

**Community Participation and Decision-Making  
in the New Forest Economy**

**Updated Report and Analysis  
on a Questionnaire Survey of Residents  
in Six British Columbia Communities**

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The questionnaire survey could not have been completed without the assistance of Tracy Thornton, Colin Macleod, Jenny Lo, and Regine Halseth. Tracy and Colin also undertook to collect the address information for our survey sample.

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Greg Halseth  
and  
Annie Booth  
Prince George  
August 1, 1999

## **Disclaimer**

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Funding assistance by Forest Renewal BC does not imply endorsement of any statements or information contained herein.

## **Project Abstract**

### **Community Participation and Decision-Making in the New Forest Economy**

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**Project Summary:**

This research project investigates community dynamics and factors influencing effective participation and decision-making in British Columbia's resource-dependent communities. The research will identify defining elements of "community" which are key to effective participation in both community development decision-making and resource planning, allocation, and management. The research findings will be of direct value to managers seeking to maximize returns on community development assistance and those seeking to make effective use of community involvement in the new types of consultation processes now underway within the Province.

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**Rationale:**

A central priority of the Forest Renewal B.C. initiative is with "strengthening communities that rely on the forests". As the Forest Practices Code changes the way our forest resource is managed, harvested and utilized, so too will change the patterns of employment, and the skills needed to gain this employment, in the new forest economy. These changes will have a direct impact upon many of British Columbia's smaller, resource-based, communities where both local workers and businesses rely upon direct participation in the forest industry. At an individual level, workers and residents will be engaged in a 'retooling' of skills to meet new job opportunities. At a broader level, communities will be seeking to participate in resource allocation decisions and to attract investment which keeps the economic benefits of the new forest economy within their community. FRBC recognizes the importance of these changes and the importance of "supporting community development and adjustment".

While achieving successful adjustment to change is a critically important goal, the participation of communities in resource allocation and management, and the positioning of communities to facilitate new economic development, will be hampered without a clear understanding of both the meaning and dynamics of community involvement. This is not simply an isolated academic issue, but rather, how communities function and come together to participate in the new forest economy will have a very real impact upon how successful they are in adjusting to new forest management practices. What defines a community? What aspects of this definition are critical to motivating participation in planning for adjustments to change? What aspects of this definition are important in promoting community economic development? What criteria can local areas employ to help define their geographic territory, especially when they may be in competition with adjacent areas over control of resources? How can the desire for community participation in resource planning be better integrated into models to ensure more effective decision-making? Finally, how can more effective institutions and structures be developed to assist decision-making? Finding clear answers to these questions will be an important part of helping communities adjust to the new forest economy.

## **Research Goals:**

Four Research Goals guide the proposed research:

1. Develop an applied definition of “community” and “community development” in British Columbia, and creation of tools for self-definition of community on a local basis.
2. Develop recommendations to enhance community participation in current resource allocation decision-making models (e.g.: LRMP's).
3. Application of community definition and participation recommendations to resource planning and management objectives and practices, including assessments of their application to community-based management models.
4. Develop recommendations on appropriate institutional developments to enhance community goal-setting and decision-making in regard to resource management at the local level.

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# **Publications**

## **of the “Community Participation in the New Forest Economy” research project**

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### **Case Studies**

A Case Study of Six British Columbi Communities and Their Participation in Resource Management Decision-Making. Annie Booth and Greg Halseth. Faculty of Natural Resources and Environmental Studies. University of Northern British Columbia. October 31, 1999.

### **WorkBook**

The Natural Resources and Community Workbook. Annie Booth and Greg Halseth. Faculty of Natural Resources and Environmental Studies. University of Northern British Columbia. October 31, 1999.

### **Discussion Papers**

Discussion Paper on Concepts: “Community”. Greg Halseth and Annie Booth. Faculty of Natural Resources and Environmental Studies. University of Northern British Columbia. December 20, 1997.

Discussion Paper on Concepts: “Community Economic Development”. Greg Halseth and Annie Booth. Faculty of Natural Resources and Environmental Studies. University of Northern British Columbia. February 10, 1998.

Discussion Paper on Concepts: “Citizen Participation in Resource Management”. Annie Booth and Greg Halseth. Faculty of Natural Resources and Environmental Studies. University of Northern British Columbia. October 31, 1999.

### **Reports**

“Updated Report and Analysis on a Questionnaire Survey of Residents in Six British Columbia Communities”. Greg Halseth and Annie Booth. Faculty of Natural Resources and Environmental Studies. University of Northern British Columbia. July 30, 1999.

“Recommendations for Public Participation in the New Forest Economy”. Greg Halseth and Annie Booth. Faculty of Natural Resources and Environmental Studies. University of Northern British Columbia. July 30, 1999.



## **Annotated Bibliographies**

### First Edition:

- #1. Community Participation and the New Forest Economy - Citizen Participation in Resource Management - An Annotated Bibliography. April 1997.
- #2. Community Participation and the New Forest Economy - Community and Sustainability - An Annotated Bibliography. April 1997.
- #3. Community Participation and the New Forest Economy - British Columbia Models of Community Participation and Examples of Management - An Annotated Bibliography. April 1997.

### Second Edition:

- #1. Citizen Participation in Resource Management - Community Participation and the New Forest Economy - An Annotated Bibliography. November 1998.
- #2. Community and Sustainability - Community Participation and the New Forest Economy - An Annotated Bibliography. November 1998.
- #3. British Columbia Models of Community Participation and Examples of Management - Community Participation and the New Forest Economy - An Annotated Bibliography. November 1998.

## **FURTHER INFORMATION**

As part of our intent to make this information as widely available as possible, copies of all research reports, discussion papers and bibliographies were sent to most public library systems in British Columbia. As well, copies were sent to many of the college, university-college, and university libraries systems in the Province.

Copies of project publications are also available online at the following website address:

**<http://quarles.unbc.ca/frbc/index.html>**

If you would like further information about the research project, please contact:

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# **Community Participation and Decision-Making in the New Forest Economy**

## **Updated Report and Analysis on a Questionnaire Survey of Residents in Six British Columbia Communities**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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#### **Introduction**

The report contains an analysis of the questionnaire survey on “Public Participation in Natural Resources Planning and Decision-Making”. The questionnaire forms one part of a larger research project entitled: *Community Participation and Decision-Making in the New Forest Economy*. In general terms, the research project is taking a broad look at public participation and consultation. The motivation comes from a desire to empower local community residents to more effectively participate in the growing range and number of “public consultation” processes in British Columbia. The research is also motivated by a desire to equip resource managers and decision-makers with information to assist with their more effective use of consultation and participation techniques. The questionnaire was designed to ask the general public in our case study communities for their views and opinions on public participation in natural resources planning and decision-making. This report should be read in conjunction with the report on “Recommendations for Public Participation in the New Forest Economy”.

The six British Columbia case study communities are Smithers, Dawson Creek, Powell River, Quesnel, Clearwater, and Kaslo. The communities display a considerable amount of diversity. The selection of particular case study communities was based on a four-fold matrix.

- 1) One case study community from each FRBC forest region (excluding Vancouver Island);
- 2) A cross-section of communities by population size and local economic diversity;
- 3) Varying degrees of dependence upon the forest resource base and industrial forestry;
- 4) That some form of public participation or consultation process be completed or underway.

#### **Questionnaire Survey**

The questionnaire collected directly comparable information, at the individual household level, on five general topic areas. These are as follows:

- 1) “local residency”, that is the time they have lived in the community and reasons for moving to that community.
- 2) general familiarity with resource planning processes within the respondent’s community.

3) views on the general topic of public involvement in resource planning processes, with some more detailed questions being asked of respondents who were active in a local consultation process.

4) perceptions of their local community's economic prospects.

5) some basic socio-economic information about the respondent and their households. Besides the "community residency" variable, it is the socio-economic variables which permit further analysis.

The questionnaire was developed in consultation with community researchers and was pre-tested with an expert panel. Prior to circulation, the questionnaire, and the questionnaire methodology, received ethics approval from the University of Northern British Columbia.

The basic questionnaire methodology involved 4 parts.

1) The process started with drawing the sample of households for each community. For each community except Quesnel and Clearwater, the sample was randomly drawn from British Columbia Assessment Authority records. In Quesnel, the sample was drawn from a community directory published just prior to the questionnaire survey. In Clearwater, the sample was drawn from a mailing list for the Clearwater Improvement District. The sample density was approximately one household in six for each case study community.

2) The second step was the mail-out of the questionnaire package. Each package included a copy of the questionnaire and a personally addressed and hand signed cover letter.

3) Approximately two weeks after the original questionnaire was mailed, a reminder letter was sent to all households in the sample.

4) As the questionnaires were received, they were numbered and coded into an electronic data base. To assist respondents, each questionnaire package was accompanied by a postage paid, pre-addressed, reply envelope. The statistical package SPSS was used for the questionnaire analysis.

The questionnaires were mailed at the middle of October 1997. A significant problem arose as Canada Post and its labour unions then initiated a very public debate around the likelihood of a postal strike. While no strike or disruption occurred, it was felt that perceptions of postal unreliability may have had a downward impact on response rates.

A total of 2,412 questionnaires make up the valid survey mail-out. A total of 483 questionnaires were completed to the point where they were considered usable. This yields an overall survey response rate of 20 percent. While this response rate is acceptable in terms of reasonable accuracy and error, it is considered to be at the lower cut-off point for permitting detailed analysis.

Response rates for two communities are worth noting. In Smithers, the response rate was higher than the overall average and this confirms our other research that the community was a very “active” one in which people were involved and easily motivated to participate. In contrast, the response rate for Dawson Creek was lower than the overall response rate. Again, this corresponds somewhat to the impression conveyed in interviews and focus groups that community activism is not as energetic and that local residents are very selective about the issues and topics with which they interact. A consequence of the small number of responses in some communities is that a “town-by-town” analysis of responses is not possible.

## **Introduction to the Analysis**

The analysis includes six parts. The first part involves a review of the socio-economic profile of the survey respondents. The respondent profile is reviewed in order to develop a sense of “representativeness” for our sample. The second part of the analysis reviews the specific variables against which respondent answers will be compared. These first two parts of the analysis set the foundation for the interpretation which follows and are important for the readers as they provide a basis upon which to determine how the results may or may not translate to their own communities.

The third part of the analysis reviews general questions about familiarity and participation in resources planning and decision-making processes. The fourth part reviews general perceptions and opinions about the role and value of public participation in these types of planning and decision-making processes. The fifth part focusses only upon those who self-identify that they have been actively involved in a resource planning consultation process. These active participants are asked about their perceptions of public input (how it is valued within the process), what works and does not work in such processes, and finally whether they feel that their investment of time and effort was rewarding. This is a key section for the report as it conveys the views of those who have spent time participating. The final part reports on suggestions for improving public participation or consultation processes.

## **Socio-Economic Profile**

The first task in any questionnaire analysis is to compare the socio-economic profile of respondents to the profile of the communities surveyed. In this way we can identify the degree to which the survey can be said to “represent” the broader community. Given that the number of responses from each community is not large enough to allow a “town-by-town” analysis, the respondent profile will be compared to the “non-metropolitan” population of British Columbia. The geographic category of “non-metropolitan” effectively captures the socio-economic character of rural and small town British Columbia.

### **Gender**

The survey sample shows a slightly higher representation of male respondents (approximately 6 percent higher than their share of the non-metropolitan population).

## Age

Respondents are more likely to be between the ages of 36 and 55 years of age, while they are under-represented in the under 35 year age groups. This is a common survey research outcome especially given that the questionnaire was addressed to homeowners.

## Marital Status

The marital status profile of respondents is much more concentrated than for non-metropolitan British Columbia. Respondents are more likely to be married and less likely to be single. This is also a likely product of the research methodology.

## Education

Compared to the provincial population, the respondent group has generally high levels of formal education. While approximately 47 percent of the non-metropolitan population has up to a high school level of education, a greater share of respondents reported some college, technical school or university training, as well as other educational training beyond a college diploma or university degree.

## Occupation

There are three items of note with respect to the occupational profile of respondents. The first is that “retired” is the largest single group accounting for about one-quarter of respondents. The next largest group is “professional” which, when combined with “government”, accounts for one-quarter of the sample. Third, “primary sector” employees comprise only a very small portion of respondents. This is an outcome more of the classification of work in resource industry towns than it is a lack of participation by resource sector workers. For example, pulp-mill workers are typically classified under “secondary”, while loggers or pulpwood truck drivers are very often “self-employed” independent contractors.

## Household Income

Household income levels in resource-dependent communities is generally high, and this pattern is found among survey respondents. Two-thirds of respondents report annual gross household incomes exceeding \$40,000, while nearly 20 percent report incomes exceeding \$80,000. Few households report incomes below \$20,000 per year. These results are even more striking when we recall that one-quarter of respondents are retired, which generally implies reduced annual incomes.

## Analysis Variables

The second task in a survey analysis is to identify the core variables against which respondent answers will be compared. Throughout the analysis below responses are examined in light of four separate characteristics. These are:

“local experience with a resource planning exercise”,  
“respondent activism with a resource planning exercise”

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“length of time living in the town”  
“experience with small town living”.

The first set of characteristics might be grouped under the heading of local experience with a resource planning consultation exercise. The first concerns whether such an exercise has been undertaken in the local area. Three groups of respondents have been developed within the survey; 1) town where a CORE (Commission of Resources and Environment) process occurred (Quesnel and Kaslo), 2) town where an LRMP (Land and Resources Management Plan) process occurred (Smithers, Dawson Creek, and Clearwater), and 3) town where other types of consultation processes occurred (Powell River). The expectation is that in communities where public consultation processes have occurred, the public will be both better informed and have more strongly developed feelings about the way public consultation is conducted in BC. The second characteristic in this first set of variables narrows the focus to those who have actively taken part in a resource consultation exercise. Again, the expectation is that those involved will have more strongly developed feelings about the process.

The second set of characteristics might be described as identifying those with small town community experience. The social and political networks within small places tend to be both intensely personal and clear to those with local familiarity. Therefore, the first evaluative variable in this set involves “length of time living in the town”. The second variable in this set focusses upon respondent “experience with small town living”. The rationale is much the same with the addition in this case of small town experience from elsewhere being included beyond simply familiarity gained through their present town. For use in the analysis, the community experience variable has been re-coded with “small town” including all places under 30,000 population while “urban” includes all places with a larger population. Given the population structure of B.C.’s resource-dependent communities, this was considered to be an effective size division.

## **Participation and Familiarity**

The third part of the analysis probed participation and familiarity with local resource planning processes. Questions included type of participation, familiarity with and attendance at a number of alternate resource planning processes. For resource managers mandated to undertake consultation processes, issues such as general “awareness” are of particular importance.

Nearly 60 percent of all respondents reported that they had been involved in some way with a public consultation or participation process. Interestingly, this drops considerably for respondents in communities where CORE processes were undertaken. Despite the extensive involvement of sector representatives through the CORE tables, it appears that involvement did not extend to a broader general public. Newcomers tended to participate slightly less and people with urban place backgrounds also tended to participate a little less.

For respondents who reported that they did participate in a public consultation process, they were asked to identify the type of consultation. Type of participation ranged widely from written submissions to such local activism as direct participation in roundtable debates. The most common method of participating was through completion of opinion surveys or attending public hearings or meetings. The next most common method was that of writing letters for submission to the process.

There was only minor variation across the evaluation variables. Respondents from CORE process communities were more likely to use some other type of interaction method than those suggested in the survey. Respondents from communities where some other form of resource planning processes had been undertaken were slightly more likely to write letters or engage in local activism. For process managers, the message is clear. A range of input mechanisms must be included in order to access as many members of the public as possible.

When asked about whether they had heard of any one of a number of land use or resource planning processes, the CORE process, any type of local government planning process, and watershed planning processes are among the most commonly cited. However, not one of the types of processes listed in the survey was recognized by more than half of respondents. Given the wide publicity surrounding the various CORE processes across the province, and the regional news coverage given to individual LRMP processes, this is very surprising. Again, a clear message for process managers is not simply the need to “get the word out”, but also to make it relevant to local residents so that they take note and, perhaps, participate.

For those who had heard of a resource planning meeting, they are most likely to have heard about it through the local newspaper. Close behind were the local radio and/or TV stations. These immediate and local sources are clearly the most efficient means of communicating to the general public. A cautionary note, however, is that our research suggests that legal notices with abstract language and indecipherable boundary definition statements do not very well inform that public.

## **General Views on Public Participation**

The next part of the analysis reviewed questions about respondent's general views on public involvement in natural resource planning processes. This was followed by probes on how the respondent felt decision-makers reacted to that public involvement.

When asked, the overwhelming response is that people strongly feel that the general public should be involved. Given the pattern of increasing public involvement processes over the past decade, and this strong level of response about its importance, it is unlikely that natural resources decision-making will be able to move away from having a significant public consultation component. Respondents from communities where the CORE process had taken place were slightly more adamant about the importance of public consultation. Those who were active participants in a recent resource planning process also strongly affirmed that participation was important. In terms of community residency, all groups strongly agreed that public consultation was important, as did respondents regardless of their community experience with small towns or urban places.

The responses changed considerably when the question moves to whether the opinions of the "general public" are presently being heard within resource planning and management debates. Less than half of respondents felt that the opinions of the community were being heard. This result may foreshadow a crisis of legitimacy within public participation processes. Respondents from LRMP communities were slightly more optimistic that the opinions of the community were being heard while respondents from communities where some other form of local resource planning process had been undertaken were generally much less optimistic. Among those who were active in a recent resource planning process there was a stronger feeling that the community's opinions were getting heard. Still, only about half of these activists reported that local opinion was being heard which also means that half of those who have considerable involvement and stake in some of these planning processes feel that despite their efforts and involvement, the views and opinions of the community are not really getting through to the decision-makers. In terms of community residency, newcomers are the most optimistic that community opinions were being heard.

This generally low pattern of affirmative responses continued with the question on perceptions of whether decision-makers generally valued public input. Only about 40 percent of respondents felt that decision-makers valued public input into these processes. Taken together, these two questions suggest a significant challenge for managers and participants of public consultation processes. Not only do public participation levels need to be increased in many cases, but so does the level of trust and confidence which members of the public show towards the process. Suggestions from our research highlight that "openness" and "clarity" of process will assist this public confidence, as will demonstrations of the various ways in which public input was incorporated into the final plans developed through these consultation processes.

Among those who were active participants in a recent resource planning process, only about half felt that decision-makers generally valued public input. The pattern of low confidence repeats for



most other variables. Respondents from communities where an LRMP or CORE process had taken place were more optimistic (still only about 44 percent reporting ‘Yes’) that the opinions of the community were being valued within the process. This is much higher than for respondents from communities where some other form of local planning process had been undertaken.

### **Views from Active Participants**

In this part of the analysis, only the responses of those people who stated that they had been actively involved in a local resource planning or management process are included. Because of their intimate involvement, the views of this group are important. They were asked to identify the form of their participation, whether they found such participation rewarding, whether they felt the general public had either been involved or represented in the debate, and whether the public had been informed about the process as it developed.

When asked about the various ways people were involved with a resource planning or management process, about 40 percent reported that they were “interested observers”, while an additional 20 percent reported that they went beyond such observer status to being a table participant. The other primary ways in which people interacted were as an “organizer”, as a technical expert (usually in an advisory capacity to the negotiating table), or as a government representative (either advisory to the table or representing an agency at the table itself).

When asked whether their involvement was personally rewarding, about 70 percent of respondents stated that it was. There was, however, variation across the selected evaluation variables. Respondents from LRMP communities were much less satisfied with the experience. In contrast, those from communities where a CORE process had occurred were much more satisfied. In light of the publicity surrounding the CORE process, there appears to be continuing spinoff benefits from this involved public consultation exercise. There was also a difference between respondents based on community experience, with those from urban places being rather more often satisfied with their involvement. One of the often cited criticisms of the resource planning processes we heard through interviews and focus groups is that they are too much driven by government bureaucratic offices in Vancouver or Victoria. This management ‘style’ of a bureaucratized, rule bounded, and formally organized succession of debate and vote taking may fit a little less comfortably with those from small towns and rural communities.

When asked whether they felt the general public was represented or involved in the resource planning process, about two-thirds of those who had been actively involved in some form of local process agreed. Again, respondents from LRMP communities were less inclined to agree that the general public had been involved or represented while those from CORE communities were much more likely to agree. In terms of community residency, both newcomers and those living in the community for between 6 and 10 years were less likely to agree that the general public had been represented compared with those who had lived in the community for longer periods of time. There was little difference noted based on community experience in small towns or urban places.

When asked whether they felt that the results of public input and participation in the resource planning process were reported back to the general public, about 71 percent of those actively involved in a local process agreed. In this case, respondents from LRMP communities were now more likely to agree that the results of public input were effectively communicated back to the public. In contrast, those from CORE communities were much less likely to agree. This result may explain some of the local reaction to the CORE processes. In terms of community residency, there is again something of a pattern, but in this case both newcomers and those living in the community for between 6 and 10 years were more likely to agree that the results of public input had been reported back to the public. Finally, those coming from urban places were slightly more likely to agree that results from public input processes had been reported back to the general public.

Finally, when asked about the types of communications methods used to keep the community informed about the process as it developed, the most common response was via 'news coverage' in the local newspaper media. Alternative communications media were much less frequently used. As noted above, more advantage needs to be made in using a range of media to reach different constituencies within the affected area. As well, the type of information put out must be understandable to the lay public and able to catch their attention. Communication throughout the process has been identified as an important issue in maintaining public confidence and involvement in resource management and planning processes

### **Process Suggestions**

The final section of the analysis reports on two suggestions for public participation or consultation processes. The first is 'needed changes' with public participation processes while the second is 'what works well'. For further development of ideas on what works and what needs attention with respect to public participation processes, readers may wish to consult the "Recommendations for Public Participation in the New Forest Economy" report of this project.

In terms of possible changes needed within resource planning and management processes, increased 'information' flow is the most often referenced change. This is not surprising given the pattern of responses reported thus far. The second is that increased or extended 'public consultation' and the need to better 'value public involvement' are the next most often referenced changes needed. A third 'tier' of commonly cited changes concerned the general question of representation. Issues such as how people were selected to sit at a negotiation table, what constituencies were represented and which were not, the relationship between the person at the table and their constituency, and how sector representatives interact at the table itself were raised by many people.

Respondents from CORE communities were more adamant that information exchange needed to be improved while those from LRMP communities were more likely to suggest general public consultation needed improvement. Respondents from a community where some other type of planning process had occurred more often suggested that public input should be more valued that it is presently. For respondents who had been active in a resources planning exercise, sector representation and table dynamics were commonly cited. Again, their intimate familiarity with

such processes explains this greater concern for the internal dynamics of the table. Respondents with small town experience were more concerned that changes be made with table dynamics and increased public consultation than were urban respondents.

When asked 'what works well in public consultation', about half of responses identified that public consultation worked well. This rather positive outcome must be balanced by the approximately 5 to 10 percent of responses that 'nothing' worked well and the approximately 5 to 10 percent of 'don't know' responses. Given that this question was answered by those familiar with a public participation process, the response levels of these last two categories should warrant some attention in terms of working to improve present processes.

## **Discussion**

This research project has been interested in the topic of public participation in natural resource planning and management processes. Drawing upon a range of survey, focus group, interview, and document review methods, we hope that the research will create a foundation of information to which communities and decision makers interested in public consultation on natural resource issues may turn. This report is a review and analysis of the questionnaire survey which we conducted in our case study communities.

In reviewing the questionnaire survey results, it must first be noted that the "socio-economic profile" of those who responded does not match the profile of the case study communities. In comparison to the general population of these communities, the respondent group is generally a little better educated, has higher average household incomes, and has lived in the community longer on average. None of these differences is very unusual in questionnaire research of this type. While the differences are expected, they must also be kept in mind while reviewing the findings.

One of the key items of note in the survey is the generally low levels of awareness by respondents of public consultation processes in their community. This is especially notable given that some of the CORE and LRMP processes have been locally controversial and would have received considerable media coverage.

Another item of note is the low percentage of respondents who felt that their opinions, or the opinions of the "general public", are being heard. Longer term residents are more pessimistic that their opinions and views are being heard within the process. The result stands in contrast and concert with the strong feelings of those who participated in some form of local process that their participation was rewarding. While process managers have worked hard on this issue, these results suggest a "crisis of legitimacy" for both the process and the agencies involved.

It has been the consistent intention of this project to set out information from which interested parties could identify issues and topics relevant to their particular context and circumstances. This report contains a range of issues which planning process managers may wish to consider in developing the next round of public input. It also provides further evidence to support the "recommendations" report and other publications from the project.

# **Community Participation and Decision-Making in the New Forest Economy**

## **Updated Report and Analysis on a Questionnaire Survey of Residents in Six British Columbia Communities**

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### **Section 1.1 - Introduction**

This report contains a review and analysis of the questionnaire survey on “Public Participation in Natural Resources Planning and Decision-Making”. The questionnaire forms one part of a larger research project entitled: *Community Participation and Decision-Making in the New Forest Economy*. In general terms, the research project is taking a broad look at a range of public participation and consultation models. The motivation comes from a desire to empower local community residents to more effectively participate in the growing range and number of “public consultation” processes in British Columbia. The research is also motivated by a desire to equip resource managers, and decision-makers in organizations intimately involved with natural resource industries, with background information to assist with their more effective use of available consultation and participation techniques.

The questionnaire component of the research project was designed to ask the general public in each of the case study communities for their views and opinions on public participation in natural resources planning and decision-making. The purpose of a questionnaire survey is three-fold. The first is to gauge the responses of individuals in each community. The second is to develop a data base of information comparable at the level of individuals. The third is to provide a type of “ground-truthing” for the information collected from focus groups and interviews with process participants and managers.

The survey findings summarized in this report should be read in conjunction with the report on “Recommendations for Public Participation in the New Forest Economy”. Many of the suggested issues for public participation processes highlighted below are described in that Recommendations report together with sets of strategic suggestions derived from our interview, focus group, and survey research.

## Section 1.2 - Case Study Communities

This research project utilized a comparative research design involving six British Columbia communities. These communities are: Smithers, Dawson Creek, Powell River, Quesnel, Clearwater, and Kaslo.

The communities display a considerable amount of diversity. The selection of particular case study communities was based on a four-fold matrix.

- 1) One case study community from each FRBC forest region (excluding Vancouver Island);
- 2) A cross-section of communities by population size and local economic diversity;
- 3) Varying degrees of dependence upon the forest resource base and industrial forestry;
- 4) That some form of public participation or consultation process be completed or underway.

The community of Kaslo has a population of 1,063 (1996 Census). Located just north of Nelson, B.C. in the Kootenays region, the community has been active in developing a Community Forest proposal which has recently been accepted by the Ministry of Forests. This has been a long and at times complicated process. Now that a Community Forest proposal has been accepted, the community must develop a comprehensive plan for how that forest land is to be managed and utilized for community development purposes. Local involvement and consultation is again about to enter a very active phase.

The community of Smithers is located in the northwestern part of the province. With a population of 5,624 (1996 Census), the local economy is timber-centred but also includes dairy and tourism components as well. In particular, the tourism industry has seen recent development, especially around the winter attraction of the Hudson's Bay Mountain downhill ski facility. The community of Smithers has been involved in a successful Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) process, but suffered considerable uncertainty over the course of our project due to the connection between local mills and the REPAP-Skeena Cellulose firm which underwent closure, sale, provincial financial bailout, and operations curtailments. A Community Resources Board, which was created out of the LRMP process, is a continuing and innovative product of recent public consultation exercises.

The community of Dawson Creek is located in the Peace River region of northeastern British Columbia. With a population of 11,125 (1996 Census), the local economy is organized primarily around the agricultural industry. The Peace River region is an extension of the prairie landscape of Alberta. Agriculture, primarily grain crops, is supplemented by a growing oil and gas industry. Control of that oil and gas industry is centred in Calgary, with regional control primarily in Fort St. John just north of Dawson Creek. There is a local forest products industry (Strandboard plant) and during the course of this research project, an LRMP process was underway in the local area and was completed about the same time this research project was concluding.

The community of Quesnel, population 8,468 (1996 Census), is located in the Cariboo region of British Columbia's central interior. Quesnel is a major forest products processing centre with two pulp mills, four major sawmills, a plywood plant, a medium density fibre-board (MDF) plant, and a number of smaller value-added reprocessing plants. Quesnel was one of the communities involved in the Cariboo CORE (Commission of Resources and Environment) process. During the course of this research, planning and management processes were underway to develop "sub-regional" plans within the general CORE framework.

The community of Clearwater (population approximately 4,960) is located northeast of Kamloops along the Yellowhead Highway. Adjacent to Wells Gray Provincial Park, the community of Clearwater was moving to implement an already completed LRMP plan through debate over a local use plan (LUP) over the course of our research.

The community of Powell River has a population of approximately 13,130 (1996 Census). Located on Georgia Strait just north of metropolitan Vancouver, this forestry community is the site of one of the oldest pulp and paper operations in British Columbia. Unlike the other case study communities, Powell River has not engaged in a significant forest land management process, however, a watershed planning exercise which included a recreational trails component has been underway. Over the course of our study, but after the questionnaire survey, the community was hit with significant job losses as MacMillan-Bloedel undertook to downsize their Powell River divisions. As part of their corporate downsizing, MacMillan-Bloedel subsequently sold the pulp and paper mill to an independent group of Vancouver investors.

A comparison of the six case study communities across the four site selection criteria is listed in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1  
Case Study Communities

Community Name	1996 Pop.	Forest Region	Main Economic Base	Resource Planning Process
Smithers	5,624	Skeena-Bulkley	Forestry-Agr.-Tourism	LRMP-Comm.Res. Bd.
Quesnel	8,468	Cariboo-Chilcotin	Forestry	CORE
Dawson Ck.	11,125	Omineca-Peace	Agriculture-Forestry	LRMP
Clearwater	4,960	Thompson-Okanagan	Forestry-Tourism	LRMP
Powell Riv.	13,130	Pacific	Forestry	Watershed Mgmt.
Kaslo	1,063	Kootenay-Boundary	Forestry-Tourism	CORE-Comm.Forest

### **Section 1.3 - Questionnaire Design**

The purpose of the questionnaire was to collect directly comparable information, at the individual household level, on five general topic areas.

- 1) The first part of the questionnaire asks about the respondents “local residency”, that is the time they have lived in the community and reasons for moving to that community.
- 2) The second part of the questionnaire asks about general familiarity with resource planning processes within the respondent’s community.
- 3) Part three asks for the respondent’s views on the general topic of public involvement in resource planning processes. Additional detailed questions are asked of respondents who were active participants in a local planning or consultation process.
- 4) Part four gauges respondent perceptions of their local community’s economy.
- 5) The final part of the questionnaire asks for some basic socio-economic information about the respondent and their households. Besides the “community residency” variable, it is these socio-economic variables which will permit more in-depth analysis of the data.

The questionnaire was developed in consultation with community researchers and was pre-tested with an expert panel. Prior to circulation, the questionnaire, and the questionnaire methodology, received ethics approval from the University of Northern British Columbia. A copy of the questionnaire document is contained in Appendix 1 of this report.

## Section 1.4 - Questionnaire Methodology

The basic questionnaire methodology involved 4 parts.

1) The process started with drawing the sample of households for each community. For all case study communities except Quesnel and Clearwater, the sample was randomly drawn from British Columbia Assessment Authority records. In Quesnel, the sample was drawn from a community directory published just prior to the questionnaire survey. In Clearwater, the survey sample was drawn from a mailing list for the Clearwater Improvement District. The decision to use an alternate data base for Quesnel and Clearwater was an attempt to capture a larger proportion of rental and seasonal households. While this decision must be borne in mind when comparing results between communities, it was felt to be important to reach out to as many local “constituencies” as possible. No similar data sources beyond British Columbia Assessment Authority were available for the other case study communities. The sample density was approximately one household in six for each case study community. The questionnaires were colour coded by community to allow us to differentiate responses and response rates by place.

2) The second step was the mail-out of the questionnaire package. Each package included a copy of the questionnaire and a personally addressed and hand signed cover letter. A copy of the cover letter is found in Appendix 2 of this report. It was hoped that by making the questionnaire package as “personal” as possible, that recipient households would be more favourably disposed to completing the questionnaire than they otherwise might have.

3) Approximately two weeks after the original questionnaire was mailed, a follow-up reminder letter was sent to all households in the sample. The reminder letter was also personally addressed and hand signed. A copy of the reminder letter is also found in Appendix 2 of this report.

4) As the questionnaires were received, they were numbered and coded into an electronic data base. To assist respondents, each questionnaire package was accompanied by a postage paid, pre-addressed, reply envelope. The statistical package SPSS was used for the questionnaire analysis.

The questionnaires were mailed at the middle of October 1997. A significant problem arose just after the period when the questionnaires were mailed, as Canada Post and its labour unions initiated a very public set of debates around the likelihood of a postal strike or a disruption. While no strike or disruption actually occurred during the initial mail-out period, it was felt that perceptions of unreliability in the postal system may have had a small downward impact on response rates.



## Section 1.5 - Questionnaire Response Rates

Table 1.2 includes the distribution of the questionnaire survey response rates. A total of 2,412 questionnaires make up the valid survey mail-out. A total of 483 questionnaires were completed to the point where they were considered usable. This yields an overall survey response rate of 20 percent. While this response rate is acceptable in terms of a reasonable level of accuracy and error, it is considered in the survey research literature to be at the lower cut-off point for permitting detailed analysis (See for example Babbie, 1995; Dillman, 1978; Feitelson, 1991).

Table 1.2  
Questionnaire Survey Response Rates

Community	Sample Size	Completed Questionnaires	Response Rate
Smithers	245	68	27.9
Dawson Creek	663	108	16.3
Quesnel	440	88	20.0
Powell River	768	156	20.3
Kaslo	66	16	24.2
Clearwater	230	47	20.4
-----			
Total	2,412	483	20.0

While the response rates for several of the case study communities are in the order of 20 percent (corresponding to the overall response rate), two communities are worth noting. In Smithers the response rate was higher than the overall average at 27.9 percent. In conversations with local residents, many made clear that the community was a very “active” one in which people were involved and easily motivated to participate. In contrast, the response rate for Dawson Creek (16.3) was lower than the overall response rate (20.0). Again, this result corresponds somewhat to the impression conveyed in interviews and focus groups with local residents that community activism is not as energetic in the Dawson Creek area. Local residents are very selective about the issues and topics with which they interact. A consequence of the small number of responses in some communities is that a “town-by-town” analysis of responses is not possible. Small numbers of responses create difficulties for both validity and confidentiality in the analysis.

## **Section 2.0 - Introduction to the Analysis**

The analysis component of this research includes five parts. The first part involves a review of the socio-economic profile of the survey respondents. For a number of variables discussed in this part, the respondent profile is compared to that of the provincial population in order to develop a sense of “representativeness” for our sample. The second part of the analysis reviews the specific variables against which respondent answers will be compared. Two general sets of the “evaluative variables” are included. The first focusses upon the amount of experience the community or person has with public consultation or natural resources planning exercises while the second focusses upon the experience respondents have with living in small town communities. These first two parts of the analysis section set the foundation for the interpretation which follows. They are also important parts for the readers of this report, as they provide a basis upon which to determine how the results may or may not translate to their own communities.

The third part of the analysis reviews general questions about familiarity and participation in resources planning and decision-making processes. Given that many of these processes are locally, regionally, and even in some cases provincially covered in the media, the base expectation is that awareness should generally be high. The important question for consultation process managers is whether awareness translates into participation. The fourth part of the analysis reviews general perceptions and opinions about the role and value of public participation in these types of planning and decision-making processes.

The fifth part of the analysis focusses only upon those who identified that they have been actively involved in a resource planning consultation process. These active participants were asked about their perceptions of public input (how it is valued within the process), what works and does not work in such processes, and finally whether they felt that their investment of time and effort was rewarding. This is a key section for the report as it conveys the views of those who have spent time participating in one of the many forms of public participation processes underway in the province.

The final part of the analysis reports on suggestions for improving public participation or consultation processes. This section links with feedback reported in the appendices to this report and is a precursor to the extensive discussion within the Recommendations report.

## Section 2.1 - Survey Sample Socio-Economic Profile

The first task in any questionnaire analysis is to compare the socio-economic profile of the respondent group to the profile of the communities surveyed. In this way we can identify the degree to which the survey respondents can be said to “represent” the broader community. Given the statements above that the number of responses from each community is not large enough to allow a “town-by-town” analysis, the survey respondent profile will be compared to the “non-metropolitan” population of British Columbia. This non-metropolitan data is from the Canadian Census. The geographic category of “non-metropolitan” effectively captures the socio-economic character of rural and small town British Columbia.

### Gender Profile

The population of non-metropolitan British Columbia is almost perfectly divided between males and females (Table 2.1). Compared to this, the survey sample shows a slightly higher representation of male respondents (approximately 6 percent higher than their share of the non-metropolitan population).

Table 2.1  
Gender Profile of Respondents

	Survey		Non-Metropolitan British Columbia
	Frequency	Percent of Respondents	
Female	209	43.8	49.7
Male	268	56.2	50.3

Source: Questionnaire Survey  
1991 Canada Census

### Age Profile

The age profile of survey respondents is more concentrated than is the age profile of non-metropolitan British Columbia (Table 2.2). Respondents are more likely to be between the ages of 36 and 55 years of age, while they are comparatively under-represented in the under 35 year age groups. This is a common outcome in survey research of this nature, especially given that the distribution methodology addressed the survey packages to homeowners.

Table 2.2  
Age Profile of Respondents

	Survey		Non-Metropolitan British Columbia
	Frequency	Percent of Respondents	
<25 years*	11	2.3	8.4
25-35 years	75	15.6	22.2
36-45 years	118	24.5	22.9
46-55 years	124	25.7	15.5
56-65 years	67	13.9	13.3
> 65 years	87	18.1	17.7

\* For the Census data, this excludes all younger than 20 years.  
Source: Questionnaire Survey  
1991 Canada Census

### Marital Status Profile

The marital status profile of respondents is much more concentrated than is the profile for non-metropolitan British Columbia (Table 2.3). Respondents are more likely to be married (75 percent compared to 58 percent) and less likely to be single (8 percent compared to 25 percent) than the non-metropolitan population. As with the age profile comparison, this may also be a product of the research methodology of addressing the survey packages to homeowners.

Table 2.3  
Marital Status Profile of Respondents

	Survey		Non-Metropolitan British Columbia
	Frequency	Percent of Respondents	
Single	40	8.3	25.4
Married	360	75.0	58.2
Widowed	36	7.5	5.9
Div./Sep.	43	9.0	10.5
Other	1	0.2	n/a

\* For the Census data, this excludes all younger than 15 years.  
Source: Questionnaire Survey  
1991 Canada Census

## Education Profile

Differences between the survey respondents and the non-metropolitan provincial population are also evident in analysis of the education variable (Table 2.4). Compared to the provincial population, the respondent profile identifies a group with generally high levels of formal education. While approximately 47 percent of the non-metropolitan population has up to a high school level of education, only approximately 36 percent of the survey respondents reported up to a high school level of education. For those who reported educational training beyond high school, a greater share of respondents reported some college, technical school or university training than did the non-metropolitan population. As well, a larger share of respondents also reported other educational training beyond a college diploma or university degree.

Table 2.4  
Education Profile of Respondents

	Survey Frequency	Percent of Respondents	Non-Metropolitan British Columbia
some public / high school	59	12.4	33.9
public / high school grad.	110	23.1	13.2
some coll. / tech. school / univ.	131	27.5	19.9
coll. diploma / univ. degree	142	29.8	28.9
post graduate degree	30	6.3	*
other	5	1.0	4.0

[To allow for better comparability, the British Columbia figures include data only for the population 20 years of age and over]

\* For non-metropolitan BC, the "post graduate degree" and "other" categories are grouped.

Source: Questionnaire Survey  
1991 Canada Census (20% sample)

As with the age profile comparison, some of these educational profile differences are not surprising. We administered a mail-out questionnaire which required written responses. Further, the topic of the questionnaire was on the rather abstract concept of public participation. The survey research literature suggests that a respondent group with slightly higher educational levels would be a typical outcome of these influences (Babbie, 1995).

## Other Socio-Economic Profile Issues

Two other issues complete the socio-economic profile of the respondent group. The first concerns the occupation of respondents while the second concerns their annual household income level. In Table 2.5, the occupational distribution of respondents is summarized.

Table 2.5  
Occupation of Respondents

Occupation	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
Professional	98	20.6
Sales/Service	77	16.2
Self-employed	44	9.3
Government	19	4.0
Primary Sector	16	3.4
Secondary Sector	66	13.9
Retired	116	24.4
Other	22	4.6

Source: Questionnaire Survey

There are three items of note with respect to the occupational profile in Table 2.5. The first is that “retired” is the largest identified occupational group. Accounting for about one-quarter of respondents, this is a not uncommon result in either small town survey work or survey work in general as this age group often has more time to participate. The next largest group is “professional” which, when combined with “government”, accounts for a further one-quarter of the survey sample. The third item of note is that “primary sector” employees comprise only a very small portion of respondents. This is an outcome more of the classification of work in resource industry towns than it is a lack of participation by resource sector workers. For example, pulp-mill workers are typically classified under “secondary” - for manufacturing, and logging or pulpwood truck drivers are very often “self-employed” independent contractors. As well, the wide range of service and support industries which directly support the mills and their families are also not classified as “primary” even though their economic existence is directly tied to primary resource extraction.

Household income levels in resource-dependent communities is generally high, and as reported elsewhere such income levels in British Columbia’s forestry communities are generally well above the provincial average (Halseth, 1999; Marchak, 1983). As reported in Table 2.6, this pattern of high income levels is found among survey respondents. Two-thirds of respondents report that their annual gross household income exceeds \$40,000, while nearly 20 percent report that their annual gross household income level exceeds \$80,000. There are relatively few households who report income levels below \$20,000 per year. These results are even more striking when we recall that about one-quarter of respondents are retired, which generally implies

that their annual levels of “income” are reduced. The generally high income levels of our survey respondents certainly fits with research reporting that resource-dependent communities are high-wage communities.

Table 2.6  
Annual Household Income Before Taxes

Income Level	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
<\$20,000	57	13.0
\$20-39,999	99	22.6
\$40-59,999	124	28.2
\$60-79,999	78	17.8
>\$80,000	81	18.5

Source: Questionnaire Survey

## Section 2.2 - Analysis Variables

The second task in a survey analysis is to identify the core variables against which respondent answers will be compared. In identifying these variables it is important that a rationale be made clear as to why the particular variables are important to the subject under investigation. Throughout the analysis discussions which follow, responses are examined in light of four separate characteristics. These are:

“local experience with a resource planning exercise”,  
 “respondent activism with a resource planning exercise”

-----  
 “length of time living in the town”  
 “experience with small town living”.

The first set of characteristics might be grouped under the heading of local experience with a resource planning consultation exercise and whether such an exercise has been undertaken in the local area. Three groups of respondents have been developed within the survey; 1) town where a CORE (Commission of Resources and Environment) process occurred (Quesnel and Kaslo), 2) town where an LRMP (Land and Resources Management Plan) process occurred (Smithers, Dawson Creek, and Clearwater), and 3) town where no extensive process occurred (Powell River). The expectation is that in communities where public consultation processes have occurred, the public will be both better informed and have more strongly developed feelings about the way public consultation is conducted in BC. As shown in Table 2.7, just less than half of respondents live in a community which has been part of an LRMP process while just over 20 percent live in a community which has been part of the CORE process. About one-third of respondents are from Powell River where no coordinated natural resources planning exercise had taken place prior to our research and respondent familiarity with public consultation will have been derived from other types of planning exercises.

Table 2.7  
 Consultation Process Occurring in Community

	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
LRMP	223	46.2%
CORE	104	21.5%
Other	156	32.3%

Source: Questionnaire survey

Next, the analysis narrows to differentiate between those who have actively taken part in a resource consultation exercise versus those who have not been active participants. Again, the expectation is that those involved will have more strongly developed feelings about the process. As shown in Table 2.8, very few people in the survey sample indicated that they have been



active in a resource planning or management consultation process. This result will come as no surprise to process managers who very often confront the dilemma of having few ‘public’ participants attend their events.

Table 2.8

Over the past 5 years, have you been actively involved in any resource planning processes?

	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
Yes Actively Involved	57	11.7

Source: Questionnaire Survey

The second set of characteristics might be described as identifying those with small town community experience. The social and political networks within small places tend to be both intensely personal and clear to those with local familiarity (Fitchen, 1991; Halseth, 1998). For small town and rural communities, the length of time over which people have lived in the community has been shown to influence their understanding of these informal social networks and power structures.

As shown in Table 2.9, most of the survey respondents have lived in their present community for a long time. Over 50 percent have lived in their current community for more than 20 years, and more than 8 percent have lived in this community for more than 50 years. Given the high rates of household migration activity in BC’s resource-dependent communities (Halseth, 1999), these long stays clearly identify the sample as a group with a substantial commitment to their communities. At the other end of the residential longevity scale, about 15 percent of respondents have lived in their present community for five years or less. This may be an interesting group as it is not uncommon for “newcomers” to demonstrate a higher degree of civic participation - both to show their commitment to the new community and because they are less familiar with the informal structures of local power and decision-making.

Table 2.9

How long have you lived in your current community? (in years)

Years Lived in Community	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
up to 5	70	14.5
6-10	65	13.4
11-20	82	16.9
More than 20	267	55.2

Source: Questionnaire Survey

The second variable in this set focusses upon respondent “experience with small town living”. The rationale is much the same as noted above, with the addition in this case of small town

experience from elsewhere being included beyond simply familiarity gained through their present town. The questionnaire probed “where” a respondent may have moved from. This geographic variable was considered especially important for communities experiencing an influx of new residents from urban locations who may be unfamiliar with a rural and small town lifestyle. As listed in Table 2.10, only about 16 percent of respondents had always lived in their present community. In contrast over one-third of respondents had moved to the community directly from a large urban centre.

Table 2.10  
Where did you move from, by community type

Community Type	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
Always Lived in Community	67	16.5
Rural	16	3.9
Village (less than 1000 pop.)	29	7.1
Town (1000-10,000)	57	14.0
Small City (10,001-30,000)	42	10.3
Medium City (30,001-100,000)	52	12.8
Large City (more than 100,000)	143	35.2

Source: Questionnaire Survey

For use in the analysis, the community experience variable has been re-coded. In Table 2.11, the category “small town” includes all places under 30,000 population while the category “urban” includes all places with a larger population. Given the population structure of B.C.’s resource-dependent communities, this was considered to be an effective size division. As shown, just over half of respondents have small town experience.

Table 2.11  
Small Town - Urban Community Experience

Community Type	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
Small Town	211	52.0%
Urban	195	48.0%

Source: Questionnaire Survey

### Section 2.3 - Participation and Familiarity

The third part of the analysis begins to probe participation and familiarity with local resource planning processes. Questions included type of participation, familiarity with, and attendance at, a number of alternate resource planning processes. For resource managers mandated to undertake consultation processes, issues such as general “awareness” are of particular importance.

In Table 2.12, the pattern of responses to the question of whether a person has participated in any way with a public opinion or consultation process within their community is shown. Nearly 60 percent of all respondents reported that they had been involved in some way with a public consultation or participation process. Interestingly, this drops considerably for respondents in communities where CORE processes were undertaken. Despite the extensive involvement of sector representatives through the CORE tables, it appears that involvement did not extend to a broader general public. There are few variations from the 60 percent norm based either on length of time people had lived in their community or their general familiarity with small town as opposed to urban places. Newcomers tended to participate slightly less while those who had been in a community for between 6 to 10 years tended to participate a little more than average. As well, people with urban place backgrounds also tended to participate a little less.

Table 2.12  
Have you participated in any public opinion or consultation process in your community?

	Percent of Respondents
All Respondents	57.4
-----	
Communities with	
LRMP	61.4
CORE	49.0
Other	57.3
-----	
Personally Active	100
-----	
Community Residency	
up to 5 years	51.5
6 - 10 years	67.7
11 - 20 years	60.0
+ 20 years	56.5
-----	
Community Familiarity	
Small Town	61.3
Urban	53.8

Source: Questionnaire survey.

For those respondents who reported that they did participate in a public opinion or consultation process, they were asked to identify the type of consultation. Type of participation ranged widely from written submissions to such local activism as direct participation in roundtable debates. In the questionnaire, people were allowed to identify multiple ways of participating.

Table 2.13 includes only those respondents who reported that they had participated in some form of public opinion or consultation process. As noted, the most common method of participating was through completion of opinion surveys or attending public hearings or meetings. The next most common method was that of writing letters for submission to the process.

Table 2.13  
If you participated, type of public opinion or consultation process.

	Percent of Respondents					
	Written Letter	Opinion Surveys	Public Hearings	Telephone Solicitations	Local Activism	Other
All Respondents	18.9	23.8	23.1	14.7	12.4	7.1
-----						
Communities with						
LRMP	17.6	25.9	23.7	15.4	11.2	6.1
CORE	16.5	22.1	21.3	15.7	11.8	12.6
Other	21.9	21.9	23.2	13.1	14.5	5.3
-----						
Personally Active <sup>20.4</sup>	21.1	29.6	8.5	14.8	5.6	
-----						
Community Residency						
up to 5 years	15.5	23.8	22.6	17.9	10.7	9.5
6 - 10 years	19.3	22.5	24.7	10.8	17.2	5.4
11 - 20 years	15.9	23.0	23.0	17.7	8.8	11.5
+ 20 years	20.4	24.4	22.8	14.1	12.7	5.6
-----						
Community Familiarity						
Small Town	19.6	25.0	21.3	18.3	11.0	5.6
Urban	17.2	22.9	24.5	11.9	14.2	9.2

Source: Questionnaire survey.

There was only minor variation across the evaluation variables. Respondents from communities where a CORE process had taken place were more likely to use some other type of interaction method than those suggested in the survey. Respondents from communities where some other form of local planning process had been undertaken were slightly more likely to write letters or engage in local activism. This may be an outcome of the comparative lack of formal forums for public input. Among those people who stated they were active participants in a recent resource planning process there was a stronger level of active participation such as attendance at public meetings or local activism. In terms of community residency - either length of time in the

community or experience in small towns or urban places - no discernable pattern emerged from the responses, although in both cases the general pattern of interaction described for all respondents held. For process managers, the message is clear. A range of input mechanisms must be included in order to access as many members of the public as possible.

In Table 2.14, a summary of the share of all respondents who had heard of any one of a number of land use or resource planning processes is listed. The CORE process, any type of local government planning process, and watershed planning processes are among the most commonly cited. The most interesting result in this table, however, is that not one of the types of processes listed was recognized by more than half of respondents. Given the wide publicity surrounding the various CORE processes in the province, and the regional news coverage given to individual LRMP processes, it is very surprising that awareness levels should be so low. Again, a clear message for process managers is not simply the need to “get the word out”, but also to make it relevant to area residents so that they take note of the process and, perhaps, become motivated to participate.

Table 2.14

Have you heard of any of the following resource planning meetings in your community?

Type of Resource Planning Process	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
CORE Regional Land-Use Plan	239	49.1
LRMP (Land and Resource Management Plan)	148	30.4
Local Land-Use Planning (Municipal or Regional District)	234	48.0
Community Resource Board	94	19.3
Community Forest Forums	139	28.5
Watershed Management	198	40.7
Other	39	8.0

Source: Questionnaire Survey

For those who had heard of a resource planning meeting, they are most likely to have heard about it through the local newspaper (Table 2.15). Close behind the local newspapers were the local radio and/or TV stations. These immediate and local sources are clearly the most efficient means of communicating to the general public that a consultation process is underway. A cautionary note, however, is that comments received during the course of our research suggest that it is newspaper or radio stories that best capture people's attention. Legal notices with abstract language and indecipherable boundary definition statements do not seem to be very effective in ‘capturing the attention’ of the general public.

Table 2.15  
If you heard of a resource planning meeting, how did you hear?

Communication Means	Percent of Respondents
Local Press	63.4
Radio and TV	54.4
Friends/Relatives	18.5
Local Newsletters	1.6
Other	22.2

Source: Questionnaire Survey

The final question in this part of the survey asked respondents whether they had attended any resource planning or management meetings over the past 5 year period. As noted in Table 2.16, about 22 percent of all respondents reported that they had attended such meetings. Given that many public consultation processes meetings are often poorly attended, this may seem like a large share of the general public, but in a questionnaire survey such as this it must be remembered that people motivated by the topic are somewhat more likely to complete the survey form. Therefore, this number may be slightly inflated over the attendance pattern of the total local population.

Table 2.16  
Over the past 5 years, have you attended any resource planning meetings in your community?

	Percent of Respondents
All Respondents	22.0
-----	
Communities with	
LRMP	26.5
CORE	19.6
Other	17.9
-----	
Personally Active	77.2
-----	
Community Residency	
up to 5 years	22.9
6 - 10 years	23.1
11 - 20 years	25.6
+ 20 years	21.2
-----	
Community Familiarity	
Small Town	25.1
Urban	18.4

Source: Questionnaire survey.

Building upon the pattern noted in previous questions, communities with LRMP processes tended to have levels of participation above the average noted for all respondents. For people who stated they were active participants in a recent resource planning process, they obviously have other ways of being active than simply attending meetings as only 77 percent of this group reported having attended a meeting in the past 5 years period. In terms of community residency, those who have been in the community for between 10 and 20 years appear to have been the most active in terms of attending meetings. Finally, again building upon an emerging pattern, those people with small town experience tended to be more active in meeting attendance than did those with urban place experience.

## Section 2.4 - General Views on Public Participation

The next part of the analysis reviews questions asked of all respondents about their general views on public involvement in natural resource planning processes. General questions on involvement were followed by probes on how the respondent felt decision-makers reacted to that public involvement.

In Table 2.17, responses to the question of whether the general public should be involved in resource planning and decision-making processes are listed. The overwhelming pattern is that people strongly feel that the general public should be involved. Given the pattern of increasing public involvement processes over the past decade, and this strong level of response about its importance, it is unlikely that natural resources decision-making will be able to move away from having a significant public consultation component.

Table 2.17  
Do you feel that resource planning processes should involve members of the general public?

	Percent of Respondents Reporting YES
All Respondents	93.8
-----	
Communities with	
LRMP	93.6
CORE	96.0
Other	92.5
-----	
Personally Active	96.5
-----	
Community Residency	
up to 5 years	92.8
6 - 10 years	95.2
11 - 20 years	93.8
+ 20 years	94.0
-----	
Community Familiarity	
Small Town	94.0
Urban	93.2

Source: Questionnaire survey.

Respondents from communities where the CORE process had taken place were slightly more adamant about the importance of public consultation in resource planning. Those people who stated they were active participants in a recent resource planning process supported this activism by affirming that such participation was important. In terms of community residency, all groups



strongly agreed that public consultation was important, as did respondents regardless of their community experience with small towns or urban places.

The pattern of responses changes considerably when the question moves to whether the opinions of the “general public of the community” are presently being heard within resource planning and management debates. In Table 2.18, only 43 percent of all survey respondents felt that the opinions of the community were being heard. This result may foreshadow a crisis of legitimacy within public participation processes.

Table 2.18  
Do you feel that the opinions of the community are presently being heard in resource planning processes?

	Percent of Respondents Reporting YES
All Respondents	43.0
-----	
Communities with	
LRMP	46.8
CORE	42.6
Other	37.7
-----	
Personally Active	49.1
-----	
Community Residency	
up to 5 years	50.0
6 - 10 years	45.2
11 - 20 years	48.1
+ 20 years	39.3
-----	
Community Familiarity	
Small Town	47.7
Urban	42.3

Source: Questionnaire survey.

There was some variation across the selected evaluation variables. Respondents from communities where an LRMP process had taken place were slightly more optimistic that the opinions of the community were being heard while respondents from communities where some other form of local planning process had been undertaken were generally much less optimistic. Among those people who stated they were active participants in a recent resource planning process there was a stronger feeling that the community’s opinion was being heard within the process. While nearly half of those who reported they had been active felt that local opinion was being heard, it also means that half of those who have considerable involvement and stake in some of these planning processes feel that despite their efforts and involvement, the views and opinions of the community are not really getting though to the decision-makers. In terms of

community residency, newcomers are the most optimistic, as half reported that they felt the opinions of the community were being heard. Interestingly, those with the longest community experience reported the lowest share who felt community opinions were being heard. This may be a legacy of historic decision-making practices as much as any current perceptions of public involvement processes. Finally, there was generally little difference between respondents with community experience in small towns or urban places with the notation that a slightly larger share of those from small towns felt that local opinion was being heard inside the planning processes.

The generally low pattern of affirmative responses to whether the opinions of the “general public” are being heard within resource planning debates continued with the question on perceptions of whether decision-makers generally valued public input into these processes. In Table 2.19, only about 40 percent of all survey respondents felt that decision-makers valued public input into these processes. Taken together, these two questions suggest a significant challenge for managers and participants of public consultation processes. Not only do public participation levels need to be increased in many cases, but so to does the level of trust and confidence which members of the public show towards the process. Suggestions from our research highlight that “openness” and “clarity” of process will assist this public confidence, as will demonstrations of the various ways in which public input was incorporated into the final plans developed through these consultation processes.

Table 2.19  
Do you feel that decision-makers generally value public input in resource planning processes?

	Percent of Respondents Reporting YES
All Respondents	40.1
-----	
Communities with	
LRMP	44.6
CORE	44.2
Other	30.8
-----	
Personally Active	50.9
-----	
Community Residency	
up to 5 years	43.3
6 - 10 years	41.3
11 - 20 years	47.4
+ 20 years	37.1
-----	
Community Familiarity	
Small Town	44.1
Urban	39.5

Source: Questionnaire survey.

Among those people who stated they were active participants in a recent resource planning process, only about half felt that decision-makers generally valued their input into the resource planning process. The pattern of low confidence repeats for most other variables. Respondents from communities where an LRMP or CORE process had taken place were more optimistic (still only about 44 percent reporting "Yes") that the opinions of the community were being valued within the process. This is much higher than for respondents from communities where some other form of local planning process had been undertaken. In terms of community residency, while the share of those reporting that they felt public input was being valued by decision-makers remained quite low (37 to 47 percent) no clear patterns developed based on the length of time people had lived in the community. Finally, there was generally little difference between respondents with community experience in small towns or urban places with the exception that a slightly larger share of those from small towns felt that public input was valued by decision-makers.

## Section 2.5 - Views from Active Participants

In this part of the analysis, only the responses of those people who stated that they had been actively involved in a local resource planning or management process are included. Because of their intimate involvement, the views of this group are important and have been separated out into this sub-section of the analysis. They were asked to identify the form of their participation, whether they found such participation rewarding, whether they felt the general public had either been involved or represented in the debate, and whether the public had been informed about the process as it developed.

Table 2.20 contains a summary of the various ways people were involved with a resource planning or management process. Most (about 40 percent) reported that they were involved as “interested observers”, while an additional 20 percent reported that they went beyond such observer status to being a table participant. The other primary ways in which people interacted were as an “organizer”, as a technical expert (usually in an advisory capacity to the negotiating table), or as a government representative (either advisory to the table or representing an agency at the table itself).

Table 2.20

In what ways were you involved in that process(es) ?

Participation	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
Organizer	9	13.4
Table Participant	13	19.4
Interested Observer	26	38.8
Technical Expert	7	10.4
Government Representative	7	10.4
Resource Manager	3	4.5
Other	2	3.0

Source: Questionnaire Survey

When asked whether their experience and involvement was rewarding, about 70 percent of respondents stated that it was (Table 2.21). There was, however, variation across the selected evaluation variables. Respondents from communities where an LRMP process had taken place were much less satisfied with the experience. In contrast, those from communities where a CORE process had occurred were much more personally satisfied with their involvement. In light of the publicity surrounding the CORE process, there appears to be continuing spinoff benefits from this involved public consultation exercise. In terms of community residency, no distinct pattern emerges. Newcomers and those living in the community from 11 to 20 years are generally less positive about their experiences. Alternatively, those living in the community either for 6 to 10 years or for more than 20 years are generally more satisfied that their involvement was personally rewarding. There was also a difference between respondents based on community experience in small towns or urban places. In this case, it was those from urban places who tended to be rather more often satisfied with their involvement. One of the often cited

criticisms of the resource planning processes we heard through interviews and focus groups is that they are too much driven by government bureaucratic offices in Vancouver or Victoria. This management 'style' of a bureaucratized, rule bounded, and formally organized debates and vote taking may fit a little less comfortably with those who are from small towns and rural communities.

Table 2.21  
Did you feel your involvement was rewarding?

	Percent of Respondents Reporting YES
All Respondents	69.2
-----	
Communities with	
LRMP	61.8
CORE	85.7
Other	70.6
-----	
Community Residency	
up to 5 years	60.0
6 - 10 years	72.7
11 - 20 years	56.3
+ 20 years	77.8
-----	
Community Familiarity	
Small Town	58.6
Urban	72.0

Source: Questionnaire survey.

When asked whether they felt the general public was represented or involved in the resource planning process, about two-thirds of those who had been actively involved in some form of local process agreed (Table 2.22). As in the previous Table, respondents from communities where an LRMP process had taken place were less inclined to agree that the general public had been involved or represented. In contrast again, those from communities where a CORE process had occurred were much more likely to agree that the general public had either been involved or represented. In terms of community residency, there is something of a pattern as both newcomers and those living in the community for between 6 and 10 years were less likely to agree that the general public had been represented compared with those who had lived in the community for longer periods of time. In this case, however, there was little difference noted between respondents based on community experience in small towns or urban places.

Table 2.22

Do you think the general public was involved or represented in the planning process ?

	Percent of Respondents Reporting YES
All Respondents	66.7
-----	
Communities with	
LRMP	58.3
CORE	78.6
Other	75.0
-----	
Community Residency	
up to 5 years	63.6
6 - 10 years	58.3
11 - 20 years	68.8
+ 20 years	69.2
-----	
Community Familiarity	
Small Town	64.5
Urban	62.5

Source: Questionnaire survey.

When asked whether they felt that the results of public input and participation in the resource planning process were ever reported back to the general public, about 71 percent of those actively involved in some form of local process agreed (Table 2.23). In a set of responses which differ from the two previous tables, respondents from communities where an LRMP process had taken place were now more likely to agree that the results of public input were effectively communicated back to the public. In contrast, those from communities where a CORE process had occurred were much less likely to agree that the results of the public input process had been reported back. This result may explain some of the local reaction to the CORE processes expressed by people we spoke with who formed focus groups for our project. In terms of community residency, there is again something of a pattern but it is the inverse of that reported above. In this case, both newcomers and those living in the community for between 6 and 10 years were more likely to agree that the results of the public input process had been reported back to the public. Those who had lived in the community for longer periods of time were much less likely to agree that this had been done. Exploring responses for those with community experience in small towns or urban places, those coming from urban places were slightly more likely to agree that results from public input processes had been reported back to the general public.

Table 2.23  
 Were the results of public input into the resource planning process ever reported back to the public?

	Percent of Respondents Reporting YES
All Respondents	71.0
-----	
Communities with	
LRMP	70.6
CORE	63.6
Other	76.5
-----	
Community Residency	
up to 5 years	81.8
6 - 10 years	83.3
11 - 20 years	60.0
+ 20 years	65.2
-----	
Community Familiarity	
Small Town	70.0
Urban	77.3

Source: Questionnaire survey.

Finally, those who were actively involved in a consultation process were asked about the types of communications methods used to keep the community informed about the process as it developed (Table 2.24). The most commonly reported method was via ‘news coverage’ in the local newspaper media. Alternative communications media were much less frequently used. Local radio or local television, together with newsletters and “public notices” issued by the process, were other communication mechanisms. As noted above, more advantage needs to be made in using a range of media to reach different constituencies within the affected area. As well, the type of information put out must be understandable to the lay public and able to catch their attention. Communication throughout the process has been identified as an important issue in maintaining public confidence and involvement in resource management and planning processes.

Table 2.24

What sort of communication mechanisms kept the general public informed about the process?

	Percent of Respondents						
	Print Media	News-letters	Public Notices	None	Other	Electronic Media	Reports
All Respondents	50.5	7.4	10.5	5.3	7.3	12.6	6.3
-----							
---							
Communities with							
LRMP	50.0	5.2	8.6	10.3	8.6	13.8	3.4
CORE	43.8	12.5	12.5	6.3	18.8	0.0	6.3
other	39.4	9.1	21.2	6.1	6.1	12.1	6.1
-----							
---							
Personally Active	45.0	8.8	15.0	5.0	8.8	12.5	4.1
-----							
---							
Community Residency							
up to 5 years	47.6	4.8	14.3	4.8	9.5	14.3	4.8
6 - 10 years	39.1	13.0	17.4	8.6	8.7	4.3	8.6
11 - 20 years	43.5	4.3	8.7	17.3	8.7	8.7	8.7
+ 20 years	50.0	7.9	13.2	5.3	7.9	15.8	0.0
-----							
---							
Community Familiarity							
Small Town	46.2	3.8	13.5	5.7	11.5	13.5	5.8
Urban	40.5	14.3	14.3	11.9	4.8	9.5	4.8

Source: Questionnaire survey.

When the communications media question is disaggregated by our set of evaluative criteria, two interesting differences emerge. The first involves communities where LRMP, CORE, or other processes had occurred. The local newspapers were quite important sources of information in those places where a LRMP or CORE process had been completed. While LRMP process communities were more likely to cite the local radio or television (electronic media) stations as a source of information, those in communities where a CORE process had occurred were more likely to cite other mechanisms such as direct mailing of brochures or use of newspaper inserts. In places where other processes had occurred, 'public notices', most often sent out by a local government body, were rather more common as an ongoing information mechanism.

The second interesting difference concerns respondents from small town communities compared to those from urban places. In this case, those with small town experience were more likely to cite local newspapers and radio/television as sources where they have noted information being shared with the community at large. In contrast, those who moved from urban places were more likely to cite process newsletters or "none" when it came to the question of information sources informing the local community.



## Section 2.6 - Process Suggestions

The final section of the analysis reports on two issues connected with suggestions for public participation or consultation processes. The first table reports on 'needed changes' which respondents identified with public participation processes. The second table reports on what those active with a resource planning process thought worked well in the processes with which they were familiar. For further development of ideas on what works and what needs attention with respect to public participation in resource planning and decision-making processes, readers may wish to consult the Recommendations for Public Participation in the New Forest Economy report written for this project. Written comments offered by respondents to the questions of "what works well" and "what changes they might like to see" with public involvement processes are contained in Appendix 3 of this report. Those respondents who had been actively involved in a local resource planning process were then asked for any specific improvements which they might recommend to the public involvement or public consultation part of the planning exercise. Written comments offered by the respondents to this question have been compiled in Appendix 4.

In Table 2.25, a summary of responses to the question on possible changes needed within resource planning and management processes is listed. A number of general items are of note. The first is that increased 'information' flow is the most often referenced change. This is not surprising given the pattern of responses reported thus far in the analysis. The second is that increased or extended 'public consultation' and the need to better 'value public involvement' are the next most often referenced changes needed within the process. Again, this result draws upon earlier described findings and compliments those outlined in the Recommendations report. A third 'tier' of commonly cited changes concerned the general question of representation. Through the responses of 'sectoral involvement' and 'table dynamics' issues such as how people were selected to sit at a negotiation table, what constituencies were represented and which were not, the relationship between the person at the table and their constituency, and how sector representatives interact at the table itself were raised by many people.

Table 2.25

What changes would you like to see with public involvement in resource planning?

	Info.	Percent of Respondents						
		Sectors	Value Public Involve.	Clearer Mandate	Pub. Cons.	Lessen Govt	Table Dynamics	Other
Communities with								
LRMP	18.6	7.5	16.8	1.2	25.5	3.7	6.9	19.9
CORE	25.0	6.6	18.4	2.6	11.8	11.8	9.2	14.5
other	20.8	4.0	26.7	3.0	12.9	5.9	8.9	17.8
-----								
Personally Active	15.9	12.7	15.9	1.6	9.5	6.3	15.9	22.2
-----								
---								
Community Residency								
up to 5 years	24.1	3.4	15.5	5.2	13.8	5.2	8.6	24.1
6 - 10 years	19.6	8.9	25.0	0.0	21.4	3.6	5.4	16.1
11 - 20 years	25.4	6.3	23.8	3.2	22.2	6.3	3.2	9.5
+ 20 years	17.9	5.8	19.2	0.6	17.3	7.7	10.9	20.5
-----								
---								
Community Familiarity								
Small Town	19.5	8.2	20.1	1.3	20.8	5.0	10.1	15.1
Urban	23.6	3.1	19.7	2.4	15.0	7.1	5.5	23.6

Source: Questionnaire survey.

Across the evaluative variables, some differences are worth noting. Respondents from CORE communities were more adamant that information exchange needed to be improved while those from LRMP communities were more likely to suggest general public consultation as something which need improvement. Respondents from a community where some other type of process had occurred more often suggested that public input should be more valued than it is presently. For respondents who had been active in a resources planning exercise, the matters of sector representation and table dynamics were cited more often than for all respondents. Again, the intimate familiarity with processes which these respondents bring to the survey may explain this greater concern for the internal dynamics of the table. While no clear pattern emerged with respect to length of time lived in the community, respondents with small town experience were more concerned that changes be made with table dynamics, sector representation, and increased public consultation than were respondents coming from urban places.

In Table 2.26, responses to the question of what works well in public consultation processes are summarized for those who identified that they were active participants in one or more such processes. Respondents were allowed to suggest at least two elements they felt worked well. Generally, about half of responses identified that public consultation worked well. This rather

positive outcome must be balanced by the approximately 5 to 10 percent of responses that 'nothing' worked well and the approximately 5 to 10 percent of 'don't know' responses. Given that the question was answered by those familiar with a public participation process, the response levels of these last two categories should warrant some attention in terms of working to improve present processes.

Table 2.26  
What works well (active only)?

	Percent of Respondents							
	Pub. Cons	Personal Learning	Gen Info Exchange	Inclusive Process	News Grabbing	Nothing	Don't Know	Other
Communities with								
LRMP	49.7	6.1	12.2	3.4	1.4	6.8	8.8	11.6
CORE	46.8	8.1	8.1	3.2	0.0	11.3	11.3	11.3
other	48.7	3.8	11.5	1.3	3.8	5.1	5.1	20.5
-----								
---								
Community Residency								
up to 5 years	40.8	8.2	10.2	2.0	0.0	6.1	14.3	18.4
6 - 10 years	50.0	7.1	16.7	2.4	4.8	4.8	9.5	4.8
11 - 20 years	49.2	6.6	9.8	1.6	3.3	8.9	4.9	16.4
+ 20 years	50.8	4.5	9.8	3.8	0.8	8.3	7.6	14.4
-----								
---								
Community Familiarity								
Small Town	56.4	5.1	7.7	2.6	1.7	4.3	7.7	14.5
Urban	43.1	6.3	11.0	1.6	1.6	10.2	10.2	12.6

Source: Questionnaire survey.

Across the evaluative variables, some differences are worth noting. Respondents from CORE communities were more likely to suggest that 'nothing' works well (but the share was approximately 11 percent). With respect to length of time lived in the community, newcomers were less likely to suggest that public consultation works well and more likely to answer 'don't know' than were respondents in the other categories. In part, the higher don't know response may be expected as these people might not have lived in the community during a CORE, LRMP, or other planning process. Respondents with small town experience were much more likely to suggest that public consultation works well while those coming from urban places were more likely to report that "nothing" works well (although this is in the order of 10 percent).

### **Section 3.0- Discussion**

This research project has been interested in the topic of public participation in natural resource planning and management processes. Drawing upon a range of survey, focus group, interview, and document review methods, we hope that the research will create a foundation of information to which communities and decision makers interested in public consultation on natural resource issues may turn. This report is a review and analysis of the questionnaire survey which we conducted in our case study communities.

In reviewing the questionnaire survey results, it must first be noted that the “socio-economic profile” of those who responded does not match the profile of the case study communities. In comparison to the general population of these communities, the respondent group is generally a little better educated, has higher average household incomes, and has lived in the community longer on average. None of these differences is very unusual in questionnaire research of this type. While the differences are expected, they must also be kept in mind while reviewing the findings.

One of the key items of note in the survey is the generally low levels of awareness by respondents of public consultation processes in their community. This is especially notable given that some of the CORE and LRMP processes have been locally controversial and would have received considerable media coverage.

Another item of note is the low percentage of respondents who felt that their opinions, or the opinions of the “general public”, are being heard. Longer term residents are more pessimistic that their opinions and views are being heard within the process. The result stands in contrast and concert with the strong feelings of those who participated in some form of local process that their participation was rewarding. While process managers have worked hard on this issue, these results suggest a “crisis of legitimacy” for both the process and the agencies involved.

It has been the consistent intention of this project to set out information from which interested parties could identify issues and topics relevant to their particular context and circumstances. This report contains a range of issues which planning process managers may wish to consider in developing the next round of public input. It also provides further evidence to support the “recommendations” report and other publications from the project.

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**Appendix 1**  
**Questionnaire**  
**Circulated in B.C.**  
**October 1997**

This survey looks at the ways individuals participate in natural resources planning and decision-making. The goal is to identify ways in which the voices of community residents can be heard in resource planning and I am very interested in your opinions, concerns, and ideas.

To accomplish this, I need your help in completing this questionnaire. It should take about 20 minutes to complete. All households who received a copy were randomly selected – All response are confidential.

Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

---

*Part A. This first part of the questionnaire asks about your local residency.*

1.) How long have you lived in your current community? (in years) \_\_\_\_\_

2.) Reason(s) for moving to your current community: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3.) Where did you move from? \_\_\_\_\_

4.) Have you participated in any public opinion or consultation processes in your community?  
 Yes                       No

If yes, please check all that apply.     written letters  
     opinion surveys  
     public hearings  
     telephone solicitations  
     local activism (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
     other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

---

*Part B. This part asks about your familiarity with resource planning processes within your community.*

5.) Have you heard of any of the following resource planning meetings in your community?  
Please check all that apply.

- CORE Regional Land-Use Plan
- LRMP (Land and Resource Management Plan)
- Local Land-Use Planning (Municipal or Regional District)
- Community Resource Board
- Community Forest Forums
- Watershed Management
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

If you checked any, how did you hear about these meetings? (ie: media, friends, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6.) Over the past 5 years, have you attended any resource planning meetings in your community?  
 Yes             No

If Yes, which resource planning process did you attend? Please list all that apply.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7.) Over that past 5 years, have you been actively involved in any resource planning processes in your community?  
 Yes             No

If Yes, with which resource planning processes were you involved? Please list all that apply.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

---

*Part C. With reference to your community, this part asks for your views on public involvement in resource planning processes.*

8.) Do you feel that resource planning processes should involve members of the general public?  
 Yes             No

comments: \_\_\_\_\_

9.) Do you feel that the opinions of the community are presently being heard in resource planning processes?  
 Yes             No

comments: \_\_\_\_\_

10.) Do you feel that decision-makers generally value public input in resource planning processes?  
 Yes             No

comments: \_\_\_\_\_

11.) In your opinion, what part of the public involvement / consultation process works well in resource planning?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

12.) In your opinion, are there any changes you would like to see with public involvement in resource planning?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please answer the following questions ONLY if you have participated or been active in a resource planning process. If you have not, please skip to PART D.

13.) In what ways were you involved in that process(es)?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



14.) Did you feel your involvement was rewarding?

Yes       No

please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

15.) Do you think the general public was involved or represented in the planning process?

Yes       No

If Yes, at what stages were the public involved?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

16.) Were the results of public input into the resource planning process ever reported back to the public?

Yes       No

If NO, are there suggestions you wish to make on ensuring that the public hears back about their input?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

17.) What sort of communication mechanisms kept the general public informed about the process?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

18.) Based on your experience, would you recommend any specific improvements in the public involvement/consultation process? Please explain:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

---

*Part D. In this part, I would like to ask some general questions about your community's economy.*

19.) How would you characterize your community's economy over the PAST 5 years?

Improving Greatly	_____
Improving	_____
Unchanged	_____
Declining	_____
Declining Greatly	_____
Don't Know	_____

WHY: \_\_\_\_\_

20.) How would you characterize your community's economic future over the NEXT 5 years?

- Improving Greatly \_\_\_\_\_
- Improving \_\_\_\_\_
- Unchanged \_\_\_\_\_
- Declining \_\_\_\_\_
- Declining Greatly \_\_\_\_\_
- Don't Know \_\_\_\_\_

WHY: \_\_\_\_\_

21.) What would you say may be the most significant changes (good or bad) to the local economy in the coming 5 year period:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Part E. In this final part, I would like to ask you some questions about yourself and your family.*

22.) How old are you (in years)?

- |           |       |       |       |       |       |           |
|-----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----------|
| <25 years | 25-35 | 36-45 | 46-55 | 56-65 | 66-75 | +75 years |
| _____     | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____     |

23.) Are you: female \_\_\_\_\_ male \_\_\_\_\_

- 24.) What is your marital status?      Single (never married) \_\_\_\_\_
- Married (or common law) \_\_\_\_\_
- Widowed \_\_\_\_\_
- Divorced/ Separated \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

25.) What is your highest level of education?

- Some public or high school \_\_\_\_\_
- Public or high school graduation \_\_\_\_\_
- Some college/ technical school/ university \_\_\_\_\_
- Coll. Or Tech. school diploma/ univ. degree \_\_\_\_\_
- Post Graduate Degree \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

26.) What is your occupation, or are you retired? Please indicate.  
\_\_\_\_\_

27.) If applicable, what is your spouse/s or partner's occupation? Please indicate occupation or retired if applicable:  
\_\_\_\_\_

28.) What category best describes your total annual household income before taxes?

- Less than \$20,000 \_\_\_\_\_
- \$20,000 to \$39,000 \_\_\_\_\_
- \$40,000 to \$59,000 \_\_\_\_\_
- \$60,000 to \$79,999 \_\_\_\_\_
- \$80,000 and over \_\_\_\_\_

29.) Are there any children living at home? Yes \_\_\_\_\_  
No \_\_\_\_\_  
Not applicable \_\_\_\_\_

If YES, how many children are living at home? \_\_\_\_\_

---

I value the time and effort you have taken to complete this questionnaire. It is hoped that the results of this project will assist residents in small resource-based communities across B.C. I would appreciate your comments on any of the issues raised here or any issues you feel were missed. Please use the space below or additional pages if necessary.

Thank you again.

**Appendix 2**

**Cover Letter  
and  
Reminder Letter  
for Questionnaire Survey**

Faculty of Natural Resources and Environmental Studies  
3333 University Way  
Prince George, B. C. V2N 4Z9

October 15, 1997

Dear <PERSONALIZED>:

Over the past few years, there has been a lot of discussion regarding the future of resource dependent communities. Decisions being made now will have significant impacts on the lives of people who live in these communities. The opinions and concerns of these people are an important part of the resource planning process. I am conducting research on the ways individuals and community groups participate in natural resources planning and decision-making, and am very interested in your ideas and concerns. The goal of the research is to identify ways in which community residents can be heard in resource planning, so that the findings will be of assistance to residents and small communities across British Columbia. To accomplish this task, I need your help in completing the enclosed questionnaire.

You will find that the questionnaire is divided into several parts. Ideally, I would like you to answer all of the questions which apply to you, but please feel free to ignore any questions or sections of the questionnaire which you would rather not answer. Finally, I would like to stress that all the information that you provide will be kept confidential. If you examine the questionnaire carefully you will see that there is absolutely no way to identify the individual respondents.

This questionnaire will take about 20 minutes to complete. A pre-paid return envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

This research is financially supported by a research grant from Forest Renewal British Columbia. The content of the questionnaire and any subsequent analysis are, however, solely our responsibility. During the course of the research all materials will be securely stored and at the conclusion of the study the questionnaires will be destroyed.

I would like to thank you for taking the time to help us with our research, your response will be of great assistance. I remind you that your participation is voluntary. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me. This survey has been approved by the UNBC Ethics Review Committee, you may register any complaints you might have about this survey with the Associate Vice-President for Research at UNBC (250-960-5820). Finally, copies of the completed research reports will be deposited in your local public library.

Sincerely,

Annie Booth, PhD.  
University of Northern British Columbia  
Faculty of Natural Resources and Environmental Studies  
3333 University Way  
Prince George, B. C. V2N 4Z9

tel: (250) 960-6649

fax: (250) 960-5538

email: [annie@unbc.edu](mailto:annie@unbc.edu)

Faculty of Natural Resources and Environmental Studies  
3333 University Way  
Prince George, B. C. V2N 4Z9

October 27, 1997

Dear <PERSONALIZED>:

Recently, you should have received a letter from me asking you to fill out a questionnaire on natural resource planning processes in your community. If you have already returned the questionnaire, you have my thanks. If for some reason you have not, I would be very grateful if you could spend a few minutes, fill it out and return it in the postage paid envelope with which it came. Your contribution to this research is very important and the information gained may be of assistance residents in many small communities in B.C..

I would like to emphasize again, that all the information you provide will be kept confidential, that you will not be identified in any way, and that your participation is voluntary.

Thank you again. If you have any questions, or if you need a replacement copy of the questionnaire, please feel free to call me at (250) 960-6649.

Sincerely,

Annie Booth, PhD  
University of Northern British Columbia  
Faculty of Natural Resources and Environmental Studies  
3333 University Way  
Prince George, B. C. V2N 4Z9

tel: (250) 960-6649

fax: (250) 960-5538

email: [annie@unbc.edu](mailto:annie@unbc.edu)

## Appendix 3

### Respondent Comments

#### QUESTION 11:

In your opinion, what part of the public involvement / consultation process **works well** in resource planning?

#### QUESTION 12:

In your opinion, are there any **changes you would like to see** with public involvement in resource planning?

**Question 11 - In your opinion, what part of the public involvement/consultation process works well in resource planning?**

Reputable organizations speaking with one voice.

different people should be from different political parties when decisions are made so it is not just one sided.

By attempting to listen to individual concerns which have merit and having more one on one dialogue with the individual(s). Feedback is essential in order for the process to continue or succeed.

elections

Only if the time is given to process information and allow for possible change - flexible timetables not, we have to be started by ... as no time to look at what public has said.

common sense

Public opinion has changed forest policy dramatically, but not through government public input process. The Environmental lobby is still the main factor.

It allows long term residents who know and respect the land a valuable say in the future of the community they love.

MOF open house meetings seem to work well if there is enough interest to bring people out - they provide opportunity for one on one discussions of problems and solutions.

We have a great Economic Development officer who is aware of this but the local council is not always. The public should be aware of the plans and be able to express opinions.

It is very difficult to get people to take an interest and become active in any public discussions.

Feedback from knowledgeable persons without (or with little) bias and without a political agenda.

Riots, sit-ins, Greenpeace - seem to work but the average working guy doesn't get listened to.

We get to see politicians lie to our face. We know who is going to stab us in the back.

It generally gets all the issues on the table. It creates better understanding among persons or groups that don't work in related fields.

chance for all sides to be heard

It helps but only in some cases.

newspaper articles; letters to the editor; radio shows/talkback shows; personal interviews with elders, people who live in the community

Unfortunately I don't believe it works well. A very vocal minority will in most cases override a silent majority.

Processes are easy to initiate and public commitment is good.

Public meetings but have a majority ruling and go along with that discussion.  
Early involvement, one on one discussions, on site discussions; clear terms of reference

Public hearings at a venue not in council chambers ie. Town hall meetings.



Bringing people from all backgrounds, jobs together to give input

Having an action/advisory committee comprised of agency officials and interested community members.

information pamphlets, open meetings

Before public can be involved they need information or education on the issues and then can help determine the best part they can play. Eg. development ... or review and critique a prepared draft.

Numbers - lots of involvement by many

When the community has a real say in what happens to the resource - voting!

Round table discussions - contacts with non profit societies and volunteer organizations

Public opinion, community meetings with committees and government officials.

Ideas and options make wider range of public knowledge and understanding.

The public needs to be presented with proposed plans so they can consider its effects and impacts - to involve them in all levels of technical detail is often frustrating but they need to have their inputs and recommendations seriously considered.

Allowing the public to speak openly with their concerns.

I'm unfamiliar with process - I'm not sure if public involvement results in representing general population or special interest groups.

Top to bottom political initiatives by progressive governments that are fuelled by environmentalists and accommodate the industry. I believe that industry initiatives are profit motivated and public consultation becomes a formality.

Process only seems to reach general public if there is an issue that effects them right away - hard to get people out to participate.

Single interest groups most effective because they lobby and get media attention.

People that are involved in that workforce ie. Mining - logging - tourism

Advance public information/awareness meetings - identifying players and goals

Any meetings that facilitate dialogue and educate.

identification of values at stake; participation as "observer" of the planning table; feedback on draft documents

Activism - something I don't usually do.

Letters to editor - editorials; newspaper announcements

The forcing of big companies to better look after the forests and air pollution control.

Having an open question period.

Old boy network.

A good general meeting. However, often people are pre-arranged to speak at these meetings. Therefore the general public get a slanted opinion from a particular party.

I believe public opinion regarding forest use has brought about and hastened current forest practices.

Work with opinion generating leaders.

It seems to me that if enough people show support or disapproval then the decision-makers take heed.

None- all final decisions are politically biased. Sometimes the politicians don't even wait for study or survey results before acting, and usually decisions are already determined subject to change only by extreme political action.

pre-planning and development

public opinion polls, ballot

Our MLA for this area being apprised of our concerns.

Works well enough if the involvement/consultation is via political processes & via media input

No council

A referendum for public input

In most cases the public couldn't care less unless they are directly affected.

areas to be used; how these areas are used

referendum

Democratic voting concerning choices applicable

strong voices of elected representatives

water management

The new waste water process (sewage).

Realtors know more of the public's needs.

Very little - it allows public to vent their spleen and they feel better. What works best is elected people ie. Unions and to a great extent - environmentalists.

petition, surveys, written letters to whoever is in charge of the resource planning

The vested interests seem always to win what they want.

Asking local people what is the best use of their area.

Research by individuals, public forums, extensive debate, long term goals, not short term profits (ie 5 year plans), honesty by decision-makers.

Gives a feeling of ownership which is necessary when public resources are in dispute.

Consultation works to a point as it forces some accountability to the community.

Elections - voting out the ones who don't listen.

Public relations

Finding community individuals willing to contract out their services for community work.

Initial information gathering and discussions with those directly affected.

Where there are concerns over environmental issues/community concerns.

Discussing proposed planning as it will impact future generations globally.

Opportunity to be heard is there (however not always take opportunity by the public.)

As long as it is the people who have to live in the area that they are listening to.

having all diversified groups participate and have all meetings open to the public

Hearings where opinions can be voiced and then reported in the news.

Showing the public how decisions are made by resource extraction industries.

Brainstorming sessions to explore all possible solutions/scenarios; surveys like this where a person is free to express their opinions without interruption; committed individuals meeting "round-table" regularly, not just in 'crisis'.

Occasional public forums are good to brainstorm. Smaller groups, such as Round table are theoretically very workable if the decision-makers cared to honour them - they do get heard at some level sometimes, ie. Changes in Forest Practices Code, etc.

Small, local meetings with all stake holders, not just representatives who are basically powerless to make decisions.

Presentations of clubs and individuals in this community are excellent and informative.

Ability to involve and hear input from all stakeholders, insuring all concerns are brought forward prior to making a decision.

recreational aspects; air quality feedback

majority

electives on committees

The understanding to involve others

As long as the general public takes part in resource planning - not just government employees

Business people and open minded people

Being advised in advance of any serious potential resources or undertakings.

Public attendance

## Public opinion

It depends on what the issues are. Generally if 25% of the public gets involved would work well. But this usually isn't the case.

Only what benefits the government.

Displays - trade shows, malls, schools - to distribute information on goals and objectives before the process is too far along. This encourages further involvement, and helps balance special interest.

The part that shows how public involvement was incorporated into the planning processes - having the public out at an LRMP has been very effective.

Surveys - that pins people down ---; "Suggestions" - gives a chance to respond anonymously; Well advertised public meetings (with all the meetings in local communities well advertised so you have the option of attending in a neighbouring town.

Input into long term planning.

A toll free telephone number to the governing group.

There are no problems with the consultation process, really. The problem occurs in the involvement process.

Marginal in some local cases

The public publication of maps (or display) and invitations to comment at least engages people who use the area.

planning - but implementation usually fails

lower level issues

Maps, etc. showing area's involved so people with interests in area are more informed.

**Question 12 - In your opinion, are there any changes you would like to see with public involvement in resource planning?**

I don't know if it is possible, but, I've been wondering if the bigger mills - wood plants - farmers "union" etc. couldn't be asked to assign workers to come. NOT HEAD OFFICE ADMINISTRATION. The "fellow" on the line.

improve time lines to become more deadline oriented.

Hearing aids for government officials.

Less talk about the trivial - look at major changes from both sides.

more notification and advertising

It seems the public only get involved when some people are against a particular resource development.

Get rid of the solution from plant. Its making too many people sick. Talk to all the people who have lung problems. That didn't have them 10 years ago.

equal say on committee

realizing all the public cannot be involved in groups, but when major decisions are made in a particular area, those members of public should be advised by written material on choices then a voting process should be included, with the majority kept in mind

By attempting to deal with individual concerns which have merit more directly in the field or area of concern rather than only at the table. Often, large groups prohibit this from happening.

Clear uncontradicted information. How do we know who is correct??

more advertising

more power or control

better public awareness with regards to resource planning and its likely impact

be sure public involvement is early enough to feel valued. More media (objective) coverage to ensure participation.

Set up web sites so that a larger number of people will contribute opinions

referendums

Involvement at more fundamental level than looking at programs and plans already made. Community level - tenures

Let the experts manage. Too much emphasis is being placed on "mythology" emanating from vocal but uninformed public

more focus groups

telephone survey, letters

An attempt to get a better cross-section of opinion before major decisions are made.

Yes - listen to the people, and let people know what is being planned

Diversity. Our forests could be managed in smaller farms and perhaps logged in a more efficient manner.

Yes, listen to the public a little closer and quit spending more money on investigations that cost us tax payers more money.

If I were younger I would become involved.

following up with what the community wants - not just token input

Easier access to all relevant information, less confrontation between industry and public. More respect for the process.

Unfortunately most of us prefer to leave the planning up to elected officials.

In depth and honest reporting by national media.

What the use, no one pay any attention to what we say.

Give locals some power over provincial and federal managers especially in areas of forestry and fishing.

more involvement

Political accountability - with heavy fines or jail terms

Our opinions taken into rightful consideration.

Since meetings are not always convenient, issues at hand might be submitted, clearly and in-depth, to the local newspaper. Concerns could then be expressed by mail or media for all to see.

My experience was there were some groups who represented minor or trivial positions or interests - more direction is needed from organized meetings to not allow individuals to stall or derail issue based discussions.

Better co-operation between everyone involved.

a better sell/communication to the public that they have a part in the planning process (not just a brief ad in the legal section of the local newspaper)

accountability of government

Put decisions to the public. Put in a TV channel to educate the public then have phone in polling referendums to decide issues.

like to see more emphasis on it so that people who are really enthusiastic about. I am too shy, so probably written material/opinion to hand in/mail in would be better.

decisions are carried through

broader consultation rather than the bias of the few serving on a board. Ie. Community surveys.

The government units should explain their overall objectives - note other input or objections.

more referendums

It can be to many involvement too

Every household should know what's going on or is there any agenda to follow

Yes, somehow make socioeconomic concerns (environmental, health, traffic, quality of life, etc.) have weight in management decisions - like technical or economic issues rather than people's "foolish concerns" which should not stand in the way of "progress".

A larger response to resource planning from the "average" person is required to get a true picture of what the public's true opinions are! How to achieve that is anyone's guess.

Need more practical, expedient processes

increased media reporting

No - wouldn't listen to what changes I would suggest anyway

This is a democratic country where the majority is supposed to rule. When we make a decision it should be enforced whether it kills us or not.

More openness to information ie. from consultants reports and suggestions

more training for all parties

more resources

Elected people listen to public not hold referendum and do the opposite of the outcome.

Yes - public involvement before management plans are drafted and implemented.

Resource managers should be encouraged to seek opinions over a broader spectrum of the community.

more local input

Before public can be involved they need information and education on the issues and then can help determine the best part they can play. Eg. Develop a draft ... OR - review and critique a prepared draft. A community must develop values around public involvement whether it is for resource planning or whatever. All too often political will takes over from public input.

Better meeting advertisement; more information

Yes, it should be as illegal as it is unethical to tell people they have no say whether it be government, Greenpeace, Sierra, mining interests or any other large group with their own best interests at heart.

more local instead of federal

Public hearings advertised well in advance in newspapers or radio.

More grassroots - less pressure to give definite answers.

The public in the areas affected by this should be able to veto government decisions.

Listen more to people directly affected by planning of resources. Their health, homes and livelihood may be at risk, but often industry doesn't seem to care.

Easier public access - don't know how to get involved.

More usable public opinion.

Special interest groups should not be allowed to dictate the process - the opinions of the broader, general public are often never heard.

more public awareness

Sometimes I would like to have referendums to decide some issues; less tax money sent to Victoria and spent here to improve roads, schools, hospitals ...

more civilians on planning committee, less bureaucrats

more notification to public

make the public more aware of what's happening - good and bad

I'm unfamiliar with process - I'm not sure if public involvement results in representing general population or special interest groups.

More community meetings announced on TV during supper time on local station.

more direct results visible

greater involvement through heightened media coverage to directly involve more members of the public

I feel that the public gets plenty of opportunities to be involved and in fact, has an impact on decisions made.

Local boards, local decisions that will stand - not Victoria decisions or Lower Mainland - especially in land decisions.

Give the public an unbiased history of the issue so they are better equipped to form their own opinion.

Keep all the people out of our plans that do not live in BC. I.e. Americans.

Politicians should consider local input.

Earlier public alert of development plans or changes.

Political red tape removed.

I would like to see the public more informed and more actively involved in the process.

Listen less to ecoterrorists; use proven data and not speculation

Less attention paid to professional lobbyist groups

I think we need public education to clarify the need to respect and work with elected officials. I abhor the antagonism created by certain neo-conservative groups - especially the reform party.

Yes, often the public is consulted at the end of a process instead of the beginning.

more education of the public on the values/interests at stake



Public knowledge not tainted by political bullshit.

Results of referendums should be binding! We've had 2 regarding waste disposal and neither has been implemented because those in power did not like the results!

Flyers to households - announcing plans; Have personal go to schools - involve young students - it is their future - jobs - or lack of jobs.

the public should be "made" more educated on these matters by TV programs or professional meetings/classes for the younger generation.

People on the panel who will listen to others.

Politicians should start listening to the people.

more coverage in the media

public hearings

Yes, perhaps a questionnaire like this would give a more honest opinion.

Vote in Reform Party and get "grassroots" involvement.

Most people have little time for evening meetings, must take the process to the workplace.

Yes, all decisions should regard employment, both now and in the future as one of the primary objectives in resource planning - fishing and forestry need drastic measures or changes immediately to survive.

Ground floor involvement of local parties ie. Societies or individuals, colleges and clubs.

I would like an honest involvement. There are too many people with an axe to grind. Example, look at the forest industry, M & B have paid out millions to defend themselves where THAT money could have been spent to upgrade their mills. M & B owes approximately \$1.8 Billion dollars.

Yes, let local people decide on what is best or acceptable in their area ... After all they live here and don't need countless expensive meetings and studies done by expert and bureaucrats in Victoria.

Industry leaders, environmentalists, and politicians have more meetings to help achieve unanimity, and concerns of us all.

Encourage people to take more interest in public meetings through advertising and other promotions.

Those in charge use common sense. Some are so "smart they are stupid".

I feel city provincial planners don't always understand how close to the wilderness small town people are.

Public input that is not ignored.

Yes, stronger people of council and planning areas. The people, public should be able to fire them if they don't fulfill their job.

decisions to be based on scientific studies (which public have been made aware of) and not withheld for political reasons. Eg. Fisheries.

I'd like to see referendums have some clout.

Reasonably quicker solutions.

I would like some assurance that public involvement resulted in some change - that it was not simply window-dressing.

When public involved, they should study very carefully before they opened their mouth. I think it is very difficult to make decision if they don't know what to do.

The forest companies realize that resources belong to the citizens and not to the forest industries.

more referendums

more credibility given by government to above 2 groups (unions and environmentalists) who represent the general public.

Would like to see the public leaders pay more attention to the general public.

have a cross section of public involved earlier in the planning process rather than after the initial plan is presented and then amended.

have the referendum being the decision maker in the municipality

would like to have feedback as to decision regarding planning in relation to public opinion.

meaningful input

make it open - have a transparent decision making process - if companies don't want to participate and open their books, they don't get our resources.

Public representatives must take responsibility for decisions. Resource extraction is required for sustenance or alternatives must be provided.

Recognize that extreme environmentalist view is a minority. Limit influence of minorities by ensuring that the majority view is captured in public consultation.

Good and bad examples made public. Honesty from all parties involved. Good will towards finding an acceptable goal. Special interest groups kept to a minimum.

Special guidelines given and deadlines kept.

More media coverage so that we know what's happening to our natural resources. We need to see both sides of the arguments.

Listen to the people!

The abolishment of TFL's and the institution of an elected Resource Board to oversee regional needs of the community.

Accountability by politicians to the public and recall. For failure to act for the public - referendums on major issues.

Not involved enough. Do take mailout to all households.

More interest by the public in the process

Let people know when and where the meetings are.

You reach a point where all the same points of view keep coming to the forefront. Beyond which certain plans usually result therefore eventually a certain amount of consultation becomes redundant.

The only change would be more public interest and involvement but the public is generally too apathetic or busy to become involved.

An interest grabbing campaign to build awareness of one's importance of opinion.

people don't pay attention because public input is ignored

The public needs to be educated in conservation more so than recycling. Not to minimize recycling but to learn how to properly use resources. People waste is incredible. Eg. Disposable paper products, burning fuel unnecessarily and destruction building up areas for housing without consulting environmentalists.

More education of the general public. Many are afraid to get involved because they don't understand it.

Education with the future - long term - taken into consideration, not just jobs for one or two generations. I suspect that some of the public are very self-centred and care only about their jobs (eg. Forest industry). I understand that technology is putting people out of work, as well.

Just some common sense.

Better education.

more meetings

Better notification, advertising

Maybe make opinion polls more understandable.

see more of the general views of the centre rather than the views of the fringes or extreme views

that before final decisions are made that a questionnaire go out to all householders (public) for final feedback.

need to have public participants not just the self serving individuals

Control of these functions should not reside with "interested" parties. There should be an independent group of moderators like "judges".

Just to keep it up.

Yes, members of the public should be paid the same wage as government and industry representatives and time lines should be enforced for all participants. No deal, no pay.

Greater public interest.

Not all evening meetings.

I would like to see the forest industry genuinely accept and support tourism. E.g. fishing resorts, and ski resorts and trail rides.

I would like intrinsic values to have a higher place in decision making.

More clout from public opinion ---> decision makers

Listened to and acted upon instead of just heard.

Local opinion still has little influence.

Use some of the public's ideas, don't just listen to them speak and do nothing.

Better knowledge of meetings and forums at the local level. Perhaps consultation between with other groups such as Chambers of Commerce, Town Councils, etc.

The process is slow and largely ineffective in regard to "feedback".

Ensure narrow special interests do not supersede broad stakeholder consensus.

That people in charge would pay more attention to local people.

Yes, let everyone in the area do a survey like so or let them in on all meetings.

As much hard data as possible presented on the consequences of different options.

The ability for the public to submit written opinions that get a vote.

Need to seek opinions of average people not those with a special interest in the resource (ie. Foresters or executives of forestry companies, but the average housewife or millworker).

Remove the special interest groups from the process and listen more to the people directly affected who live and work in the community.

It should almost be mandatory for companies with mills to send their employees to these meetings.

more involvement from the public

Not so much of minority rules.

more follow up on the progress to the interested parties.

hard discussion

business people and open minded people

more public opinions and actions

I suppose more public show would help but people have given up.

More news about what's going on and how it will affect us.

I would like to see those in charge to really "hear" those that voice their opinions.

Everything, we don't have any say.

more weight given to public concerns when environment is concerned.

Phone solicitation to businesses asking for volunteers or recommendations for participants who may be considered.

more open to public

Get the opinion of public at large.

For small communities it is important to advise when meetings are and generally educate the public.

more time, more resources

That our contributions are taken seriously and acted upon.

There is too much crown land and not enough privately owned. Owners can manage forest and ranch land far better than government.

professionals have more awareness, proposals need to be reviewed by more public

televised public meetings, phone in questions

When decision makers are entrenched in their positions, then only their own agenda will be used for making these decisions. Then these positions need to be limited and to use a broad spectrum of people.

Progress Reports on achievements of goals as process moves beyond primary planning into management and fine tuning, published in simple format like report card or score sheet.

I don't believe committees, chaired up to study a problem, actually listen to public opinion. An arbitrator would be far simpler solution.

Involve more people from the region in which the hearings are taking place in the decision process.

more involvement of workers and people who use the resources

Should set up regional boards - with members from both rural and city.

open meetings that are not controlled by appointed bureaucrats.

It would be nice if government would listen rather than just pay lip-service.

Help plan - not tell us what they are going to do.

Yes, put out a question sheet just like this to every household for their input.

No, may be overdone now. I think there is ample opportunity for anyone to participate in resource planning now.

Local involvement carries the most weight. Decisions should not be heavily influenced by outside communities/cities which are far removed from the site in question.

take the government out of the process or force them to abide by general public wishes in areas affected only

greater public awareness of the issues through newspaper etc. as well as options (just after filling out this questionnaire I found a copy of 'choices' in the flyers by the Forest Alliance - the first one I believe I've seen).

Get more people out.

more public input

Commissions (roving) are too costly. Let's have direct access through telephone.

more information

How about letting the small logging outfits get some fibre, they employ more people at a more local level and allow for much more diversification of forest usage.

We vote and then the council do not listen to our wishes. They do as they please anyway.

To invite in advance and ask associations for parts of the community for input on questions before the meeting is to take place so this is well thought out before addressed by planning department.

Education of the public needed; Honesty of Government; Democratic control - response to public needs; Protection of Resources; Accountability; Open discussions with industry with subsequent feedback.

Should listen to the public - not override their majority opinion.

More recycling of paper, cardboard, glass, tin.

I would like to see more consideration of public opinion and less personal agenda.

More active roles for the public. Maybe a tour of the proposed site by a professional who could answer questions on the spot.

If consensus arrived at - then should be implemented.

clear understanding of the uses of input

Ongoing account of funds & people

Binding input after thorough consultation and requisite follow up.

more description in paper advertisements; proof that our opinions actually count

## **Appendix 4**

### **Respondent Comments**

**QUESTION 18:**

Based on your experience, would you recommend any specific improvements in the public involvement/consultation process? Please explain:

**Question 18 - Based on your experience, would you recommend any specific improvements in the public involvement/consultation process. Please explain.**

Don't know. Am not personally involved now due to family health problems.

Answers given in relation to specific concerns.

Better maps.

There is always room for improvement as no two groups are the same. For me the best way to improve was to meet with concerned individual(s) in the field on their own turf. This made them feel they were listened to and their concerns were being addressed.

More advertising/exposure is required to ensure the public is aware of any meetings.

Give the public a feeling their opinion is important. To have an "engineer" tell you you are stupid is enough to turn anyone off.

Clear terms of reference and full understanding that process are advisory rather than dictatorial.

Perhaps more questionnaire type input that can be tabulated - often at public meetings, people speak up but the panel puts their own spin on everything. Also it would prevent the more vocal people or groups from monopolizing meetings and input.

Time and information. It takes time for some issues to be fully understood. And all information should be presented clearly and honestly so as to be able to make a decision.

My biggest concern is the quality of the public input. Too often the extremes are very vocal but the general public is not heard from. Also, lack of knowledge generally prevails.

Listen to what the locals want.

Elections every six months or a firing process - (Not necessarily execution!)

There should be an overall plan and regulation format worked out - Fragmented planning only wears out the people who volunteer - you cannot cope with all the demands as a volunteer.

Yes. The Federal Government should look more into the needs of a small community like ours.

Give weight to decisions about socioeconomic issues like quality of life. For example, you can identify km<sup>2</sup> of fish habitat lost by a development project. How do you calculate the quality of life lost due to noise or traffic or blasting or loss of recreation area? How do you calculate the loss of a pristine valley, NOT in \$ figures?

Less reliance on protracted consultation

more training for all parties; more resources

In most cases better chaired so issues discussed are same as those on the agenda.

Encourage Resource Managers to become more involved in regular discussions with the general public.

Yes, general public should have information meetings advertised on all media prime-time, before any government agency makes any decisions. It is unfortunate to slow projects and make more work and cost, but the fact that some seem to slip by make this necessary.

increase public awareness



They should put out their own flyers. That way we get first hand the truth.

Unfortunately in the public consultation process specific interest groups have the ability to stop or stall a decision. I feel this is wrong, however, I don't know how it can be stopped.

more frequent updates through the media - This would keep "surprises" to the public at a minimum. Unfortunately, limited staff (very limited in "Planning") and funding preclude the time needed to do this and other "nice-to-do" things.

Full public involvement bogs down - work with opinion makers up to voting req'd.??

Do it early. Do it honestly.

Take it out of the hands of the vested interests. If a company is doing the "process" to get resources it is a conflict of interest.

Maybe an unbiased reporter to follow the "story" and keep the public up to date in the newspaper, radio, TV, etc. That way if people become interested then they can see for themselves and maybe join the debate at a later time.

Set up general guidelines to follow. Allow planners to be specific in their direction given basic traits of the types of people living in most rural communities and speed process up with less discussion of the very same issues.

Limit the number of groups/people involved in the decision making process to those who have or will be impacted by the local decision.

Education (Only those in the know get involved)

Referendum

Who makes what decision.

questionnaires

Need to educate public about this involvement role.

Yes - give forestry and government workers a course in "How not to come across like condescending know it alls".

Not at this time.

Ministry of Forest hold all the cards. They listen just to say they listened but do as they please anyway.

Group or process chair requires specific training in mediation etc., as many of these processes involve emotional debates.

Yes - persons involved should be paid.

More exposure regarding the particular issue.

easy access to information, meetings; televised presentations; phone in questions.

We tend to think that we are doing the work well. However we need to find ways to encourage participation and give people a sense that what they offer is important.

"invite" representatives from as many local groups as you can.

## **Appendix 5**

### **Response Frequencies for all Survey Questions**

The tables in this appendix are in the order the question appeared in the survey document. The first part of the questionnaire addressed questions of local residency.

How long have you lived in your current community? (in years)

Years Lived in Community	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
1-5	70	14.5
6-10	65	13.4
11-20	82	16.9
21-30	111	22.9
31-50	115	23.8
50+	41	8.5

Source: Questionnaire survey.

Reason(s) for moving to your current community.

Reasons for Moving	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
Born in Community	73	15.7
Job Prospect/Business Opportunity	244	52.5
Closeness to Family/Relative	26	5.5
Lifestyle/Quality of Life	38	8.1
Community Ambiance	28	6.0
Moved with Parents as Child	25	5.4
Marriage	12	2.6
Other	19	4.1

Source: Questionnaire survey.

Where did you move from, by community type

Community Type	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
Always Lived in Community	67	16.5
Rural	16	3.9
Village (less than 1000 pop.)	29	7.1
Town (1000-10,000)	57	14.0
Small City (10,001-30,000)	42	10.3
Medium City (30,001-100,000)	52	12.8
Large City (more than 100,000)	143	35.2

Source: Questionnaire survey.

Where did you move from, by location

Region	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
Lower Mainland of B.C.	103	25.2
Vancouver Island	37	9.0
Other B.C. Community	138	33.7
Canadian Prairies	70	17.1
Central Canada	23	5.6
Maritime Canada	6	1.5
Northern Canada	5	1.2
USA	8	1.9

Source: Questionnaire survey.

The second section of the questionnaire began to probe participation and familiarity with local resource planning processes.

Have you participated in any public opinion or consultation process in your community?

	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
Yes	275	57.4

Source: Questionnaire survey.

For those respondents who reported that they did participate in a public opinion or consultation process, they were asked to identify the type of consultation.

If you participated, type of public opinion or consultation process.

Type	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
written letters	126	25.9
opinion surveys	159	32.6
public hearings	154	31.6
telephone solicitations	98	20.1
local activism	83	17.0
other	47	9.7

Source: Questionnaire survey.

Have you heard of any of the following resource planning meetings in your community?

Type of Resource Planning Process	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
CORE Regional Land-Use Plan	239	49.1
LRMP (Land and Resource Management Plan)	148	30.4
Local Land-Use Planning (Municipal or Regional District)	234	48.0
Community Resource Board	94	19.3
Community Forest Forums	139	28.5
Watershed Management	198	40.7
Other	39	8.0

Source: Questionnaire survey.

If you heard of a resource planning meeting, how did you hear?

Communication Means	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
Local Press	309	63.4
Radio and TV	265	54.4
Friends/Relatives	90	18.5
Local Newsletters	8	1.6
Other	108	22.2

Source: Questionnaire survey.

Over the past 5 years, have you attended any resource planning meetings in your community?

	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
Yes Attended	107	22.0

Source: Questionnaire survey.

Over the past 5 years, have you been actively involved in any resource planning processes?

	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
Yes Actively Involved	57	11.7

Source: Questionnaire survey.

The next part of the questionnaire asked for the respondents general views on public involvement in natural resource planning processes.

Do you feel that resource planning processes should involve members of the general public?

	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
Yes, should be involved	438	89.9

Source: Questionnaire survey.

Do you feel that the opinions of the community are presently being heard in resource planning processes?

	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
Yes	196	43.0
No	206	45.2
Sometimes	29	6.4
Don't Know	25	5.5

Source: Questionnaire survey.

Do you feel that decision-makers generally value public input in resource planning processes?

	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
Yes	181	40.1
No	222	49.2
Sometimes	31	6.4
Don't Know	17	3.5

Source: Questionnaire survey.

Respondents were then asked about those parts of the public involvement or consultation process which they felt works well in natural resource planning. These questions applied only to those who had participated or had been active in a local resource planning process.

In what ways were you involved in that process(es) ?

Participation	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
Organizer	9	13.4
Table Participant	13	19.4
Interested Observer	26	38.8
Technical Expert	7	10.4
Government Representative	7	10.4
Resource Manager	3	4.5
Other	2	3.0

Source: Questionnaire survey.

Did you feel your involvement was rewarding?

	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
Yes	45	69.2
No	17	26.2
Sometimes	3	4.6

Source: Questionnaire survey.

Do you think the general public was involved or represented in the planning process ?

	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
Yes	44	66.7
No	18	27.3
Sometimes	4	6.1

Source: Questionnaire survey.

Were the results of public input into the planning process ever reported back to the public?

	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
Yes	44	71.0
No	15	24.2
Process Ongoing	1	1.6
Sometimes	1	1.6
Don't Know	1	1.6

Source: Questionnaire survey.

What sort of communication mechanisms kept the general public informed about the process?

Communication Mechanism	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
Written Media	48	50.5
Newsletters	7	7.4
Electronic Media	12	12.6
General Public Notices	10	10.5
Process Reports	2	2.1
Process Minutes	4	4.2
Other	7	7.3
None	5	5.3

Source: Questionnaire survey.

The fourth part of the questionnaire asks the respondent to offer some general comments about the state of their community's economy.

How would you characterize your community's economy over the PAST 5 years?

	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
Improving Greatly	20	4.2
Improving	179	37.8
Unchanged	77	16.2
Declining	146	30.8
Declining Greatly	43	9.1
Don't Know	9	1.9

Source: Questionnaire survey.

How would you characterize your community's economic future over the NEXT 5 years?

	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
Improving Greatly	6	1.3
Improving	179	37.9
Unchanged	88	18.6
Declining	120	25.4
Declining Greatly	28	5.9
Don't Know	51	10.8

Source: Questionnaire survey.



The final part of the questionnaire asked some basic socio-economic profile questions. Respondents were asked about their age, gender, marital status, education, and family income level.

How old are you (in years)?:

Age	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
<25	11	2.3
25-35	75	15.6
36-45	118	24.5
46-55	124	25.7
56-65	67	13.9
66-75	48	10.0
>75	39	8.1

Source: Questionnaire survey.

Gender of Respondents

	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
Female	209	43.8
Male	268	56.2

Source: Questionnaire survey.

Marital Status of Respondents

Status	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
Single	40	8.3
Married	360	75.0
Widowed	36	7.5
Divorced/Separated	43	9.0
Other	1	0.2

Source: Questionnaire survey.

### Respondent Level of Education

Level	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
some public or high school	59	12.4
public or high school graduation	110	23.1
some college / technical school / university	131	27.5
coll. or tech. school diploma / univ. degree	142	29.8
post graduate degree	30	6.3
other	5	1.0

Source: Questionnaire survey.

### Occupation of Respondents

Occupation	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
Professional	98	20.6
Sales/Service	77	16.2
Self-employed	44	9.3
Government	19	4.0
Primary Sector	16	3.4
Secondary Sector	66	13.9
Retired	116	24.4
Other	22	4.6

Source: Questionnaire survey.

### Annual Household Income Before Taxes

Income Level	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
<\$20,000	57	13.0
\$20-39,999	99	22.6
\$40-59,999	124	28.2
\$60-79,999	78	17.8
>\$80,000	81	18.5

Source: Questionnaire survey.

### Are there children living at home?

	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
Yes	202	42.4

Source: Questionnaire survey.

