

Previous Government Plans & Studies

The Babine River Watershed has been the subject of many government reports, studies and plans. The Babine River Corridor has been the subject of a number of government planning processes including the Babine Local Resource Use Plan (LRUP), the Bulkley and Kispiox Land and Resource Management Plans (LRMP's), Access Management Plans and Forest Development Plans (FDP's).

The Babine Local Resource Use Plan

"The Babine River planning process was initiated in response to a conflict between access for timber harvesting and conservation of recreation and wildlife values. Competing land use interests in the Babine River Drainage created pressures that required an overall land use plan be formulated. This process began in 1988 jointly coordinated by the Ministry of Forests and Ministry of Environment. A Technical Advisory Committee (T.A.C.) was established to identify and resolve conflicting issues and develop options for this land base."³

The Babine River Local Resource Use Plan area covered two timber supply areas (TSA's), the Bulkley and the Kispiox. The Babine River LRUP represented a set of strategies for managing the resources in the Babine River Watershed. Alternatives were identified and analyzed as part of the Bulkley and Kispiox Land and Resource Management Plans that were later developed for each of the two TSA's that surround the Babine River.

The intent of the Babine LRUP was stated in a July 27, 1992 provincial press release.

"The wilderness qualities along the river will be maintained while allowing carefully managed forest development elsewhere."⁴

The term "maintain" has been defined by Ministry of Forests to mean "to preserve from failure or decline; to cause to continue"⁵ This term is also a key word in the Babine River Foundation vision statement.

The Bulkley and Kispiox Land And Resource Management Plans (LRMP's)

The Bulkley LRMP is a provincially approved plan that is built upon and closely reflects the Consensus Management Direction achieved by the 12 member Bulkley

³ Babine River Interim Local Resource Use Plan, Ministry of Forests & Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks, January 1985

⁴ Province of British Columbia. 1992. Decisions Made on Babine Local Resource Use Plan.

⁵ B.C. Ministry of Forests. 1998. Guide to Writing Resource Objectives and Strategies. Forest Practices Branch, in cooperation with the Ministry of Environment Lands and Parks, and the Land Use Coordination Office (page 54).

Valley Community Resources Board (CRB) between 1992 and 1998. The Kispiox LRMP was approved in April 1996 and amended in March 2001. The LRMP provides management objectives, strategies and zones to guide the sustainable use of provincial Crown Land and resources in the Kispiox planning area.

LRMP Monitoring and Amendments

Updates and amendments of both LRMP's were anticipated in the original plans. Scheduled amendments were anticipated within 8 years of the plan adoption to accommodate new issues and significant amendments that are not adequately addressed in the original plans. Unscheduled amendments are significant changes to the plan that may be identified in the annual report or at the annual public meeting. The Bulkley LRMP indicates that when issues arise that require a major amendment (major revisions to objectives or management statements set out in the plan, or changes to Resource Management Zone boundaries of 500 hectares or more, not including SM1 zones or Protected areas) the Inter Agency Management Committee of government will establish a schedule and Terms of Reference for the amendment process.⁶

Kispiox Land and Resource Management Plan Excerpt

“ 9.0 Monitoring and amendment

The intent of monitoring and amendment procedures is to allow the public and government agencies to assess whether resource management and development activities are consistent with the Kispiox LRMP and to provide a process for amendment of the plan, if required.

Public, First Nations and government representatives will form a monitoring committee to review implementation of the Kispiox LRMP. A call for nominations for committee members will be broadly advertised and selection of committee members will be by consensus among nominated candidates. The monitoring committee will develop a terms of reference for approval by the Prince Rupert Inter-Agency Management Committee (IAMC) and will produce a public annual report on implementation of the LRMP. The annual report will describe how the objectives and strategies in the Kispiox LRMP are being met by resource management activities and resource development in the planning area. An annual meeting will be held to review implementation of the plan.

⁶ B.C. Bulkley Valley Community Resources Board. Bulkley Land and Resource Management Plan. March 1998. (page 118).

The monitoring committee may recommend amendments to the Kispiox LRMP to the IAMC. Amendments may be required as a result of more detailed planning processes, new information and monitoring or as directed by the IAMC. Appropriate public participation processes will be defined for amendments. A major review of the Kispiox LRMP is required in the eighth year after approval and may be required earlier if directed by the IAMC.”

Bulkley Land and Resource Management Plan Excerpt

“5.3 Updates and Amendments

5.3.1 Updates

Plan updates are any minor changes to the plan to be approved by the IAMC. After IAMC approval, minor changes will be documented and circulated to the public, CRB, interest groups and tenure holders. Examples of minor changes include:

- * revision of wording;
- * revised priorities for more detailed plans and watershed assessments;
- * small changes to boundaries of Resource Management Zones,
- * refinements to objectives and strategies suggested by more detailed plans; and,
- * changes required to make the plan conform with new laws, regulations, or policies.

5.3.2 Scheduled Amendments

If by the 8th year of the plan, there have been a sufficient number of significant amendments, and new issues have emerged in the Plan Area that are not adequately addressed in the Plan, then IAMC may choose to redraft the Plan. The IAMC will establish the Terms of Reference for the amendment process, consistent with existing legislation and regulations. The public will be involved in the amendment process.

5.3.3 Unscheduled Amendments

An unscheduled amendment is a significant change to the plan. This includes major revisions to objectives or management statements set out in the plan, or changes to Resource Management Zone boundaries of 500 hectares or more, not including SM1 zones or Protected Areas.

The public or agencies may identify issues that require an unscheduled amendment. These will be identified in the Annual Report or at the annual public meeting. When issues arise that require a major amendment, the IAMC will establish the schedule and Terms of Reference for the amendment process. The public and the Board will be involved in the plan amendment process.

5.3.4 Amendments to Protected and SM1 Zones

Amendments to the plan will not include boundary changes to Protected Areas or Special Management 1 zones. Special Management 1 zones will not be upgraded to Protected Areas.

5.3.5 Interpretation and Appeal

From time to time, the public or agencies may become concerned about how the plan is being interpreted or about specific land and resource practices that result from it. In all instances of concern, the issues will be dealt with in a co-operative manner.

Where the public or agencies raise concerns with specific resource management practices that are occurring in the LRMP, they should raise the issue with the Board, and directly with the affected resource agency which is mandated to manage those specific values. Where there is an existing review or appeal process, the concern will be dealt with through that process. For example, concerns over forest road construction will be dealt with under the Forest Practices Code.

The objectives and strategies in this LRMP are intended to be at a broad or strategic level wherever possible. Where a concern is raised over the interpretation of land use objectives and strategies, the concern should be addressed directly to the affected agency or agencies. The responsible manager will respond to the concern in writing, consulting with the LRMP chair and Interagency Planning Team where necessary. If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved, the concern will be forwarded to the Interagency Management Committee for resolution. The Interagency Management Committee will determine if the decision is consistent with the intent of the approved plan. If it is, no further action will be taken. If it is not, the agency responsible will be directed to revise the decision to be consistent with the intent of the plan.”

The West Babine Sustainable Resource Management Plan

In May of 2002, the Resource Planning Branch of the Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management introduced a discussion paper regarding Sustainable Resource Management (SRM) Planning.⁷ The working paper indicates that SRM planning consolidates and simplifies an array of strategic resource plans. The purpose of SRM planning is to provide a new consolidated approach to planning at the landscape level on provincial Crown lands.

⁷ B.C. Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management. May 1, 2002. Sustainable Resource Management Planning – A Landscape-Level Strategy for Resource Development. Victoria, B.C.

In July of 2002 a draft West Babine Sustainable Resource Management Plan was completed. The strategic level direction for the plan was provided by the two previous land use plans, the Babine Interim Land Resource Use Plan (LRUP) and the Kispiox Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP), representing public, industry and government interests.

Creation of the Babine River Corridor Park

The Babine River Corridor Park was established as a Class A park by the Provincial government in 1999 following consensus recommendations by the public in the Bulkley and Kispiox LRMP's.