

# On the path to success

The Non-Timber Forest Products Network of Canada



Growing an active and influential organization for the sustainable development of the non-timber forest products sector in Canada

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## Message from the Centre for Non-Timber Resources

Beginning in the 1990's, it became apparent to many working in the non-timber forest products (NTFP) sector that interest in, and recognition of the sector was growing across Canada. Workshops were held, research projects and publications were supported, and training materials were developed. Recognition of the sector continued to grow, both among the public and within government – although to this day the sector is not always recognized as a 'legitimate' part of forest resource management.

Against this backdrop of growing interest and increasing activity, no mechanism existed to effectively share the knowledge and the 'lessons learned' about NTFP development and management in Canada. Many of those working on NTFP initiatives continue to work in relative isolation, unable to properly benefit and learn from research and development initiatives that have occurred elsewhere in the country. Many also continue to struggle for recognition for the sector with agencies that make policy and establish funding priorities that have a direct impact on the sector. For those working with NTFPs – as businesses, researchers, community development workers, etc. – it has become clear that we require new approaches to collaborate on research, market and product development, training, and other key areas. The NTFP Network concept developed from the recognition that by working together more effectively, we can avoid duplication in effort, learn from other researchers and practitioners, and do much more to enable the NTFP sector to reach its potential for delivering significant benefits to rural and often remote communities.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the efforts of a number of individuals who continue to believe in the potential of the NTFP sector to deliver real benefits (economic and otherwise) in communities across Canada. Many of these individuals – though not all – are recognized on the next page. I would also like to acknowledge the efforts of Holly Caine, who did much of the work of taking a broad and sometimes disparate range of responses from interested parties across the country and turning them into a coherent and very useful document for the future development of the Network.

This plan and the discussions that have taken place to date are only a starting point. Please join us in taking the next steps in the creation of an active and influential organization that will provide real value to the many stakeholders in this sector across Canada.

Tim Brigham

Coordinator, Education and Capacity Building  
Centre for Non-Timber Resources  
Royal Roads University  
<http://cntr.royalroads.ca/>

## Advisory Team

The following Advisory Team voluntarily gave up their time to provide invaluable assistance, guidance and resources in the early development of the NTFP Network of Canada.

Province/Name	Affiliation
<b>British Columbia:</b>	
Tim Brigham	Centre for Non-Timber Resources, Royal Roads University
Evelyn Hamilton	BC Ministry of Forests and Range
Dan Adamson	Formerly with the McGregor Model Forest
<b>Alberta:</b>	
Donna Fleury	Alberta Agriculture
<b>Saskatchewan:</b>	
Gerry Ivanochko	Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food
Connie Kehler	Canadian Herb, Spice and Natural Health Products Coalition
Wanda Wolf	Saskatchewan Herb and Spice Association
Hayley Hessel	Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Saskatchewan
<b>Manitoba:</b>	
Dave Buck	Consultant; Past Manager, Northern Forest Diversification Centre
Rob Penner	University College of the North
Iain Davidson-Hunt	University of Manitoba
<b>Ontario:</b>	
Les Tabachuk	Canadian Wild Rice Mercantile
Sylvie Richard	Canadian Forest Service
Lorraine Rekmans	Formerly with the National Aboriginal Forestry Association
<b>Quebec:</b>	
Gerald Le Gal	Gourmet Sauvage; also Association pour la commercialisation des champignons forestiers
<b>New Brunswick:</b>	
Stewart Cameron	Canadian Forest Service

Special thanks to Natural Resources Canada for supporting the initial launch of the Network's website (<http://ntfpnetwork.ca/>) and funding the consultative process to assist in the development of the Network's strategic plan.

## **Who we are**

The Network is a partnership of individuals, communities, businesses, organizations, agencies, and others concerned with the sustainable and ethical development of the non-timber forest products sector in Canada. Our aim is to enhance the ability of communities, researchers, resource managers, policy makers, economic development specialists and others to develop expertise, share knowledge, make informed decisions, and ultimately, work together more effectively to develop and manage these resources for the benefit of communities across Canada.

## **What are Non-Timber Forest Products?**

Non-timber forest products (NTFPs) are defined as the botanical and mycological resources and associated services of forests and under-utilized lands other than timber, pulpwood, shakes, or other conventional wood products or agricultural products. Examples of NTFPs include foods such as wild mushrooms and berries, medicinal herbs, and a wide range of other products such as decorative greenery harvested from managed and unmanaged forests, under-utilized agricultural lands, and agroforestry systems. Many NTFPs are wild harvested, but there is significant potential – and in some cases, need – to practice deliberate management of these resources as is emerging on a limited scale in different parts of the country. Products such as wild blueberries, maple and birch trees for syrup production, and fiddlehead ferns are examples of products that are currently subject to some level of more intensive management in Canada.

NTFPs have the potential to play an increasingly important role in rural economic development as domestic and international consumers become aware of the rich variety of goods that forests have to offer - from natural health products, wild foods, and floral products to First Nations art, and cultural and eco-experiences.

## **Why do we need a NTFP Network in Canada?**

There are dozens of research programs, community development projects, and other initiatives involving NTFPs currently underway across Canada. Many operate in isolation with few opportunities to benefit and learn from research and development initiatives that have occurred elsewhere in the country.

The idea of the Network grew out of the recognition that by working together more effectively, we can avoid duplication in effort, learn from other researchers and practitioners, and do much more to develop this sector for the benefit of resource dependent communities. There is currently no mechanism to effectively share knowledge and the 'lessons learned' about NTFP development and management. Those working on NTFP initiatives also continue to struggle for recognition for the sector with agencies that make policy, establish funding priorities, and engage in other activities that directly impact the NTFP sector. It is clear that we require new approaches to collaborate on research, market and product development, training, and

other key areas if the industry is to reach its potential for delivering significant benefits to rural, remote and sometimes marginalized communities.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### ***Vision***

The Network supports the development of a socially, ecologically, and economically sustainable non-timber forest product sector across Canada that acknowledges and respects First Nations culture, rights and traditional territories. We envision a vibrant and diverse sector that will provide opportunities for communities across Canada, including those that can be described as rural and remote.

### ***Mission***

The Network will share information about research, initiatives and issues related to the NTFP sector. We intend to build a network of individuals, researchers, businesses, organizations, First Nations and those concerned with the sustainable management and appropriate development of NTFP resources. Through our members and partnerships, we hope to realize the goal of a sustainable, equitable and vibrant NTFP sector that respects cultural values while providing economic opportunities for resource dependant communities.

### ***Aim***

We will provide a web-based forum for communities, researchers, resource managers, policy makers, economic development specialists and others to share knowledge, develop expertise, and work together more effectively. By providing this essential communications link across Canada, the Network will benefit the sector by combining efforts and providing a collective voice to the public, government, and the market place.

### ***Core Values***

We believe that these fundamental core values are essential for the NTFP sector in Canada to realize the goals of sustainability, diversity, and social responsibility:

- An ecologically and commercially sustainable and ethical non-timber forest products sector in Canada
- utilization of NTFP resources for the expansion of opportunities and economic benefits in communities across Canada
- respect for and recognition of aboriginal culture, rights, and traditional territories
- stewardship of all forest resources as well as land, air, and water

## **ORGANIZATION SUMMARY**

The Network will develop its organizational framework over time and at a rate that reflects available resources. The Network will begin with a volunteer core group and, as resources become available, will develop into a value-based organization that serves its members and supports the needs of the NTFP sector across Canada.

### ***Legal Entity***

Over the long term, the NTFP Network of Canada would best serve its members, partners and sponsors as a federally incorporated society (not-for-profit). This structure would enable the Network to be registered as a national organization with representatives from the provinces. Organizationally, it would have a board of directors and could be structured for association membership; it would also have the opportunity to be registered as a charity to benefit sponsors through their donations. As a federal entity, the Network would have the potential to be the umbrella organization to support emerging regional industry associations at the provincial level and have the ability to seek funding under its own name.

## **STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION SUMMARY**

The idea of the Network grew out of the recognition that by working together more effectively, the NTFP sector can better share information, avoid duplication in effort, and do much more to develop a sustainable, equitable and vibrant NTFP sector. There are many steps in the process of developing a viable organization – taking it from an idea through to a legal entity. This initial developmental step for many not-for-profit organizations is made up of two key ingredients: human resources and monetary resources.

In order to champion the first stage of development, the Network will require a core group of three to five committed individuals to address the developmental needs of the organization and to actively pursue the resources that are needed to move the Network forward in its progression. This core group will be instrumental in finalizing the strategic plan, initializing key objectives and prioritizing long term goals.

Once funding requirements have been assessed and adequate support is in place, the Network can then begin the process of incorporating into a federally registered society. Over the long term, this governance structure best supports the Network as it enables the core group to expand into a formalized board of directors. With a formal board in place, the Network will reap the benefits of additional people resources and expertise. As a registered association, the Network will also have the ability to generate annual revenue from association membership and seek funding under its own name through initiatives and sponsorships.

To support the strategic planning of the board and the basic administration needs of the Network, a paid staff position will be required to take on the basic work tasks that a fledgling organization requires in its day to day operations. This paid position is critical

to the longevity of the Network and carrying out the internal and external communication goals that are needed to keep the NTFP sector informed and engaged.

Through the external communication activities of the Network, the NTFP sector will begin to see value in the organization's efforts and its proven ability to achieve goals that are based on the needs of the sector. This in turn will lead to a greater membership potential with annual revenue that can contribute to the on-going operations of the Network. Over the long-term, the Network needs to focus on becoming a largely self-sustaining organization with core activities ideally supported by the NTFP sector.

### ***Current Objectives***

The Network will share information about initiatives and issues related to the NTFP sector, focusing on Canada but recognizing the potential value of international information. Over time, we intend to populate our website with reports from all jurisdictions to help us both share information as well as build a network of individuals, businesses, organizations, and others concerned with the sustainable management and appropriate development of these resources.

The Network will play an important support role in the on-going development of the non-timber forest products industry in Canada. We recognize the need for the best utilization of our present resources by focussing the Network's initial efforts on the following key objectives:

1. Provide and maintain a web-based forum for NTFP stakeholders to access and exchange current information and ideas.
2. Foster strategic partnerships to support current objectives and long-term goals.
3. Promote a focused, coordinated approach to NTFP applied research for the benefit of the sector.
4. Develop opportunities for the delivery of outreach information sessions and training support in resource dependent communities across Canada.

### ***Long Term Goals:***

#### **Research**

- Act as a link between practitioners and the research community to promote practical, applied research.
- Provide direction from industry to the research community to help avoid duplication and ensure research is focused on meeting industry needs.
- Ensure research results reach those who can benefit from them.

## **Capacity Building**

- Collaborate on the development and delivery of education and training to support the development of the sector at all levels, including business mentoring services for new entrepreneurs.
- Create a 'learning community' – focusing on a set of problems and bringing people together that actually are physically involved in that sector to address problems over the long term.
- Facilitate mentoring/extension services through linkages between 'experts' and interested parties.

## **Networking Advocacy**

- Ensure there is a voice for the NTFP sector to all levels of government.
- Encourage and support proactive dialogue between industry and government.
- Ensure broad and inclusive participation in policy decisions that influence the sector.
- Protect the interests of the sector by advocating for legislative changes.

## **Marketing**

- Build awareness and understanding of the importance and benefits of NTFPs to the public, governments and the market place.
- Collaborate on industry promotion and market development including joint marketing initiatives.
- Explore the potential to 'brand' products produced under commonly applied standards.

## **Policy Action**

- Assist in the development of commonly applied standards for the sector.
- Support the development of practical mechanisms to help address issues around Aboriginal rights, traditional knowledge and intellectual property/access and benefit sharing.
- Promote recognition of holistic forest management – “forests are much more than a source of timber” – influencing decision-making about resource management.
- Champion legislative changes with the potential to positively impact the sector.
- Work collaboratively with other industry organizations that are influencing policy and decision making in complimentary sectors such as: agroforestry, functional foods and natural health care.

## **STEPS TO SUCCESS**

The following four steps will move the Network forward in its development. These steps can be started by the core group and can be worked on with minimum funding.

### ***Step 1) Core group/board development***

**Focus** - This group will be responsible for seeing the initial planning process through to completion. The expertise of this group will lend a diversity of skills and resources that will move the Network from strategic planning forward to accomplishment of objectives. Developing the Network will require a committed group to champion the process of initial development, be responsible for defining roles and responsibilities, keeping resources focussed on key objectives, and maintaining the values of the organization.

### ***Step 2) Provincial representation***

**Focus** - The Network will need to reach out to potential representatives from each of the provinces and territories to capture a true 'national' identity. Recruitment must also focus on ensuring participation by all the various stakeholder groups represented in the sector (i.e., academics, business, NGO, government, etc.), keeping in mind that the Network is not strictly a research organization, marketing service, or other single focus entity. Through provincial membership, the Network has the opportunity to support emerging industry associations at the regional level, while advocating for Federal policy and legislative support. To create a truly national organization, the Network must address the need for as high a level of bilingual content as is realistic. Clearly, not all materials will be available in both official languages. However, the Network recognizes that a commitment to providing access, where practical, to materials in French and English is important in creating a network of value across the country.

### ***Step 3) Branding the network***

**Focus** - The Network will need to brand itself by developing a clear identity and governance structure. The vision, mission and core values should be inclusive of the feedback that NTFP stakeholders have voiced through the Mission and Objectives Survey<sup>1</sup>. By listening to stakeholders and reflecting their valuable comments and insights into the strategic planning process, the Network can demonstrate that it is listening to the needs of the sector and working collaboratively within the sector. By conveying a consistent message to its members, the public and potential partners the Network will develop a solid identity for the sector across Canada. The governance structure will need to support the needs of the sector now and well into the future, so exploring a federally incorporated society structure would be most appropriate. The board should adopt a governance model that reflects the Network's core values and enables it to achieve its objectives.

### ***Step 4) Partnership engagement***

**Focus** – The Network is a partnership open to all NTFP stakeholders who are concerned with the development of products and management of resources. It is

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<sup>1</sup> Mission and Objectives Survey is located in Appendix 1

paramount that the Network fosters relationships with other like-minded industry organizations to support shared project initiatives; these relationships need to be seen as complimentary and not competitive in nature. The Network will need to position itself as a “collaborative” partner that can work alongside other organizations with a win/win approach.

The Network does not have the people or monetary resources to “do it all”, so it will need to create innovative partnership opportunities to fulfill key objectives and activities. These opportunities should be directed towards individuals, businesses and organizations that do have the required expertise and resources to accomplish the tasks.

The Network will take a leading role towards fostering these valuable partnerships across the sector. These partnerships will support the key objectives that the Network has identified to support the long term development of the sector. The Network’s role should be based on realistic activities that can be successfully accomplished by a core group and eventually a board of directors. By promoting shared project initiatives through strategic partnerships, the Network’s role is not diluted, nor does it take on more work than there are resources to complete.

Through partnership agreements, the Network can maintain its core role, while participating in multiple partnership activities that support sector initiatives.

## **A promising future for the NTFP industry in Canada**

### ***Industry Analysis***

The NTFP market as a whole has shown rapid growth in the past two decades with increasing domestic and global demand for quality products. The Canadian Forest Service estimates the value of the industry could readily reach \$1 billion a year – based primarily in small, forest dependent communities. Non-timber forest products are a growing part of the forest industry in Canada: current sales of NTFPs, which include nutraceuticals, pharmaceuticals, ornamentals, crafts and industrial products, are at \$441 million and 0.7 percent of total forest production sales, but there is potential to increase this to \$1 billion and 1.7 percent respectively<sup>2</sup>. However, the real issue lies in the consumer’s ability to distinguish products that have been ethically produced and harvested with sustainable resource management practices. Currently, there are no commonly applied standards for the sector.

### ***The Market***

It is estimated that there is the potential to develop over 600 kinds of NTFPs in Canada; in the 1990s, it was estimated that over 200 species were being harvested commercially in British Columbia. Mushrooms represent an especially lucrative market, with 25 species that can be harvested commercially in Canada. Matsutake mushrooms, found in old-growth forests, have generated up to \$50 million annually to the economy of

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<sup>2</sup> Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) *Sustainable Development Strategy: Now and for the Future*.

British Columbia. The sector as a whole is estimated to contribute well over \$100 million per year to the BC economy. When cultural tourism activities related to NTFPs are taken into account, the economic impact of these resources on the provincial economy is even greater. NTFPs are increasingly being considered as an opportunity for diversification in communities impacted by downturns in other resource sectors. NTFPs are crucial to the economic development of many rural and Aboriginal communities, and some resources play an important role in Aboriginal culture. Eco-tourism represents the largest growth sector in today's tourism industry and contributes more than \$165 million annually to BC's economy<sup>3</sup>.

Functional food and health products, a number of which are or could be derived from NTFPs, are a growing industry in Canada and throughout the world. Rapid growth in the industry has been fueled by the increased understanding by consumers of the link between diet and improved health and longevity. According to Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, the Canadian industry is well positioned to become a world supplier of functional foods and health products. In 2001, the global industry value was estimated at \$56.6 billion and was expected to continue growth at a rapid pace. Target markets for functional foods and health products are strongest in the US, Europe, Japan and Canada<sup>4</sup>.

## **COMMUNICATIONS SUMMARY**

The Network's overall success will be measured on its ability to fulfill its major goal of sharing information and resources with the NTFP sector across Canada. It would benefit the Network to secure adequate funding to hire a seasoned communications consultant to develop a detailed and comprehensive communications plan. The guidance of a communications specialist will provide the board with the necessary strategies and tools that they will require as they embark on the mission and objectives of the Network.

### ***Needs Assessment***

Through the consultative process, the following communication needs have been identified by NTFP stakeholders:

- Adequate funding is required for the overall communication needs of the Network
- A repository of research and information portal to new developments that impact NTFP businesses and/or resource management
- Support and link provincial associations together as the sector develops
- A newsletter both in an electronic and hard copy format to mail out to members, partners and sponsors to keep them apprised of current events, activities and issues faced by the NTFP sector

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<sup>3</sup> Source: Wills and Lipsey, An Economic Strategy to Develop Non-Timber Forest Products and Services in British Columbia, Forest Renewal BC, 1999

<sup>4</sup> Agriculture and AgriFood Canada, 2006

- Collaborate on publications, NTFP business directories, linking websites, newsletters and industry bulletins.
- One or more paid staff to carry out internal and external communications and work tasks
- Pickers and harvesters may be difficult to reach electronically, so mail outs are needed

## ***Building Strategies***

### **Internal**

- For the core group, board and staff person: monthly or bi-monthly conference calls combined with annual (or as resources allow) in-person meetings in rotating locations across Canada
- Employ a Network administrator to deal promptly with paperwork and details
- Video/teleconferencing for core group, supported by frequent group emails appraising all members of progress and developments
- Explore a national digital conferencing system

### **External**

#### **Resources**

- Secure adequate funding
- Hire a communications consultant
- Hire one or two paid positions to carry out communications strategies

#### **Outreach**

- Provincial reps send out brochures to businesses, research groups and government reps in their region
- Link the website to regional buyers/sellers directories
- The board would work to create awareness in communities and organizations across Canada and to convey the importance and benefits of the organized development of the NTFP sector
- Travelling road show over a period of months, equipped with PowerPoint presentations developed for communities, funding organizations, government and potential partners
- Organize an national conference, seeking support from existing industries within Canada
- Utilize member's outreach through word of mouth, mailing lists and open invitations
- Have a booth at national and international trade shows with promotional materials and links to businesses that are part of the Network

### **Website**

- Continue the development of the Network's website (<http://ntfpnetwork.ca/>) and keep it up to date with regional and national initiatives
- Maintain a list of all NTFP research projects and relevant industry papers
- Key words optimized on website for NTFP search engines
- Link website to other forestry and botanical associations

### **Newsletter/Annual Report**

- Have a newsletter that is electronic on the website and mailed out to members and stakeholders
- Produce an annual report that is available on the website and mailed out to members

### **Linking**

- Promote the Network on the FAO Non-Wood News list serve
- Set up email list serve and partner with environmental organizations to send information out to their members
- Link producers, brokers and buyers so industry members can see concrete benefits from belonging to the Network
- Link to other organizations: woodlot owner coops, maple sugar producers association, forest tree improvement coops, Christmas tree grower associations, Canada yew association, Eco Trust, etc

## **FUND RAISING SUMMARY**

The Network's fund raising efforts should include a short term strategy for infrastructure development support and a long term strategy for self sustainability of the organization.

### ***Short term strategy:***

To assist the Network in its infrastructure development, the core group or board will be required to explore various resources such as regional economic development funding initiatives, industry sponsored initiatives and federal government grants.

### ***Long term strategy:***

Once the Network is federally registered as a not-for-profit association, it will be able to structure itself for membership categories and generate revenue from annual membership fees. The membership structure of the Network could consist of the following categories:

1. Individual
2. Business

3. Organization
4. Sponsor

The association also has the potential to apply for charitable status, which would benefit potential sponsors who donate funding, resources and/or materials. Having charitable status also opens up other funding opportunities that may provide the Network an advantage over other associations competing for similar funding sources. Through the Network’s strategic partnerships, it has the ability to benefit financially from collaborative research agreements, industry initiatives and other shared funding sources.

### ***Funding Forecast***

#### **Funding Forecast (to be developed by the Board)**

<b>Year</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>5<sup>th</sup></b>
Individual					
Business					
Organization					
Sponsors					
Research Agreements					
Shared Funding Initiatives					

### ***Milestones (proposed)***

1. Secure infrastructure development funding in 1<sup>st</sup> year
2. Submit incorporation documents before the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> year
3. Recruit 25 members by the end of 2<sup>nd</sup> year
4. Achieve two new industry sponsored research agreements with researchers at the member institutions by the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year
5. Recruit an additional 25 members by the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> year.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Non-Timber Forest Products Network of Canada Mission and Objectives Questionnaire**

# Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFP) Network of Canada Mission and Objectives Questionnaire

The concept behind creating a NTFP Network in Canada came about from discussions amongst practitioners, researchers and an expanding group of supporters working in this sector. The group identified the need for a mechanism to effectively share knowledge about NTFP development and management in different parts of the country. With the support of Natural Resources Canada, the initial launch of the Network's website [www.ntfpnetwork.ca](http://www.ntfpnetwork.ca) came about in February 2007. The Network is moving forward with the development of a strategic plan and your participation in this survey will assist us in the planning process.

**Purpose of the project:** The purpose of this survey is to request input from interested parties on the mission and objectives of the NTFP Network. The information gathered will be used to develop a strategic plan to guide future activities of the Network and move the Network beyond its initial stages.

**Informed consent:** You will be asked to avoid disclosing any information that may be considered to be sensitive or confidential information. You will be asked to confirm that you are aware that the information you share will be used by the NTFP Network of Canada for the purposes described above.

You are not compelled to take part in this research project. If you do elect to take part, you are free to withdraw at any time with no prejudice. Similarly if employees or other individuals elect not to take part in this research project, this information will also be maintained in confidence.

Information will be recorded in hand-written format or typed directly into a computer and, where appropriate, summarized, in anonymous format, in the body of the final report. At no time will any specific comments be attributed to any individual unless specific agreement has been obtained beforehand. Completed questionnaires will be stored at the Royal Roads University Centre for Non-Timber Resources office until March 31, 2010, at which time they will be destroyed.

Do you consent to have your name or your organization's name mentioned in reports?

\_yes \_no

Information gathered during this interview may be used by the Centre for Non-Timber Resources; the Centre will use information in accordance with this agreement, i.e. no identifying information without the explicit consent of the interview participant.

**By completing this survey or by agreeing verbally to the terms over the telephone, the individual gives free and informed consent to participating in this project.**

Please complete the following questionnaire by:

- 1) providing required information,
- 2) indicating your choices, and/or
- 3) rating your choices (where applicable)

➤ Name (optional):

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➤ Please indicate which part of the NTFP sector you are currently involved with, i.e. business, First Nations, government, industry association, research centre, etc.

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➤ Community and province of residence:

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➤ What is your age?

1. \_\_\_ under 20 years

2. \_\_\_ 20-40 years

4. \_\_\_ 41-55 years

5. \_\_\_ 56-65 years

6. \_\_\_ 65 years and over

## Section A - creating a shared vision

Vision: A vision helps unite people towards a shared purpose and paints an inspirational picture of the organization's future.

***The Network's shared purpose is to support the development of a socially, ecologically, and economically sustainable non-timber forest resources sector for the benefit of resource dependant communities across Canada***

1. Do you agree that the above vision statement captures the essence of the Network's purpose?
2. Do you see a future benefit for those who share in this collective purpose? If so, please list the benefits.
3. Is this a vision that you could see yourself or your organization supporting?
4. Please describe, in 30 words or less, additional ideas for the vision, or your own vision for the Network.

## Section B – planning the mission

**Mission:** The point of the mission statement is to make clear to the world what the organization is about and it should clearly define the goals the organization would like to achieve in the community.

***The Network will develop a web-based forum to share information on NTFP activities to further the advancement of this emerging industry. By providing this essential communications link across Canada, the Network will build awareness and understanding of the importance and benefits of non-timber forest products to the public, governments and the market place. The Network will create partnerships and develop opportunities for the delivery of education and training support in communities across Canada; collaborate on industry promotion and market development; explore the potential to 'brand' NTFP products in Canada; ensure there is a voice for the sector to all levels of government; advocate for the development of commonly applied standards for the sector, while promoting a focused, coordinated approach to NTFP applied research.***

1. Do you agree that the above Mission Statement reflects the fundamental goals of the Network?
2. Can you see clearly the aim of the Network in this mission statement?
3. Do you see the potential that the Network will have on the development of the NTFP industry from the mission statement?
4. Is this a mission that you or your organization would support?
5. Please help us prioritize the Network's next steps by rating the following objectives in order of importance, using the numbers 1 through 6, with 1 being the most important:

\_\_\_ Communication Objective

*Goal: Provide a web-based forum for interested parties to access and exchange information and ideas.*

\_\_\_ Research Coordination Objective

*Goal: Promote a focused coordinated approach to NTFP applied research*

\_\_\_ Marketing Objective

*Goal: Collaborate on industry promotion and market development including joint marketing initiatives and explore the potential to 'brand' products produced under commonly applied standards*

\_\_\_ Capacity Building Objective

*Goal: Collaborate on the development and delivery of education and training to support the development of the sector at all levels of production*

\_\_\_ Networking Advocacy Objective

*Goal: Build awareness and understanding of the importance and benefits of the NTFP to the public, governments and the market place*

\_\_\_ Policy Actions Objective

*Goal: Assist in the development of commonly applied standards for the sector*

6. Please list any other objectives/goals that you believe are necessary for the Network to achieve the shared vision described in Section A?
7. Do you feel that the Network is capable of succeeding with all of the above objectives? If not, what challenges might the Network encounter along the way?

## Section C – reflecting values

Values: Core values should capture the organization's culture; these are the deeply held values that do not change over time.

Core Values:

- ***a sustainable and ethical non-timber forest products sector in Canada***
- ***utilization of NTFP resources for the benefit of rural and remote communities across Canada***
- ***respect for cultural values while providing economic opportunities for the sector***

1. Please list other core values that you feel are essential for the Network to build trust between the NTFP sector and the public.
2. If you operate a NTFP business now, would your business be able to incorporate these values and still be economically viable?
3. If you are part of a non-governmental organization, does your organization share similar values? If so, which values are shared?
4. Do you see a benefit to the NTFP sector in Canada for promoting these values? If so, please describe.
5. Are you familiar with other 'natural resource' value-based organizations that operate successfully in your province? If so, please list them by name.

## Section D – embarking on the journey

Governance: Good governance enables an organization to do its work and fulfill its mission.

1. Are you supportive of the name: Non-Timber Forest Products Network of Canada? If not, please list alternative names.
2. Which organizational structure do you think would most benefit the Network over the long term:
  - a. a non-registered entity – this structure would be informal, with a volunteer steering committee; can have representatives from the provinces, but is not structured for membership
  - b. a federal incorporated society (not-for-profit) - this structure would allow the Network to be registered as a national organization with representatives from the provinces; it would have a board of directors and can be structured for association membership; it would be able to seek funding under its own name; it has the potential to be registered as a charity if desired
  - c. other, please describe in detail
3. Please indicate how you see yourself or your organization participating within the Network:
  - a. board member
  - b. committee member
  - c. association member
  - d. provincial representative
  - e. strategic partner
  - f. sponsor
  - g. general volunteer support, i.e. jump in when needed
  - h. other, please describe

## Section E – communications assessment

1. Through your experience, what communications strategies do think would benefit the ongoing development of the Network?
  - a) Internally
    - Initial recruitment of a “core group” or a board to carry out the objectives of the Network
    - What communications tools would help this “core group” to participate in regularly scheduled meetings, keeping in mind that these individuals will be spread out across the country
    - Other ideas
  - b) Externally
    - What are your ideas and strategies for reaching out to potential sponsors, members and partners
    - How can the Network get the word out to stakeholders to let them know that the Network’s website is a ‘one stop’ resource for accessing NTFP information, resources and activities
    - Other ideas
  
2. What do you see as the overall communication needs and tools of the NTFP sector as a whole?

\*\*\*\*\*

Can we contact you in the future to gather more information or to discuss further your insights and comments in this survey? If so please give us your contact information, i.e. phone number, email, or mailing address:

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**Thank you for participating in this survey. Your insights and experience will significantly assist in the Network’s planning process.**

## **Appendix 2**

### **Developing a Canadian Non-Timber Forest Products Network: Final Report**



# Developing a Canadian Non-Timber Forest Products Network:

## Final Report



Centre for Non-Timber Resources  
Royal Roads University  
Victoria, BC

January 31, 2007



ROYAL ROADS  
UNIVERSITY

# Developing a Canadian Non-Timber Forest Products Network

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Tim Brigham, Centre for Non-Timber Resources

## Background

The concept behind creating a network in Canada focused on issues related to non-timber forest products (NTFPs)<sup>5</sup> can be traced back a few years to discussions within the small but continually expanding group of practitioners and researchers working in this area. While there was a growing recognition among some groups of the real potential for NTFPs to improve rural livelihoods and provide other benefits in many communities across Canada, researchers, communities, policy makers and others interested in supporting NTFP development faced numerous challenges in accessing and exchanging reliable and practical information. To a large degree, challenges stemmed from the lack of organization and communication that has traditionally been a feature of much of the sector. Initiatives to support the industry are often fragmented, and potentially useful information tends to be scattered and difficult to identify. The result for those seeking to intervene and support the sector has often been an inability to learn from initiatives across the country, or to benefit from the synergies between government, industry, non-profit organizations, and educational institutions.

Another important and oft-expressed rationale for developing the network stems from the frustration felt by many researchers and practitioners working in the field that the importance of NTFPs in community development, resource management, cultural revitalization, and other areas were not being recognized. Those working on NTFP initiatives have long struggled for recognition for the sector with agencies that make policy, establish funding priorities, and engage in other activities that directly impact the ability of communities to realize their goals in the area of NTFPs.

Until now, no mechanism has existed to effectively share knowledge and the 'lessons learned' about NTFP development and management in different parts of the country, and to advocate for NTFPs to be 'at the table' in policy and other discussions. Although the long-term success of the Network obviously depends on the engagement and efforts of the various partners in the process, the launch of the Network means the opportunity now exists to address issues around sharing information, collaborating effectively on research initiatives, and the need for greater recognition for the sector.

Natural Resources Canada should be recognized for its decision to support this initial step in the development and launch of the Non-Timber Forest Products Network of Canada.

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<sup>5</sup> Non-timber forest products (NTFPs) are defined as the botanical and mycological resources and associated services of forests and under-utilized lands other than timber, pulpwood, shakes, or other conventional wood products or agricultural products. Examples of NTFPs include foods such as wild mushrooms and berries, medicinal herbs, and a wide range of other products such as decorative greenery harvested from managed and unmanaged forests, under-utilized agricultural lands, and agroforestry systems.

## **Launching the Network**

Launching the Non-Timber Forest Products Network of Canada ('the Network') was a two stage process. The first was announcing the creation of the Network during the 10<sup>th</sup> National Forest Congress in Ottawa in September, 2006. The second stage of launching the Network – and when the substantive work of the Network began – occurred during the initial meeting of Network participants in Saskatoon in October, 2006.

### ***10<sup>th</sup> National Forest Congress, Ottawa, September 25-27, 2006***

The Non-Timber Forest Products Network of Canada was officially launched during a presentation at the National Forest Congress by Darcy Mitchell, Director of the Centre for Non-Timber Resources (CNTR) at Royal Roads University<sup>6</sup>. The Congress provided a venue to display and distribute information about the establishment of the Network by way of a full colour 'rack card' produced as part of the in-kind contribution of Royal Roads University to the project. More than two hundred rack cards were distributed over the course of the Congress. The Model Forest Network display at the event also included a number of NTFPs from Canada and elsewhere which again raised the profile of NTFPs during the Congress. The Congress also provided an opportunity for Tim Brigham, project lead for the development of the Network, to discuss the formation of the Network with Congress attendees from a range of jurisdictions across Canada.

The launch of the Network during the Congress tied in with a clearly growing interest in NTFP-related issues among the forest resource community represented at the Congress. The term 'NTFP' was invoked in a minimum of three presentations during the first morning of the Congress, and came up in a number of the discussions that followed. One of the key challenges for Network partners will be to ensure that these resources stay on the agenda and play an increasing role in discussions on research and policy. Strategies for increasing the visibility of the sector were discussed during the initial meeting of the Network (see the meeting notes in Appendix B), and will be an on-going focus of the Communications Committee.

### ***Initial Meeting and Consultation, Saskatoon, October 16-17, 2006***

The initial meeting and consultation in Saskatoon provided the opportunity for individuals supportive of the Network to meet and discuss a strategy for moving forward with Network development. As noted in the opening presentation at the meeting (attached as Appendix A), this was not the first meeting of parties interested in developing a NTFP Network within Canada, but the first with identified funding in place that allowed for the creation of a formal network.

The 16 participants at the meeting from seven provinces represented academic institutions (4), provincial and federal government researchers (5), industry (5), and NGOs, including First Nations organizations (2). Recognizing the limited funding support available, the meeting attained a reasonable representation of participants from across the country.

The goals set for the meeting were to:

- Determine some immediate and medium-term goals for the Network;
- Identify how to create 'value' within the Network;
- Identify who wants to be involved and how; and
- Decide on some realistic, practical activities for the initial phase of the Network.

Although there was considerable animated conversation on specific topics related to the functioning of the Network, there was unanimous agreement around the table that a NTFP Network for Canada was clearly needed.

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<sup>6</sup> A short summary of Dr. Mitchell's presentation "Safety Net, Springboard, Social Capital: Non-Timber Forest Products and Boreal Forest Communities" can be accessed at: [http://www.nfc-ca/pdfs/proceedings/Proceedings\\_10th%20.pdf](http://www.nfc-ca/pdfs/proceedings/Proceedings_10th%20.pdf).

Following a discussion focusing on some of the key issues faced by the NTFP sector, including the possible role for the Network in addressing these issues, the discussion turned to the type of services the Network could and should offer. In no particular order of priority:

- Services to communities – which might include training tools;
- Education, communication, and information sharing tools;
- Policy actions i.e., advising on NTFP-related policy questions;
- Research – support an active, relevant, focused research program; and
- Market support – including the development of certification programs.

The discussion then turned to the idea of ‘branding’ the Network (see recommendations section), audiences, and partners. There was a reasonable amount of discussion around the appropriate name for the Network, and the First Nations organization representative expressed concern that using the term ‘Canadian’ may alienate potential Aboriginal supporters of the Network. The current working name of the Network – “The Non-Timber Forest Products Network of Canada” – was suggested as a way to address these concerns.

Committees were also struck to proceed with two key areas identified for the first phase of Network development:

1. A *Communications Committee* to address questions of messaging, branding, website design, short communications pieces, etc.
2. A *Governance Committee* to propose potential models for the Network to follow.

These committees have begun discussions with the goal of finalizing some of the decisions within the coming 3 – 12 months depending on the action.

The group also clearly recognized that while the participants around the table represented a strong beginning for the establishment of the Network, we need to reach out relatively soon and get more people involved. With the establishment of the website as our first communication tool, we plan to begin the next stage of partner engagement immediately using an electronic forum approach, as well as targeted contacts based on suggestions from current partners. The diverse and somewhat scattered nature of the sector suggest multiple strategies will be required to identify and connect with potential new Network partners.

Detailed meeting notes – including the meeting agenda and list of participants – are provided as Appendix B.

## **Website Development**

The initial version of the website is now ‘live’ and can be accessed at <http://www.ntfpnetwork.ca/>. Royal Roads University has secured the domain name for the on-going use of the Network, and has offered to provide website maintenance and support for the initial phase of the Network.

Internal issues related to capacity at Royal Roads led to some delays in the establishment of the website. Information services at the university have undergone a significant re-structuring over the past 6 months which severely stretched the ability of the university to meet a variety of demands. Once a strategy was developed to address the internal capacity challenges, we were able to access outside assistance and the process of building the website has developed well. More importantly, we have an understanding of the assistance and support that will be provided to ensure the website is properly maintained and updated.

The website has been identified as an ‘initial’ version because we have only taken the first steps in creating a strong Internet presence for the Network. Over time, we will be migrating one or more sections of the Centre for Non-Timber Resources website (<http://www.royalroads.ca/programs/faculties-schools-centres/non-timber-resources/>) to the National Network website. This will include the ‘Who’s Who in NTFPs’ (<http://www.royalroads.net/ntfp/whoiswho/>) which is currently linked to the National Network website but is still identified as a CNTR page. Through NRCAN we have also received support to provide

the Law and Policy Papers on NTFPs in a French Translation. These documents are also on the CNTR site (<http://www.royalroads.ca/programs/faculties-schools-centres/non-timber-resources/cntr-law-and-policy-papers.htm>) but are linked to the National Network website. There is a clear understanding among current partners that for us to establish a truly 'national' Network we must move to a more bilingual presentation over time. Given the costs involved and the associated challenges of translating the documents that we hope will eventually flood the site, it may be that we are never able to develop a completely bilingual site. While recognizing that, there are clearly priorities we can establish for translation and we will seek to meet those goals over the next few months.

We also hope to secure funding for the Communications Committee of the Network to undertake a 'branding' exercise to ensure the Network develops a clear identity and projects a consistent message both within Canada and outside our borders. This work could be done in collaboration with Media Technologies at RRU or with an outside contractor.

## **Recommendations for Next Steps**

### ***Outreach***

The initial meeting of the Network in Saskatoon had a reasonable representation from across the country, keeping in mind the limited resources available to support travel. Now that the Network has a functioning website as an initial communications tool, we need to begin a more active program of reaching out and recruiting more members. Although we have a solid nucleus of interested parties, our representation from across the country remains somewhat uneven. For example, there are a variety of NTFP-related initiatives in Ontario, but we have no researcher or NGO or provincial government representation at this time. Clearly there is a need to recruit some of the potential partners already identified in Ontario to the Network. We also have an uneven representation across the provinces in terms of how the various stakeholder groups are represented (i.e., academics, business, NGO, government, etc.). An early task of the current group will be to seek out new partners to link in to the Network.

Some parallel work will also be required on the organization and governance of the Network; a governance committee has been established to begin work on this task by identifying different options for the Network. Although we cannot wait to begin our outreach activities, it will also be important to continue and accelerate work on the 'branding' of the Network (see below) to ensure we project a consistent message to those we are inviting to join the Network.

### ***Shared project initiatives***

In the end, the long-term sustainability of the network will depend on its ability to deliver concrete action and value for the sector as a whole. This does not mean trying to do 'everything'; the NTFP sector is still in its initial stages in Canada, and there are many potential areas of the sector requiring attention and providing fertile ground for intervention. However, there is also a danger in trying to do too much and losing sight of those national initiatives where the Network can clearly play a useful role.

Apart from our over-all task of providing a mechanism to better share information on NTFP activities from across the country, there are a number of other more focused research and development activities that present opportunities to collaborate on projects of a national nature. Examples of existing or potential projects include:

- *Improve collection of, and access to, reliable trade data on NTFPs in BC and Canada*  
This is a project that has been funded for its initial stage by NRCan and could involve National Network partners from across the country. The project will focus on expanding the Harmonized System (HS) of trade data collected at the national level to include specific NTFP species. This will

have a significant impact on our ability to better track the international trade in NTFPs originating from Canada and will contribute to improving the level and quality of data available to policy makers, industry and researchers. Given the clearly national implications of the project, it makes sense for the National Network to be involved.

- *Evaluate the options for a possible 'beyond organic' certification program for promoting the sustainable development of non-timber forest products*

Wild collection of medicinal and food plants for sale is increasing around the world, including in Canada. Unfortunately, this collection is often done with little consideration of safety, sustainability of the resource, and respect for cultural concerns. The marketplace is increasingly demanding that suppliers of these products respond to these concerns. We propose to complete a scoping paper examining current certification procedures for wild harvested materials in Canada as well as useful examples from other jurisdictions with a view towards developing a potential 'beyond organic' certification for wild products. The implementation of such a program will put Canada in the forefront of an emerging area, and assist with the further development of a viable industry based on the sustainable wild harvesting of plant resources. Initial funding for this project is being sought provincially, but the project has clear implications for a national approach to certification.

These are just two examples of where the Network could become active and involved – and relatively quickly – in supporting and participating in research initiatives with a national focus.

### ***Branding the Network***

One of the key early tasks for the Network should be to create an identity, or 'brand'. Developing a brand means creating a combination of name, words, symbols or design that identifies who we are and what we do. The Network will also need to design and deliver a consistent message about the sector and its role in supporting the sector. A beginning was made on this process during the meeting in Saskatoon, and the Communications Committee formed will help guide the work on this task. Some of the key messages we wish to project about the Network can be found in the meeting notes attached as Appendix B. As one of the goals of the Network is to be more than just a nationally focused group, it will also be important to consider the image we wish to project internationally, in part to assist where possible with market development for internationally traded Canadian NTFPs.

The Non-Timber Forest Products Network of Canada has taken its first steps toward becoming an active, viable, and influential organization. With the establishment of the Network, the sector now has an entity in place to facilitate information sharing and advocate for increased recognition and support. The responsibility now falls on Network partners to continue the development of this initiative and seek opportunities to realize the potential for NTFPs to deliver significant economic and other benefits to communities across the country.

Appendix A

Opening Presentation at the Network Meeting – Saskatoon

October 17, 2006

Slide 1

The Canadian Non-Timber Forest Products Network – some background...

Tim Brigham  
Centre for Non-Timber Resources

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Centre for Non-Timber Resources

This slide features a dark background with a vertical green-tinted image on the left showing various forest products. In the top right corner, there is a collage of four small images: a green leaf, a red flower, a green leaf, and a green leaf. The title and presenter information are centered in a light green font. The Royal Roads University logo is in the bottom left corner.

Slide 2

- Significant growth in interest over last 10-15 years
- Requests from across the country for information/assistance
- 'Orphan' sector
- CNTR/NFDC (with others) hatched idea for a 'network' or 'coalition'

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Centre for Non-Timber Resources

This slide features a dark background with a vertical green-tinted image on the left showing various forest products. In the top right corner, there is a collage of four small images: a green leaf, a red flower, a green leaf, and a green leaf. The bullet points are in white text. A small image in the bottom right corner shows a person's hands holding several morel mushrooms. The Royal Roads University logo is in the bottom left corner.

Slide 3

The slide features a dark background with a vertical green decorative strip on the left side containing images of leaves and berries. In the top right corner, there is a cluster of small images showing various forest products like mushrooms and berries. In the bottom right corner, there is a photograph of several small, round, woven baskets filled with forest products, with a small white card next to them. The text is centered on the slide.

- Conference call hosted by PFRA – Spring 2004
- Alberta Ag/CNTR/NFDC organized meeting in Leduc, November 2004
- Discussed at various conferences, including RRU August 2005 – positive response
- Looking for resources

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Slide 4

The slide features a dark background with a vertical green decorative strip on the left side containing images of leaves and berries. In the top right corner, there is a cluster of small images showing various forest products like mushrooms and berries. The text is centered on the slide.

- Application to Ag Canada – Science & Innovation Broker Program, Fall 2005
  - Information clearinghouse – including provincial/territorial profiles
  - Marketing support
  - Initiate, influence, track research
  - Collaborate on educational initiatives & development strategies
  - Sector advocacy – lack of organization & voice hinders sector development

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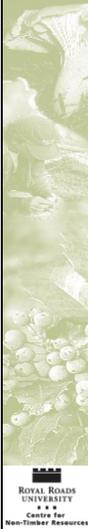
Slide 5



- NRCan providing funding to:
  - Launch the Network (organize meeting, identify interested parties, share results of consultations)
  - E-forum to gather input
  - Create website – ‘who’s who in NTFPs’ – hosted on RRU site

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Non-Timber Resources

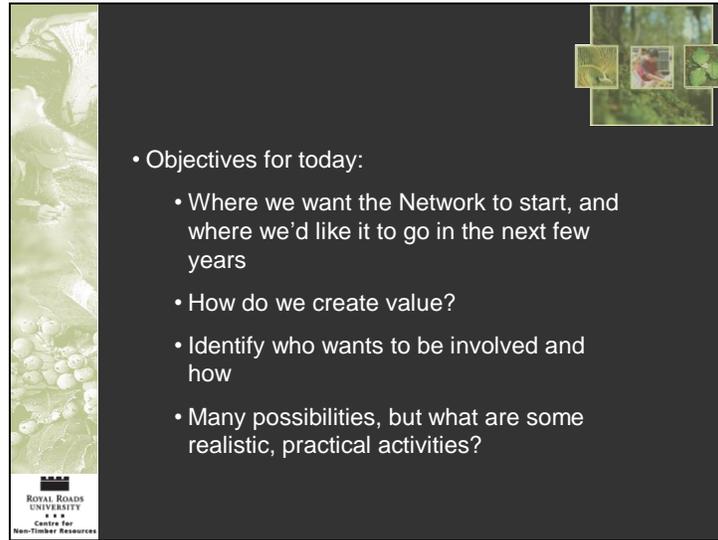
Slide 6



- Leduc meeting – recurring themes:
  - Communication and networking
  - Research coordination
  - Capacity building activities
  - Marketing activities

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Slide 7

The slide features a dark background with a vertical green sidebar on the left containing images of forest products. In the top right corner, there is a cluster of four small images showing various forest products. The main text is a bulleted list of objectives.

- Objectives for today:
  - Where we want the Network to start, and where we'd like it to go in the next few years
  - How do we create value?
  - Identify who wants to be involved and how
  - Many possibilities, but what are some realistic, practical activities?

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Slide 8

The slide features a dark background with a vertical green sidebar on the left containing images of forest products. In the top right corner, there is a cluster of four small images showing various forest products. The main text includes the center name, contact information, and a large image of red berries.

**Centre for Non-Timber Resources**

For more information:

<http://www.royalroads.ca/cntr>

[ntfp@royalroads.ca](mailto:ntfp@royalroads.ca)



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## Appendix B

### Notes from the Initial Meeting of the Non-Timber Forest Products Network of Canada

October 17, 2006

## **Meeting of the Canadian Non-Timber Forest Products Network**

**October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2006**

**Innovation Place, Saskatoon**

### **Meeting Notes**

The meeting agenda is attached as Appendix A. Although we covered all of the topics in the agenda, they were not in all cases in the form or order originally proposed. The list of participants is attached as Appendix B.

Based on discussions during the meeting, the working name of the Network has been proposed as “The Non-Timber Forest Products Network of Canada”.

### **Background and Introductions**

The meeting began with a presentation reviewing the background to the development of the Network to date. Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) was also acknowledged for their initial funding support for the development of the Network.

The meeting continued with participants introducing themselves and providing some initial comments on their interest in the creation of a Network. A number of the meeting participants have been involved in discussions on the development of the Network over the past two years, and have been very supportive of the concept.

- **Tim Brigham** – Centre for Non-Timber Resources – recognize the advantages of working together more effectively on many of the issues facing the sector
- **Wanda Wolf** – Saskatchewan Herb and Spice Association – also involved as a broker; interested in the potential of the Network to assist with market development and improving the supply chain
- **Connie Kehler** – Canadian Herb, Spice, and Natural Health Products Coalition – especially interested in the role of the Network in the areas of product safety and traceability; also interested in Good Wildcrafting Practices (GWP) as it is integrated into the Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) they are developing
- **Evelyn Hamilton** – BC Ministry of Forests and Range – resource management, including new ways of managing land for sustainable livelihoods
- **Donna Fleury** – Alberta Agriculture – involved in a number of related projects – good wildcrafting initiative, also cosmetic products focus on native plants; interested in facilitating industry development
- **Hayley Hesseln** – University of Saskatchewan – interest in agricultural law and the environment – focus on more northern issues; interested in finding out who the key people are in the sector
- **Sylvie Richard** – Canadian Forest Service – Bioproducts specialist; interested in better understanding the issues and how we can meet the needs of this sector
- **Stewart Cameron** – Canadian Forest Service, Fredericton – work on *Taxus* – interested in the challenge of sustaining biodiversity in the face of wild harvesting, also the question of domestication and research into productivity and quality
- **Lorraine Rekmans** – National Aboriginal Forestry Association – has become clear that there are issues around food security, proprietary rights, Aboriginal rights.... and the ‘hard questions’ are not being answered. NTFPs play a huge role in sustaining impoverished families; how do we set priorities and address rights, especially for

- impoverished communities? Support the advocacy role of the network. We need to have Aboriginal themes part of the Network from the beginning, not as an after-thought
- **Iain Davidson-Hunt** – University of Manitoba – extensive experience working with First Nations – interested in the idea of ‘multi-functional’ or cultural landscapes especially as sector-based approach seems problematic. Interested in starting to build a research program in this area... Key question over the past 7 years: what movement have we seen on many of the key questions?
  - **Dan Adamson** – McGregor Model Forest – working with RRU on various projects – believes NTFPs are one piece of the puzzle in community development. New model forest program starting next fiscal. Good opportunities to link the NTFP Network with the national model forest network. Has been a success story over the past 15 years but only this spring did they formalize to form a network.
  - **Gerald Le Gal** – owns wild foods business – interested in the opportunities presented by the Network to share information and methods right across the country, as well as the potential to advocate for the sector. The Network will be a forum for determining how we want to see the industry develop. Also concerned with community development opportunities presented by the sector.
  - **Les Tabachuk** – Thunder Bay – owner of Canadian Wild Rice Mercantile and interested in expanding the business with a NTFP focus. New to the sector and learning; one of the goals is to open stores across Canada with a unique marketing plan.
  - **Dave Buck** – Northern Forest Diversification Centre, ex-Manager of the NTFP program. Leader in developing a community development model based on NTFPs including traceability and certification. Industry provides some of the answers for issues in northern health, underemployment, and poverty. Long-term view and support is vital, as well as empowering the communities and harvesters to manage the resources.
  - **Gerry Ivanochko** – Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food – been involved in NTFPs in northern Saskatchewan for 20 years – very lonely at the beginning. Network needed to bring the players together and act as a sounding board for ideas. Wild rice development in the north may be a good model for how the industry can develop – but long-term support is clearly needed to create a functioning industry that provides benefits to many communities. Concerned about over-regulation stalling the industry. Lots of work with Organic certification, including with wild mushrooms.
  - **Rob Penner** – University College of the North, Manitoba – grew from Keewatin Community College, where the NFDC began. Interested in training and research for the NTFP sector.

### *Post-introduction comments*

- Lorraine – many things happening, but not strictly commercially – concerned about the commercial focus of the discussion i.e., with the focus on ‘sector’. We are faced with the reality of large aging populations in the north with declining numbers of youth – how can we sustain these communities? Food security and supply needs to be addressed. Important link to community and social development.
  - Also questions around tenure – business world does not address rights. Generating revenue is not necessarily only/key interest in communities.
  - Believe the best approach would be research and advocacy followed by commercial development; also interested in the effect of maintaining cultural diversity on maintaining biodiversity
  - experience with tribal council marketing coop – collecting timber from small communities and marketing on a larger scale; faced a number of problems, now focusing on awareness, training, inventories
- Iain – need to learn from the Taxol story in Quebec; being left as only the provider of raw materials is problematic; also tenure issue

## *Developing a Canadian Non-Timber Forest Products Network – Final Report*

- Definitions are important – ‘major’ forest products vs. ‘minor’ forest products. We lack a forest ecosystem based approach – focus on ‘product’ = a business driven model. Need a more holistic way of thinking about the land and how we think about the questions and the issues.
- Lorraine – need to move further towards co-management arrangements. Also food security issues – very basic issue we need to address.
- Connie – develop link between business and social benefits. Must be in for the long-haul
- Must ensure the Network has a highly inclusive approach to bringing in all the stakeholders
- Stewart – Initial push tends to be commercial (i.e., Taxus). Many things have gone wrong with the Taxus industry. Need focus on training for sustainability as well
- Are rural communities a priority? Is this an over-arching issue? What can we learn from the development of co-ops (including forest co-ops in Quebec)?
  - Rural revitalization may be a way of capturing the attention of government
- Iain – what models for ‘business’ work best? Need re-investment in rural economies. Also need to consider that Aboriginal labour is not always mobile labour

### **Questions:**

*Where do we want to be in five years?*

*What services will we offer?*

(NOTE: I’ve attempted to characterize these comments by themes, but not all are mutually exclusive)

- Network recognition:
  - Recognized, credible, well-known network with a reputation for being respectful, reputable, and inclusive [question: how do we define ‘credible’? For who?]
  - The Network is recognized and has connections internationally
- Network development:
  - Network has successfully identified people across the country with interest in the sector and has begun work on developing/contributing to a national strategy on NTFPs
  - Effectively serving a very diverse audience interested in the sector
  - Develop a clear focus and solid identity for the Network
  - Focused on issues/initiatives of national relevance (i.e., certification systems?) while leaving room in the Network for regional considerations
  - long-term plan in place, including membership and financial support strategies
  - The Network meets regularly to exchange information and empower communities and connect them
  - Credible, member-driven network – “pick the low hanging fruit” – after developing credibility, move towards advocacy
  - Network membership is valued and supported based on the benefits and services provided
  - learn from and collaborate with other Networks/groups
- Community impacts:

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- Demonstrated impact in helping communities thrive and reducing rural poverty (I guess this means more effectively than we could do now)
- Making available the tools needed (i.e., adding value at the local level) to help communities sustainably develop the sector
- Recognition that benefits to communities come at different levels.
- Create community development models and tools
  
- Education, communication, and information sharing:
  - Education services at many levels (schools, communities, policy makers....), and on many topics but with consistent 'messaging'
  - NTFPs integrated into the educational curriculum
  - Established 'one-stop shopping' information source on the sector
  - Effectively sharing information across the country: including 'telling the story' about potential/real impacts on peoples' lives
  - Facilitate mentoring/extension services through linkages between 'experts' and interested parties
  - Advocacy role: champion the potential of the sector – with proper support – to make a contribution to the revitalization of communities
  - Communication strategy to ensure information is available and flows to the appropriate agencies; help people 'make the connections' re: the linkages between NTFP development and other issues facing communities
  - Move the discussion towards more of a 'systems approach' – less sector and product-based
  - Create a 'learning community' – focusing on a set of problems and bringing people together that actually are physically involved in that sector to address problems over the long term
  
- Policy actions:
  - Mechanisms in place to help us address issues around Aboriginal rights, traditional knowledge and intellectual property/access and benefit sharing
  - Recognition of holistic forest management – “forests are much more than a source of timber” – influencing decision-making about resource management issues
  - Recognized as a champion for legislative changes impacting the sector and related areas
  - Ready to intercede, 'make the case', as required (i.e., National Forest Strategy); we are the group government can turn to
  
- Research:
  - Need to develop an active, cohesive research program that attracts students and reflects community needs/interests
  - Advocate for more sustainable research support – 'industry \$' do not exist to the same degree in this sector; make in-roads with the funding boards that control the \$s
  - more focus on community problems – more community involvement in research directions
  - working to address our knowledge gaps
  
- Market support:
  - Trade networks (with a focus on equity and sustainability) have been established/enhanced
  - Certification services as a role of the Network?
  - Educate consumers – look to Slow Food model? Look for links to emerging market sectors

## **Discussions: the Who, What, Why...**

***Branding: What key phrases/topics/concepts best describe the Network? (NOTE: These are not in order of priority)***

- Research
- Community development
- Inclusive approach; diversity – community, social and economic development
- Healthy communities
- Social conscience
- Environmental stewards
- A 'go to body' – one-stop shopping for information, advocacy, support
- Fill the knowledge gaps
- Education
- Sustainability – environmental, social, etc

***What do we do – big picture?***

- We are a recognized leader in providing services to stakeholders in the non-timber resource sector across Canada.
- We focus on supporting and promoting the sustainable development of the sector, recognizing the need to ensure viability for the industry, communities, cultures, and the ecosystems on which we all depend.
- We work to sustain rural communities and ecosystems through the promotion of an ethical wild harvest.

***Why are we doing this?***

- Addressing the knowledge gap, and sharing knowledge more effectively
- Building connections between all stakeholders in the sector
- Advocacy, education and communication
- To facilitate action and communication across the sector
- To build healthy communities
- To support ethical harvesters and businesses and help develop and promote a good reputation for this industry
- To provide moral support as well as mentoring and networking opportunities to those interested in the sustainable, equitable, and ethical development of the sector

***Who is our audience?***

- Primary
  - Communities, rural people, non-commercial and commercial users
- Secondary
  - Government
- Auxiliary
  - Consumer
  - Public

***What services will we provide short-term?***

- Who's who in NTFPs in Canada (web-based)

- E-mail address to re-direct enquiries at this point (direct questions to the who's who where possible?)
- A website with variety of links:
  - Research
  - Associations
  - Governments
  - Regulations
  - International link
  - Buyers
  - Harvesters
  - Supplies
  - Education
- Communication package – minimal to begin with i.e., one page fact sheet and possibly a short PowerPoint presentation
- Private list servers for us as partners – chat line – self maintaining – password protected or sign in.
- Research coordination support

***Who do we partner with?***

- Government at all levels (including Aboriginal governments)
- Other non-timber associations
- Other interested associations
- Industry
- Educators
- Researchers
- Community representatives

***Our name***

There was a reasonable amount of discussion around the name of the Network. Concern was expressed that using the term 'Canadian' in the name would not be supported by many Aboriginal organizations. There was also debate over the use of 'products' vs. 'resources'. In the end, a decision was taken to give ourselves the working title of "The Non-Timber Forest Products Network of Canada". I don't think the discussion on this topic is closed, but that will be the working title for the short-term at least.

**Committees**

A decision was taken to establish two committees at this time.

***Communications***

(messaging, branding, vision, website, FAQs, One-pager, etc.)

- Stewart
- Tim
- Gerald
- Iain

From the comments provided, a variety of key messages have already been identified and can be extracted for development of the communications strategy.

### **Governance**

(determining potential models for the Network)

- Dan
- Tim
- Lorraine

### **New members**

*Who are we missing? How do we get them involved?*

Everyone will contribute to developing a list of new members to be invited to participate in (or at minimum receive information on) the Network. Please send additions to Tim who will add them to the distribution list.

Suggestions for potential participants at the next meeting:

- John Kerney (through Iain)
- PEI Bio-alliance (Roger Gordon)
- Wilf Nichols
- CED person? Through Mike Lewis
  - Gap with natural resources sector
  - CANDO (Council for the Advancement of Native Development Officers)
  - Rural municipalities
- Social economy representative
- Aboriginal women's group, Métis (Donald Sharpe)
- Make sure seat remains open for additions
- Lorraine to assist with recommendations on involving additional Aboriginal representation

I would also like to see, as part of your commitment to the Network, a willingness to have your association/agency/group listed as a 'Network Member' or whatever terminology we would prefer to use. I think many of you already agreed to this, but I believe it was suggested that listing government agencies may present some complications. When we are ready to make the website 'live' I will confirm with each of you your willingness to have your organization listed on the site. I think the credibility of the Network (a goal mentioned a number of times during the discussion) will be enhanced by the variety and make-up of the list of organizations that support it.

### **Next Steps: Actions for the next 6 – 18 months**

6 months:

- website
- Fact sheet Q&A
- Promote the growth of the who's who in NTFPs in Canada site (currently hosted on the CNTR site but will be moved to the Network site)
- Provincial activities/'profiles' – on the website
- Recruiting members – to develop the Network
- Strategy document for developing the Network
- 'Elevator speech' – related to the fact sheets, this would be a carefully crafted, succinct message about who we are, what we do, and why this is important
- Explore funding avenues for further Network development and future meetings. We didn't get very far in this discussion but two opportunities are:
  - Atlantic Opportunities Fund
  - Federal program(s?) on health (this was a general discussion around linking our work to the profound need to develop healthy communities in the broad sense)

18 months:

- Governance model
- Definition piece: who are we?
- Communication – develop articles to raise profile and create some 'media buzz'
- Locate money for another face to face meeting
- Define what we want to do in the next five years

### ***Additional potential opportunities for Network involvement***

These projects are under development (that is, not yet funded) but I think present some good opportunities for the Network to get involved and become 'active':

- 1) We may be able to link with a project focused on improving the collection of, and access to, reliable trade data on NTFPs in BC and Canada. I know some of you have already been contacted about participating in this project, and I suspect there will be more opportunities for involvement depending on the funding secured for the project. It is originating with the Ministry of Ag and Lands and the Ministry of Forests here in BC, but is clearly a project with national implications and therefore makes sense for us to be involved.
- 2) With others, I'm pursuing avenues for funding to support an evaluation of a 'beyond organic' certification program for promoting the sustainable development of non-timber forest products, ensuring ethical, environmental and social issues are included. This would involve a research program/needs assessment, as well as the potential to move ahead on developing the system and the 'brand'.

These are just two examples of where the Network could become involved and active quite soon. I urge everyone to watch out for other opportunities, including practical, on-the-ground activities where the Network could play a role.

# Initial Meeting of the Canadian Non-Timber Forest Products Network

October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2006

Candle Room, Innovation Place, Saskatoon

## DRAFT AGENDA

8:30 Introduction to the day, objectives, agenda additions/comments

8:45 Participant Introductions

9:10 Background on the Network

9:30 Where we want to be: The Network in 5 years

### **10:15 Break**

10:30 Obstacles and Key Issues

11:30 Establishing Priorities: Focusing the activities of the Network

### **12:00 Lunch**

1:00 Priorities – continued

1:45 Priorities: how do we get there?

2:30 Who are we missing? How do we get them involved?

### **3:00 Break**

3:20 Strategies for financial stability

4:00 Getting the Network 'on the map': Next Steps/initial activities

5:00 Adjourn

## Participants in Saskatoon Meeting – October 17, 2006

Province/Name	Affiliation
<b>British Columbia:</b>	
Tim Brigham	Centre for Non-Timber Resources, Royal Roads University
Evelyn Hamilton	BC Ministry of Forests and Range
Dan Adamson	McGregor Model Forest
<b>Alberta:</b>	
Donna Fleury	Alberta Agriculture
<b>Saskatchewan:</b>	
Gerry Ivanochko	Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food
Connie Kehler	Canadian Herb, Spice and Natural Health Products Coalition
Wanda Wolf	Saskatchewan Herb and Spice Association
Hayley Hesseln	Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Saskatchewan
<b>Manitoba:</b>	
Dave Buck	Consultant; Past Manager, Northern Forest Diversification Centre
Rob Penner	University College of the North
Iain Davidson-Hunt	University of Manitoba
<b>Ontario:</b>	
Les Tabachuk	Canadian Wild Rice Mercantile (industry)
Sylvie Richard	Canadian Forest Service
Lorraine Rekmans	National Aboriginal Forestry Association
<b>Quebec:</b>	
Gerald Le Gal	Gourmet Sauvage (industry); also Association pour la commercialisation des champignons forestiers
<b>New Brunswick:</b>	
Stewart Cameron	Canadian Forest Service