markets exacerbate the uncertainty of harvesting in the few areas where values are high. Existing and potential recreation opportunities are superb as indicated by the submissions presented by Parks Canada (Canada, 1984 and 1985); outdoor recreation and conservation groups (Outdoor Recreation Council of B.C., 1984; Federation of Mountain Clubs of B.C., 1984; British Columbia Caucus Heritage For Tomorrow, 1984a; Friends of the Stikine, 1984; Reitz and Thunderstorm, 1984), local commercial interests (Bourquin, 1984; Pakula, 1984), and, notably, the forestry community (Eidsvik, 1986). MOF would enjoy excellent public relations if it were to plan and manage areas such as the lower Stikine for recreation as the dominant resource value with timber harvesting assuming a secondary and limited role.

5.1.2 MOF's Approach to Forest Land Use Planning

Findings

Comment was mixed on whether MOF is the appropriate agency to be determining general patterns of resource use in local areas. MOF personnel [5, 71%] agreed the ministry should be able to do the job effectively but that excessive bureaucracy and old forestry school biases towards timber harvesting tended to be limiting factors. Opinion was expressed that staff and funding problems preclude early, proactive planning in areas where no immediate development is proposed. One resource agency respondent {1, 25%} noted that MOF's perceptions are skewed towards timber harvesting and, as a result, make planning for other resource uses difficult. There was consensus among all outside interests {10, 100%} that MOF should not be solely responsible for determining general patterns of resource development and use. Those respondents were critical of the top-down planning procedures originating from Victoria and the issue-responsive nature of that planning.

Discussion

MOF's nominal approach to planning is sound. But weaknesses exist in practice. Land use conflicts in provincial forests get MOF's attention only after adversarial positions have been raised. The public perception that MOF plans on a piecemeal and ad hoc basis demands immediate attention. Harvesting proposals and public controversy should not be the only catalysts for planning. Foresight is necessary. To a certain degree, limited funding and staff resources prevent early, proactive planning, and often in forest districts scarce resources must be spread over a number of higher priority areas. But potential resource use conflicts should be explored to the fullest extent possible before development proceeds.

MOF's present approach to planning is piecemeal and unsystematic, and if not improved, will prolong public controversy. In some areas of British Columbia, a "no planning is good planning" approach is inadequate. MOF should designate all nonproductive forest land in the same way it designates productive forest land. This would improve existing knowledge of where recreation and wilderness values are high and would make local planning efforts more manageable as local conflicts arise. Resource allocation and planning guidelines must be established early through the coordinated effort of MOF, other resource agencies, resource users, and interest groups. This will avoid exacerbating the fragmented nature of forestry decision making that now exists.

5.1.3 Terms of Reference and Objectives

Findings

All respondents (16, 100%) agreed that local planning was necessary in the lower Stikine. Differences of opinion were raised regarding the terms of reference and objectives for the study laid out by MOF. The planning report was intended to be a preliminary evaluation of the resource issues, not a land use plan. The "quick and dirty" nature of the report was intended to serve as a springboard for further planning. Its foremost objective was to determine a broad land use strategy for the study area. A secondary objective was to ascertain the need for further more detailed planning. The district office in Dease Lake noted that upon completion and analysis of the report, revised management objectives could include provision for long-term harvesting, a moratorium on harvesting pending specified further resource planning, or management as a wilderness area. Despite interest groups' claims to the contrary, MOF insisted that the structure of the planning exercise in no way prejudiced a final decision.

Skeptical MOF respondents [2, 29%] called the planning report a "rush timber analysis" and a "typical timber-biased forestry report." Outside interest groups and individuals {8, 100%} shared that skepticism and viewed the study as simply a means to justify a foregone conclusion that logging would be allowed to continue. That opinion was repeatedly supported by the fact that MOF first issued the TSL, heard the public outcry, then initiated the planning process. Recreation interests and native groups were frustrated that the terms of reference excluded consideration of both single use designations and the outstanding Tahltan land claim.

Discussion

The stated intent of the Lower Stikine Planning Report was legitimate and its strategic approach to focus on the resource issues was good. As a preliminary assessment of the resource conflicts, it summarized existing information, identified critical data gaps, and outlined further planning needs for each land use alternative. But that good intention was jeopardized by poor timing of the study initiation, continued logging during planning, and the exclusion of public input to the study terms of reference.

The planning report was not initiated until after the TSL was issued and public opposition heard. Confusion resulted over the questions the Lower Stikine Planning Report addressed. Local resource use planning is intended to determine how development will proceed for designated areas, which assumes development is a foregone conclusion. But to confuse matters, the report also asked the question whether logging should even continue. The Cassiar Forest District, in effect, played two roles in the lower Stikine. First, it determined the best mix of uses to which land in the lower Stikine should be allocated and second, it

established site-specific operational standards for harvesting. The divergence of the planning report from the true intent of local resource use planning is understandable given the flexibility of MOF's local planning methodology.

A wide range of local planning methodologies are now in use by MOF. Because each resource use conflict differs in nature and complexity, flexibility is necessary. Although flexibility allows planners to design terms of reference around time and data constraints, there is a risk that the seriousness of the problem will be overlooked. When there is a wide range of choice in how MOF responds to any set of circumstances, it is more difficult for the public to exact accountability from planners and decision-makers.

The onus is, therefore, on planners to involve interested publics in drafting terms of reference and establishing objectives for planning exercises. In the lower Stikine issue, MOF neglected to ask what the local people wanted. Concerned individuals and interest groups had no opportunity to provide input to the terms of reference and objectives of the planning process. It appears that the terms of reference were designed to accommodate time and data constraints, and the agency's bias towards harvesting. As a result, the significance of the land allocation problem was underplayed. In combination, these circumstances engendered skepticism that the report was little more than an after-the-fact attempt to legitimize timber harvesting.

MOF could have minimized controversy in the lower Stikine by involving local people early in the goal-setting stage. At least some common ground could have been reached and mutual understanding attempted. Given that local and provincial priorities were not established for the study area, nor incorporated into the process objectives, the report should have not been the sole basis for

establishing land use priorities for the area.

5.1.4 Time and Resources Available

Findings

Time was identified as a constraint in the planning process by all respondents (9, 100%). MOF personnel [7, 100%] commented that one year was restrictive and acknowledged that shortcuts were made. Nonetheless, they were generally satisfied that a land use problem could realistically be resolved in a year to meet the urgent need for development decisions. Outside interests commented that the time frame was inadequate for even an initial assessment of the resource values and issues. Concern was expressed that professional planning expertise in the district office was nonexistent. A noteworthy comment was made by three respondents, including one MOF representative, that more time and money would not have changed the outcome.

Discussion

Forest districts in British Columbia no longer have the sole responsibility to protect forests from fire and infestation. Under MOF's new planning system, the districts are charged with an important planning function. There is little that will be achieved if no expertise or money exists to effectively implement that function.

The Cassiar Forest District office requires more professional planning expertise than now exists. Indeed, the work done on the planning report and on the local resource plan, now underway, was transferred to both regional and provincial staff as well as a private consultant because of inadequate district expertise. District planners are needed to ensure continuity in local area planning,

to help establish and maintain rapport with local people, and to avoid overloading ministry staff at other levels.

5.2 Decision Process

5.2.1 *Planning Hierarchy*

Findings

The majority of respondents (10, 91%), including 4 from MOF [4, 57%], felt that the complex resource issues in the lower Stikine were of provincial and international significance and therefore warranted broader public scrutiny. The common perception was that a proper assessment of the problem would have been achieved if the issue was assessed at the provincial level. Instead, a planning process was adopted that was, in the opinion of local respondents {6, 100%}, ad-hoc, initiated for short-term economic gain, and isolated from other essential resource uses.

Discussion

Three distinct circumstances prevented the lower Stikine issue from being assessed at a higher planning level. First, at the time the lower Stikine planning process was initiated, guidelines for TSA planning were not established in MOF's planning system (Hynd, 1985. pers. comm.). Consequently, no plan for the Cassiar TSA existed. A timber supply analysis report was completed in April 1984 as an initial step in the preparation of the TSA plan but no range or recreation analysis was done. A broad, yet cursory recreation inventory on 1: 250 000 scale maps was available.

Given these circumstances, there was limited guidance for the local planning exercise. No general areas of the TSA were flagged for resource development, recreation use, or environmental sensitivity. What was known was that recreation and scenic values were high, especially in proximity to Great Glacier, located immediately upstream of the Boundary Supply Block and that harvesting of that timber would be complicated by the area's environmental sensitivity, isolation, inhospitable climate, and the questionable success of any potential licensee in marketing the timber.

Second, the TSL was issued and the planning process initiated at the district level. Once land use decisions are referred to the district there is no guarantee they will get the broad public scrutiny they deserve. Had there been sustained, province-wide public opposition, the issue may have received attention at the provincial level.

Third, provincial forest designation was given; the resources of the Stikine Provincial Forest were already allocated to the integrated use pool. Any controversy over broader land status questions, as far as MOF was concerned, was not relevant to the immediate harvesting issue.

Decisions regarding operational and logistical site-specifics belong at the district level. But decisions regarding land use allocation do not. This is because of the risk that district-level decisions may undermine regional and provincial significance of other essential resource values in the interest of short-term economic gain. The question of whether logging should be allowed in the lower Stikine should have been addressed at the provincial level.

5.2.2 Information

Understanding of Issues

Findings

Local respondents {4, 57%} who agreed with MOF personnel [5, 71%] that logging conflicted with the fishery, wildlife, and recreation values also identified other issues as equally important. These included: mining, impact of logging road access, the question of aboriginal title, water resources, and archaeological significance. Surprisingly, some Telegraph Creek respondents {3, 43%} believed that recreation was not an issue and never would be unless access was improved to enable more people to come to the Stikine.

Discussion

Responses from local residents and private consultants reflect a broader perception of the fundamental issue in the lower Stikine. Conflicts between individual resource uses were perceived to be peripheral to the central concern of respondents about the piecemeal and uncoordinated manner in which resources are developed in British Columbia.

The question of logging was assessed in the report as an isolated incident in the lower Stikine. This approach to planning lacks foresight because the manner in which logging development proceeds has important implications for the future development of all other resource values in the watershed. In the opinion of local respondents, MOF overlooked that broader precedent-setting implication.

Adequacy and Timing

Findings

Most respondents (13, 87%), including 4 from MOF [4, 57%], believed the information base was inadequate to support a land use decision. The general opinion was that all resource values other than timber were basically ignored in the report. While a minority of MOF respondents [2, 29%] acknowledged that time constraints did not allow complete assessment of the recreation, fish, and wildlife values, they thought (2, 13%) the information presented in the Lower Stikine Planning Report was adequate given the study terms of reference.

Requests for a comprehensive, field-collected data base and a 4-year moratorium on logging were made by local and provincial interest groups, and local native organizations (9, 60%) throughout the planning process. The rationale behind this request was that, while initially expensive, an extensive inventory for the watershed would result in substantial long-term savings. Conversely, comment was made (3, 20%) that more time and information would not have made a difference to the final decision.

Discussion

The terms of reference for the Lower Stikine Planning Report stated that the assessment would be based upon existing or easily gathered information (British Columbia, 1984b, 7). The intent was to summarize what was known about the study area, identify the resource issues, and highlight critical information gaps. MOF's overview approach was good. The strategic, quick and dirty scan of the problem avoided possible costly and time-consuming collection of information that may not, in the end, have been pertinent to the problem.

The information available allowed a reasonable appreciation of the user conflicts but it was inadequate to support a land allocation decision. Its inadequacy was due, in part, to the lack of inventory information available from other resource agencies and also to the absence of clearly expressed interests in the study area by those agencies. In effect, the urgency of a decision on Hal-Pac's logging proposal limited further data collection and constrained the nature of the planning exercise.

5.2.3 Participation and Representation

Public Involvement

Findings

Despite interest group requests for a joint planning team, MOF chose a consultative approach to public involvement for the lower Stikine. Limited resources of the Cassiar Forest District, logistical difficulties given the remoteness of the study area, and time constraints were listed as key reasons by MOF respondents for using this method. In the opinion of most respondents (13, 72%), including 2 from MOF [2, 29%], this public involvement strategy seriously hindered the effectiveness of the whole process.

Conversely, most MOF respondents [5, 71%] felt the public involvement process was effective because, without it, the decision could have been much worse. The claim by MOF respondents [2, 29%] and one agency representative [1, 25%] that there is presently a cabinet inclination to downsize public involvement and avoid joint planning teams is noteworthy. Those interviewees confirmed that ELUC deliberately chose not to handle the lower Stikine issue.

All respondents (18, 100%) agreed that there was no early opportunity for interested people to get involved in the planning process because the TSL was

issued before public notification was made. Geographic barriers, inadequate funding, difficulty in obtaining data and answers from MOF, and a limited time frame for public review of the planning report further hindered access to the process. All MOF respondents [7, 100%] acknowledged that the time frame for public review was tight, and the MOF responses to some questions and briefs was delayed.

The prevalent opinion expressed among local respondents interviewed {6, 75%} and submissions reviewed {6, 43%} was that MOF personnel were not sensitive to local needs. Respondents who had put much time and energy into keeping well-informed on the planning process felt frustrated that their opinions and ideas were not understood and their advice was not taken seriously. They commented that the structure of the public meetings, MOF's use of technical jargon, and the absence of straightforward discussion reinforced an adversarial atmosphere.

Competent staff and strong governmental support were listed as prerequisites to an effective public involvement program. MOF respondents [2, 29%] suggested that public involvement in the lower Stikine could be improved in a number of ways. These included: enhancing dialogue, overcoming the logistical difficulties of frequent meetings given the area's remoteness, focussing lobbying efforts on politicians and decision-makers rather than bureaucrats, and finally, never assuming what the public thinks before asking them. Local respondents {4, 80%} suggested a grassroots approach to public involvement whereby local people would participate in planning and decision making and use MOF staff as their resource people.

Discussion

MOF did not consider a joint planning team to be an appropriate approach to public involvement in the lower Stikine. One reason offered was that planning for the study area did not have a land status or land allocation emphasis, and that typically joint planning teams were used to deal with those questions (British Columbia, 1984b, 48). That reasoning is not valid. Existing provincial forest status is the fundamental issue. Informed local and MOF opinion indicated that MOF's decision to designate part of the Stikine watershed to provincial forest status in 1982 was made quickly with little public input. That alleged "rushed" designation process remains an issue today because provincial forest status precluded consideration of single use park designations that have received much public support. Land allocation is equally fundamental to the lower Stikine issue because MOF's decision in the area involved identifying land use priorities and tradeoffs among competing users.

The question remains why MOF strongly favored consultation over any extended method of public involvement. The limited resources of the Cassiar Forest District and logistical difficulties given the remoteness of the study area were fundamental considerations. Area remoteness may also be linked to the degree of public attention received. Unlike other contentious land use issues such as Meares Island and South Moresby, the lower Stikine logging issue did not receive a high public profile. This is due, in part, to the logistical and funding difficulties encountered in creating and sustaining broad-based citizens' action, perhaps more so in the Cassiar Forest District than anywhere else in British Columbia. As a result, the public interest generated was not sufficient to attract provincial-level political attention. A joint planning team with ELUC as a final arbiter may have been seriously considered if the lower Stikine was proximal to

the B.C. lower mainland, more political votes were at stake in the decision, and province-wide public appeal had been sustained.

What resulted instead was a consultation process that was polarized from the start. Issuance of the TSL without public notice was a blunder. MOF seriously underestimated local community interest and, in so doing, exacerbated the mistrust that already existed towards its whole planning process. The adversarial nature of the consultation process prevented any mutual understanding, learning, or information-sharing.

MOF's choice of a consultative approach accommodated planning time constraints and avoided complicating the problem with a wide range of solutions. The process was successful in stimulating community awareness and effective in clarifying for MOF the public sentiment. But MOF failed to give real attention to the input offered.

Such public involvement programs will continue to be viewed as little more than after-the-fact attempts to pacify angry people until government demonstrates a genuine, honest interest in using their input. Under MOF's present public involvement policy, regional and district managers can choose public involvement methods according to their own perceptions of what is appropriate to address the resource conflict in question. In effect, this discretion allows managers to limit both the level of public input and their commitment to that input in the decision making process. This, in turn, often places regional and district staff in the unenviable position of administering a process which has only a limited terms of reference to accommodate public concerns.

Other weaknesses have been identified in a number of MOF-initiated public involvement processes (Feller, 1982; Van der Horst, 1982; Farquarson, 1984;

Freeman, 1980; and Helmer, 1980). The fundamental problem is that the public simply does not share the same attitudes and values as the foresters who are managing crown forest land. MOF's interests parallel the resource use for which it is primarily responsible--timber harvesting--and when the chips are down agency decisions consistently protect that interest. For this reason MOF cannot pretend to have a broad perspective. A change in ministry perspective and attitude toward forest use can come only after a long transition period of effort to educate and train a new kind of forester.

Until that occurs, all controversial forest land use proposals should be adjudicated openly in a public forum. Local government, native organizations, and interest groups should be notified early and directly. Deadlines for public response should be set only after all requested and relevant information is accessed. Without better effort by MOF to respond quickly and honestly to information requests and questions, the public will continue to have insufficient time and information to offer useful responses to development proposals. Equal opportunity to participate should be maintained through government funding assistance to interest groups with limited resources. A synopsis of public comment should be published. The biggest mistake MOF can make, and did make in the lower Stikine, is to assume what the people think without directly asking them.

To avoid future conflicts over forest land already committed to multiple use under provincial forest status, formal opportunities should be provided for public input to the development of broad resource use policies and objectives at the provincial, regional, and TSA levels.

Agency Referral

Findings

MOF [5, 71%] and agency {3, 75%} respondents felt the referral process was adequate. All resource agencies acknowledged receipt of MOF's referral for the TSL and lower Stikine project outline. The Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the Ministry of Lands Parks and Housing were satisfied that the information they submitted and concerns they expressed regarding the lower Stikine issue were represented in the planning report. The Fish and Wildlife Branch acknowledged receipt of MOF's intent but had little inventory information to contribute. The Heritage Conservation Branch claimed that its concern for heritage resources of the lower Stikine River was not adequately addressed in the report. Other respondents (6, 43%) felt that the agency referral process was inadequate because MOF's single-use orientation biased their interpretation of the sparse planning information that was presented.

Discussion

The effectiveness of MOF's agency referral for the lower Stikine was affected by the lack of resource inventory information available and the absence of clearly stated objectives for the area by other provincial resource agencies. Generally, the agency position statements submitted to MOF indicated their respective mandates and concerns for the fish, wildlife, heritage, and recreation values of the area. The possibility now exists, given the serious inadequacy of baseline information, that the effects of harvesting lower Stikine timber on other resource values could be major or irreversible.

Clearly, some planning information is required from agencies to make the referral process a useful mechanism for integration. Without information, however, interagency consultation cannot occur and the referral process becomes little more than a time and paper consuming administrative formality.

5.2.4 Analytical Tools and Mechanisms

Adequacy of Solutions

Findings

The range of options presented to decision-makers was thought to be incomplete and oversimplified given the complexity of resource use conflicts in question (13, 87%). A national park, provincial park, recreation corridor, Canadian heritage river, and Tahltan tribal park were identified as options that should have been considered. In response, MOF commented that provincial forest status limited their consideration of such single use designations.

MOF's disregard for the Tahltan land claim encompassing the study area and the related traditional uses such as hunting, fishing, and trapping was noted by native and nonnative residents. The question of aboriginal title was not addressed because native land claims are under the separate jurisdiction of the Ministry of the Attorney General (British Columbia, 1984b, 47).

Management of the lower Stikine as a recreation corridor was advocated by two provincial outdoor recreation and conservation groups. Recreation corridor status is administratively feasible under provincial forest designation. Subsequent to the October decision, the lower Stikine River was nominated as a potential recreation corridor by MLPH and MOF. Both ministries are currently involved in assessing the area's recreational, historical, and natural attributes for the corridor designation process. The corridor study is being done with a longer view that is

not constrained by an urgent decision on a logging proposal. Nonetheless, recreation interests are apprehensive that the scenic and recreation values of the lower Stikine will be slowly eroded and jeopardized if logging continues (Outdoor Recreation Council of B.C., 1984).

Discussion

It is not difficult, especially in complex resource allocation issues involving a number of conflicting objectives, to lose site of the nature of the problem and adopt inappropriate solutions. The problem in the lower Stikine centered on determining a land use strategy for the study area such that resources would be optimally allocated among competing users. Timber harvesting was a major consideration in determining that optimal blend despite the known vagaries of the log export market and the provincially and nationally recognized significance of the area's recreation resource.

The mix of options presented in the Lower Stikine Planning Report reflects MOF's tradition of allowing timber harvesting priorities to dictate the suitability of forest land for other uses. The expressed objective of option 1--timber harvesting emphasis--to maximize timber production with no regard for recreation values violates the ministry's legislated commitment to integrated resource management. Option 2, integrated timber-recreation emphasis, was poorly communicated in the report, and is at best ambiguous and open to a wide range of interpretations.

Several single use management strategies were possible in the lower Stikine but none were feasible given MOF's commitment to multiple use in the area. Consideration of single use strategies should have been made during the

provincial forest designation process. Provincial forest status in the lower Stikine enabled MOF, in effect, to narrow the range of options that would be considered in future. The problem was simplified to a timber-recreation conflict, possible solutions were kept to a minimum, and MOF's need to make an urgent decision was satisfied.

It is not good planning practice to eliminate options on the basis of institutional precedent or administrative ease. Narrow vision can engender complacency, and prevent new insights into the nature of a problem and how it might be dealt with. A truly responsive set of solutions should incorporate the broader public interest.

Management of the lower Stikine within the context of the provincial recreation corridor policy should have been given more attention for a number of reasons. First, recreation corridor status is an administratively feasible option within a provincial forest. Second, recreation corridor status would not prohibit logging but it would require more indepth study of the area's recreational, natural, and historical attributes. Third, MOF would enjoy excellent public relations for taking a positive step towards recreation management in an area where timber values are generally low. MOF would be committed to manage the lower Stikine corridor as a recreation priority area and defer harvesting in areas of high scenic, cultural, or recreational value. Despite the joint MOF-MLPH nomination of the lower Stikine as a candidate for the corridor designation process, the concern that the continuance of logging while studies are undertaken will place essential corridor values in jeopardy is legitimate.

Evaluation Methodology

Findings

The majority of respondents (10, 77%), including 2 from MOF [2, 29%], believed the evaluation of alternatives was poor. The relatively detailed economic assessment of harvesting benefits in comparison to the sparse treatment of existing and potential recreation benefits was noted. MOF's decision not to do an economic cost-benefit analysis of logging versus recreation led outside respondents {8, 100%} to believe that the ministry feared the results would indicate that logging in the lower Stikine was clearly not economically feasible. MOF consciously excluded a cost-benefit analysis for lack of information on all resource values, lack of time to gather it, and doubts about whether it would be useful. One MOF respondent indicated that, at minimum, an overview or cursory assessment of the social and economic benefits derived from the recreational use of the area should have been attempted. In contrast, the inappropriateness of cost-benefit analysis for evaluating intangible wilderness values was noted.

Discussion

MOF does not normally use cost-benefit analysis in resource management decisions. The rationale is that its usefulness is diminished by serious practical and theoretical pitfalls. In its Resource Planning Manual, the ministry notes that forest land use decisions often involve too many aesthetic and wilderness concerns for which monetary values cannot be estimated and intangible values cannot be agreed upon by all individuals (British Columbia, 1985b, 54). Environmental, conservation, and outdoor recreation groups often advocate the preservation of wilderness for its own high intrinsic value. But MOF's legislated mandate endorses the multiple use of forest land and resources; it precludes

consideration of single use alternatives such as wilderness. These two distinct viewpoints are a major source of conflict in wilderness evaluation and pit MOF and recreation interests against each other. Witness the lower Stikine situation.

In the lower Stikine planning process MOF had no intention of making any direct economic comparison of commercial recreation use with the forest industry. The ministry felt that a cost-benefit approach was untenable because it might mislead the public to believe that the provincial government's sole objective was to maximize economic return, regardless of social concerns. Instead, the intent was to make a meaningful statement about the magnitude of timber and recreation values relative to opportunities elsewhere in the province.

There is a broad interest and willingness in the public and private sectors to address the issue of wilderness values in the land allocation process. The national forestry conference, Woodshock,¹ and the provincial Wilderness Advisory Committee are two recent initiatives that exemplify this interest. But too much emphasis has been placed on the technical difficulty encountered in evaluating the intangible wilderness resource. The fact is that no matter how much agonizing is done over quantifying all resource values, the decisive elements needed to make a truly objective decision would be lacking. In short, resource allocation issues cannot be solved solely by quantitative evaluations. Although respondent opinion indicated a cost-benefit analysis would have greatly facilitated the evaluation of timber and recreation use alternatives for the lower Stikine, the deciding factor in such an evaluation would have still been human value judgement. Better analytical skills are needed at the district level to effectively

¹ Woodshock, held in Toronto in October 1985, brought together representatives from government, industry, and special interest groups concerned with forest use to discuss topics on forest management and renewal, withdrawals and multiple use, public involvement, resource planning, and industrial and social policy.

grapple with available information. It is equally important that MOF decision makers look beyond the ministry's entrenched institutional values and recognize wilderness as a productive and permanent use of forest land.

The Lower Stikine Planning Report -- An Effective Decision Making Tool?

Findings

Most respondents (12, 75%) thought the planning report provided no clear basis for a land use decision. Some MOF respondents [3, 43%] and one resource agency representative [1, 25%] felt the report was an inappropriate decision making tool given its apparent intent to justify logging. Those respondents claimed that the report was useful as an overview only and that further study should have been a prerequisite to a decision. MOF respondents [4, 57%] who supported the effectiveness of the report as a good decision making tool contended that it was efficiently prepared, fair to all interests, and no information was hidden. However, they indicated that more time, more information, and a more detailed resource analysis before logging was allowed to continue would have improved the report.

Discussion

The thinking behind the Lower Stikine Planning Report represented an innovative and strategic approach to land use problems quite different from traditional MOF resource studies. The report was intended to be a problem assessment rather than a comprehensive, detailed resource study. There is much to be said for a quick and dirty scan of such a problem before embarking on detailed studies which may prove in the end to be unimportant. The report relied on existing and readily available information. It was prepared in a short time

relative to that required of traditional comprehensive studies. Resource use conflicts were effectively identified, information gaps singled out, and options which reflected a particular land use priority developed. Expected social, economic, and environmental implications of each options were briefly mentioned.

The report effectively whittled the problem down to the crucial issues but in so doing undermined the importance of isolating key areas for more rigorous study. The report was a good vehicle for focussing public attention. What evolved as a result of that attention was an unanticipated problem more complex than simply deciding whether logging should be allowed to continue. Under these circumstances the quick overview report could have effectively, and should have, been used to outline the direction for further detailed planning. The report was not enough in itself to solve the problem. Widespread public opposition to the solutions offered should have triggered MOF to ask if the problem had been satisfactorily defined.

5.3 Decision Review

5.3.1 *Equitable Negotiation*

Findings

The majority of respondents (13, 93%), including 3 MOF personnel [3, 43%], recognized that the process was not fair to all interests. Lack of open discussion, information, and time were identified as constraints to the decision making process. The manner in which MOF weighed the input from resource agencies and outside interest groups was also questioned.

Discussion

Effective negotiation in the planning process suffered from poor relations between the district office and residents in the nearby communities of Iskut and Telegraph Creek. In effect, the district manager was shielded from public opinion because the planning process was headed by "borrowed" regional staff in Smithers. Little mutual understanding materialized. The district office perceived the local environmental group, Residents For A Free Flowing Stikine (RFFFS), to be the nucleus of all the "anti-log" mail received. This presumption led the district manager to believe that "all other interests were almost a non-issue". Given this presumption, it is questionable whether the broad public interest, expressed by groups and individuals other than RFFFS, was equitably weighed on its own merit.

MOF is required to consult with agencies and the public but is in no way bound to accept or implement their recommendations. As a result, decisions are not necessarily reached through fair negotiation. The plurality of interests and often mutual exclusivity of alternatives that typify forest land use conflicts demand that there be room for compromise. But compromise must be reached through close consultation with local people. Mail or telephone correspondence is not enough. Planners and technical specialists must enter consultations with an attitude that they are planning *with* the people, not *for* the people.

5.3.2 Democratic Decision Making

Findings

The decision to integrate timber and recreation resource uses was made by two people--the district manager of the Cassiar Forest District and the regional manager of the Prince Rupert Forest Region. Other resource agencies and outside interest groups played no role in the final decision making. The decision was

not supported by a consensus. At an August 1984 public meeting in Telegraph Creek, 75 local residents unanimously requested that a moratorium be imposed on logging to allow for more detailed study of potential resource conflicts. Nevertheless, MOF respondents [3, 43%] were satisfied that the resource use objectives of other agencies could be met with appropriate development constraints. Resource agencies {4, 100%} supported the decision on the condition that those constraints were effectively implemented and impacts carefully monitored.

There did, and still does, exist opposition to logging. But much of that opposition (11, 52%) is rooted more in the way MOF handled the problem. In fact, some people accept that logging can be part of the overall resource use picture provided it is initiated on a local, small-scale basis. That way, it is thought that mistakes would be small-scale and local people would be in a better position to exact accountability from the operators.

The majority of respondents (12, 75%) were convinced that the lower Stikine decision was made in Victoria. Timber harvesting benefits and political interests were perceived to be the main factors that influenced the decision. In contrast, MOF personnel [4, 57%] affirmed that there was no political pressure from Victoria to log lower Stikine timber. They perceived it to be definitely a district office decision influenced only by the values and priorities of the district manager. Concern was expressed by MOF [3, 43%], one resource agency representative {1, 25%}, and local interests {6, 60%} about the lack of expertise and openmindedness at the district level and the poor sense of obligation to manage for nontimber forest uses. A minority of MOF respondents [2, 29%] felt the decision was most influenced by public opinion and values. They were confident that the public sentiment expressed through the consultation process

was wholly reflected in the decision.

Few respondents (2, 25%) thought MOF was an appropriate decision making body for determining a resource management strategy for the lower Stikine. The need for a neutral arbiter was commonly identified (6, 75%). ELUC was not a popular choice of either MOF [2, 29%] or outside {4, 100%} respondents given its perceived ties with industry. Local respondents felt the decision should have been made at the local level by local people.

Discussion

The literature is replete with arguments in favor of regionally or locally-based control over resource planning and management decisions. The rationale provided is that the people most directly affected by resource use should have a major voice in decisions that affect them. It would appear that MOF's local resource planning efforts should result in democratic decision making because expressed attempts are made at the local level to integrate relevant resource values, and to provide for public input to management decisions. An added virtue is that, as decision-makers, district managers are close to the citizens they are entrusted to represent.

But all the fanfare about local planning and decision making is undermined by three problems that must be faced at the community level, as evidenced by the lower Stikine situation. First, generating and maintaining community interest in local planning; second, determining who best represents the community interest; and third, relying on one nonelected bureaucratic decision maker to interpret that interest and be accountable for his or her decisions.

Discussions with community people who provided no input to the planning process (n=7) revealed a distrust of government planning and a common view that whatever government does is out of local control. This common sentiment is the reason, in part, why only a small minority of people get involved in community issues. The silent majority may also chose not to participate because they feel adequately represented by someone in the vocal minority; they are unaware that they will be affected by a decision, or they do not believe they can influence the decision. It does not mean their opinion is any less important. Efforts should be made to promote a broad understanding of resource and land use planning at the community level to ensure that all legitimate interests are heard.

The second and related problem is that of determining who best represents the community interest. There is a wide range of people to be found in local communities, each with their own interests and aspirations. Polarity of interests is not uncommon. Controversy over who is local, and who is not, is pervasive. It is vital that community people develop some common ground if they hope to get involved in local planning. Otherwise a confrontational process will result.

A third problem exists with empowering one bureaucrat at the district level to make land allocation decisions. It is impossible for local people to exact accountability from nonelected representatives whose prime responsibilities lie elsewhere. Land allocation decisions involve accepting risk and determining tradeoffs that will directly affect local people and therefore should be made in close consultation with them. It is important that decision-makers' values and assumptions used in making judgements are clearly identified.

MOF failed to respond to the public in a democratic manner, as evidenced by the almost universal animosity towards the decision making process. The decision would likely have had more local support had MOF delegated some planning responsibility to the community level. People are more likely to accept processes in which they have participated and with which they can identify.

5.3.3 Accommodating Uncertainty

Findings

Most respondents (5, 71%) thought uncertainty about environmental, economic, and social effects of logging was ignored in the decision making process. Concern that important recreation and wilderness values could be irreversibly altered by allowing logging to continue was expressed. A position argued by some respondents interviewed (2, 29%), and in correspondence reviewed (3, 42%), was that postponement of a decision to allow for further evaluative studies would have provided the greatest amount of latitude for future decision making on the lower Stikine. MOF respondents [2, 29%] commented that the postponement option was excluded on the grounds that it did not represent a productive scenario given the urgent need for a decision.

Discussion

The planning report identified recreation values as a critical area of uncertainty. There was little quantitative information available on the provincial significance of the resource, existing and potential levels of recreation use, and the value of commercial tour operations. Under these conditions, the report stated that options 2 and 3 were "adaptable and would provide the forest land manager with greater flexibility in the future" (British Columbia, 1984b, 42).

MOF's forest management decision statement indicated that under option 2 limited opportunities for harvesting would be allowed subject to protection constraints for fish, wildlife, archaeological, and recreation resources. The lower Stikine Resource Plan was initiated to establish area-specific management prescriptions for the study area. It would include a recreational inventory, engineering feasibility study, reforestation prescriptions, and guidelines for mitigating the harvesting impacts.

On the surface, MOF's chosen course of action indicates an expressed intent to reduce uncertainty surrounding the physical and social environment. But that choice is only appropriate if performance standards are met by the licensee and the operation is monitored closely by MOF and regulatory agencies. Comments made by local river boat operators, a private consultant, and MOF regional staff who were on the lower river in the summer of 1985 indicate that the logging operation did not meet acceptable environmental standards. It appears that little effort had been made by the district office to exact accountability from the licensee. A pressing and legitimate concern exists now that the continuance of poorly monitored logging will jeopardize the fishery, recreation, and scenic resources. Further logging in the area should have been deferred until the local resource use plan was complete.

Operations that do not meet performance standards, and that diverge significantly from stipulated harvesting constraints, render carefully prepared plans useless. This points to the need for decision-makers to pay close attention to all logistical and operational aspects of land use decisions. Performance standards should be set with a clearly defined contingency plan to deal with possible future problems.

5.3.4 Responsive to Problem

Findings

Comment was mixed on the question of whether the chosen option responded faithfully to the problem. A majority of MOF [5, 71%] and agency {3, 75%} respondents were satisfied that, given the terms of reference and present circumstances, the study objectives were met and the problem was resolved. Contrary opinion was expressed by outside interest groups {9, 100%}. The common sentiment was that MOF fulfilled its own objectives and ignored the concerns and aspirations of those people that would be most directly affected by future resource development in the Stikine. Local comment was made that MOF has a dangerously narrow perspective on the problem. To community people who live in or near the forest, the problem is perceived to be much broader than that defined in the terms of reference.

All respondents but one commented that MOF's LRUP process is not an effective way to plan a watershed (12, 92%). The planning methodology was considered to be sound by MOF respondents [2, 29%] but they noted that implementation to date has been poor. Enormous planning areas, inexperienced and an insufficient number of planners, old forestry school timber harvesting biases, inadequate public involvement methods, and lack of ministry commitment to that involvement were noted as factors hindering the planning process. The serious problem of harvesting and planning simultaneously was raised. MOF acknowledged that planning at the district level is currently done on an ad hoc basis in response to specific development proposals and geared more towards timber availability and location. Planning expertise at that level was viewed as seriously deficient.

The need for a larger, professional organization at the provincial level with more expertise than currently exists at the district level was identified to resolve major resource use conflicts like those in the Stikine. Comment was made that more attention should be made to overall resource use patterns throughout the watershed. One MOF respondent noted that effort in some forest regions is being made towards undertaking LRUP in the context of completed TSA land use plans which would flag priority planning areas for the attention of district managers.

A watershed-based local planning approach, with local decision making authority, was a suggested improvement to the current planning process by local respondents and private consultants {9, 100%}. Local decision making authority, early and comprehensive data collection, no time constraints, and emphasis on the long-term maintenance of renewable resources were identified as necessary elements.

Discussion

The nature of the problem in the lower Stikine was perceived differently by respondent groups. As a result, consensus on whether MOF's decision was responsive to the problem was not achieved. MOF was faced with the immediate problem of responding to an urgent logging proposal. District and regional staff viewed the problem as site-specific and bounded by certain time constraints.

Outside interests, especially local groups and individuals living in or near the watershed, viewed the problem from a much broader perspective. These people recognize that the Stikine is becoming increasingly subject to resource development pressures, as evidenced by B.C. Hydro's desire to develop

hydroelectric power in the Grand Canyon, Gulf Canada's proposed coal development at Mount Klappan, and Hal-Pac's recent commercial interest in timber on the lower river. A legitimate fear of local people is that development of Stikine resources will proceed in the interest of short-term economic gain, in as piecemeal and ad hoc a manner as it has in other areas of the province. The problem they perceive is the need to establish a long-term land use strategy and stop ad hoc development now.

In short, MOF's perception of the problem was narrow; comparatively, the local perception was broad. It is fair to conclude that the outcome of the planning process responded well to the urgent need for a logging proposal decision. But left unaddressed were local concerns about the implications of logging development for future resource use in the watershed.

Local resource use planning, as undertaken in the lower Stikine, is not an effective way to plan a watershed. MOF's planning was confined to the area where harvesting was occurring and was done in the absence of any broad resource use objectives for the watershed. The links where the planning process broke down are listed below. These shortcomings bear testimony to why MOF is not equipped, especially at the district level, to make land allocation decisions:

- the TSL was issued prior to planning;
- planning was done in the absence of an overall watershed land use strategy;
- planning skills and technical competence were lacking among district level staff;
- the study terms of reference were narrowly defined with no public input;
- available resource inventory information was negligible;

- the public was involved too late in the planning process;
- clearly stated objectives by other resource agencies were lacking;
- solutions were oversimplified, poorly communicated, and centered around timber harvesting; and
- MOF decision-makers failed to respond to the public's expressed interests in a democratic way.

Need For Improvement. The need for a neutral perspective in the land allocation decision making process is recognized (British Columbia, 1984a, F23). There is much debate, as shown by the findings of this case study, over what body constitutes the best decision making authority. Within a democratic political system, government decision makers are elected representatives of the public at large. The public through its voting power can remove or influence a government which acts contrary to the public will. Regretably, an underlying reality of a democratic system is that duly-elected representatives can misuse their power by acting at the behest of particular interest groups.

In British Columbia, for example, much frustration has been expressed over the difficulty of ensuring that public preferences are adequately reflected in resource management decisions (Fox, 1980). Such decisions are often said to benefit the interests of the Vancouver-Victoria metropolis more directly than the interests of the hinterland, where the effects of the resource use are most directly felt (Halverson, 1980). Without government efforts to improve this imbalance and, thereby, improve the quality and acceptability of decisions, public debate will continue to escalate.

Initial efforts to improve decision making should most appropriately focus on the planning process. The process suggested below would provide the broad planning guidance required to make local planning efforts more effective, and

guarantee that all legitimate interests are given a fair hearing.

Land Use Planning Commission. A permanent land use planning commission, established outside of existing government resource agencies, with adequate staff support, would be established to guide the overall planning process. Commission members and staff would be professionals trained in resource-related disciplines, with broad social and economic perspectives. The commission would provide the broad planning scope necessary to coordinate the particular resource use mandates of individual resource agencies. Its purpose would be to facilitate an analytical process for evaluating land use alternatives and allocating natural resources in a way which optimizes provincial social and economic benefits.

Central among its responsibilities would be to:

- interpret competing objectives, priorities, and values of resource agencies, resource users, and interest groups;
- recommend initiation of planning exercises, and the establishment of local planning bodies as necessary;
- provide professional planning skills and technical expertise to local planning bodies;
- review and comment on draft plans prepared by local planning bodies; and
- approve revised plans and submit them to the Environment and Land Use Committee of cabinet for final approval.

The planning commission would serve as an umbrella planning body; it would supplement, not replace, the planning processes of individual resource agencies. Only those issues not easily resolvable through existing mechanisms would be accepted for detailed planning. The commission would have the virtue of providing overall policy direction and strategic planning guidelines, maintaining the continuity necessary in planning, and accumulating experience and expertise to deal with resource use conflicts in a variety of local planning situations.

Local Planning Bodies. Planning would occur at the local level. A planning body, consisting of locally-elected representatives from all interests, would be required in each case to ensure that planning is responsive to local conditions and needs. Under the direction and guidance of the local planning body, a team of professional planners, employed by the commission, would be authorized to prepare land use plans for designated planning areas. The geographical limits of a planning area would vary according to local or regional biophysical and socioeconomic factors, and the complexity of each resource conflict situation. When possible, planning expertise would be borrowed from regional and district offices of government resource agencies. The responsibilities of the local planning body would be to:

- identify local land use issues, conflicts, and priorities through public forums and internal debate;
- integrate local land use priorities with those of the region and the province; and
- establish resource and land use objectives; and draft a local land use plan for submission to, and approval by, the land use planning commission.

Each planning body would have a chairperson, chosen by its members, who would also serve as liaison between the local, operational level and the central commission. Appropriate funding arrangements would be required to cover the expenses of all representatives who participate. Final plan approval would rest with the Environment and Land Use Committee of cabinet. Plan implementation would best be monitored by the lead agency involved in each conflict situation.

Stronger Process Links. It is recognized with this approach that broad policies, objectives, and terms of reference for planning would still originate largely from the top downward. Within that framework, however, there would be

expanded opportunities for people in hinterland communities to be granted a fair hearing. There should be fewer links where the process could break down. First, a professional body, with broad social and economic perspective, and no vested interest in a particular resource use, would be responsible for coordinating the whole process. Second, planning would be guided by people at the community level with the full technical support of professional planners. Third, there should be less animosity towards itinerant government planners because people are more likely to accept plans in which they have participated and can relate to. Lastly, greater local responsibility implies that people are in a better position to exact accountability from their elected representatives. Support of any local area involvement is based on the premise that local animosities and differences, identified earlier, can be reconciled first. If local planning is not based on common goals, conflicts will continue to escalate.

These suggested improvements should make the planning process open and informative; account adequately for affected interests; enhance local participation; and relieve district level representatives of the impossible burden of speaking on behalf of all local interests in polarized conflict situations. One added virtue is that local participants would have to live with the results of their own planning endeavors and learn from their own mistakes. The success of this approach would depend on two things: (1) whether there is the political will and (2) whether those persons most directly affected can either identify with the planning process--or at least feel that they have been fairly represented.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the lower Stikine case study, conclusions and recommendations follow. Discussion incorporates the concerns raised by people interviewed and submissions reviewed. Improvements to the existing process and an alternative approach to resolving local resource use conflicts are suggested.

6.1 Improvements to Existing Process

MOF is faced with the task of restoring credibility and accountability to its planning and decision making process. Public skepticism towards the whole process exacerbates mistrust and confrontation at the local level as local resource conflicts arise. That skepticism is not shared by the public alone. This study indicates that on all but four issues, a core of MOF respondents [29%] consistently voiced opinion in support of outside interest groups and individuals. This is a noteworthy finding, indicating that some people within MOF recognize that the ministry is not fulfilling its intended role. Moreover, it is promising that effort is being made internally to change the ministry's sensitivity towards nontimber forest uses in the decision making process.

Problems with the lower Stikine planning process are summarized below. The suggestions for improvement, which follow, should assist forest planners and administrators concerned with improving the quality of forestry decisions.

6.1.1 MOF's Integrated Resource Use Policy

MOF is responsible for the planning and management of 86% of the province's land base. But at present ministry priorities lie only on lands that are suitable for commercial forest production and thus critical to the forest industry. The remaining 47% of nonproductive land is left unattended. Yet these lands, largely in northern British Columbia, encompass lakes, river corridors, and large tracts of alpine areas with superb recreation opportunities and significant wilderness values that are worthy of attention.

MOF's widely recognized ties with the forest industry have serious implications for the province's forest landscape. Appropriate actions need to be taken now to indicate to the public that MOF is truly committed to its integrated use mandate. The Stikine Provincial Forest exemplifies a setting where such action could be adopted. MOF would enjoy excellent public relations if it were to manage areas such as the Stikine Provincial Forest, where timber values are generally low, for recreation as the dominant resource value. Until MOF fully recognizes the value of nontimber forest uses as equal in principle to timber extraction values, the ministry will be in no position to adjudicate resource conflicts in a balanced and respected manner.

Methodology needs to be developed to accommodate interdisciplinary demands on provincial forest land. Further, MOF should broaden its scope by allocating research funds for social forestry. This would enable better assessment to be made of the overall socioeconomic well-being of forest regions throughout the province, as well as broaden the perspectives of technical specialists and managers.

6.1.2 MOF's Approach to Forest Land Use Planning

MOF's planning in provincial forests is typically done on an ad hoc basis in response to specific development proposals. Any attempt to integrate timber harvesting with other essential forest uses occurs only if adversarial positions are raised. Harvesting proposals and public controversy should not be the sole catalyst for planning.

There is an urgent need for early strategic plans which stipulate meaningful resource and land use guidelines. MOF should designate all nonproductive forest land in the same way it designates productive forest land. This would improve existing knowledge of where recreation and wilderness values are high and should make planning efforts more manageable as local conflicts arise. In spite of decision making time constraints and current government restraint and cutbacks, early planning should not be dismissed as unrealistic. Planning for urgent interim decisions is necessary but should be done only in the context of long term resource use objectives. In the absence of overall regional resource use strategies, local planning exercises are destined to result in prolonged conflict.

6.1.3 Terms of Reference and Objectives

Flexibility in the terms of reference for MOF's local planning exercises is needed to accommodate resource use conflicts of varying complexity. Nevertheless, flexibility introduces two problems. First, if terms of reference are designed primarily to accommodate time and data constraints, planners' abilities to accommodate the true scope of the problem may be undermined. Second, it is more difficult for the public to exact accountability from planners if the public cannot trace what planners are doing. To avoid these problems, the onus is on planners to involve the interested public in designing terms of reference

for planning exercises.

6.1.4 Time and Resources Available

Forest districts in British Columbia are charged with an important planning function. If local resource use planning is to be successful, professional planning expertise is required at the district level. The Cassiar Forest District office in Dease Lake requires more professional planning experience than now exists. Experienced district office planners would ensure the needed continuity in local planning, help establish and maintain better rapport with local residents, and avoid overloading ministry staff at regional and provincial levels.

6.1.5 Planning Hierarchy

At the time the lower Stikine planning process was initiated, the guidelines for TSA planning were not established in MOF's planning system. The absence of a TSA plan for the Cassiar TSA undermined the effectiveness of the local planning process. Broad resource use objectives for the entire Stikine watershed were, and are, needed to ensure that all existing and potential resource uses are considered.

In future, TSA planning guidelines should be established early and precede local resource planning. Decisions regarding operational and logistical site-specifics belong at the district level. Broad land allocation decisions which determine the "best" mix of uses do not. This is because of the risk that the regional and provincial significance of otherwise important resource values may be undermined in the interest of short-term economic gain. Once land use allocation decisions are deferred to the district, there is no guarantee they will get the broad public scrutiny they deserve.

6.1.6 Information

The information base available for the lower Stikine planning process, though limited, nevertheless offered a fair appreciation of individual resource conflicts and identified the need for more rigorous study in key areas. But given the incomplete assessment of all resource values, and lack of clearly stated resource use objectives by other agencies, a land allocation decision should not have been made. The planning process would have benefitted from more information, given the broad questions MOF was asking and the widespread concern that wilderness and recreation values were in jeopardy.

The need for more information is a common criticism posed by special interest groups and is sometimes useful as a bargaining tool to stall urgently needed decisions. But groups should recognize that by the time a costly and comprehensive data base is compiled, the nature of the problem or conflict may have changed or it may even have subsided. For this reason, postponement of a decision to allow for further study may be worse than risking a decision based on incomplete knowledge and understanding. Before embarking on comprehensive collection of resource inventory information, planners should ask if more information will truly improve, or make a difference to, the decision.

6.1.7 Public Involvement

The lower Stikine public involvement process was effective in the narrow sense that it sensitized MOF to public sentiment. Without public consultation, the decision to accommodate logging interests could have been made with even less regard for the other essential resource values in the area. But the meaningfulness of the process was undermined by the following factors:

- the TSL was issued without public notice or review;

- there was no early opportunity for involvement by interested public;
- the public had difficulty in obtaining data and answers from MOF;
- the time frame for public review of the planning report was limited;
- confrontational attitudes by MOF decision-makers and local residents prevented mutual understanding; and
- logistical difficulties which, given area remoteness, prevented frequent meetings and hindered day to day communication.

The fundamental problem undermining the success of MOF's public involvement programs is that the public simply does not share the same attitudes and values as the foresters who are managing crown forest land. MOF's interests parallel the resource use for which it is primarily responsible--timber harvesting--and when the chips are down, agency decisions consistently protect that interest. For this reason, MOF cannot pretend to have a broad perspective. A change in ministry perspective and attitude toward forest use can come only after a long transition period of effort to educate and train foresters with a different set of values, especially those with licence to make decisions.

Until that occurs, all controversial forest land use proposals should be adjudicated openly in a public forum. Local government, native organizations, and interest groups should be notified early and directly. Deadlines for public response should be set only after all requested and relevant information is accessed. Better efforts should be made by MOF to respond quickly and honestly to questions and information requests than occurred in the lower Stikine. Equal opportunity to participate should be maintained through government funding assistance to interest groups with limited resources. A synopsis of public comment should be published.

Most forest land in British Columbia has been committed to multiple use through MOF's provincial forest designation process. Fewer land use conflicts would exist today at the district level if there had been formal public input to that process. In future, when similar broad, precedent-setting land allocations are in question, the public should be guaranteed an early, meaningful role at the provincial, regional, and TSA planning levels.

6.1.8 Agency Referral

A lack of resource inventory information and the absence of clearly stated objectives for the area prevented resource agencies from effectively participating in the planning process for the lower Stikine. It is recognized that time and funding constraints prevent agencies from collecting comprehensive baseline information. As a minimum, priority resource conflict areas should be flagged by MOF in consultation with other agencies and interest groups with the objective of ensuring that resource use objectives are established early.

To achieve the necessary integration and cooperation, agency referral and public involvement mechanisms must be used early at the regional level in setting broad resource use objectives and initiated at the beginning of each planning process. This is critical because primary land use allocation decisions made at the regional level substantially influence the range of choices and outcomes at the local level. In the absence of early consultation, important resource use opportunities may be precluded.

6.1.9 Adequacy of Solutions

The range of solutions presented in the Lower Stikine Planning Report reflects MOF's tradition of allowing timber harvesting priorities to dictate the suitability of forest land for other uses. Provincial forest status precluded consideration at the outset of other more popular alternatives for the area such as a heritage river or national park designation.

Attention should have been given to management of the lower Stikine within the context of the provincial recreation corridor policy, given the nationally and provincially recognized significance of the corridor's recreation values, the growing importance of Highway 37 as a recreation corridor, and the generally low timber values of the area.

It is poor planning to eliminate options on the basis of institutional precedent or administrative convenience. MOF planners have a professional obligation to suggest innovative solutions to forest land use problems, beyond those solutions entrenched in tradition. A truly responsive set of solutions should reflect the broader public interest. This did not occur in the lower Stikine.

6.1.10 Evaluation Methodology

Resource allocation issues cannot be solved solely by quantitative evaluations. A cost-benefit analysis may have facilitated the evaluation of timber and recreation use alternatives for the lower Stikine. But the decisive factor would still have been human value judgement. Better interdisciplinary and analytical skills are needed at the district level to grapple with available information for evaluation purposes. MOF decision-makers must look beyond entrenched institutional concepts and values and recognize nontimber uses as

productive and permanent uses of forest land.

6.1.11 LSPR Effectiveness as Decision Making Tool

The Lower Stikine Planning Report represents an innovative and strategic way to approach forest land use problems--quite different from the comprehensive nature of traditional resource studies. It offered a quick and dirty appreciation of the problem, met time constraints, was cost-effective, and identified key areas requiring more rigorous study. The report would have served its purpose had it stopped there. Its limitations were exceeded when it was used to establish resource use priorities for the study area.

6.1.12 Negotiation

Equitable negotiation was undermined in the lower Stikine planning process by poor relations between the district office and the people in the nearby communities of Iskut and Telegraph Creek. Little mutual understanding materialized. Lack of trust, honest open discussion, information, and time created a process of confrontation and, in effect, were constraints to effective negotiation.

The many interests and, often, the mutual exclusivity of alternatives that typify forest land use conflicts, demand that there be room for compromise. To that extent, MOF decision making in the lower Stikine was successful. The effects of that particular compromise and related tradeoffs remain open to question. To avoid mistrust in future, planners and technical specialists should enter consultations with the attitude that they are planning *with* the people and not *for* the people.

6.1.13 Democratic Decision Making

Democratic decision making should give full credit to, and build upon, public input. Improvements to the quality of forestry decision making should start at the local level where the greatest opportunity for public participation exists. But, to be effective, three problems must first be addressed at the community level: first, generating and maintaining community interest in local planning; second, determining who best represents the community interest; and third, relying on one district level government official to interpret that interest and be accountable for his or her decisions.

The vocal minority of a community does not always speak on behalf of all community interests. The silent majority may chose not to participate because they are unaware that they will be affected by a decision or because they do not believe they can influence the decision. To ensure that all legitimate interests are raised, efforts should be made at the community level to promote a wider understanding of, and appreciation for, the importance of resource and land use planning.

Animosities at the local level are pervasive. Some common ground must be reached by local people if they want meaningful involvement in government-initiated planning processes. Decision-makers must make no assumptions about homogeneity among interest groups and their aspirations.

The district office in Dease Lake failed to respond to the public's expressed interests in a democratic manner, as evidenced by the almost universal animosity towards the decision making process. Under the present structure, district level officials can make decisions but cannot be easily held accountable for those decisions. Recommendations for improving the existing decision making process

follow in Section 6.2.

6.1.14 Accommodating Uncertainty

MOF noted that the chosen option was favorable because it was adaptable and would provide the greatest amount of latitude in future decision making for the area. An expressed intent was made to reduce uncertainty with further study and mitigate impacts on fish, wildlife, archaeological, and recreation resources through appropriate harvesting constraints. However, the concern by local residents and recreation interests that important values will be jeopardized as further study proceeds and poorly monitored logging continues is legitimate and demands the attention of decision-makers.

Decision makers can do two things with uncertainty--study and thereby reduce it or accommodate it. They should first ask whether further study will truly reduce uncertainty. If this is likely and there is time, further study ought to be undertaken. If time is a constraint, as often it is, decisions and recommended actions must be designed to accommodate uncertainty. Close attention must be paid to all logistical and operational aspects of a land use decision. Performance standards must be met by operators, impacts monitored carefully by MOF, and regulations enforced by appropriate regulatory agencies. Otherwise, the amount of latitude for future decision making initially thought to exist may be reduced. As a result, future opportunities may be precluded.

6.1.15 Responsive to Problem

The lower Stikine planning process responded well to MOF's urgent need for a decision. But local concerns about the implications of that decision for future resource development in the watershed were left unaddressed.

Local resource use planning as practised in the lower Stikine is not an effective way to plan a watershed. The links where the planning process broke down are listed below and they bear testimony to why MOF is not equipped, especially at the district level, to make land allocation decisions.

- the TSL was issued prior to planning;
- planning was done in the absence of an overall watershed land use strategy;
- planning skills and technical competence were lacking among district level staff;
- the study terms of reference were narrowly defined with no public input;
- available resource inventory information was negligible;
- the public was involved too late in the planning process;
- clearly stated objectives by other resource agencies were lacking;
- solutions were oversimplified, poorly communicated, and centered around timber harvesting; and
- MOF decision-makers failed to respond to the public's expressed interest in a democratic way.

Planners and administrators within MOF have a professional obligation to design and implement a process that is responsive to the many interests that are supposed to be accommodated through the ministry's mandate. Professionals with appropriate experience should critique the manner in which MOF's present forest planning framework is being implemented and suggest alternative approaches where useful.

6.2 Alternative Approach to Resolution of Local Resource Use Conflicts

A major premise of this paper is that resource and land use planning at the local level requires two elements: (1) a broad regional planning strategy; and (2) community planning guidance. As one alternative, the approach suggested accepts existing institutional realities while incorporating these two essential requirements that are presently lacking under MOF's planning framework. This would provide the strong foundation that is necessary to support local planning initiatives.

A permanent land use planning commission, established outside of existing government resource agencies, with adequate staff support, is recommended to: (1) ensure that local planning occurs within the context of broader regional and provincial resource use objectives; and (2) guarantee that all legitimate interests are given a fair hearing. The commission would provide the broad planning scope that is urgently needed to coordinate the resource use mandates of individual resource agencies. It would supplement, not replace, the planning processes of the resource agencies. Only those issues not resolvable through existing mechanisms would be accepted for further detailed planning. Emphasis would be placed on facilitating an analytical process for effectively evaluating land use alternatives and allocating natural resources in a way which optimizes provincial social and economic benefits.

Planning would be undertaken at the local level by a body consisting of professional planners and locally-elected interest group representatives. Each local planning body would be authorized to draft a local land use plan for submission to, and approval by, the land use planning commission. Final plan approval would rest with the Environment and Land Use Committee of cabinet. This approach

should make the planning and decision making process open and account adequately for affected interests, enhance local participation, district level bureaucrats of the impossible burden of speaking on behalf of local interests.

6.3 General

Incremental steps can and should be taken to ensure full and fair consideration of all legitimate interests and accountability to those who will be most directly affected by decisions made. The improvements suggested in section 6.1 would greatly enhance the cohesion and continuity of MOF's planning process and are feasible under the existing political structure. A land use planning commission, with local planning bodies, would provide the overall guidance and community participation needed for effective local resource and land use planning. Implementation of this alternative approach will depend upon political will. Its success will depend on whether those persons most directly affected can either identify with the planning process--or at least feel that they have been fairly represented.

POSTSCRIPT

In a democratic society it is unfair that only some groups should be represented in decision making. But democracy is not cheap. Present government efforts to guarantee the public a legitimate role in forest land allocation decisions are prioritized below efforts to deal with restraint and to create an attractive business investment climate in British Columbia. Given the government's highly centralized approach to decision making and its historical commitment to the forest industry, it is likely that highly contentious forest land use conflicts will continue to be resolved at the political level. Those issues perceived to have less political risk will continue to be deferred to the district level for resolution. The onus is therefore on professionals within the forestry community to challenge MOF's present approach to conflict resolution and to suggest alternative approaches. Anything less than a responsive approach that fully recognizes the interests and aspirations of native and nonnative people in hinterland communities will simply prolong the adversarial nature of forest land use conflicts prevalent in British Columbia.

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APPENDIX 1

"MINISTRY OF FORESTS' LOCAL RESOURCE USE PLANNING IN THE LOWER STIKINE, BRITISH COLUMBIA: AN EVALUATION"

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is one component of a Masters Research Project. The questions are designed to assess one approach to local resource planning and to evaluate the effectiveness of its application in the lower Stikine. Although you may not be familiar with all of the topics, please answer each as best you can.

Respondent's Name:

Affiliation:

Location:

Date:

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I. PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Do you live in the Stikine watershed?
2. What do you do?
3. What is your interest in the lower Stikine?
4. Are you familiar with the land, resources and people of the Stikine watershed?
5. Does the Ministry of Forests planning process affect your interest? How?
6. Were you personally involved in the planning process in the lower Stikine? How?

II. MINISTRY OF FORESTS PLANNING FRAMEWORK

A. Institutional Arrangements

1. The Ministry of Forests (MOF) designates provincial forests throughout B.C. to maintain the forest land base for integrated (multiple use) resource management. Do you think MOF effectively implements its mandate of integrated resource use when planning crown forest land in B.C.? Why or why not?
2. Forest land planning involves a number of important tasks: (1) determining general patterns of resource development and use; (2) specifying regional resource planning objectives; and (3) identifying primary resource uses in local areas. Do you think MOF is the appropriate agency to be making such decisions when planning crown forest land in B.C.?

III. LOCAL RESOURCE USE PLANNING IN THE LOWER STIKINE

1. Do you think local resource use planning (LRUP) was necessary in the lower Stikine? Why or why not?
 - were the resource issues complex and controversial enough to justify the whole process?

A. Lower Stikine Planning Report

1. What was the purpose of the LSPR, as you see it?
 - substantive or political?
2. Do you think there was adequate time and resources available to complete the Lower Stikine Planning Report?
3. MOF said the objective of the LSPR was to determine a land use strategy for the lower Stikine. Do you agree with this objective? Why or why not?
4. Do you think the report was based on adequate information?

- if not, could this information have been easily added to?

5. MOF compiled and interpreted all the planning information submitted by other resource agencies. Do you think the agency referral was satisfactory?

6. Do you agree with MOF that the major resource use issues are between logging and the recreation, fish and wildlife values of the lower Stikine? Why or why not?

- does this conflict have serious or not serious implications for the resource base of the watershed?

7. Do you think all feasible management alternatives and consequences were fully explored in the LSPR?

- were any feasible alternatives ignored?
- do the options make sense technically? economically? administratively?

8. The management alternatives presented in the LSPR were evaluated according to 4 criteria: timber development benefits, recreation benefits, risk to fish and wildlife, and administrative feasibility. Do you think the evaluation of alternatives was adequate? Should any other criteria have been used? If so, which ones?

9. Do you think the LSPR was or was not an effective decision making tool?

10. What changes, if any, would you recommend to improve the LSPR?

B. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

1. Why do you think the MOF selected a consultative method of public involvement in the lower Stikine?

- complexity of resource issues?
- strong public interest?
- funding and staffing resources available?
- logistics and support services available?
- planning time available?
- politics?

2. Was the public involvement process effective?

- was your full participation hampered in any way?
- was liaison maintained: within MOF; between MOF and other agencies and interest groups?
- was ample time and opportunity provided for public review and comment on the LSPR?
- were all questions and recommendations from public responded to?
- were resource planners sensitive to local needs? did they listen?

3. Were the public consultation meetings useful?

- specifically, what did they do for you?

4. In general, do you consider public involvement, as practised in the lower Stikine, to be a realistic and effective mechanism through which an interested public can influence management decisions?

5. In the Stikine specifically, do you consider public involvement to be a positive__ negative__ necessary__ or unnecessary__ aspect of the local resource use planning process?

6. If the lower Stikine planning process were to be repeated how would you like to see the public involvement aspect conducted, if at all?

C. DECISION MAKING

1. Do you agree with the decision that option 2, integrated timber/ recreation management, should be implemented in the lower Stikine? Why or why not?

2. Do you think MOF should have made the decision? If not, who?
● would ELUC have been appropriate?

3. Do you think the chosen option accomodates risk and uncertainty?

4. What factors do you think were the most important in the decision making process?

5. Do you think the Stikine issue was assessed by 4MOF at the appropriate planning level?

D. OUTCOME

1. Do you think the objective of the planning process to determine the best uses for the resources of the lower Stikine was fulfilled? Why or why not?

2. Do you think the chosen solution responded to the problem?

3. Which of the following factors do you think affected the outcome of the lower Stikine planning process?

- clarity of terms of reference
- information adequacy
- planning method (MOF vs. multidisciplinary planning group)
- public involvement method (consultative vs. extended involvement)
- representation of all interests
- inter/intra agency co-operation
- funding resources
- staff competence and continuity
- planning time available
- political and legal constraints

4. Do you think the process was carried out in the most efficient way?
● any bottlenecks?

5. What do you think you personally gained by participating in the planning process? At what cost (time, money)?

- justified?

6. Do you think the planning process was fair to all interests? Why or why not?

- will any interest groups stand to gain more than others?
- if yes, is this resource misallocation justified?

E. CONCLUSIONS

1. Are you confident that the final Resource Plan will be implemented in the lower Stikine? What factors do you think will influence whether or not the plan is implemented?

2. In general, are you satisfied that MOF planning at the district level pays enough attention to overall watershed or corridor resource use issues?

3. Do you think the MOF's LRUP process is an effective way to plan a watershed? Why or why not?

4. Can you think of an alternative mechanism that would be as or more effective in resolving resource issues at the watershed or local level? Please describe.

5. Do you have any further thoughts, comments, suggestions?

** Thank you very much for your time. **

APPENDIX 2

RESPONSE TO KEY SURVEY QUESTIONS

* The percent values indicate the percentage of the total number of respondents to each question.

Question II.A.1.

Do you think MOF effectively implements its mandate of integrated resource use when planning crown forest land in B.C.?

Total number of respondents (n): 17

yes: 7 (41%)

no: 10 (59%)

- MOF considers all resource users and interests
- MOF's integrated resource planning framework is able to consider all resource values but funding resources can be a constraint.
- MOF considers all interests and the lower Stikine is a good example. We allowed some logging, but in consideration of other resources too.
- Monetary concerns of MOF take priority. Values other than timber are compromised.
- Sincere attempt by personnel to consider perceptions and responsibilities of other agencies but the bottom line is harvesting.
- implementation of integrated use policy falls short due to 4 factors: (1) skills and abilities of planners; (2) staffing problems, only 1 planner in each region; (3) poor public involvement methodology; and (4) ministry commitment to public involvement.
- No information to prove they are not implementing their mandate.
- Main interest of MOF is to cut trees with no consideration of local employment.
- MOF attempts to consider all interests but they don't weigh all segments evenly.
- MOF only considers dollar values not aesthetics.
- MOF gives only token consideration to resources and resource users other than timber interests.
- MOF personnel are usually inexperienced and have never been responsible for their decisions. They do not understand that we do not have the moral right to grab one resource while grinding under another.

Question II.A.2

Forest planning involves a number of important tasks: (1) determining general patterns of resource development and use; (2) specifying regional resource planning objectives; and (3) identifying primary resource uses in local areas. Do you think MOF is the appropriate agency to be making such decisions?

n: 16

yes: 5 (31%)

no: 11 (69%)

- MOF should make these decisions if the planning system works operationally. Remember, MOF does not work in isolation.
- MOF ought to be able to do the job effectively and meet all resource concerns.
- MOF is the only agency that can plan because it is the only agency with an integrated resource use policy.
- Not sure whether MOF has a planning system. There is a great deal of flexibility in how they respond to any set of circumstances.
- MOF is capable of making decisions but there needs to be more amalgamation of resources. Too much bias and top-heaviness.
- MOF can make these decisions but the public must have input.
- The goal of MOF is to derive maximum economic returns from the forest land base. As a result, the ministry's perceptions are skewed towards timber harvesting and this makes difficult land use planning for other resource uses.
- MOF is the logical choice since they initiated the planning process in response to a logging proposal.
- Some other agency should say whether forest land should come under MOF jurisdiction.
- MOF should only plan if they can do an objective, unbiased job. To date they have failed miserably.
- MOF should not be making these decisions because the ministry is single use oriented -- timber extraction. Trees are viewed first as logs and a distant second as part of a complex ecosystem. Also people are viewed as separate from the forest by MOF policies.
- Why not, we do not need more bureaucracy. It is far easier to smarten them up than to try to create something new.

Question III.1

Do you think local resource use planning was necessary in the lower Stikine?

n: 16

yes: 16 (100%)

no: 0

- All respondents thought LRUP was necessary in the lower Stikine. The resource issues and concerns warranted it.

Question III.A.1

What was the purpose of the Lower Stikine Planning Report, as you see it?

n: 13

- An initial assessment of resource issues. It was somewhat of a cursory process given that it established a land use priority without a comprehensive detailed assessment.
- MOF's present approach to planning is a quick and dirty overview assessment to answer immediate questions first, before a broad comprehensive land use plan is initiated. That is the approach we took in the Stikine.
- An information package to determine whether or not to allow more logging in the lower Stikine.
- A rush timber analysis.
- A typical standard forestry report - timber heavy.

- To legitimize timber harvesting on the lower Stikine by making a number of compromises between local and preservation interests and the MOF.
- A means to pacify the public.
- Rationalized a few bureaucrats existences. Woke up a few people to the kind of crooked games the government plays.
- The planning report is not a land use plan so how can MOF make a land use decision?
- 7 respondents viewed the Lower Stikine Planning Report as a means to justify a foregone conclusion that logging would continue.

Question III.A.2

Do you think there was adequate time and resources available to complete the Lower Stikine Planning Report?

n: 9

yes: 0

no: 9 (100%)

- All respondents agreed that the time frame for completion of the Lower Stikine Planning Report was tight.
- 3 respondents noted that more time or money would not have changed the outcome.
- 1 respondent noted that there was not enough time, given the emphasis on user group input for collecting data in lieu of field data collection.
- 1 respondent noted that the time frame was inadequate for even initial data collection on all other resource issues.

Question III.A.4

Do you think the Lower Stikine Planning Report was based on adequate information?

n: 15

yes: 2 (13%)

no: 13 (87%)

- 3 respondents said that the information base was adequate given the terms of reference for the planning exercise. The same respondents did acknowledge that time constraints disallowed complete assessment of recreation, fish and wildlife values.
- 1 respondent noted that a landscape inventory would likely have been done before strategic decisions were made if there was more time.
- 1 respondent said that the data base defined the exercise.
- 10 respondents commented that information was seriously inadequate for decision-makers. All values other than timber were whitewashed. The need for a comprehensive, field-collected data base for the entire watershed was identified.
- 3 respondents noted that more information would not have made any difference to the final decision.
- 1 respondent said the information has been available in universities for a generation; it just wasn't searched out and applied.
- 9 respondents noted the need for a complete cost/benefit assessment of all alternatives and opportunity costs.

Question III.A.5

MOF compiled and interpreted all the planning information submitted by other resource agencies. Do you think the agency referral was satisfactory?

n: 14

yes: 8 (57%)

no: 6 (43%)

- Cannot recall that we had any input to the process before the report was written, except a letter acknowledging what MOF was doing. We have not taken much interest except to respond to and wait for specific proposals. Ideally we should have fish and wildlife inventory information to contribute. But we have no money to collect it. The lower Stikine is just 1 of many priorities. For that reason, I question the usefulness of a joint planning team. We have too little information to contribute to warrant the expenditure of time and money that would be required.
- After the first referral for the TSL was received, we requested the cutting permit be deferred until planning was carried out. Although the permit was allowed, MOF did agree to do the planning report. We were satisfied that all the information we submitted to MOF was included in the report.
- We work well with MOF and feel comfortable with their planning processes. Inevitably there are occasional differences of opinion, resulting from the different agency mandates which may overlap in a specific area. Any interpretation of lower Stikine planning information was not done in isolation by MOF; they kept us informed of their progress and we were aware of how the report was developing.
- Our experience with MOF has to date been good on paper. At present we have no concrete information indicating any problems. MOF compiled and interpreted all the planning information but then someone has to do that. As they initiated the program they are the logical choice to carry out the planning. Our interests were not adequately addressed in the planning report but our concern for the heritage resources has received a positive response.
- MOF's single use timber interests biased the interpretation of the planning information submitted.

Question III.A.6

Do you agree with MOF that the major resource use issues are between logging and the fisheries, wildlife, and recreation values of the lower Stikine?

n: 12

yes: 9 (75%)

no: 3 (25%)

- 9 respondents agreed the major conflict was timber harvesting vs. recreation, fish and wildlife values.
- Other issues considered equally important were mining, logging road access, the question of aboriginal title, water resources, archaeological significance.
- B.C. is still creaming the crop, not faced with resource scarcity and not being forced to look objectively at the forestry situation. No long-term view. Geared up like B.C. Hydro to meet projected demand.

- The issue is really timber vs. preservation. It is only a recreation issue for those people who make a living off of recreation.
- Recreation is a non-issue. There is no recreation use to speak of now and never likely will be unless access is improved and lots more people come to the Stikine.
- The issue is can we continue indefinitely to develop resources piecemeal in B.C.?
- This is the apparent issue but no one can be sure without a complete land use plan considering aboriginal title, water resources, etc.
- The resource issues are complex enough to warrant more than LRUP.
- The principle conflict is **not** with any existing economic entity but with the failure to weigh the dubious values of exporting timber with other small present and future values of the area.
- We must keep in perspective what we are talking about. Not just a landscape inventory. That's not the answer. These studies are meaningless. There are bigger questions to ask.

Question III.A.7 Do you think all feasible management alternatives and consequences were fully explored in the Lower Stikine Planning Report?

n: 15

yes: 2 (13%)

no: 13 (87%)

- 2 respondents said the alternatives presented were suitable for what was needed.
- 2 respondents commented that recreation alternatives were not fully explored. Recreation was undervalued and regarded only in vague terms of potential.
- The timber harvesting option with no defined attention to landscape management is extreme in the same sense that class A provincial park over the entire watershed could be construed as extreme. It is difficult to envisage the MOF seriously considering an option where recreation has no value, particularly in light of the ministry's mandate and responsibility to manage for recreation.
- 2 respondents noted that MOF failed to recognize that logging in the lower Stikine is a submarginal gypo operation -- not economically feasible.
- Not all feasible options were considered. Ecological Reserve or provincial park were feasible but Parks expressed no interest. A moratorium with more study was excluded. Not a productive scenario. Must make a decision.
- Alternatives were not fully explored given time constraints.
- The postponement option is ideal because it would curtail logging until adequate information about the consequences of logging is known and it would accommodate the uncertainty of the Tahltan land claim question.
- No consideration of native people in designing alternatives.
- Solutions are too simplified. All, none, or half way -- it was obvious they would go with a compromise.
- Given the catalyst in this project it was inevitable that some logging would be proposed.
- The range of alternatives were designed to endorse logging.

- Integrated timber/recreation emphasis is vague. It could include a wide range of development alternatives.
- Only standard timber harvesting approaches were considered. These approaches were selected in spite of the doubts expressed in the Lower Stikine Planning Report about the ability to reforest.
- Respondents identified the following alternatives that should have been included: national park, provincial park, recreation corridor, heritage river and Tahltan park.
- Stikine valley should be used as a model corridor to illustrate the advantages of utilizing the new recreation corridor policy. It is now time to show the public that the recreation corridor is a viable means to achieve sound land management ... where all resource values are weighed rationally and where public participation in the planning process is legitimate and timely" (Outdoor Recreation Council of British Columbia, 1984).

Question III.A.8

Do you think the evaluation of alternatives was adequate? Should any other criteria have been used?

n: 13

yes: 3 (23%)

no: 10 (77%)

- Criteria was ranked qualitatively on the basis of the district manager's values.
- The valuation of intangibles is a source of conflict. Environmentalists advocate wilderness values for wilderness sake. MOF is a use-oriented ministry and does not look at resources that way.
- Could have used more time on the evaluation.
- We consciously excluded cost/benefit analysis because we had doubts about our ability to do it given poor information and doubts about whether we would even use it.
- MOF's refusal to do cost/benefit analysis assumes logging will continue. It seems to be a self-serving policy to protect MOF timber interests in the planning area.
- How can a rational decision be made on logging unless all resource values are clearly and equally identified and quantified.
- Criteria were defined so vaguely in the planning report that they could easily be manipulated to yield a "desired" result. For example, timber development benefits can be portrayed positively in some aspects until one looks at marketability, economic efficiency, costs, benefits, and opportunity cost.
- The river rafting industry is growing and the market value of the industry is derived from the wilderness character of the river valley. The recreation resource must be assessed in terms of existing and potential use.
- Perhaps the criteria were listed in the report but that doesn't mean the solutions were evaluated.
- Too simplified. All, none, or half way -- no social or people aspects included.
- Subjective analysis from biased forestry perspective.
- It is not correct for MOF to both outline options and chose

options.

- It is questionable whether the 4 criteria were objectively evaluated.
- Respondents identified the following criteria that should have been included: compatibility with aboriginal land claims, sustainable forest capability, administrative ability to carry out silviculture and rehabilitation of soil, water and fish; wilderness values; protection of unique natural and archaeological features; and short/long term economic analyses.

Question III.A.9

Do you think the Lower Stikine Planning Report was an effective decision making tool?

n: 16

yes: 4 (25%)

no: 12 (75%)

- 4 respondents said the lower Stikine Planning Report was a good decision making tool.
- 12 respondents said no. The following reasons were cited:
- Only an outline of values. No basis for decision.
- The interests of the public were not met. The report was insufficient in detail and useful only as an overview.
- Only effective from MOF perspective -- in achieving short term economic goals.
- If planning is to be carried out in an objective manner, the LSPR is an effective planning tool. If planning is to be used to justify a pre-existing and ongoing situation the LSPR is not an effective tool.
- The LSPR was a good vehicle for focussing public attention but failed to provide meaningful role for participants.
- Suggested improvements include: more time, more data, planning should be complete before any harvesting is allowed, use LSPR as a basis to fill information gaps before making decisions.

Question III.B.1

Why do you think MOF selected a consultative method of public involvement in the lower Stikine?

n: 10

- The following comments were raised:
- Logistics, funding, staff, flying time and the method fit the terms of reference.
- Extensive involvement would have put high demands on time and resources.
- Logging was insignificant and public concern was underestimated.
- Joint planning teams are time consuming and troublesome.
- Because land status is not an issue here, a joint planning team does not represent the most appropriate approach.
- Cabinet did not want any more joint planning teams. There is a definite initiative in government to downsize public involvement.
- MOF did not feel the resource issue warranted extended costs -we are not talking many trees.
- MOF misunderstood public concern and underestimated the international implications of the Stikine in an unaltered state.

- All of the considerations listed in the Public Involvement Handbook which support the use of an extended public involvement approach unquestionably fit the Stikine situation.
- Without the strong public interest there would have been no public involvement program.
- Consultation is the primary means by which MOF involves people -- Let the people speak and then explain to them the errors of their beliefs -- it is listening without hearing.

Question III.B.2

Was the public involvement process effective?

n: 18

yes: 5 (28%)

no: 13 (72%)

- 5 respondents said the public involvement process was effective because without it the decision could have been much worse.
- The following comments were made:
- Hal-Pac Forest Products would have had a blank check without public involvement.
- It was not effective, I guess, because I did not convince them that my decision was right.
- The Residents For A Free Flowing Stikine was the nucleus of all our anti-log mail -- so, concerns raised by other groups are almost a nonissue.
- No comment on what happened. But, I really question a joint planning teams because we have no information to contribute and no dollars to get it.
- 13 respondents felt the public involvement process was not effective. The following comments were made:
- MOF lost public trust immediately by issuing the TSL with no public notice.
- Energy and hours spent by locals was considered to be a waste of time.
- The process was a sham. Participatory democracy does not exist in B.C. MOF ignored comments it did not like --especially the unanimous opposition to logging expressed at the public meeting with 75 locals present.
- MOF could not support their own position under questioning.
- The public involvement process was effective in getting public opinion clarified but they did not listen to what we said.
- How can public involvement be effective when a decision has already been made by people who are not willing to make substantial changes.
- Inadequate time frame for appropriate and important research to derive a useful response.
- MOF's public involvement policy is nothing progressive. Just a new program for the same old policies.
- My participation should mean that I can ask a specific question and get a reasonable scientific answer. My questions and letters were ignored.
- You cannot say process was a good one if the native and local people say no.

- The only reason MOF initiated the planning and public involvement processes was because of the strong public opposition expressed.
- I experienced personal satisfaction in being part of a strong community bond.
- Native groups will always be defeated until government officials start to consult with us before making decisions.

Question III.B.6

If the lower Stikine planning process were to be repeated how would you like to see the public involvement aspect conducted, if at all?

n: 11

- 11 respondents offered ideas for improving the public involvement process. Comments are summed up as follows:
- Overcome logistics, enhance dialogue.
- Do not issue TSL without informing public.
- Public should lobby politicians. Directing letters and concerns to bureaucrats alone is not good enough.
- Never underestimate or assume what the public sentiment is. Ask them directly.
- Government personnel must be resource people to the locals.
- Plans should be done from the ground up.
- Listen to the local people. You cannot ignore them. Let them make decisions that will most directly affect them. Let them be responsible for and live with their own mistakes.
- MOF's so-called public involvement was a waste of time. They don't come here to find out what we want. They have made a forgone conclusion. They just come to pacify us and use unclear terminology. No human, straightforward talk. They talk a different language in their reports.
- Let locals make decisions, make their own mistakes - but they will be small enough to be fixed. Must have faith in community's ability to determine best resource uses. Ultimately, local people can best decide because there would be good communication and feedback.
- Public involvement is necessary at the resource development and monitoring stages.

Question III.C.1

Do you agree with the decision that Option 2, integrated timber/recreation management, should be implemented in the lower Stikine?

n: 21

yes: 10 (48%)

no: 11 (52%)

- 10 respondents agreed with the decision.
- The following comments were made:
- Land base now better defined.
- Agree only if appropriate recreation, fish and wildlife constraints are met.
- Agree, as long as fish habitat is protected. Option 2 calls for harvesting of forests adjacent to most valuable fish habitat in the valley, and will result in considerable cost to adequately assess the areas concerned.

- Cannot disagree with all logging but there must be some constraints.
- If appropriate recreation, fish and wildlife constraints were met logging would not be allowed.
- The Stikine is so vast. Logging in the lower Stikine does not affect us at all here in Telegraph Creek. Most of the people here have never even been down river. We have to make a living up here, so people must adapt to change or perish.
- 11 respondents disagreed with Option 2. The following comments were made:
 - Might agree if the government approached us. But they never do.
 - The district manager had his answer before he even started the planning process.
 - Logging in the lower Stikine is simply not economically viable. The logs are sitting in Wrangell with no market.
 - No logging should have been allowed with no clear understanding of the consequences.
 - MOF had an incomplete data base and carried out a very unobjective planning process.
 - If all recreation, fish and wildlife constraints were met there would be no logging.
 - Absolutely no concern for local people who live in the Stikine watershed.

Question III.C.2

Do you think MOF should have made the decision? If not, who?

n: 8

yes: 2 (25%)

no: 6 (75%)

- MOF, of course. We are the only one who can deal with this. We have the multiple use mandate.
- MOF, yes, but not at the district or regional level. The decision should have been made at the provincial level.
- Not MOF. Hard to find an objective body, therefore local people should make final decision.
- ELUC would not be any better than MOF. Industry has ELUC's ear.
- ELUC would be not better because it is controlled by politicians. All of them have no view of the future -- short term visions only.
- ELUC might have been involved if there had been more public lobbying. ELUC usually limits its involvement to land use allocation issues. The lower Stikine is already allocated to provincial forest.
- 3 government respondents affirmed that ELUC chose not to handle the Lower Stikine issue.

Question III.C.3

Do you think the chosen option accommodates risk and uncertainty?

n: 7

yes: 2 (29%)

no: 5 (71%)

- MOF's consideration of uncertainty is academic to the problem at hand until a more complete evaluation of the economic benefits of recreation is done. Because of uncertainty, resource plans are either

ignored by MOF or are so general that actual development activities diverge significantly from the initial understanding reached at the completion of the plan. We are not confident that adequate decisions can be taken when all resources other than timber values have been treated so lightly.

- The only decision which would have provided the greatest amount of flexibility for future decision making is a no logging option.
- The vagaries of the log export market seriously augment the economic uncertainty of logging.
- How can MOF contend that Option 2 is flexible when in their report they say that the effects of timber harvesting on the recreation, fish, and wildlife values are unknown?
- We considered the moratorium option, and got flack for not adopting it. But it is not a productive scenario. We had to make a decision.

Question III.C.4

What factors do you think were most important in the decision making process?
n: 16

- 1 respondent said the Ministry of Forests Act and its related multiple use mandate.
- 2 respondents said public opinions and values.
- 6 respondents said timber harvesting benefits.
- 6 respondents said political influence.
- 1 respondent noted that information, access and time were all constraints that had a negative influence on the decision-making process.
- 4 respondents affirmed that there was no political influence on the decision.
- 2 respondents noted that the Victoria executive was opposed to logging given the marginal timber value and high political risk.
- 1 respondent said that the district office granted that TSL because it was the first time industry had shown a real interest in Cassiar TSA timber.

Section III.C.5

Do you think the lower Stikine issue was assessed by MOF at the appropriate planning level?

n: 11

yes: 1 (9%)

no: 10 (91%)

- 10 respondents agreed that the lower Stikine issue should have been assessed at a broader level. The following comments were cited:
- The Stikine is a nationally and internationally significant river therefore planning efforts are worthy of a broader public scrutiny.
- The District office in Dease Lake did not consider the regional or provincial significance of the Stikine
- In a large, relatively untouched watershed such as the Stikine the province should assume responsibility.
- Management is geared more towards timber availability and location. The District doesn't see beyond the boundaries of the district.
- The lower Stikine was assessed at the wrong planning level. At the

LRUP level too many decisions have already been made. As a result, interest groups find themselves barking up the wrong tree too late.

- Major issues should not be handled at the district level where there is no expertise.
- Why was such an important decision deferred to the district level of the MOF when the Lower Stikine Planning Report recognized the provincial and national significance of the Stikine River?

Question III.D.1

Do you think the planning objective to determine the best uses for the resources of the lower Stikine was fulfilled?

n: 17

yes: 8 (47%)

no: 9 (53%)

- No local planning ever occurred.
- Resource use conflicts are far from being resolved because individual resource values have not yet been fully expected.
- Cutting and planning simultaneously presents serious problems. The purpose of planning is to determine the best of a number of alternate land uses for a given area of land. Once cut, the area is removed from the planning process, as the land use has been determined for it.

Question III.D.6

Do you think the planning process was fair to all interests?

n: 14

yes: 1 (7%)

no: 13 (93%)

- All respondents who said no commented that timber harvesting interests received priority. Comments included:
- Yes, it must be remembered that Residents For A Free Flowing Stikine was the nucleus of all our anti-log mail. So the letters* written by other interest groups are almost a non-issue.
- All the little people were ignored. The government sees things in terms of lobbies. Eventually, they will oil the loudest squeak. Perhaps that result won't be in the best interest of the majority.

Question III.E.2

In general are you satisfied that MOF planning at the district level pays enough attention to overall watershed or corridor resource use issues?

n: 11

yes: 0

no: 11 (100%)

- No, it should though. Issuance of the TSL was done in isolation.
- Planning methodology is good but process and implementation is poor.
- District only sees things in terms of timber availability and location.
- Can't look at watershed issues in country this size. Cassiar TSA is 1/6 the size of B.C. with everything in vegetation from coastal forest to arctic tundra. TSA analysis should look at watershed

issues.

- Not enough plans are being done, but that's not MOF's fault.
- MOF does not have the expertise at the district level (limited at any level) on watershed management. Watershed management involves a holistic vision and dedication, also means balancing the short and long terms ... MOF does not have or do these things.

Question III.E.3

Do you think the MOF's local resource use planning process is an effective way to plan a watershed?

n: 13

yes: 1 (8%)

no: 12 (92%)

- Its effective given that the Cassiar TSA is 1/6 the size of B.C..
- Can not always plan before developing because often there wouldn't be an issue without a development interest.
- Our planning methodology is sound, but to date, implementation has been constrained.
- No attention is given overall watershed resource use. There should be, but MOF's approach to planning now is issue-specific.
- Development should never precede planning.
- No inventory, no local control, incomplete process, no objective communication. MOF lacks a holistic approach, they compartmentalize decisions. MOF is an inappropriate group to be doing resource planning.
- We need lots of private business interests. Then if one resource gets trampled there will be someone there to complain.

Question III.E.4

Can you think of an alternative mechanism that would be as or more effective in resolving resource issues at the watershed or local level?

n: 15

- Start with TSA Land Use Plan for broad resource use objectives and guidelines.
- ELUC should collect data with locals.
- Need a larger professional organization at the provincial level with more expertise than found at the district level for resolving resource issues like the lower Stikine.
- Local authority heading a joint planning team. Use MOF as resource people.
- Comprehensive approach with extensive data collection first.
- Decentralize decision-making authority to local populace.
- Watershed-based local planning with own consultants. More emphasis would be placed on long term maintenance of renewable resources. Responsibility for making mistakes would be at the local level.
- Regionalized not centralized control.
- Take a normative approach. Interest groups as well as resource agencies should critique MOF's assessments.
- MOF must take a holistic approach to watershed planning and management -- an approach that is presently thwarted by a lack of expertise at the district level.