

# BVCRB-Bulkley Valley Community Resource Board

## Final Minutes

**Date:** Mon. Sept. 21, 2020, Skype for Business

**Present:** Bob Mitchell, Christoph Dietzfelbinger, Ted Vanderwart, Matt Sear, Jeff McKay, Sue Brookes, John Fisher and guests: Cam Bently, Jeven Hanchard, Patrick Furguson, Bobby Love

**Absent:** Ron Vanderstar, Bryan Swansberg, Eric Becker

**Chair:** Matt

**Recording:** Sue

Next Meeting Date: Oct. 19, 2020 7pm

Matt called the meeting to order at 7:15pm.

Matt made introductions of those on line. Ron sent his regrets.

A motion to approve the June 15 meeting minutes was seconded and approved.

Matt will continue to provide Skype for next meetings as needed. Suggestions regarding in person meetings in other venues resulted in a few action items. The next meeting location is to be confirmed by email.

**AI\*\*** Ted will check the BV Exploration Group meeting room

**AI\*\*** John will ask about a genealogy room at Muhiem.

Please let Matt and Bob know results.

No additions to the agenda.

### **ACRONYMS:**

Agricultural Wildlife Zones AWZ

Wildlife Habitat Management Areas WHMA's

Use, Recreation and Enjoyment of the Public Reserve UREP

Agricultural Designated Area ADA

Community Resiliency Investment CRI

Crown land wildfire risk reduction CLWRR

Wildland Urban Interface WUI

### **1 Guest: Bobby Love RPF, Director Authorizations, Skeena Region, FLNRORD**

Background:

- Bob refers to over 1600 historical AWZ's and other special management zones or land reserves (UREP's, WHMA's) sometimes as Section 16's, protected under the Lands Act, Section 15, 16 and 17

- it became an administrative burden to process new applications for industrial proposals when every second app. crossed one of these reserves. Certain land reserves needed higher legal status and achieved this, others languished and were forgotten. Provincial staff didn't want reserve lands impeding other interests in the land. Bob's department undertook to source out the agency or title holder, request an updated rationale for keeping reserve status, consult with ecosystems, fish and wildlife, parks and rec. and then decided to cancel,

amend or extend the terms of these reserves. Over the years these reserve lands amounted to 25% of the land in the Skeena region. Terms of reserve lands were also reduced from 30 years. Terms went from 8 - 15 years and rational for renewal were formally established. The portfolio become much more robust and detailed based. As such it can be used to delineate terms of tenure by land use applicants. This was called the Crown Land Reserve Review Project.

- reserve status' never did protect the land from mining or exploration, nor do many designations lend it legislative protections that could prevent forestry activities

Discussion:

- a director indicates there was justification for reserve lands suggested in the LRMP and what of those lands that are now removed?

response: anything that was designated thru that process should have been investigated thoroughly in the departmental review process. It's status would remain or it should have had a higher form of designation assigned.

- another director asks how to get a higher form of designation on LRMP land reserves , is an ADA a higher form? Not sure of the answer.

- he also asked if CORE eco systems show up and they do. Bob's staff does see the designation through a technical review and will try to see if these concerns can be mitigated or accommodated.

- the first director's question is with regard to designations being removed despite the department's diligence. A parcel along the Bulkley was given as example

- another director indicated that landscape corridors and higher level designations are very much respected when people come to apply for use. How does this reconcile with what we heard from Fish and Wildlife people with regard to removal of so many designations despite known values. Bob responds that these people and departments have been involved since 2016 and input on the process. Despite the known values status can't remain for 30 years without a rational basis. There was some debate about the competing internal interests of government.

- agricultural wildlife zones - how many are remaining?

AI\*\* Bobby Love will respond after a look up

- a director had problems using Skype, and moved to teleconference but complained that using digital platforms you cannot get credible governance by committee, for this you need to meet in person

- a director asks is there a dbase available where these designations existed in the past that lists current status. Bob says yes he can reference these.

- Bob cannot look up whether all designations from the LRMP were made into land reserves. It's possible there may be discrepancies in the process where certain lands were thought to be identified as reserves after the LRMP process but never were. Bob can look up specific properties and report on their current status.

## 2 Presentation: Skeena Stikine Natural Resource District - Wildfire Risk reduction, FLNRORD

Presenter: Patrick Furguson RPF from Bulkley Valley Wildfire Preparedness and Prevention Group Supported By: Cam Bently, RPF - Resource Manager DSS, Jevan Hanchard RPF, District Manager DSS

Summary:

- Patrick is to help implementation of fuel management projects, he is assessing risk and looking at high level planning objectives.

Community Resiliency Investment (CRI) program:

- to reduce the risk of wildfires and mitigate their impacts on BC communities

Two main streams:

- community funding and supports
  - o Communities Regional Districts and Private land (eg FireSmart)
- crown land wildfire risk reduction (CLWRR)
  - o Program that Patrick is work for
    - § Focus on the Crownland/Wildland interface

CLWRR has 3 phases:

1. Planning - Wildfire Risk Reduction Tactical Planning - Risk and Treatment unit ID in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI).
  - a. 5000 foot level
  - b. Look for stand treatment candidate areas
  - c. Consider landscape level fuel breaks
2. Site Prescriptions - Professional document addressing higher level objectives and risk reduction objectives.
  - a. Jevan: Could conceive of needing to make trade-offs between higher level plan objectives and need for risk reduction.
3. Operations - Can include a variety of initial and maintenance treatments. (Pruning, surface fuel removal, thinning, prescribed burning, clearcut)
  - a. Some examples of what treatments could look like eg Telkwa treatment area. Call lake.

Maps

- one large area of landscape level overview was shown with the Wildland/Urban Interface (WUI) area shown.
- a smaller scale of a potential treatment area on Seymore Ridge.

Discussion:

- a member asked if they had an Ecologist on staff?
  - o No specific Ecologist, but a biologist on staff with full access to Ecosystems staff and resources within FLRNO/MOE (David Skerik group)
- discussion around the Seymore Ridge area:
  - o Is in a CORE ecosystem

- Thinking will be a variety of treatments, though low impact eg pruning limbs to 2m, some surface fuel removal.
- A member mentioned the BV Backpackers have attempted some work there, very labour intensive. Suggested the group reach out to them as well as the Smithers Mountain Bike Association.

- a member suggested there needs to be a close tie to what happens on private land to what happens on crown land. Crown Land may be at risk due to increasing fire hazards on neighbouring private lands. How is this mitigated as part of a holistic landscape? Their response was: this is where the fire smart assessments come into play.

- they will try to make recommendations about engaging neighbourhoods and fire guards

- a member suggested if prescribed burning is used, that air quality particulate is a concern and suggested the group be in touch with the BV Airshed Management Society (BVLD AMS). A few members favour chipping and/or leaving the fallen log over burning, this is already already in the BV and our guests acknowledged our Director's concern that a whole log is not a wildfire risk

- climate change is not in scope in this program. Rather the focus is on fuel (biomass) and building resiliency to wildfire over a couple decades. It is considered over the longer term. there's a temporal separation between a short term reduction strategy and application of long term strategies based on the science of ecology, biodiversity and feedback loops...

- Planning won't stop a major conflagration in an exceptionally dry year, but may serve to buy time for orderly evacuation in that event
- Provides more options on the landscape for firefighters to stage a fight from.
- Provides areas of safety

- Jevan -- Sees CRB as representing the community. A member suggested, that we cannot take on that role, rather can be a soundboard of various interests. The ministries have to do the out reach themselves

- looking at the 5000ft level starts with looking at the highway 16 corridor. They are considering fire impediments and hazards

- when they get down to the site level from the 5000 ft level they begin things like contract procurement, coming up with a site level prescription, they want to identify the values from the high level that apply on the site. Other activities to occur would have plans highlighting how they are consistent with the higher level plan

Conclusion:

- these folks will be sending out an invitation to groups like ours - stakeholders to input on the process

- the short term strategy is reduction, essentially a manipulation of biomass on the land in order to reduce fire intensity, this is a resiliency process that takes place over a couple decades...

- there's a temporal separation between a short term reduction strategy and application of long term strategies based on the science of ecology, biodiversity and feedback loops...

- a director asks about chipping and yes altering the state of the biomass - it's a viable solution and is already used as fire mitigation in the valley

### **3 Next Meeting:**

Review of presentations tonight.

Review of the winter RAMP process

### **4 Other News**

- how do we recruit more people on the board?...pay for an ad campaign, send letter to stakeholders, posts on Facebook and other sites
- dissatisfaction with the working of the meeting - Skype doesn't work for all

AI\*\* Matt to contact Eric and get some news, agenda item for next meeting. We will table this till the fall.

AI\*\* Matt to recruit a GIS recruit to look at the WHMA's and get a visual report of those as well as those identified in the LRMP

AI\*\* Sue to review member recruitment letter/posters, get feedback from Matt/Bob and send out mass mail

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm.