

Appendix 3:

Community Priorities

Many priorities for a community forest were expressed by community members in the consultations for this feasibility study. These are consistent with *The ICSI Consensus Goals and Principles* and they have been incorporated into this feasibility study. The list includes summary points as well as direct quotations from meetings and interviews carried out by the consultants.

One category of priorities that could not be fully dealt with directly in the feasibility study is the first one below: “Community priorities for the land base.” An in depth explanation of issues related to the land base is provided in section 2.1.7 of the report.

Community priorities for the land base

- The community forest should be located in areas that are close to islands communities, to keep costs down and allow people to get to know the forest.
- *“If you can't see the forest in your daily life, there won't be ownership.”*
- *“People should be able to see it, walk in it, and enjoy it close to where they live in order to recognize it as theirs.”*
- *“Having a land base as a single package is important.”*
- The east coast of Graham Island from the Honnah to Masset is the most logical place for the community forest and can provide community forest area close to six out of seven of our communities. Sandspit however also needs part of the community forest nearby to help create local jobs.
- The west coast areas should be included in a community forest because they are also part of the islands community and camp life is part of our lifestyle and the way we are used to making a living.
- The lands included in the community forest should be productive and accessible enough to provide a viable economic resource. Ideally, they should have a timber profile typical of the Islands.
- A community forest may require lands from TFLs on the Islands, *“the TFL structure shouldn't hamper the potential for establishing a community forest.”*
- *“The community forest should be large enough to provide flexibility and a variety of options.”*
- Longer rotations may mean that a larger area is required to meet the same harvesting objectives that a smaller area would meet under conventional harvesting.
- The community forest should not be entirely made up of contentious areas: *“Why would we go into areas that are contentious until all of the issues have been dealt with. We don't want to create any more internal conflict.”*
- We have to be careful not to over-estimate the amount of wood that is available in the areas under discussion for the community forest.
- Re-allocation of volumes from the SBFEP to the community forest should not have negative impacts on those who now depend on the SBFEP.
- The community forest should provide benefits that complement, rather than draw away from, the opportunities and goals of the Small Business Forest Enterprise Program (SBFEP). *“The community forest should be able to provide competition to the MoF SBFEP”*
- *“A community forest must provide fair opportunity to island based business and processing enterprise.”*

- More wood than is currently been discussed for a community forest needs to be made available. *“The 5% of the TSA volume currently allocated to 16.1 sales is not sufficient to sustain local manufacturing.”*
- *“To be able to promote local processing, a community forest must be able to provide a predictable flow of the right kind of timber.”*

Community priorities for tenure

- *“The public is not supportive of a volume-based tenure. We want area base.”*
- *“The Community doesn't want to be stuck with unsustainable required harvest volumes. We want to be part of the solution not part of the problem.”*
- A longer rotation period should be used for the determination of the AAC.
- *“Rotation ages should be 150-200 years for AAC determinations.”*
- Work towards the reform of forestry practices in the islands as a whole should not be lost as a result of the effort put into the community forest. The community should continue to pursue its vision of tenure reform at the broader scale, while setting an example at a small scale.
- A community forest tenure must flexible in order to work. It should be based on basic principles but be allowed to evolve over time. It must provide adequate institutional support for innovation.

Community priorities for Organizational Structure

Community “ownership” and involvement

- The community forest has to belong to the Islands Community as a whole.
- The creation and activities of the community forest have to be without prejudice to the interests of the Haida Nation.
- *“The community forest must bring a sense of ownership to the community through hands-on experience, learning and participation.”*
- The community forest has to be a cooperative effort and should result in fair returns and benefits to all of the communities of Haida Gwaii.
- The community forest and its organization should be self financing.
- *“The challenge is to create an independent mechanism that is self-governing, self-running and provides win-win situations for the Haida and non-Haida communities.”*
- The people of the Island Community must have an opportunity for input into decision-making at the strategic and operational planning level, although this should not interfere with the day to day management of the forest based on those plans.
- Community members should have meaningful participation in forming the guiding principles and objectives of the community forest.
- Each community needs a voice on the board because of the risk that some communities might be under-represented through an “at large” election.
- Public input into the Stewardship Charter should determine ways of ensuring accountability and these should be spelled out in the policies of the community forest board.

- *“There needs to be an accountability mechanism built into the board structure and community forest organization.”*
- Decision-making for the community forest should be open and transparent. Good records should be accessible for public review.
- *“Anybody can walk in off the street and see the community forest's books. It's far better to have decisions out in the open.”*
- The community forest organization should represent the interests of the different peoples and sectors of the islands community in the management of the forest.

Expert, informed management

- The organization that plans and manages the community forest should include capable people with the right skills and experience.
- The organization should make sure that the community forest is managed by people with the expertise to deal with the liabilities and responsibilities of holding a forest licence, who have credibility and can win the confidence of the business community.
- The board will have to know enough about basics like the Forest Practices Code to be able to give appropriate direction to the staff.
- While the community forest board should be accountable for policy and high-level decision making, the staff should have practical skills to run the business day-to-day and they should be given the chance to do their job.
- *“The people involved should have practical skills, good business sense, and a concern for the community and the land.”*
- Stakeholder committees and contracting should be used to tap the knowledge of local, experienced stakeholders.
- Performance audits and technical reviews should help ensure good management.
- Monitoring and evaluation would help the community to see its progress, build on successes and learn from mistakes.

Community priorities for forest management

Maintaining and drawing on the full range of forest values

- A variety of values will be supported by the community forest, including recreational, traditional/spiritual and non-timber economic values.
- The community forest should meet a range of uses, from mushroom picking to guide outfitting, to an outdoor recreation centre.
- The community forest should maintain an economic timber base, but also include management for non-timber values.
- *“There is no further need to alienate any more timber in this area (although, obviously, this does not preclude setting aside smaller areas, representative forests, riparian areas, and so on, that's OK).”*

Alternative management approaches

- Education and creative thinking should quickly be applied to maintain the vision of the community forest while responding to market forces.

- The community forest should be operated at harvest levels based on the long run sustainable yield.
- Diverse approaches should be used that reflect community expectations for maintaining and enhancing forest values, jobs, lifestyles and incomes.
- Rather than follow an industrial approach to forestry, the rate of harvest should be based on ecological principles and a clear understanding of community values.
- *“We have to lose the plantation model of forestry.”*
- The community forest will provide a place to test new approaches and practice more flexible harvest options.
- Research and education should provide a solid foundation for alternative approaches; the community should not rush into new ways of doing things without being well-informed on their pros and cons.
- *“Community forest operations need to be based on sound, comprehensive inventories, community land base planning, and technical review.”*

Community priorities for the business aspects of the community forest

- In the medium term, while the community forest may not be required to show high profits, it should not be a cost to the community.
- The supply of timber available to the community forest should be enough to support an operation that will operate “in the black” within a reasonable period of time.

Manufacturing and marketing

- *“No round logs should be leaving Haida Gwaii! The wood should be processed locally to create local jobs and community stability.”*
- Products manufactured from the community forest will have to be of high enough value to earn a price premium in international markets. Volume or commodity products will not be as competitive.
- Certification will be an advantage to the community forest, improving access to markets.
- Community forest wood supply agreements will be important to foster small scale wood processing.
- Market mechanisms should be created to add to the strength of the small manufacturing sector, without calling on the community forest to subsidize local manufacturers.
- The community forest should implement a community log market as soon as possible.
- *“I would like to see the community forest advance opportunities for value-added manufacturing by offering secure timber supply.”*
- Volumes that suit the needs of small and medium sized contractors should be made available by the community forest.
- *“The community forest should provide for small 500 to 1 000 m³/year sales with 3-5 year durations to provide stability for the smallest operators.”*

- The wood extracted from the community forest, as well as wood waste, should be processed locally.
- *“There is tremendous value in 10% of the forest profile; the community forest operation needs to maximize that value at every stage from the forest (falling, bucking, sorting) to the dryland sort, and on to markets.”*

Community capacity and infrastructure needs

- A shortage of electric power on the islands is a constraint to increased local processing, and puts disadvantages on power intensive industries. This will have to be addressed.
- The community forest will have to use initiatives and infrastructure already in place, such as the Haida Gwaii/Queen Charlotte Islands Community Skills Centre, and the co-generation plant in Port Clements.
- *“We have many local talented people and companies with the ability to handle small community forest volumes and optimize community benefits.”*
- The community forest will depend on the capacity of the Community’s small businesses, local people with skills and community-based companies, so the health of the small business sector should be maintained through the transition to the community forest.
- *“It is important to foster a healthy manufacturing base for a community forest now: a base that includes a cash flow, established markets and a reliable wood supply.”*
- Cooperative working arrangements between the community forest and local small business operators should enhance stability.

Community priorities for employment and training

- Local employment is a priority of the community forest.
- Employment should be broadly based.
- Employment benefits should favor full time island residents over off islanders.
- Training opportunities should be provided so that unemployed people without the necessary skills can benefit from the jobs provided by the community forest.
- Ongoing training opportunities including on the job training should allow people to advance in forest based employment if they choose.
- Joint ventures in the community forest could provide opportunities to develop shared technical capabilities and business skills.
- A research component in the community forest could contribute to education and learning.
- The community forest will provide a way that the community can learn more about forest management.