

Rio Tinto

Water Engagement Initiative

Main Table videoconference

Wednesday, September 16, 2020



Draft Agenda

- **Welcome, introductions, and agenda review (Kevin addition re: reservoir water levels)**
- **Discuss results from WEI participant survey**
- **Progress update on WEI-specific issues, interests, objectives, and performance measures**
 - Discuss three draft objectives and performance measures from WEI Table-identified issues
- **Discuss “working groups” to develop issue-specific recommendations**
- **Lunch break**

Agenda (2)

- **Water temperature management**
 - Presentation on current Rio Tinto operations related to water temperature
 - Discuss recent concerns and requests regarding water temperature
 - Discuss pathway forward to identify temperature issues, and develop alternative temperature management flow scenarios
- **Development of next meeting agenda**
- **Confirmation of next meeting dates and format**
- **Adjourn**

WEI participant activities

- **Emails**
- **News articles**
- **Letters**
- **The WEI is intended to be a vehicle to explore participant issues and develop solutions**
- **We have a established code of conduct and guiding principles**
- **Many different opinions and positions will be expressed**
- **As a group, we need to move from positions to interests to solutions, respectfully**

WEI ground rules: a reminder

1. Be respectful

2. Listen actively and be attentive

3. Try to understand other participant's perspectives, even if you disagree with them

4. Be collaborative

5. Focus on the future

WEI ground rules

6. Stay on topic and be concise

7. Give others a chance to speak

8. Turn off your electronics (during meetings)

9. Speak about your interests

10. Respect the facilitator's requests

WEI Guiding Principles

<https://www.getinvolvednechako.ca/7037/widgets/27362/documents/18050>

Section 4.2 Participants

- Throughout the WEI process, participants in the process will:
 - Share their knowledge and experience of the Nechako region
 - Participate in an open, inclusive and engaged manner with the goal of working collaboratively.

WEI Guiding Principles (2)

- **4.6 Transparency and Accountability**
- The WEI Process will be transparent. During the Process, efforts will be made to share information with the public, based on input from participants. It is envisioned that these could include:
 - Website posting of approved meeting summaries, which document discussions held, and decisions made.
 - Media can be used to share information about the process. The form of media used could include radio, television, print, or social media. The information content and form of media will be approved by participants prior to release. Rahul Ray will be the media spokesperson for the Table.

Results of WEI participant survey

- **16 responses to five open-ended questions received from WEI participants**
- **Actual responses (with no names) provided in the pre-meeting reading package**
- **I have tried to summarize the key themes based on my read, but you have the raw responses**
- **Please correct my interpretation if needed**

Question 1. With respect to the Water Engagement (WEI), what do you think has gone well? (13 responses)

Participant comments:

- **Good attendance by a diverse group**
- **Participants respectful and mostly seeking to learn and understand**
- **Scoping stage**
- **Honest dialog**
- **Good process design**
- **Excellent presentations**

Question 2. What do we need to improve? (14 responses)

Participant comment:

- Need to cross off issues where the evidence confirms we can (e.g. limited viability of large flushing flows, multiple aquatic components of healthy streams, timing of fertilizer application)**
- Improve functionality of Technical Working Group**
- Increased awareness of the decision process**
- Keep discussions within scope**

Question 2. What do we need to improve? (14 responses)

Participant comment themes:

- Need to define the true frame of reference for change. The river is not going back to the way it originally was**
- Develop a GANT chart/schedule to outline where we started, where we are and where we want to go**
- Pace is slower than hoped, but realize the issues are complex, and people are passionate**
- Stop the domination of the meetings by a few; need to hear from everyone**
- Need to clearly identify specific objectives**

Question 3. Are there areas we need to put more focus? (15 responses)

Participant comment themes:

- More water is not the complete solution to a healthy river. Need to incorporate landscape inputs from contributing second and third order watersheds**
- Need to keep focus on interests, goals, and performance criteria**
- Watershed planning that is within scope (identify gaps, identify watershed status, what data is needed to support this)**

Question 3. Are there areas we need to put more focus? (15 responses)

Participant comment themes:

- Develop a long-term defined relationship between Rio Tinto and the broader community, something they can trust will be in place after the process is complete, and that assures continuity of the engagement effort though of course in a modified or reduced way.**
- Need to build on science, and expert opinion on potential improvements**
- Remove non-practical options off the table as an option (e.g. a 1,400 cms flushing flow)**
- Need to better understand impacts to Indigenous communities**

Question 4. What are your measures of success for the WEI? (15 responses)

Participant comment themes:

- Living document with adaptive planning steps to answer the unanswered questions with science**
- Cohesive collaboration of Indigenous communities, regulators, various level of local and provincial government, non-government organizations, community members, and stakeholders coming together on a foundation of science to make improvements to the Nechako Reservoir and River systems.**
- Actual changes now, with a living moving dialog to invoke changes**

Question 4. What are your measures of success for the WEI? (15 responses)

Participant comment themes:

- **Addressing emergency flood situations**
- **Understanding of negative contributors of health, with efforts in place to mitigate the effects of Rio Tinto and other industry**
- **Reversing population declines in Nechako White Sturgeon and Chinook salmon**
- **Completion of the process**
- **Defining specific objectives, clear understanding of what Rio Tinto intends to do, the tone of the responses shifting to more hopeful/positive**
- **Formal agreement to manage the system well**

Question 4. What are your measures of success for the WEI? (15 responses)

Participant comment themes:

- **Qualitative measures of outcome satisfaction from majority of members**
- **“What my kids & grandkids will have to live with and not have to try and fix”**
- **Sound management that can adapt to climate change**

Question 4. What are your measures of success for the WEI? (15 responses)

Participant comment themes:

- **“Forward progress, new information, positive informed change/action, people feeling included in decisions/actions”**
- **Need to ensure the result is a healthier river**
- **Establishing a volume and flow pattern that benefits the river and all its life forms as determined by a truly independent body of experts**
- **A release facility at the dam is absolutely necessary to enable restoration of the Murray/Cheslatta system.**

Question 5. Are there any other comments you want to provide? (12 responses)

Participant comments:

- **Need for greater Indigenous community involvement**
- **Need for three presentations:**
 - **Nechako Environmental Enhancement Fund (NEEF)**
 - **Nechako Fisheries Conservation Program (NFCP)**
 - **Tahtsa Narrows**
- **This initiative should not be directed at past mistakes**
- **Let us work together to improve what is here**
- **Need to broaden discussion beyond fish**

Question 5. Are there any other comments you want to provide? (12 responses)

Participant comments:

- **“everyone is required to maintain an open mind about understanding all points of view and learn from this experience.”**
- **“I am happy to be a part of this process & find great value in it.”**
- **“Time is of the essence.”**

Meeting 12 Action items

- **ACTION ITEM:** Rio Tinto to investigate approach to provide reservoir management information when Reservoir levels are nearing capacity.
- **Update:**
 - Refinements and increased frequency of Flow Facts made during the 2020 high reservoir level period
 - **Andrew to discuss current levels and projections**
 - Suggested inclusion in Flood Emergency Plan (Communication Working Group recommendation)

Meeting 12 Action items

- **ACTION ITEM:** Rio Tinto to look into why no response was provided to a participant through Flow Facts.
- **Update:**
 - This issue was addressed with the concerned participant during the last WEI Main Table meeting

Meeting 12 Action items

- **ACTION ITEM:** Rio Tinto team to look into the potential to monitor sediment or turbidity in the river.
- **Update:**
 - Northwest Hydraulics has a turbidity sensor in the Nechako River at Vanderhoof

Meeting 12 Action items

- **ACTION ITEM:** Rio Tinto to upload historical Flow Facts data (pre-2016) to the Get Involved Nechako Website.
- **Update:**
 - In progress. The data has been provided, with the website host revising the program used to present more historical data

Meeting 12 Action items

- **ACTION ITEM:** Rahul to resend web links on Big Bar slide.
- **Update:**
 - Big Bar update prepared by DFO sent on Tuesday, August 4, 2020
 - Dustin Snyder provided the link to the DFO Big Bar site, which was forwarded to the Main Table the same day on Tuesday, August 4, 2020

Meeting 12 Action items

- **ACTION ITEM:** TWG to request an update (or a presentation) from DFO on their initiatives and to develop a summary for the Main Table.
- **Update:**
 - Dan to provide summary of DFO salmon enhancement initiatives

Meeting 12 Action items

- **ACTION ITEM:** TWG to determine if data gaps exists with respect to Nautley, so that decision on changing flows can be made with certainty.
- **Update:**
 - Jayson and TWG to advance this investigation

Meeting 12 Action items

- **ACTION ITEM:** Rio Tinto to explore a central data centre that will provide links to provincial and federal data
- **Update:**
 - This action is in progress. Rio Tinto is exploring what already exists to avoid duplication

Meeting 12 Action items

- **ACTION ITEM:** Rio Tinto to provide presentation on how the system is managed under various conditions during high reservoir levels
- **Update:**
 - Rio Tinto to host an optional information session to explain their reservoir management system

Meeting 12 Action items

- **ACTION ITEM:** Improvements to Flow Facts to include: Adding Metric System units to the graphs
- **Update:**
 - Metric measurements added to Flow Facts

Meeting 12 Action items

- **ACTION ITEM:** Rahul to provide Gantt chart of the WEI process showing timelines and tasks
- **Update:**
 - Draft conceptual schedule has been developed

Meeting 12 Action items

- **ACTION ITEM:** TWG to develop draft Performance Measures and Objectives for flow related interests, which will be presented to the Main Table in the Fall
- **Update:**
 - Sample of draft objectives and performance measures to be presented and discussed today

Progress update on WEI-specific issues, interests, objectives, and performance measures

- **Structured Decision Making (SDM) review**
- **Backgrounder re-sent as part of the meeting reading package**

Structured Decision Making (SDM)

- **Structured Decision Making or SDM: organized approach to identify and evaluate creative options and make choices in complex decision situations**
- **designed to deliver insight about how well objectives are satisfied by potential alternative courses of action**
- **helps find 'win-win' solutions across groups, clarifies the trade-offs that may exist between alternate potential courses of action and helps to communicate how people view these various options**

SDM Process Overview

- **Scoping: understand Table issues and interests**
- **Develop objectives**
- **Identify performance measures**
- **Create alternatives**
- **Make trade-offs**
- **Select an alternative**
- **Implement alternative**

Structured Decision Making

- **Website:**

<http://www.structureddecisionmaking.org/>

- **Book:** Structured Decision Making: A Practical Guide to Environmental Management Choices, by R. Gregory, L. Failing et al.

- BC Hydro Water Use Plans:

https://www.bchydro.com/about/sustainability/conservation/water_use_planning.html

Structured Decision Making: Objectives

- **Objectives: fundamental interests that could be affected by a decision – “the things that matter” to people**
- **Consists of a verb that indicates the desired direction of a change**
- **Start building objectives**

Discuss draft objectives and performance measures from WEI Table-identified issues

- Jayson

Southside

- **Information gathering effort: Thursday, August 20 – 1 pm to 7 pm**
- **Wistaria Hall – Open house, but COVID protocols in effect**
- **Jason, Danielle, Lianne, Justus**
- **Information was on hand (maps, information sheets)**
- **9 Southsiders attended (WEI participants and non-participants)**

Interests Discussed

- Erosion
- Cattle/fences
- Wildlife
- Communications
- Rio Tinto Infrastructure
- Water pumps/intakes
- Fire preparedness
- Recreation
- Rio Tinto funding
- Water quality
- Run-off
- WEI Process
- Navigation/mapping
- Emergency response
- Reservoir access (boat launches)
- Fish
- Fish habitat

Topic-specific working groups

- **Interest in advancing specific elements within the WEI through Working Groups**
- **Similar to the Communication Working Group that meet twice earlier**
- **All working group recommendations will flow to the Main Table for review, revision, and then acceptance**
- **Working group proposal: Reservoir Working Group**

Proposal

- **Mid to late October**
- Meet with individuals and conduct site visits
- Spatially-linked record/photo information gathering
- Investigating fly-over/drone aerial images
- Upload information to Get Involved Nechako interactive map
- Build Southside “information package”, with everything compiled to date

Southside Next Steps

- **Early Nov:** Provide “information package” (interests, objectives, potential recommendations/options) to Southside “Working Group”
 - Recommendations/options to address interests may be:
 - Flow-related (SDM process)
 - Communications
 - Physical works
 - Research
 - Ongoing adaptive management structure/mechanism
- **Nov:** Working Group review Package
- **Late Nov:** Southside Workshop
- **Dec-Jan:** Finalize package and present to Main Table

Lunch

Water temperature management

- **Presentation on current Rio Tinto operations related to water temperature**
- **David Levy**

Water temperature management

- Discuss recent concerns and requests regarding water temperature

Water temperature management

- Discuss pathway forward to identify temperature issues, and develop alternative temperature management flow scenarios

Development of next meeting agenda

- **Ask the Main Table to help build the agenda for the next meeting**
- **Meeting format?**

- **Water temperature**
- **Chinook salmon**
- **Sockeye salmon**
- **Archeological sites (Murray-Cheslatta)**
- **Agriculture (including fence losses)**
- **Flood management**
- **Reservoir levels**
- **Erosion**
- **Sedimentation**
- **Fish entrainment**
- **Resident fish species**
- **Access to tributaries**
- **Murray-Cheslatta (flow, water release, restoration, etc.)**
- **Ramping rates**
- **Winter flows**
- **Accessibility of the river/reservoir**
- **Mental and physical health**
- **Other topics as needed**

Confirmation of next meeting dates

- **TWG meeting: Wednesday, September 30, 2020**
- **Main Table meeting: Wednesday, October 14, 2020**
- **TWG meeting: Wednesday, October 28, 2020**
- **Main Table meeting: Tuesday, November 10, 2020**
- **TWG meeting: Wednesday, November 25, 2020**
- **Main Table meeting: Wednesday, December 9, 2020**

Adjourn

- Thank you