

Bulkley Valley Community Resource Board - Final Minutes

Mar 18, 2024

Present:

Directors: Ron, Sue, John, Anne, Dave Hooper

Guest: Dave Duncan

Public: Len Vanderstar, Bob Mitchell, Deb Wellwood, Kevin Tyler

Regrets: Directors: Ted and Eric, Public: Irena Wieland

Next Meeting: Apr 15, 7pm, Smithers Council Chambers, 2024

Meeting convened at 7:05pm

Acronyms:

- IPCA: Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas
- IGPCC: Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
- https://bvcrb.ca/images/uploads/documents/bvcrb_acro.pdf, for a full list of acronyms

Everyone in the room introduced themselves.

Ron volunteered to be the Chair.

Financial Report:

\$ 8500 in the account. There are no outstanding accounts other than Sue's billing.

In the past year we spent about \$3500.00./year for minimum operations.

We are not actively seeking funding.

Organizational:

Defer the approval of the February minutes until we have full complement of those that were in attendance. Dave Hooper withdraws his application as a Director. He regrets he doesn't have the time just now.

Presentation:

Dave Duncan, BC Timber Sales

Biodiversity and Wildlife: A Case Study.

David's presentation includes wildlife monitoring information and photos taken by BC Timber Sales for the past 2 years near Serb Creek or the Caas Tl'aat Kwah Drainage. David also describes some management options.

The board is not being asked for anything, the purpose of this presentation was to share information. Dave is not mentoring or training a replacement once he retires. He could not find a counterpart to bring to the presentation but there are others that have seen the presentation.

An excellent presentation, it is posted on line here at: https://bvcrb.ca/images/uploads/documents/March_18_2024_CRB_Pres_FINAL_Serb_Biodiversity_and_Wildlife_.pdf

Dave Duncan's Take Away:

Please check if there could be an upper limit to road density in the area.

Slide Summary:

- What has been assessed and by whom
- Bulkley LRMP management direction
- Indigenous management direction
- Old growth strategic review
- 4 wildlife cameras
- Old growth in the Serb
- Identified habitat and cultural features
- Species management concerns
- Road density and grizzly population management
- Plant species at the edge of their range, plant species at risk
- High value bird nesting habitat and fisher habitat
- Cost benefit analysis, models
- Valuation of carbon offsets and storage
- Climate change reugia
- Wilderness tourism
- Some management options

Gallery comments on slideshow:

- Moisture content of fogs generate certain lichens
- There are sledders on the Dennis West Rd, some present have seen new trails cut and used, 30 km near the top.
- The cabin near camera 3 is not legally there, despite an old public request to Lands to take it down. This means the area is not low intensity.
- Regulation ideas include spatial recognition of impact or intensity, day or weekly use quotas and updating of the winter RAMP.
- The wolverine needs a range of species to exist and maternal dens are very sensitive. They will move dens upon the slightest disturbance like tracks left by a snowshoer. There is no baseline information on wolverines.
- The goat on camera 3: Goat use of this trail is considered quite low in elevation for the goat. Is it going to mineralize? Camera 3 is in quite an old stand although it has small diameter trees. There was calcium near a cedar stand. Seepage and calcified tree bark indicate there is a mineral lick nearby.
- Does BC Timber Sales consider old growth seasonality and road density or just suitable habitat for ecosystem health? Low density road development is quite low here but can there be an upper limit to road density to guide future road development?

- Effective decommissioning of roads needs to be planned at the start, this means not just consideration of road density but active road density, and the impact of strategies to restore the habitat like pulling debris back onto the road.
- What assurances will there be about management?
- Cameras indicate that ungulates alternate usage on these trails with grizzlies and other animals.
- A 30m riparian reserve (+20m) is so little compared to the 100m OW guideline. At these limits you can't make a cut block. All are agreed one size fits all is not a good solution to creating reserve boundaries either.
- There was mention of a roaming wolf pack in the past and its distances covered.
- The Serb Creek area is critical to the entire trout and steelhead population. We need a thorough high flow risk analysis before development.
- BCTS has recommended the Serb for a deferral, this is great for the Serb but not for low elevation old growth areas.
- Cost benefit analysis: Patchworks is pitched as the superior product for managing long term habitat. It was also suggested there be a structured decision making consequences table included in management planning.
- Problems selling the carbon offsets are many but one is the biggest purchaser being the BC Province. There are gold standard offsets, under the table offsets and more nuances to this market.
- The oxy moron "wilderness tourism". Skiing is as disturbing as snowmobiling for wolverines and others. Even small amounts or low impact recreation requires planning, location, connectivity to lower elevations, density etc.
- What is the timber supply impact? No answer, a rough calculation had concluded roughly 250 000 cubic meters.
- Sitting on a board is different from having influence on a board and consulting with the general public.
- The Serb has been recommended for a deferral. This is a relative term that may only last a few years so it is important to know now, the management direction or development plan on maintaining the values. All plans need to be on a multi year rotation.

Updates to Action Items: (Table on last page)

1. An invitation to present was offered to Chris Schell, M18_24. His response was he was awaiting deliverables that will feed into a regional prioritization for Conservation Lands. Any potential polygons in the Bulkley Valley will be a part of that.

2. Ask the OW does the government still have a freeze on these ADA's? Are they active on this issue? Answer from Leanne H, OW Referral Coordinator: no idea!

A quick survey of the BC Province led me here:

- <https://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/resources/land-use-planning/>.
- Johnathon Stevenson - out of his purvey, he is responsible for private land ownership only.
- Provincial Agricultural Land Commission, Emailed M18,24 <https://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/contact/>, Michael McBurnie

- the CRB could contact the Treaty Commission Office
- Jane Woods of Front Counter BC, 250 876-6702 says there is a very little chance of success though you can apply. You would need letters from First Nations supporting the transfer.
 - She says there are no new grazing licences being issued at this time.
 - She says there are no lease options available to purchase now but there could be exceptions made like in the case of a housing crisis.
 - Grazing licences are longer term than leases and have stronger language around security.
 - Eric's may have been the last inquiry into this possibility.

3. Anne is rethinking a letter to First Nations and will send some comments by email.

Referrals:

none today

Other Discussions:

1. The LRMP was never implemented by the Province. It's been successfully used to stop some access routes and loop roads but otherwise it hasn't been successful.
2. Dave H is working and observing the Lake Babine Nation establish free to grow guidelines like stems per ha and connectivity recommendations.
3. Keeping Forestry vital as an industry includes keeping habitat viable.
4. The Thye Mountain Ski Trail Association was informed we were informed and in favour of the logging of the WHMA. Apparently none of our previous recommendations were transferred to the Association or former Wetzinkwa Wood Lot Manager Auroura Lavender. We should reach out to the Province once again and ask for an update on the status of these lands and remind them before these lands are flagged and listed to sell timber licences, they should undergo extensive planning.
5. We need to demand a fair open process to land use planning, the NDP insisted they wanted community direction in 2021 but now they have intensified and no longer want open dialogue.

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.

Action Items on the next page.

Open Action Items

task	who	date	status
Deb Wellwood would like a copy of the Hilltop Agreement. Can anyone provide it?	all	Mar 2024	open
Start a spreadsheet of tangible examples for FLP improvements. Networking with former members, foresters and other groups will help nail these values down. Scope - forest based, corridors - how can we improve management.	Anne	Jan 2024	open
A letter to First Nations to help maintain a biodiversity plan in functional Old Growth, draft copy found here: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1M1SkBk2zfxGbWOB RJtR4OLBIkg8oMplie5Rh47stk5Q/edit	All, Anne	May 2023 Jan 2024, Mar 2024	open
Provide an example of true cost accounting over longer periods.	Anne	May 2024	open
Can there be an upper limit on road density when it comes to FLP's?	David Duncan	Mar 18, 24	open
Respond to Dean Daly re: a tour of his woodlot in June and draft a letter with regard to the April minutes.	sue	April 20, 2024	open
Invite Jon Penninga to the Board cc and invite Lori Halls as well.	Sue	Feb 2024	open
Keep recruiting by word of mouth.	All	Mar/April 2023	open