

Bulkley Valley Community Resources Board (BVCRB) Minutes

Date: November 20, 2017. Meeting convened at 7:00 pm

Location: Smithers Town Office

Board members in attendance: Karen Price (Chair), Eric Becker (Vice Chair), Ron Vanderstar (Treasurer), John Fisher, Ted Vanderwart, Cor van der Meulen, Christoph Dietzfelbinger, Matt Sear

Absent: Debra Flemming, Bryan Swansburg

Recorder: Laura Guillon (BVRC)

Guests: Tony Harris, Bob Mitchell

Item	Discussion
Introduction /Agenda Review	Agenda accepted with change of Trade Show analysis presentation to a discussion.
Past Minutes	June 19, 2017 minutes addendum accepted October 16, 2017 minutes accepted
Presentation by Tony Harris	<p>Cycle16</p> <p>The project was first conceived in 2002 in the Village of Telkwa. The group looked at many routes that would connect Smithers and Telkwa, but the only feasible possibility was to follow the highway and people were not interested so it fell off the table.</p> <p>A couple years ago, the project was restarted with a meeting between the Village of Telkwa, the Town of Smithers, the Regional District and the Office of the Wet'suwet'en. After two and a half year, the project is making headway.</p> <p>There were three proposed routes all starting on the right-hand side of the highway (river-side) in Smithers</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Build a bridge just past the Babine Lake Road and cross to the left-hand side 2. Build a tunnel by Greta's corner and cross to the left-hand side 3. Stay on the right-hand side all the way <p>The first option with the bridge crossing is the most attractive although the most expensive (\$650,000-1.5 million). International advice is to have something iconic about the trail. This choice would allow salvage the path that is there already and the left is the sunnier side of the highway.</p> <p>Comment: The bridge could be built partially out of wood from one of the local mills and be great advertising for them.</p> <p>The board needed a conceptual design to bring to the Department of Highways. The Rotary donated the proceeds from their 2016 auction (15K) and the Department of Transportation donated 20K to achieve this.</p> <p>The largest hurdle and opportunity is private land ownership. The project is well</p>

	<p>supported with a membership of 700 in Cycle16. There are a few hold outs from property holders and the board hopes to build trust and relationships over time.</p> <p>The Par 3 golf course owner is very supportive and offered to have the trail follow the riverfront instead of climbing the hill along the highway out of Smithers. However, the trail would need to be owned by the Regional District which is unattractive to them due to the risk of flooding. The board is currently looking into moving the trail up and are hopeful to find a path along Laidlaw road. The project is being split into three parts which may be accomplished in different timeframes: Smithers to Laidlaw, Laidlaw to the Bridge and the Bridge to Telkwa.</p> <p>Cycle16 just received a grant from BC Healthy Living for 60K for a detailed engineering plan. The trail would be a paved 3 meter wide trail primarily for commuting. It would be great for road bikes as there is nowhere to ride one in town now. The trail would also support those with mobility scooters, rollerblading and cross-country ski training.</p> <p>Question from the BVCRB: Does the Cycle16 board have a variety of members from different areas? Answer: There is a good mix, although they are missing a person with a business perspective on the board.</p> <p>The entire project is estimated to cost 5.5 million. The success or failure of this project will be a reflection of the community. There are many of these trails going in around the country. The next step is to put all the information into a package for the Regional District to review and if they say yes, the board can then look for funding.</p> <p>Cycle16 is asking nothing from the CRB, just keeping posted</p>
<p>Ongoing Items</p>	<p>Spruce Bark Beetle subcommittee formation</p> <p>The CRB is not sure what the agenda is for this subcommittee. Is it tasked to figure out strategies to manage the beetle without impacting our objectives? Strategy will be to wait until someone asks for review of a plan for infestation of landscape corridors and COREs. These areas have already had a round of harvesting to combat Mountain Pine Beetle and further action could push harvesting constraints beyond the threshold of what has been agreed. Some areas have already exceeded thresholds.</p> <p>It sounds like it is getting to a crunch point and there will be pressure to change how we manage them. This is a two-tiered issue and does not just take into account a basic percentage, structure and function need to be maintained. A matrix was developed when landscape plans were developed. The idea would be strategic planning to keep the percentage consistent across the area. This is a contentious point – most plans brought in don't take that into account. Most look at the whole area and percentage as a whole and end up overcutting sections while not touching others (borrowing equity from some sections).</p>

Anywhere you measure the width of the landscape corridor, there needs to be at least 70% mature, so cutblocks should be distributed. The original intention was to allow creativity in planning and it is up to the forester to make that call.

A challenge now is that corridors are spatially designed, but creative blocks can still be designed.

With no monitoring, what is effective? A BWMT project looked at exactly this using three indicators: forest structure, lichens and birds. This project found that deciduous trees are not regenerating as expected and this affects the lichen and bird populations.

How this has been done is not a question for this board. We are not charged with changing the forest practices act, but with maintaining the intent of the LRMP.

Ron, Karen and Matt have volunteered for the subcommittee. They have a wealth of specialized knowledge to discuss these issues and can present to the board when needed. The mandate will be when a project or operation is proposed deviates from the standard operation plan of the LRMP, the board will review whether that is the best plan. The board cannot get involved with strategy or make decisions, only test a plan against the intent of the LRMP and give recommendations back.

There is concern in Quick currently about an infested area. Any work on the infestation still has to meet the LRMP. If people are concerned, they can come to a meeting and voice those concerns. BC Timber Sales is involved in that area, they could come to a meeting to talk about it

No actions at moment.

Trade Show Discussion

The report has been sent around; there are no questions. An interesting result is that there is no large change in values after 20 years, so we don't need to update the LRMP. Although the values are the same, the land will be changing due to climate change. These changes will be unpredictable, although we should expect increased variability (e.g. heavy rainfall followed by drought).

Forestry is already seeing the impact with infestations. Usually we see sporadic infestations with one species at a time, but now we are hit with many. Trees can grow with the changes, but the other elements that take advantage (frost damage, insects/disease, fires) have an impact. We are very monoculture oriented – put ourselves at risk. The Valley naturally has diversity in tree species so there is some inherent resilience.

Action: The board is interested in a presentation on what climate change will bring and what the province will be doing to mitigate effects.

Higher Level Plan Order report questions

The HLPO is what was taken from the LRMP and made legal, particularly the spatial objectives. It is appreciated that PIR also included items that were not legally required. Many items in the LRMP were not made legal, so they aren't included. BC Timber Sales and the Wetzinkwa Community Forest also use the HLPO. This helps the foresters write site plans. They need to be able to point to something that shows are meeting objectives to justify the plan.

The board thought the report was thorough and any questions were answered at the time.

Air Quality

The board has heard the rules have changed around venting in the last year. However there is a local Smoke Management Plan for the Bulkley that all licencees have signed onto that goes above and beyond provincial rules.

Action: Ask Ben Weinstein about venting rules

Does the recent sale of Newpro affect how the board views their applications on venting?

Action: Cultivate relationship with Newpro and ask about air quality plans.

Funding

Overview: There is \$1700 from Wetzinkwa Community Forest specifically for public liaison with no deadline and \$5000 from the MOF for all activities that needs to be invoiced for by the end of March.

Action: Prepare an invoice to the MOF for all core activities from September to June

The board needs to discuss where to use the money. After core expenses, we should have ~3k left. The project can take place after March, as long as we have an idea.

Action: Everyone come up with ideas on how to use the funding.

The BVRC manages the CRB finances and the management fund is depleted.

Action: Treasurer will write a cheque from the general account for \$1000 to replenish.

<p>New Business</p>	<p>Canfor activity in Reisetser area</p> <p>Item 1 – Visual Concern</p> <p>There are two very large blocks affecting visual quality. Pictures of the cutblocks have been sent to board members.</p> <p>It is tough to comment on them. The concern is that some members feel the limits may have been exceeded. Another member said it is difficult to comment without reviewing the assessment done.</p> <p>Discussion on what Visual quality is all about: Visual quality objectives (VQO)</p> <p>For a given landscape with a visual quality objective, there are limits on the visible size of a disturbance based on that objective in the range of 7-15% of the visible size of the landform it's located on. Additionally the blocks must keep natural lines and fit the landscape.</p> <p>A forester does an assessment to demonstrate they have checked visual quality (3D modeling). A board member has asked Canfor/Lowell Johnson for the modelling and they said they don't have it ready yet, but this should have been done before. There is concern about what the next blocks will look like. Can they bring us the plans before they cut?</p> <p>Item 2 – 50,000 m³/year Reisieter SMZ 2 Volume Limit for Telkwa High Road: The biggest issue is with the licensee asking for forgiveness rather than permission. The proponent should come in advance and present their plan so the board can review it and come back with recommendations.</p> <p>Canfor/ Lowell Johnson faced issues that delayed cutting and have decided to haul more in the two years they have left in the licence. The board feels that things don't always work out and agreements should stay constant.</p> <p>A member discussed with the issue with an MOF employee and they would have been willing to extend the licence if they were asked, but no one asked.</p> <p>Some members feel that they should not have ignored limits and agreements in place no matter the difficulties. This issue affects the LRMP. One member noted that the previous licensee has always managed to stay within the limits, the concern is with the new operator.</p> <p>Discussion on licensee operating areas: In the past, a consensus agreement (not legally binding) was made between the licensees on who would operate where. There are big problems provincially with people logging in others areas as licences are volume based, not area based. The government issues licences for volume and the company needs to work out where to take it. A matrix was built and everyone agreed.</p>
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It was pointed out that the government in 2003 under “Bill 28” (Forestry Revitalization Act) took back volume (Annual allowable cut) from all major licensees. The purpose was to increase the amount of volume competitively bid on the open market to set stumpage rates in response to the Softwood lumber dispute, and to provide an apportionment of AAC for the government to use in reconciliation efforts with First Nations. The Lowell Johnson License is partly due to volume awarded to the Morricetown (Wiset) Band. When this license was established, PIR voluntarily gave up the area to facilitate the new license. An agreement was struck to allow the orderly transfer of operations in the Reisetser from PIR to Lowell Johnson, while being mindful of the 50,000 m3 requirement.

When woodlots are established they become area tenures and are removed from the TSA. Technically the MOF should be sorting this out.

Question to the board: before the agreement for the 50 thousand that road used to be worse; has it improved since then? Has work been done to the road such as brushing corners, crush placement and realignments that partially address the safety concern? **Answer:** there have been minimal improvements to the road.

A member expressed that they should try to honor the 50 thousand limits in the agreement for traffic on the road. This is part of the LRMP and they are in breach. This is the first time this has happened. They went over 50 thousand this year and plan to do it next year. The wood being hauled is not from the Reisetser area from the agreement, but the safety on the road is an issue regardless.

It was pointed out that the 50,000 m3 requirement, technically applies to the SMZ 2 only, which is a portion of the entire Reisetser Area. It is felt that the residents of the High Road feel that the 50,000 m3 applies to volume hauled on the Highroad from the 9000 road.

There is a plan to mitigate safety concerns that was presented last meeting. However, a board member pointed out that trucks have been observed to be running during the same time as the bus which was not supposed to happen according to this plan. Canfor did say at last meeting they would be investigating this.

Action: The Board will write two letters to MOF. One about a high volume of traffic on the road and another about visual quality. There are concerns and the CRB would like it to be checked. Christophe will do a first draft of both letters and circulate to board for comments

Report from a meeting with the Minister

Doug is very supportive and he was involved in formulating the first LRMP. He thinks the CRB is useful and wants to keep us funded. There will be a better idea of funding in January.

	<p>The Bulkley Valley LRMP was ahead of its time and this is the longest functioning CRB in the province.</p> <p>The government is committed to land use planning and environmental stewardship (basically the same thing).</p> <p>Babine Watershed Monitoring Trust – report on monitoring Forest Stewardship Plans</p> <p>A project investigating the effectiveness of post-harvest retention of forest stand structure for maintaining biodiversity within sub-boreal spruce forests was completed in the BWMT study area. The work was presented at the BVRC seminar series at the beginning of the month.</p> <p>Forest Stewardship Plans should be included in the monitoring framework to see if they have results and strategies consistent with objectives.</p>
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Meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm. Next meeting 7:00 pm, December 18, 2017

Actions

Task	Due	Responsibility
The board is interested in a presentation on what climate change will bring and what the province will be doing to mitigate effects.	Next meeting	Karen
Ask Ben Weinstein about new slash burning and venting rules	Next meeting	Christophe
Cultivate a relationship with Newpro and ask about air quality plans	Ongoing	Christophe
Prepare an invoice to the MOF for all core activities from September to June	Next meeting	Ron
Come up with ideas on how to use the funding	March 1, 2017	Everyone
Write a cheque from the general account for \$1000 to replenish	January, 2018	Ron
Write a draft of two letters to MOF and circulate to board members for comment. One about the high volume of traffic on the Telkwa High Road and another about visual quality of cutblocks in the Reisetser area.	Draft by next meeting	Christophe
Set up presentation by Telkwa Coal	Next meeting or January	Ted