

Rio Tinto

Water Engagement Initiative

Main Table videoconference

Meeting 15

Wednesday, December 9, 2020

10:00 am to 12:00 pm



Draft Agenda

- Action item review
- Technical Working Group (TWG) update
- Water Release Facility (WRF) update
- Communication improvement recommendations
- Southside Working Group update
- Main Table guidance on a WEI process update document
- Next Main Table meeting dates
- Proposed next meeting topics
- Adjourn

Meeting 14 Action items

- **ACTION ITEM:** Rahul to post the '87 and '97 Agreements on the Get Involved Nechako Website.
- **Update:** The agreements were already on the Get Involved Nechako website.
 - **1987 agreement:**
<https://www.getinvolvednechako.ca/7033/widgets/27307/documents/17958>
 - **1997 agreement:**
<https://www.getinvolvednechako.ca/7033/widgets/27307/documents/17959>

Meeting 14 Action items

- **ACTION ITEM:** Rahul to adjust the way the conceptual schedule is presented to make it more reader friendly.
- **Update:**
 - Reformatted conceptual schedule sent to WEI participants a part of the WEI Main Table 15 reading package on Wednesday, December 2, 2020
 - The schedule is in Microsoft Excel for easier viewing

Meeting 14 Action items

- **ACTION ITEM:** Andrew to provide another update on a potential Tahtsa Narrows dredge when information gathering efforts are complete
- **Update:**
 - Andrew will provide an update when additional information is compiled

Meeting 14 Action items

- **ACTION ITEM:** Rahul to work with Lyla to develop water flow change communication recommendations
- **Update:**
 - Some communication recommendations will be presented, discussed, and potentially approved today
 - More discussion is needed to address the issues raised by Lyla

Technical Working Group (TWG) update

- Jayson, as the TWG Coordinator, will provide a summary of the efforts being undertaken by the TWG
- The information presented will be summarized in the meeting summary

Water Release Facility (WRF) update

- Mike Robertson, Cheslatta Carrier Nation representative will provide an update on the WRF investigations that have been occurring
- Discussion points will be captured in the meeting summary

Communication improvements

- Intent is to outline improvements to communications related to Rio Tinto operations
- Formed Communication Working Group (CWG); two meetings
- CWG recommendations, supplemented by guidance at the Main Table are presented here for your review, revision, and confirmation
- Additional recommendations will flow from further discussion with agricultural interests

Communication improvements (2)

Overall guidance: “With the improvements directed through the Water Engagement Initiative (WEI), Table participants expect communication between Rio Tinto and interested parties to be:

- More collaborative: designed as an interactive partnership.
- Timely: where the information provided is useful for planning purposes and provides relevant information of upcoming changes.
- Inclusive: including local knowledge that exists in communities.”

Communication Recommendation 1: Flow Facts

- Prior to the WEI, Rio Tinto used the Nechako Flow Facts to communicate operational information. The weekly Flow Facts included information on:
 - reservoir level;
 - Skin Lake spillway discharge;
 - Nechako River flow at Vanderhoof;
 - precipitation during the past week
 - precipitation forecast for the week ahead; and,
 - links to reservoir elevation, Skins Lake spillway, Nechako River at Vanderhoof, snowpack, and real-time river data.

Communication recommendation 1: Flow Facts

- During the WEI process, improvements were made to Flow Facts
- Received positive feedback
- Additional improvements to Flow Facts have been identified, and will include:
 - additional historical data on the Flow Facts website; and,
 - increased advertising in the community outlining that the information supporting Flow Facts can be obtained at any time from the Get Involved Nechako website.

Communication recommendation 1: Flow Facts

- Additionally, Rio Tinto is investigating:
 - automated Flow Facts updates; and,
 - automated flow projections.

Communication recommendation 1 for Table review, revision, and approval: WEI Table members support the information currently included in Flow Facts and support the additional improvements identified above.

Communication recommendation 2: Flood Emergency Planning

- During the WEI, participants recommended that Rio Tinto develop a Flood Emergency Plan (FEP). The overall intent is to:
 - outline the procedures to be followed when the likelihood of a flood is increasing;
 - confirm communication procedures;
 - identify roles and responsibilities; and,
 - outline opportunities for continual improvement.

Communication recommendation 2: Flood Emergency Planning

- Preliminary FEP components were identified as including:
 - identification of triggers for the activation of the FEP;
 - confirmation of communication mechanisms to be used to alert interested parties of emerging flood issues, such as social media, telephone calls, community postings, text messages and/or emails;
 - identification of processes used to update contact information for those with roles in the FEP

Communication recommendation 2: Flood Emergency Planning

- contact information for Indigenous communities and stakeholders who will receive the information;
- contact information for Rio Tinto emergency coordination representatives; and,
- the system to be used to keep contact information current.

Recommendation for Table review, revision, and approval: Rio Tinto representatives to initiate scoping efforts, conceptual design, and engagement regarding the FEP.

Communication recommendation 3: Team member awareness and communication efficiency

- WEI participants identified need for increased familiarity between Rio Tinto team members and representatives from municipalities, regional districts, and Indigenous communities that have roles that interact with Rio Tinto operations
- Rio Tinto currently holds face-to-face meetings with a range of groups on an annual basis

Communication recommendation 3: Team member awareness and communication efficiency

- **Recommendation for Table review, revision, and approval:** Rio Tinto to expand the list of municipal, regional district, and Indigenous communities to meet with on a defined basis to discuss Rio Tinto operations and relevant personnel. Rio Tinto to make information about their representative broadly available, e.g. this should be digital and posted in various locations and revised as personnel change.

Communication recommendation 4: Maintain “Get Involved Nechako Website

- Interests were expressed in having relevant and timely information about Rio Tinto operations
- WEI participants recommended the maintenance of the Get Involved Nechako website:
<https://www.getinvolvednechako.ca/>
- **Recommendation for Table review, revision, and approval:** Rio Tinto to actively maintain the Get Involved Nechako website as an informational tool throughout and after the completion of the WEI.

Additional communication improvements

- Agricultural communication challenges to address:
 - Sufficient notification of water releases (ideally 7 to 10 days)
 - Need for seasonal schedule
 - Confirm most efficient communication mechanism
 - In-person meetings
- Key considerations relate to: irrigation schedules, haying times, fencing to control cattle or replacement of fences after the water has gone down

Southside update

- Jason Collier, WEI facilitation team member, will provide an update on efforts that have and will be taken to understand and hopefully address a subset of Southside interests

WEI process update

- Looking to provide a public WEI process update in January
- Seeking your input on the topics to include and tone of the communication
- Propose to build on the responses received through the WEI Survey, and shaped by your input

WEI process update: Proposed contents

- Introduction and intent of the WEI
- Get Involved Nechako website
- Participants (municipal, regional district, Province of BC, DFO, some Indigenous communities, public participants, Rio Tinto)
- Use of Structured Decision Making (SDM), relationship to BC Hydro Water Use Plans
- Process to date: Meetings to date (in person, virtual due to COVID); presentations; introduction issues identification

WEI process update: Proposed contents

- Technical Working Group (TWG): role, composition, focus, activities
- Scenario building
- Scenario analysis
- Southside Working Group
- Engagement
- Implementation
- Adaptive management

Key themes (based on WEI Participant Survey)

- Good attendance and engagement by a diverse group
- Useful presentations
- Pace is slower than hoped, but realize the issues are complex, and people are passionate
- Trying to build practical solutions
- Living document and management with adaptive planning steps to answer the unanswered questions with science
- Long-term commitment needed

Proposed WEI Main Table meeting dates

- Main Table meeting: Wednesday, February 10, 2020

Proposed February agenda topics

- TWG update
- Southside Working Group recommendations
- Adaptive management structures
- Climate change research initiative presentation (Dr. Stephen Dery)
- Province of BC land use planning initiative overview
- Nechako White Sturgeon Recovery Initiative (NWSRI) update

Adjourn

Thank you