Strategic Advisory Group Meeting #1
Silviculture Innovations Program
June 2023

WORKSHOP MINUTES

Date: June 22 – 23, 2023
Place: The Old Church, Smithers, BC

IN ATTENDANCE

Name	Stakeholder Group
Jodi Axelson	Office of the Chief Forester
Alana Clason	Bulkley Valley Research Centre
Matt Dance	Fuse Consulting
Jennifer Gunter	BC Community Forests Association
Kira Hoffman	Bulkley Valley Research Centre
Danielle Ignace	University of British Columbia
Kevin Kriese	Polis
Marie-Lou LeFrancois	Forest Practices Board
Erica Lilles	BC Ministry of Forests
Dennis MacDonald	First Nations Forestry Council
Garnet Mireau	BC Professional Foresters
Jeff Mycock	West Fraser
Andrew Snetsinger	Office of the Chief Forester
Lisa Wood	University of Northern BC
Kelsey Copes Gerbitz	University of British Columbia

Regrets

Francis Johnson	Alkali Resource Management

Action Items	Who	Due

1: Convene a Strategic Framework Sub-group to continue the work of developing:
• Strategic Framework.
• Vision & Mission.
• Org Structure including roles and responsibilities.
• Two Terms of Reference (ToR)
    o Operations Team
    o Strategic Advisory Group.
• Opportunities for outreach and communications
	Jodi, the Ops Team and Fuse	Work completed prior to the September workshop

2: Work with the BVRC Board to develop relevant BVRC Board policy in support of the SIP.	Alana and Kira	As needed, reporting back to SAG
3: Create the quick wins list, send out a list to SAG for advice and direction. This could take the form of a Google Survey.	Alana and Kira	By September
4: The Operations Team will meet in Kamloops on September 14 – 15.	Ops Team	September

5: The SAG will join virtually on September 14th to discuss:
    o Strategic framework
    o Quick wins
    o Proposal for knowledge summit
	SAG	September 14th

6: Calendar out important dates to avoid overlap as we plan the Knowledge Summit.	SIP Project Manager	Immediately, and on-going as needed

Key Decisions	Date
Decision 1: The Operations Team should hire 2 extension specialists within the BVRC.	ASAP
Decision 2: Move forward with knowledge summit planning.	ASAP

Meeting Objectives
- *Relationships:* Clarifying individual motivations and interests, building relationships
- *Clarity:* Building consensus on where we are going through a Vision and a Mission
- *Oversight:* Confirming a governance structure for the Silviculture Innovation Program
- *Outcomes:* Discussing initial research 'buckets' to guide future program actions and investments

Please note: These minutes are written without attribution in support of open, honest, and direct conversations.

Day One: Thursday June 22ⁿᵈ

Settling In

The day started with an introduction by Alana, Kira, Jodi and Andrew that grounded this work in Recommendation 12: Innovative Silviculture Systems from the Old Forest Strategic Review. Within this context, the Bulkley Valley Research Center was granted $10M from the Government of British Columbia to conduct work under the umbrella of silviculture innovation.

A round table of introductions was conducted. People were asked to introduce themselves, and then encouraged to share what they hoped to achieve in working with the Silviculture Innovation Program, Strategic Advisory Group. The following comments were made by meeting participants:
- They were interested in creating a shared vision & goal for silviculture in B.C.
- Hope to collaborate with people from a diversity of backgrounds.
- Looking for a tangible outcome through great work leading to future funding opportunities.
- To simply make partial cutting easier to do.
- Getting current knowledge out that research already indicates is effective.
- Extension of knowledge between groups.
- Equity.
- Have work that is impactful and scalable.
- Ways to use existing research and provide the tools/incentive for foresters on the ground to actually start to change practice.
- Fill a 20-year deficit that mountain pine beetle created.
- Longevity of the project – the outcomes won't stop when the project ends.
- Address challenges with legislation to make changes – tie research with Indigenous knowledge.

Elder Mabel provided a welcome to meeting participants and reflected on her life in Smithers.

What does silviculture innovation mean to you?

Meeting participants were asked to reflect on their personal understanding of silviculture innovation. Those who were attending the meeting virtually were asked to draw a picture of "silviculture innovation", those attending in-person were asked to create a model using playdough, pipe cleaners, popsicle sticks and little puff balls. The follow comments were made in explaining each drawing and model:

Model #1 Represents:
- Doing different things on the landscape creates more resiliency than the current clearcut system
- Things we do are not new, anything we different we do is innovative
- Resilience, innovation implementing what is already happening elsewhere but not done here already
- Create a more diverse economic benefit

Model #2 Represents:
- Interconnect ideas
- Managing and caring for the landscape we live on
- Diversity in landscape
- Better coexist with fire
- Diversity of perspectives
- Fire brings issues but also brings different groups together

Model #3 Represents:
- Complexity
- Connect practice and ideas in space and across time
- Room for failure – innovation isn't possible without trying different things
- Bridge knowledge to other groups such as practitioners
- Different scales of time is important

Model #4 Represents:
- Landscape (triad = multi use values – partial cut, intensive silviculture (fast growing high yield) – conservation)
- Diversity of values seen on the landscape

Model #5 Represents:
- Vertical and horizontal structure (not just biodiversity)
- Age groups of structure
- Not spatially even (clumps of species, dependent on the individual species)
- Healthy water systems, wildlife habitat
- Small harvesting machines will help to implement the innovation

Model #6 Represents:
- Innovation: actual and extension
- Current forest state
- Future state – more application of current state (expansion of known systems to a larger scale)
- Novel systems – systems designed for fire resilience
- Innovation program is only one part of change – need policy changes

Model #7 Represents:
- Knowledge, extension practice
- Can't exist in a silo, need to become a butterfly and come together
- Many ways to get to new state, you can weave different ways and approaches
- At the end we all come together, have good relationships
- Extend knowledge and practices together

Model #8 Represents:
- A stand moving through time – wanting to design practices that move towards an objective
- Homogenous stand that moves to more heterogeneous stand

- Thoughtful design of silviculture that moves towards getting at the stand you want to see
- Monitoring to achieve objectives
- Understand why you failed – take aways
- Fire suppression issues we're dealing with now
- Post fire resiliency
- Community members – fires happened, land is showing us something

Model #9 Represents:
- Multi-scale spatial model
- Stand scale to landscape scale
- Multi-values, multi-species, structure
- Opportunity for harvest
- Bridging gaps of people
- Diversity, resilience, from small to landscape scale

Model #10 Represents:
- Landscape ecology
- Watershed, many stands and types of ecosystems
- No one type of silviculture can be applied to the landscape
- Resilient stands in the future that will provide a myriad of values
- Temporal aspects

Model #11 Represents:
- Individuals and communities are benefiting
- Forests are the provider for the things we rely on (emotional, spiritual) for a community
- Diversity of things for the people who rely on the forest for those things
- The things we don't see (wisdom to be shared) are just as important

Model #12 Represents:
- Zoom in from the landscape
- Above ground – molecules, CO_2, O_2, insects, birds
- At surface level, grasses, dead wood, mushrooms,
- Soil level – root systems, intertwining.
- Below ground – microbes, bacteria,
- Interconnectedness of relationships is the foundation of the work
- The more relationships the stronger the foundation
- Everything has an important role (things we know are there but don't get to be seen or heard)

Model #13 Represents:
- What is silviculture – applied ecology to manage for many values
- Understand natural disturbance (which are changing)
- Sustainable values in a system that is changing
- Innovation is using old tools more effectively and new technologies

Discussion Summary:
The SIP will support new research and innovative practices that better address forest resilience, ecosystem health and climate adaptation.
- Tied to recommendation 12 of old growth strategic review (OGSR)
- Wildlife habitat
- Non-clearcut systems

Innovative: getting back to what we were doing, but using new technology

Vision, Mission, and Organizational Structure

The Operations Team presented a draft Vision, Mission, and Organizational Structure. The intent of these draft documents is to provide a starting point for discussion with the Strategic Advisory Group.

The following information was presented to the SAG:

Draft Vision: We are a catalyst for change in forest practices within B.C.

Draft Mission: Our work will inform forestry systems that reflect a broader diversity of values for British Columbians. To do this, we will:
- Make existing information more accessible and easier to interpret.
- Identify core gaps in knowledge and make targeted investments in research and extension.
- Empower extension experts and ignite a motivated network of forest practitioners within regions throughout BC.
- Create a solid foundation to inform implementation and policy changes that mobilize existing and future innovative forest practices

Discussion Summary:
Draft vision:
- "we are a catalyst for change in forest practices within BC"
- Defining & rebrand silviculture.
- Forest practice – too broad, setting up for failure
- Define what we mean clearly
- Connect the silviculture word to the OGSR (bring back to the roots of the money)
- Different word for change – maybe growth, or innovation

Draft mission:
- Map of decision makers
- Clear lines on government to government
- Go back to OGSR (old growth strategic review) – silviculture is the key
- A word that includes a more holistic "forest ecosystem" approach
- Innovative silviculture how it affects the landscape
- Resilience isn't captured in the mission
- Care, intending, intention

Draft Organisational Structure
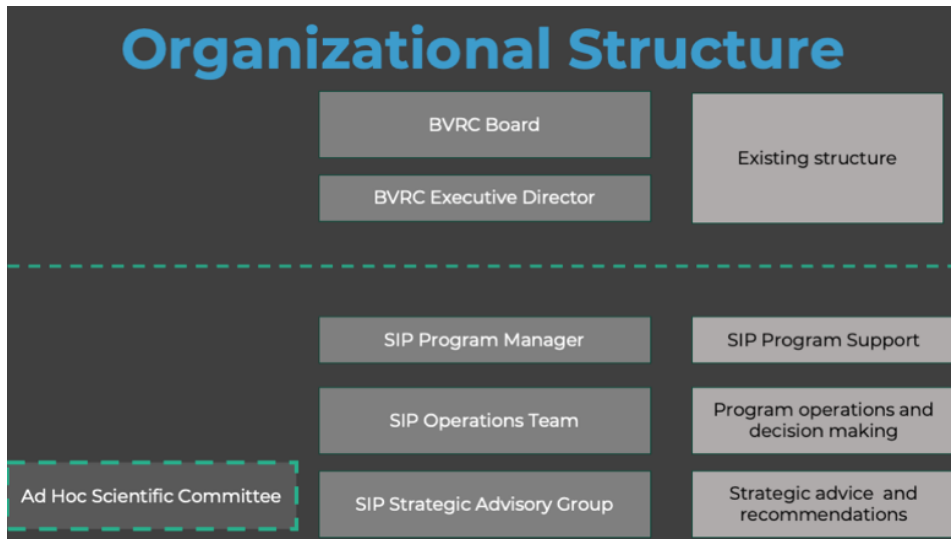
Details of the Organisational Structure
- The BVRC was granted the money from the Government of British Columbia. As such, the Board and Executive Director are part of the Organisational Structure by virtue of holding the grant.
- There is a policy break between the BVRC Board / ED and the SIP Program.
- The Silviculture Innovation Program (SIP) will be managed and supported by a SIP Program Manager. As part of their role, they will be responsible for information flows within SIP and between the BVRC and SIP.
- The role of the SIP Operational Team is to work with the Program Manager to manage the SIP.
- The Operations Team will be responsible for final decisions but will seek recommendations and advice from the Strategic Advisory Group.
- The Strategic Advisory Group's (SAG) role is to provide guidance, advice, recommendations to the Operations Team. While we will not be seeking consensus with the SAG, if the opportunity is available to get buy-in on a specific piece of advice, we will do so.
- The Operational Team will also draw on AD Hoc expertise of a Scientific Committee that will be convened on an as need basis.

The following points were raised in discussion of the Organisational Structure
- There was general agreement that the Vision, Mission, and Organisational Structure were good staring points, but that more work was required prior to finalizing these documents.
- Some thought should be given to the Strategic Framework that the Vision and Mission sit within.
  - It was suggested that a Strategic Framework document could represent an initial outcome of the SIP
- There is some work that the BVRC Board should complete, including to update the bylaws and create appropriate policy to support SIP operations, such as:
  - Conflict of interest policy

ACTION: Convene a Strategic Framework Sub-group to continue the work of developing a Strategic Framework, Vision, Mission, Org Structure including

roles and responsibilities and two Terms of Reference (ToR). One for the Operations Team and another distinct ToR for the Strategic Advisory Group.

ACTION: Alana and Kira to work with the BVRC Board to develop relevant BVRC Board policy in support of the SIP.

Proposed Funding Streams
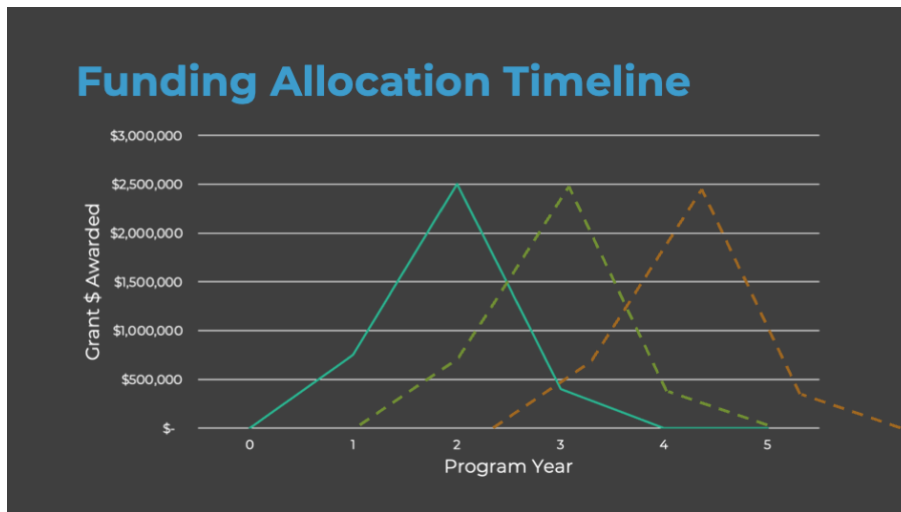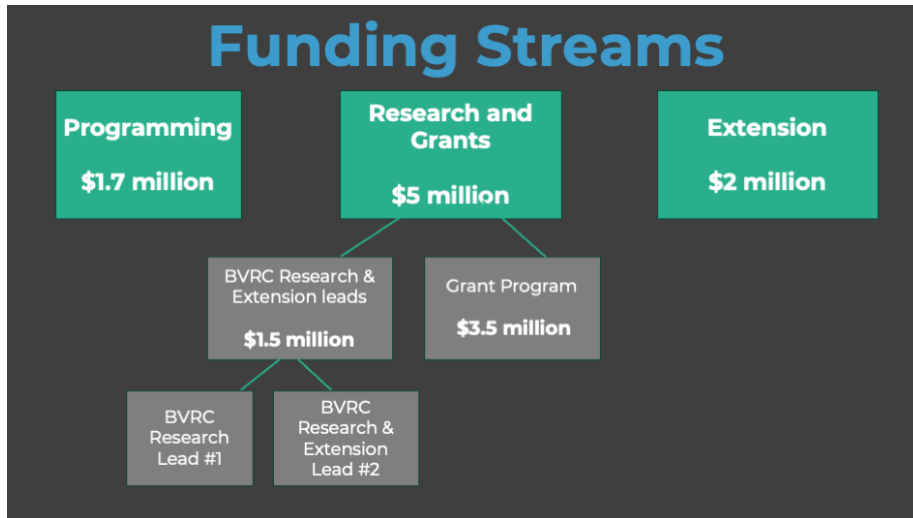
Details of the Funding Streams
- Admin fee: This $1.3M was the BVRC Administration Fee for receiving and administering the $10M Grant. This is non-negotiable
- Programming: This $1.7M is to run programming at the BVRC and includes paying for SAG honorariums, travel and human resources
- Research and Grants: This $5M is divided into two portions:
    - $1.5M will be portioned to the BVRC Research and Extension Leads. This will enable the SIP to 'hit the ground running' with immediate research and extension capability.
    - $3.5 M for external request for proposals

- o Objectives: "Projects will support new research and innovative practices that better address forest resiliency, ecosystem health and climate adaptation. This could include selective harvesting approaches or treatments that retain and promote old-growth stand characteristics, make ecosystems more resilient…"
  - o Goal: release first call late Fall 2023
  - o Need: develop criteria and themes, etc…
  - o $2M for Extension (discussed in detail below).
- Funding Allocation Timeline
  - o Use this initial funding as seed funding. Draw the $8.7M down over 4-5 years and leverage the outcomes for additional grants.

The following points were raised in discussion of the Funding Streams:
- Requirements of projects – when you report out, have the financials attached with them.
  - o What is the best way to report out – it should be designed to be transparent.
- Make sure Indigenous communities can apply for these opportunities.
- Make sure the data and publications can be accessed in the future.
- Up front and clear with Nations about what is being shared or not. This grant process should be building relationships as a soft outcome.
- Implementation based projects – things outside of the policy – assess barriers – mechanisms for allowances.
- Research & grants – do we have a good grasp of knowledge and research? Do we have a scope of questions that we want the money to go to? To support a better understanding of our needs, we should host a state of the knowledge summit.
- Feasibility of proposed projects – role at program level to help people understand feasibility.
- Money goes to people with money. We should be deliberate in designing a granting program to help support the people who aren't already in the space of funding (small, rural, First Nations who have unequal access) that recognizes the hidden costs and barriers. These groups have innovative ways already. Seed money could help.
  - o There should also be a set amount of money to get professional services for underserviced populations to help build proposal/model for those without existing money/support.
- Principals that we operate within, the underlying framework, will helps steer call for proposals and proposal development.
- Program structure that allows strengths that already exist – program design that has early strength and existing – and have a space for the gaps (that we won't know about for at least a year)
- What is the location for the call for proposals? It should live at the BVRC with a separate website. The call should be push it out to all the places it needs to go. A strategy should be created to do this.
- More emphasis of the funding in the 2nd year – after state of knowledge summit and it will allow different communities to build capacity to apply for the funds.
- Recognize the timescale that different communities work and operate at – different capacities (i.e. after wildfire).

ACTION: The Strategic Framework sub-group should also consider the strategic opportunities for outreach and communication.

Extension

The Operations Team presented some slides on Extension for discussion:
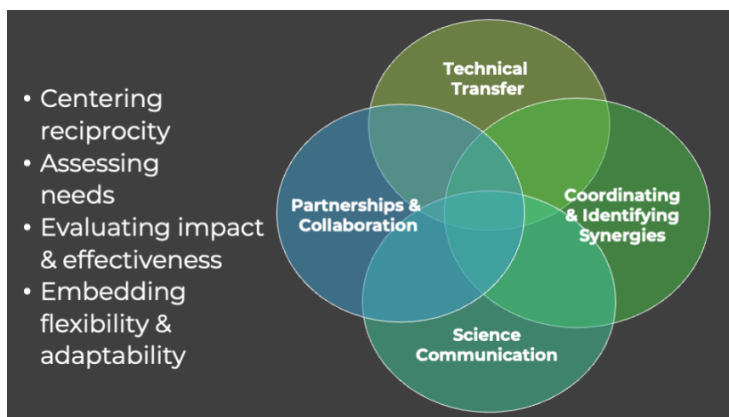
The SAG was divided into three breakout groups, and asked to discuss the following questions:
- What does extension look like for you?
- Who is the target audience?
- What are your extension needs?
- What structures or processes would help meet those extension needs?

Each breakout group reported back to the larger group. The following points were made / reported back:

Who is the target audience?
- Multiple levels within a community.
- Collective relationships at different scales.
- Forest practitioners: Planners and field people, consultants – can't get to all of them in one way.
- District staff – they have to be on board with getting "different" things through.
- Scaled – internal to government workshop.
- Licenses of all sorts – what do you need things to look like when presented to you.
- Licenses and gov practitioners together.
- Consultants that are hired by government – not included in the conversations – whoever is working on the same project, they all need to be in that room.
- Science communication for school children – extent info to kids
- Community members – so much variety, so many communities need to be engaged.
- Staff working in the communities can do the extension.

- Regional hubs.

What does extension look like for you?
- In person workshop in the place.
- Each audience is something different.
- People already practicing and being paid – way to compensate the people attending who aren't paid.
- People in practice already have venues to be reached (more straight forward mechanisms).
- Other communities need different outreach mechanisms.
- Some may need professional development.

What are your extension needs?
- Different levels of capacity.
- Depends on existing relationships.

What structures or processes would help meet those extension needs?
- Taping into someone who has already built relationships.
- Number of different projects and all of the places they need to go.
- How do you make it a transfer of knowledge without saying this is the only way to do it
- Field tours – successful way to showcase.
- Have to show people and demonstrate – not inside an office – way to reach communities.
- Hyper localized for it to be meaningful.
- Engagement with follow up, build and gain trust.
- Showing up an incorporating guidance.

Discussion:
- Develop internal positions within SIP?
- Mobilize regional folks who are effective at it.
- Money from pot or research proposal have extension element (with a workshop) we facilitate spaces it happens in.
- Technical transfer: needs assessment, knowledge creation, two-way process. Evaluation
- Partnership and collaboration: building trust. Mutually beneficial. Bring people into partnership who haven't been at the table before.
- Coordinates and identifying synergies: bringing together networks. Build out networks in positive and meaningful way. Areas of overlap are identified. Reduce redundancy. Achieve multiple visions of success. What does success mean?
- Targeted extension, the key is who are we targeting first. Primary vs. secondary (secondary gets the spill over from the primary)
- Good extension = lots of money
- Grey area between research and extension
- Bring extension people to the state of the knowledge summit.
- Research does their own extension – extension built into the research (enhanced by the extension specialist).
- We cannot do all the things – we need to pick the narrow lane that we will work within and focus on that work.
- Funding models and partnerships * key to success of the program

Day one Adjourned at 4PM

Day Two: Friday June 23rd

The second day of the workshop began with snacks and coffee at 8AM. The meeting started at 8:30.

Reflections on Thursday's Conversation

The following points were made in reflection of the conversations that were had on Thursday:
- Action that is necessary vs time to be thoughtful vs time to have good intentions. Don't get locked into things early on. In early phase keep it small, what are the knowledge gaps:
  - Strategic vision, timeline, first steps, (maybe no call for proposals so soon), large state of knowledge summit first
  - Pressure to spend money – so need to show something.
  - Operational quick wins that don't lock into strategic vision.
  - Quick wins, low cost, high visibility
  - BVRC internal research is a good way to get some things out the door.
    - Extension early on
    - Proposal for small amount of money that would scope out a large project.
    - Feasibility
    - Chance to vet some early ideas.
    - Need a vision of where you're going before doing this.
    - Operational trials: Need to talk about who gets funds, how to make it fair.
    - Quick project idea (pre commercial thinning in Williams Lake area)?
- Research vs. application of operational trials vs. extension – there is some confusion / clarity needed.
  - Prioritization
  - Boundaries put on some things otherwise we'll run out of money.
  - Need to have a large idea first so we can put some bounds on this.

The group was split into three breakouts, and asked to consider "What research buckets do we need and want"? The following is a summary of the reporting back from the breakout groups:
- Good research already underway and including trials.
- Less money should go into research and more in extension.
  - Cluster of extension people within SIP that may include:
    - Indigenous, non-indigenous
    - Grad students
  - External extensionists – after we have the internal set up.
  - Needs assessment done by internal extensionist – who then brings in the proper people to do the extension.
  - Once needs are identified it could go to a call for external.
- Knowledge summit to get the people together:
  - Extension hub.
  - Before intake of proposals.
  - Initial technical workshop, indigenous focused.
  - Capacity building.
  - Practical take aways- not high level.
  - Connecting old and new practitioners.
  - Connecting Indigenous communities who want to do the same thing.

- Trials are expensive – we have a lot already, what are you getting out of the trial that we don't already have?
- Get info from datasets we already have.
- Economic business models
  o Non-monetary values that need to be considered in the cost analysis.
  o Develop decisions tools beyond cost benefit analysis.
- Extension is an easy way to get results to practitioners.
- Use extensions in platforms that already exist.
  o like FLP
- Common hub across the province
  o then split B.C. into ecotypes:
    ▪ what do we have for trials?
    ▪ understand the gaps.
    ▪ prioritize from there.
  o scope out a 5- or 10-year vision – have the whole structure:
    ▪ Cookbook of knowledge of the systems
    ▪ Identify what we can do and where we could go with more time and money.
- Silviculture systems
  o Impact on values other than timber:
    ▪ Fire resiliency.
    ▪ Habitat, carbon.
    ▪ OG age, OG structure/biodiversity.
    ▪ Economics.
    ▪ Pre-commercial thinning/commercial thinning.
- Landscape level analysis synthesis
  o Roll up stand-level effects for commercial thinning, how does that effect fire resiliency?
  o Interpretation and bringing to scale data that is already there.
- Clearcut system? Is it a part of SIP?
- Extension – quick wins:
  o Technical world.
  o Public facing and engaging with public.
    ▪ Good fire.
    ▪ Resilient landscapes.
  o "Old tools, new ways" is the new t-shirt logo!
    ▪ Important on getting old stuff out right away.
  o Landscape scale
    ▪ Role of silviculture systems in promoting landscape resiliency.
  o Fire has affected working forests and post-fire disturbance.
  o Tenure
    ▪ Volume based tenures.
    ▪ How to insure people who have tenure already invested in the landbase to get on board beyond free growing
  o Leverage strategic partners.
  o Wildfire & stand level biodiversity.

Group Discussion
The following points were made by the group:
- Perhaps we need a data scientist to gather and become expert at the existing datasets?
  o Who's best positioned to do the synthesis?
- Parse apart the topics:

- o What are our capabilities?
- We need to get information out, but it needs to be thorough and robust:
  - o Knowledge symposium.
  - o Technical extension.
  - o Building capacity of groups.
  - o Define the existing tools and research.

Grant design discussion:
The following points were made by the group:
- Is the grant model the best model? Or is it worth building a program and then build a grant program in 5 years?
- Targeted grants on key topics to bring in other partners. Targeted call for proposals this fall. Focused on our strategic objectives.
- If you don't put an open call out, you reduce the people who are putting input in
- We need to clearly define what the program roll out looks like. This is our plan, this is where we are going to put the money – instead of putting a call for proposals out so soon.
- Grant for synthesis before the trials
- Progress in a program is having things moving forward, getting early and easy wins out the door.

Quick wins discussion:
The following represent a quick win brainstorm conducted by the group:
- Outreach to existing academic institutes (could be international).
- Highlight cases that are already doing innovative silviculture within old growth (extension)
- Extension person/team
  - o Academic institutions – grad students
    - ▪ Specific streams for grads
  - o Leverage what is already there
  - o Operational extension
  - o 2 within BVRC (Indigenous for sure)
    - ▪ Coproducing knowledge
    - ▪ Part of strategic decision making on grants that need to go out
- Website
  - o Existing relevant webinars
- Newsletter, blog, videos, prescribed fire website
- Webinar series that SIP hosts
- Strategic plan (all on a website)
- Knowledge working summit (spring)
- Hub lite
  - o Available for knowledge summit
- Build a research framework in a conceptual model that you want in 15 years to help guide future work.
- Presence at NSC or other conferences
  - o Calendar of key meeting and conferences on the website

Next steps:
The group defined these next steps:
- Ops Team gathering (Sept 14-15)
  - o Quick win assessment
- Come back with a quick win list in July.
- Work on strategic plan in the meantime

- Sub-group
- Ops team provide guidance to subgroup.
- BVRC internal capacity assessment
  - Synthesis
  - SIP Project Manager start to assign tasks.

Decisions

Based on this discussion, the following decisions were made by the Strategic Advisory Group as advice and recommendations for the Operations Team:

Decision 1: The Operations Team should hire 2 extension specialists within the BVRC.

Decision 2: Move forward with knowledge summit planning.

Based on this discussion, the following actions were assigned:

ACTION: Alana and Kira create the quick wins list, send out a list to SAG for advice and direction. This could take the form of a Google Survey.

ACTION: The Operations Team will meet in Kamloops on September 14 – 15.

ACTION: The SAG will join virtually on September 14th to discuss:
- **Strategic framework.**
- **Quick wins.**
- **Proposal for knowledge summit.**

ACTION: SIP Project Manager to calendar out important dates to avoid overlap as we plan the Knowledge Summit.

Day Two adjourned at 12:00 Noon.