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CFAR Conference 2010

Interactive Workshop: Building Strong Relations through Effective Community Engagement by Jeff Cook

As Aboriginal communities continue to build long-term community self-reliance through the control and management of land use, land use planning is benefiting Aboriginal communities in numerous ways by helping to: negotiate treaties and specific land claims, protect and manage natural resources, capture economic development, design sustainable housing and infrastructure, strengthen cultural identity and values, improve social relations, and increase local capacity.

At the heart of land use planning and management, is the opportunity and ability to meaningfully engage citizens, communities, agencies, governments and businesses across a broad spectrum of needs and preferences - in ways that build long-lasting relationships that are culturally appropriate, mutually respectful and broadly beneficial.

This one hour interactive planning session will engage participants in a dialogue to identify methods, tools and techniques that inspire meaningful community engagement and outcomes. The dialogue will be guided by questions such as: 1) How can we empower and support Aboriginal communities to better serve their land use planning and management needs?; 2) What are the innovative opportunities that external agencies, governments and industry can engage Aboriginal communities? ; and 3) How can we create meaningful partnerships that are mutually beneficial?

Participant Results

Three sessions were facilitated during the two day conference. Participants were asked to self-select a station and choose or develop a question that was of particular interest to them. The following table summarizes what participants shared in the small group break-out exercise. In total, there were 15 groups that participated. Results are grouped by question for easy reference and comparison.

<p>Day 1: Morning Station 1: Question 1</p> <p>What is effective community engagement? What would tell you that you have achieved successful community engagement with Aboriginal communities?</p>	<p>Day 2: Morning Station 1: Question 1</p> <p>What is effective community engagement? What would tell you that you have achieved successful community engagement with Aboriginal communities?</p>	<p>Day 1: Morning Station 1: Question 1</p> <p>What is effective community engagement? What would tell you that you have achieved successful community engagement with Aboriginal communities?</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two way dialogue • Understand knowledge difference • Understand protocols • Having a vehicle to understand • Trust • Relationship Building • Personal touch – good neighbour policy <p>Successful Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal invites • Adoption to a community • Instead of a handshake, a hug • Standing on common ground • First name basis • Share in celebrations/ceremony • Open invitation to community • Coming together and mutual understanding and agreement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the ground • Personal agreement • Sustainability in light of difficult situations/conversations • Informed decision-making • Local liaison • Protocol – knowing who to approach and how to approach • Mutual engagement / two way conversation • Conversational flexibility while still maintaining focus • Expectation management • Listen and learn rapport • Recognize, understand and work with community from a holistic perspective • Participation in community daily life (eating meals) • Use of GIS or similar technology to facilitate conversation and interactive tools • Walking the land and discussing issues on site • Incorporate information received into a database and GIS type technology to reflect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community response – openness to outcomes • Consider all factors – capacity, culture and rights • Relationship growth – outside of objectives • Entire stakeholder involvement – meaningful outcomes, genuine, defined intention • Multiple and numerous positions and opinions = compromise if necessary • Flexibility – timelines, agendas, outcomes, attitude • Respectful communication: limit contact, avoid borderline harassment <p>Successful Engagement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness to participate, communicate, respond, build relationships in future • Have a mutually beneficial agreement at the end of the day (Community – culture, rights, interests, economic wealth, environment; Industry –

	<p>back to community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with communities to help document and preserve traditions Identify funding/fundraising opportunities to benefit the community Follow-up: continued engagement must accompany community financial investment 	<p>expectations met, project goals, sustained relationship)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of legal intervention is a risk for industry Endorsement of project by community Long-term success of company outside of the community (e.g. leaders, speakers, employee turnover <p>Community reception and attitude to new ideas and staff</p>
<p>Day 1: Afternoon Station 1: Question 1</p> <p>What is effective community engagement? What would tell you that you have achieved successful community engagement with Aboriginal communities?</p>	<p>Day 1: Morning Station 1: Question 2</p> <p>What tools, methods, techniques can help to create and sustain meaningful relationships partnerships that are mutually beneficial? What tools, methods or techniques can Aboriginal communities, Industry or Government share with one another?</p>	<p>Day 1: Morning Station 1: Question 2</p> <p>What tools, methods, techniques can help to create and sustain meaningful relationships partnerships that are mutually beneficial? What tools, methods or techniques can Aboriginal communities, Industry or Government share with one another?</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing communication Create trust Full participation with the community Create relationships Be clear with what you do Each party must do what they say Be transparent and ensure continuity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Round Table discussion Inclusive invites to all Big enough facility Timely – ample notice Earlier the better Find out about area Build baseline relationship Protocols established 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mutual respect Time investment Informal Engagement Meet at the site that created the most effective dialogue Clarity and transparency Youth engagement Education – commence in formative years (teens) Capacity Employment

<p>Day 1: Morning Station 2: Question 1</p> <p>What does a strong and successful relationship /partnership (e.g. between Aboriginal and Industry or Government) look like? What would tell you that your relationships/partnership is working well and successful?</p>	<p>Day 1: Afternoon Station 2: Question 1</p> <p>What does a strong and successful relationship /partnership (e.g. between Aboriginal and Industry or Government) look like? What would tell you that your relationships/partnership is working well and successful?</p>	<p>Day 1: Afternoon Station 2: Question 1</p> <p>What does a strong and successful relationship /partnership (e.g. between Aboriginal and Industry or Government) look like? What would tell you that your relationships/partnership is working well and successful?</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look forward to meeting with partner • Win/ win (i.e. where both parties are satisfied) • Coming forward with honest and open intentions • Not just meeting when one party needs something • Having a casual friendship based on relationship • Partnerships and relationships are different (need relationship to build partnership) • Understanding each other's goals and objectives – what are the interests of parties involved. • Must be long-lasting relationships • Understand the complex nature of both parties • Understand each parties different definitions of concepts (i.e. rights) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to communicate • Amount of informal communication and comfort level • Trust between community and industry and government • Meaningful knowledge between both parties • Honest, straight forward dialogue • Measurable outcomes • Trade-offs • Consistency over time - internal and external 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular , ongoing informal and formal communication (two - way) • Equality amongst participants – willingness to listen, understand and work together (open minded and transparent) • Put yourself in others' shoes • Trust and mutual respect • Follow-through on commitments and ownership (honesty and integrity) • Continued dialogue and mutual results achieved - reflective of opinions/concerns and objectives of all participants • May not have consensus but mutual respect is beneficial • Have clear goals and objectives • Close the loop – did we achieve the goals, objectives and purpose that was established early on?

<p style="text-align: center;">Day 2: Morning Station 2: Questions 1</p> <p>What does a strong and successful relationship /partnership (e.g. between Aboriginal and Industry or Government) look like? What would tell you that your relationships/partnership is working well and successful?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Day 1: Morning Station 3: Question 1</p> <p>How can we empower and support Aboriginal communities to better serve their land use planning and management needs?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Day 1: Afternoon Station 3: Question 1</p> <p>How can we empower and support Aboriginal communities to better serve their land use planning and management needs?</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect • Think of the future • Don't develop expectations • Actions taken by both / all parties • Aboriginal communities and industry to lobby government • Clear understanding of perspectives • Define assumptions • Help community educate themselves • Have candid, open conversations • Trust • Listening • Repeated points = frustration • Open communication • Have social activities • Engage one another • Share values and interests • Develop understanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dollars – funding • Internal training • Cohesion with executive management • Right people at the table • More face time • Need more information and tools • Technical support • Balance of responsibility • Long-term planning (5 years) • Collaborative process • Recognition • Desire of relationship and understanding • Build rapport, share time • Priorities – relationship • Trust • Land use policies /MAP • Early engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have tools (GPS/GIS to map lands and uses of these lands) • Conduct interviews to gather traditional land use from Elders • Create a land use plan • Develop map base system to address racism • Get government to fund FN land use planning, development and capacity building

<p style="text-align: center;">Day 2: Morning Station 3: Question 1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">How can we empower and support Aboriginal communities to better serve their land use planning and management needs?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Day 1: Afternoon Station 1: Question 2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">What are the innovative ways and opportunities that external groups and agencies can engage Aboriginal communities?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Day 1: Afternoon Station 3: Question 2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">How can land use planning processes be designed in ways to meaningfully engage Aboriginal communities and citizens?</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding for experts, honorarium, field costs, salaried positions • Technical support = experts • Community involvement – educate community • Cross-cultural awareness for proponent • Timing – produce schedules that reflect seasonal opportunity • Build good relationships – no one is leaving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take group out on the land and practice traditional activities • Get exposure to an active project in another location • Undertake joint land use research (Parks biophysical research) • Job sharing exchange • Cultural sharing in the Park • Use of modern technology • Go to the community without an agenda – more of a friendly visit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early engagement in the conceptual phase • Aboriginal people should design their own process • Find out what is the cultural / traditional background of the community • Determine what are the resources within the community • Use simple terms so that community people can understand and interpret to the local language (K.I.S.S) • A process has to be set up within the community to have fair presentation on the Land Use Framework. • Aboriginal people may be outnumbered when it comes to the voting process. • Identify key people in the community • Identify and recognize capacity within the community to handle a large amount of information, projects etc.

Jeff Cook, M.A.P

Jeff Cook is the Principal of Beringia Community Planning Inc., a dynamic, participatory-based planning organization specializing in First Nations strategic & comprehensive community planning (CCP), as well as sector and project based planning in areas of socio-economic development, land use, housing & infrastructure, health & wellness, governance, and cultural tourism. With 19 years of experience, Jeff brings a fresh and innovative approach to community planning practice. He emphasizes long-lasting planning relationships based on trust, respect, social inclusion, friendship, transformative learning, capacity development and fun.

To compliment Jeff's community experience, he completed a Master's Degree in Community and Regional Planning from UBC in 2002. Jeff is especially known for his expertise in CCP, evidenced by his ongoing commitment to community facilitation and CCP training, national and provincial planning awards, CCP conference design and lead facilitation, international speaking engagements, and various research initiatives including two articles in *Plan Canada* and his recent reports: *Gaining Momentum: Sharing 96 Best Practices of First Nations Comprehensive Community Planning (2009)*; and *Land Use Planning Coordinator Training Program: Planning Curriculum and Tools for Aboriginal Communities (2009)*.