



CDFCP Terms of Reference

Background

The Coastal Douglas-fir biogeoclimatic zone (CDF zone) is the smallest and most at risk zone in BC and is of conservation concern (Biodiversity BC, 2008). The CDF zone is home to the highest number of species and ecosystems at risk in BC, many of which are ranked globally as imperiled or critically imperiled (BC CDC, 2012). The global range of the CDF lies almost entirely within BC, underscoring both its global uniqueness and BC's responsibility for its conservation. Of all the zones in BC, the CDF has been most altered by human activities. Less than 1% of the CDF remains in old growth forests (Madrone, 2008) and 49% of the land base has been permanently converted by human activities (Hectares BC, 2010). The trend of deforestation and urbanization continues and has resulted in a natural area that is now highly fragmented with continuing threats to remaining natural systems. Approximately 9% of the CDF zone is protected in conservation areas (MFLNRO, 2011). The extent of disturbance combined with the low level of protection places the ecological integrity of the CDF zone at high risk (Holt, 2007).

In response to complaints to the Forest Practices Board related to logging of endangered plant communities on Crown Land in the CDF zone, the province of BC released its CDF Conservation Strategy in 2008. Along with the protection of an additional 1600 ha of CDF under a Land Use Order and completion of terrestrial ecosystem mapping for 80% of the zone (excluding CDF in Lower Mainland), the strategy included a commitment to raise awareness and promote CDF stewardship to private land owners, local governments, and environmental non-government organizations (ENGOS). Since 2010 the province has hosted a series of workshops to both share information and solicit ideas on how to better address CDF conservation issues on a land base with a unique land ownership pattern where approximately 80% of the CDF zone is private land, 9% is provincial crown land and 11% is owned by other levels of government. A growing awareness of these issues has resulted in an increased interest in stewardship amongst the people, organizations and governments in the CDF zone.

One of the highest priority recommendations, from the feedback received at the workshops since 2010, relates to the need for a more strategic and collaborative approach amongst those working on CDF conservation issues to identify shared priorities, reduce duplication of effort and share resources and information. Another recommendation was to include the Coastal Western Hemlock Eastern Very Dry Maritime (CWHxm1) variant in the discussion because of the transitional area between the two biogeoclimatic units, the anticipated changes in boundaries due to the effects of climate change, and in many areas, similar levels of loss and fragmentation to that of the CDF. A key difference between the CWHxm1 and the CDF is that the CWHxm1 is much broader in range in BC and extends into the Pacific Northwest of the USA.

With these recommendations in mind, an ad hoc group of representatives from various levels of government, community residents, and ENGOS have met since the fall of 2011. At a workshop in March 2012 attended by a wide range of organizations, governments, resource professionals and private citizens, the concept of a partnership was widely endorsed. One of the action items from the workshop



COASTAL DOUGLAS-FIR & ASSOCIATED ECOSYSTEMS CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP

was to task a small group to develop a DRAFT Terms of Reference (TOR) to be presented back to the larger audience by June, 2012. The workshop participants requested that the TOR address options for the group's name, its mandate and its geographic scope. The concept of the Coastal Douglas-fir and Associated Ecosystems Conservation Partnership (CDFCP) had been launched.

Purpose

The CDFCP is intended to be a forum for communication and collaboration regarding the maintenance and restoration of healthy Coastal Douglas-fir and Associated Ecosystems (CDFAE) (see map in Appendix A). The CDFCP recognizes the need for shared stewardship of CDFAE and will strive to focus resources collaboratively, strategically and transparently so as not to duplicate existing conservation efforts and to maximize conservation gains.

The CDFCP will strive to strategically address ongoing threats to CDFAE conservation due to growing human populations, development, and resource use through collaborative engagement of parties with the goal of raising awareness of conservation issues and promoting conservation objectives in a respectful manner.

The CDFCP will endeavour to support and explore synergies with its partners and will recognize existing conservation planning and initiatives and will endeavor to build upon, promote and support those initiatives whenever possible and incorporate existing plans into CDFCP outcomes. The Partnership will strive to not negatively impact a partner's ability to carry out their mandate.

The CDFCP recognizes the importance of basing decisions on the best available science and will provide an information sharing forum to disseminate information such as mapping resources and provide advice to support conservation initiatives occurring throughout the CDF and CWHxm1.

Conservation Partnership Composition, Roles and Responsibilities

Participants and Supporters:

The CDFCP will be an affiliation of a broad range of stakeholders who share a common focus on CDFAE conservation. It includes agencies and individuals that are interested in promoting and protecting healthy CDFAE into the future. Land trusts, government (federal, provincial, regional, local), environmental stewardship groups, resource industry professionals, First Nations, private landowners and academic institutions are encouraged to become CDFCP Participants or Supporters and are invited to participate in related working groups. Participants are affiliated with a government or organization whereas Supporters have no such affiliation.

Steering Committee:

The Steering Committee will consist of a maximum of 12 people, preferably with at least one, or possibly two, member from the various sectors listed in Table 1 who will serve as a working executive for the Conservation Partnership. The Steering Committee will be responsible for developing the overall



COASTAL DOUGLAS-FIR & ASSOCIATED ECOSYSTEMS CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP

approach of the Conservation Partnership and provide a forum for decision making which reflects the direction the Conservation Partnership chooses. The Steering Committee will be responsible for the day to day management of the Conservation Partnership as well as establishing Working Groups and will provide direction to them. Ideally, the Steering Committee will in part consist of Chairs and/or Co-Chairs of the various Working Groups. The Steering Committee and the Conservation Partnership will have no regulatory authority but will provide leadership, strategic guidance and assistance to partners through potential activities such as:

- Guiding development and implementation of plans and/or strategies.
- Recommending priorities.
- Engaging and providing advice to governments and local stakeholders.
- Securing funding where required.
- Providing and accessing specialized expertise.
- Facilitating the collection and dissemination of data and information.
- Facilitating public outreach and education.
- Supervising and directing the CDFCP Coordinator.

The potential composition of CDFCP Steering Committee (may be more than one representative per sector):

- Ministry of Environment
- Ministry of Natural Resource Operations
- Federal Government
- Local Government
- First Nation
- ENGO
- Resource Sector
- Academia
- Private Land Owner (member at large)

CDFCP Coordinator

The Conservation Partnership Coordinator is responsible for:

1. Coordinating meetings for the:
 - CDFCP Steering Committee,
 - CDFCP Working Groups,
2. Coordinating communications materials with direction and input from the Steering Committee;
3. Acting as a flow-through for information dissemination to CDFCP Participants and Supporters; and
4. Other activities outlined in the CDFCP Coordinator job description.

The Conservation Partnership Coordinator will report directly to the Chair(s) of the Steering Committee.



Working Groups:

Working Groups which report to the Steering Committee will be established to complete specific priority activities laid out in subsequent plans and/or strategies. Working groups will select Chairs or Co-chairs who will be responsible for guiding the group to carry out identified priority tasks and report back to the Steering committee.

A number of possible Working Groups have been discussed. These will need to be refined and approved by the stakeholders of the Conservation Partnership and Steering Committee. They include:

a) Restoration and Stewardship group

The Restoration and Stewardship Working Group will focus on active restoration of CDFAE as well as promoting stewardship of CDFAE through existing organizations and information sharing between organizations.

b) Science/Technical

The Science/Technical Working Group (STWG) will provide advice and data to the Conservation Partnership, the Steering Committee and Working Groups, based on the best available science and mapping. Where the STWG does not have the appropriate level of expertise in-house for a particular subject, it will consult with appropriate experts.

c) Local Government

Due to the overlap of objectives, the Local Government Working Group (LGWG) may consist of the same membership as and be associated with regional implementation of the Species and Ecosystems At Risk Local Government Working Group, and will respect the recommendations and TOR that guide that group, while also meeting the recommendations and TOR of the CDFCP.

d) Resource Sector

The Resource Sector Working Group (RSWG) will be associated with natural resource extraction industries active in CDFAE. The RSWG recognizes economic activities exist within CDFAE and are an important part of local economies. The RSWG will engage others in the resource sector to:

- raise awareness of CDFAE conservation issues
- increase awareness of the impacts of resource extraction activities on CDFAE
- develop and promote best management practices to reduce impacts on CDFAE
- seek ways to increase the compatibility of resource activity outcomes with CDFAE conservation objectives



COASTAL DOUGLAS-FIR & ASSOCIATED ECOSYSTEMS CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP

- explore and promote alternate economic opportunities that are more consistent with the CDFAE conservation objectives

e) Outreach and Education

The Outreach and Education Working Group (OEWG) is responsible for increasing awareness of CDFAE and CDFAE conservation issues as well as promoting CDFAE conservation objectives amongst all parties including the general public, all levels of government, CDFAE private landowners, First Nations and the Resource Sector.

f) Securement

The Securement Working Group (SWG) will consist of land trust organizations who will collaborate on land securement priorities for CDFAE and methods for land securement including conservation covenants, land donations, eco-gifts, land acquisition, Crown Land securement and other voluntary conservation methods. Representatives of this Group will liaise with the Land Securement Subcommittee of the Conservation Partners of BC.

Geographic Scope

The Geographic Scope of the CDFCP includes the CDF and CWHxm1 biogeoclimatic zone/subzones, featured on the map in Appendix A.

Operating Policies and Procedures

Meetings

- Regular meetings of the Steering Committee at a minimum of every 3 months.
- Meetings of the Conservation Partnership (open to the public) once a year.
- Meeting procedures by consensus of CDFCP members.
- Regular meeting dates established at start of the year.
- Other meeting dates at the call of the Co-Chairs.

Members who are unable to attend can be represented by an alternate or can provide their written input prior to a meeting or join via teleconference

Resource people or community representatives may be invited to attend specific meetings where their input would be of benefit

Decision-making

Consensus model as much as possible.



COASTAL DOUGLAS-FIR & ASSOCIATED ECOSYSTEMS CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP

If decision-making by consensus cannot be achieved, quorum for the decisions of the steering committee will be 50%+1 of active members.

Steering Committee members will be mindful and make best efforts to act in accordance with the following “Ground Rules”.

“Ground Rules”

Steering Committee members will:

- come well prepared to discuss issues.
- recognize concerns & interests of others, whether or not they agree with them.
- share discussion time, encourage full participation and search for common understanding.
- state their own views clearly, listen carefully to others, and explore issues fully before forming conclusions.
- work in a spirit of collective problem solving.
- communicate with respect and courtesy – no interrupting or side conversations.
- strive to reach consensus.
- support a decision, strategy or plan once it is adopted.

Communications outside Partnership

A spokesperson or spokespersons chosen by the Steering Committee may communicate on behalf of the CDFCP for the purposes of advancing a plan or strategy endorsed by the Conservation Partnership. In the absence of a plan or strategy, the spokesperson(s) may communicate on behalf of the CDFCP to provide support for conservation initiatives occurring within the CDFAE.

Participants can promote the Conservation Partnership but may not communicate on behalf of the Conservation Partnership without the approval of the Steering Committee. CDFCP participants will not use their participation in the CDFAE Conservation Partnership to advance their own interests without first consulting and receiving approval of the Steering Committee.

Funding

Funding will initially be secured through CDFCP participants. As the CDFCP matures, other funding models may be considered.

The Conservation Partnership will exist independently of operating and project funding. Where funds are sought, they will support the interests outlined in this Terms of Reference or will advance the goals and objectives of a CDFCP conservation plan or strategy. Where synergies exist, the Conservation Partnership will endeavour to seek funds that will also support its partners and wherever possible, fundraising for the CDFCP will be done in novel ways and efforts will be made to seek funds from



sources not available to partner groups. Members of the CDFCP participate on a voluntary basis and are not financially compensated for their time by the partnership. Steering Committee members may be reimbursed for travel costs in order to attend the face-to-face meetings or workshops if funds are available.

Short Term Outcomes

The Steering Committee, in collaboration with CDFCP Participants and Supporters and Working Groups will work to produce the following outcomes:

1. CDFCP Interim Budget: Within three months, the Steering Committee will complete an interim budget to define the financial resources required to implement the interim work plan, establish and resource priority working groups and hire a Conservation Partnership Coordinator.
2. CDFCP Interim Work Plan: Within three months, the Steering Committee will complete an interim work plan to guide its work prior to the adoption of a CDFCP Conservation Plan/Strategy. This interim plan will include:
 - A communications statement indicating how the Conservation Partnership will communicate with funders, the public, Conservation Partners and other agencies in absence of a CDFCP Conservation Plan/Strategy. Communications may include website development, indications of support to partners requesting endorsement of CDFCP related projects and CDFAE information materials.
 - Information on immediate action items and responsibilities of the CDFCP Working Groups
3. Establishment of CDFCP Working Groups: Within 6 months, the Steering Committee will establish the membership of the CDFCP Working Groups. Within one year, the CDFCP Working Groups will create their own Terms of Reference which will include information about:
 - Goals and objectives
 - Member responsibilities
 - Meeting frequency and attendance
 - Decision making
 - Communication within the working group, with other working groups, outside agencies and with the Steering Committee
4. CDFCP Coordinator: Within 6 months, the Steering Committee will create a job description and funding plan for a CDFCP Coordinator. Within one year, a Coordinator position will be funded and filled.
5. CDFCP Conservation Plan/Strategy: Within one year, the Steering Committee will complete a CDFCP Conservation Plan/Strategy that includes:
 - A vision statement
 - Conservation goals
 - Measureable targets
 - Assessment of threats
 - Recommended actions and lead agencies for the actions



COASTAL DOUGLAS-FIR & ASSOCIATED ECOSYSTEMS CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP

- Proposed budget and financing plan

The CDFCP Conservation Plan/Strategy will incorporate and recognize existing conservation plans and will not duplicate work that has already been done. CDFCP Participants and Supporters will be asked to provide input into the Plan/Strategy and endorse the CDFCP Conservation Plan/Strategy upon its completion.

6. Implementing the CDFCP Conservation Plan/Strategy: By the spring of 2014, the Conservation Partnership will begin implementing the Conservation Plan/Strategy through the Steering Committee in collaboration with the Working Groups.

Appendix A

