

Bulkley Valley Community Resources Board (BVCRB) Minutes

Date: January 15, 2018. Meeting convened at 7:00 pm

Location: Smithers Town Office

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

Absent: Debra Flemming, Christoph Dietzfelbinger, Bryan Swansburg, Bob Mitchell

Recording: Laura Guillon (BVRC)

List of Abbreviations

ADA - agricultural development area

OIC - order in council

LRMP – Land and Resource Management Plan

RMD - resource management

WHMA - Wildlife Habitat Management Area

WMA – Wildlife Management Area

Item	Discussion
Introduction /Agenda Review	Agenda accepted with revisions
Past Minutes	December 2017 minutes accepted with a few minor changes
Presentations	<p>Update to the WHMAs by Anne Hetherington of FLNRO</p> <p>Summary: The provided documents “Bulkley Valley Wildlife Habitat Management Areas and Fish & Wildlife Reserves” and “Ministry of Forests, Land and Natural Resource Operations Decision Note” show a case for moving the legislative authority for these areas from the Lands Act to the Wildlife Act.</p> <p>These areas were part of the Bulkley Valley LRMP that had been bypassed several times before. These remaining packages of crown land were looked at individually in detail to decide how to divide into woodlots, subdivisions, crop areas and wildlife areas. If site soil inspections showed capability for crops went to cereal production. 30% of the lands had grazing or gravel pits already. There were problems with the previous method of a referral process and a lag in updating the Lands database (some areas did not show up and were found in hindsight). When the LRMP was created, the remaining areas designated as WHMA’s went to the Lands Act and not the Forest Act.</p> <p>This proposal brings all those areas that were not addressed in the LRMP together into a package for a management plan. The advantages of being under the Wildlife Act is annual funding (fencing, planning, clean up and management etc.) which would not be available otherwise, putting the areas under a comprehensive umbrella plan for habitat purposes, long-term security and higher visibility when it comes to referrals. These stepping stones for wildlife through the valley are important. The new plan maintains the intent and allows other activities that are</p>

consistent with the plan.

Under the Wildlife Act, there is real consequence for disturbing the area in comparison to the Lands Act. The restrictions will not change; motorized equipment is not supposed to operate in the WHMAs and those who do serious environmental harm could be charged. Existing use consistent with the plan will be grandfathered in. This would be less restrictive than what is currently in place in the Telkwa Mountains. A lot of the areas have trails and recreational use. If there are conflicts (eg. a footpath along a steep south slope displacing wildlife) funding is available for assessment and re-routing. There is one area along a pipeline that is used by the ATV community that could be of concern. Such a circumstance has happened previously and an agreement was made with a local ATV club that they are allowed to use the trail but will be responsible for maintaining it. An on the ground joint inspection would occur and funds could be obtained to build a decent trail.

Many of the board agree the plan looks beneficial with no drawbacks. They support the concept of defending the areas for wildlife habitat. The board has asked what public consultation has happened and how would existing uses of the areas be sought out? In answer, there are site specific notes from liaison with the public (two public consultations have occurred for the WHMA's) and there should not be any ignorance to the regulations in place. A board member has noted that signs are up in the areas, but often get ripped down. Any further consultations would need funding from this change. There will be zero changes to rules, just an administration change to an office that has more money available. These areas should not be taken for granted. A lot of time has been put into this plan, lots of consultation and it has been reaffirmed in a public review process.

Should these areas be considered as parks? No, the areas are not park-like (e.g. grazing and gravel pits) and not likely to be converted. Parks has removed them from their mandate. Should this plan have been referred to the board first? No, this was already put forward and extensively been a part of the LRMP with more than 20 years of public process and multiple public reviews.

What does FLRNO need from the CRB? It would be helpful to have a letter from the CRB supporting the idea to strengthen the case.

**Action: Anne will send the map in a shape file to Eric.
The CRB will decide on a letter of support in one week.**

Presentation on Climate Change by Karen Price

The last three years were globally the hottest on record. Last year was the driest in record in Southern BC. Since 1895, the global temperature has increased three degrees. The 2055 projections are for more rain and 30% less snow. The summers are likely to be warmer and drier because of the decreased snow melt creating drought stress. There will be increased disturbance with likely tree loss in some sites. The high water temp will affect fish and we do not know if they will be able to adapt. Glacial streams will be the refuge.

	<p>Warmer winters will increase disturbance from infestation (e.g. satin moth and leaf miner are already impacting the Aspen). The area may lose Aspen, Pine or Willow. With less snow there will be more ground freezing. Wetter springs will increase flooding and rusts on leaves (cranberries).</p> <p>As Smithers is on the edge of the coastal and interior weather patterns projections are difficult; what we will see is increased extremes. For example, five times as many days will be at or above 25°C in summer, which could be an issue for fish. Increased freeze and thaw cycles can increase predation. When seasonal timing is off, there can be surprises. For example, Goshawks chicks are usually feathered before the black fly population begins to expand, but when the flies come earlier the chicks are weakened and diseased.</p> <p>How can we prepare and adapt? Using a tree selection tool to figure out what our best bet is for planting and relaxing free to grow requirements which restrict species planting will increase diversity and strengthen forests. The government needs to incorporate climate change in decisions.</p> <p>Action: Karen will send the presentation to the board.</p>
<p>Ongoing Business</p>	<p>Review of the Telkwa High Road Hauling Letter</p> <p>Canfor/LJ did minor improvements to the road by seal coating near Moricetown to help with dust and logged a difficult corner to improve the sight lines. The last sentence needs the most oversight (what are we asking?). Add in that Canfor/LJ should have asked for an extended period; the CRB have been led to believe that an extension would have been granted. They should have asked for permission rather than forgiveness of the CRB and public. In the future, the CRB would prefer they come up with a solution before exceeding the 50 thousand in the agreement.</p> <p>How does FLNRO propose to ensure that the limits are not exceeded in the future and community agreements are adhered to? Can we ensure community involvement as part of the project planning? Can they ensure that multiple licensees maintain a total below the agreement?</p> <p>Action: Finish letter, send to BVRC to put on a letterhead</p> <p>Financial Review</p> <p>The CRB is currently in arrears with the BVRC for \$900. There is \$2000 in the account and \$2200 in the summer RAMP project.</p> <p>The operating expenses invoice was accepted by the MOE. It should take 21 working days after the processing date of January 4th. We are covered for the year up to \$8000. We could contemplate the RAMP using the rest of the MOE funds and Wetzinkwa grant, which we only have a one year term.</p> <p>Action: Eric will get a hold of Brandy about the summer RAMP</p>

New Business	<p>Communication Structure</p> <p>The referrals process is inefficient. Referrals come in when an application for land use goes to the government; they check the list of who has interest in reviewing proposals and send it to the CRB. There is usually six week for a decision so we need to get review them in a timely manner. Currently they have been going to Spark, bounced to Patti, who forwards them to Eric and Ted. It is not appropriate to be signing in with personal BCIDs.</p> <p>Eric has set up a Gmail account to receive the referrals and will give access to the BVRC. They can forward them to the board and add referrals to the agenda. Communications should go through BVRC so nothing falls through the cracks.</p> <p>Action: Eric will send email and password to the BVRC and the board.</p> <p>May meeting</p> <p>Stat is the third week (21st), move meeting to the 14th.</p> <p>Action: Update the website</p>
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Meeting adjourned at 9:45 pm. Next meeting 7:00 pm, February 19th

Actions

Task	Due	Responsibility
Send the map in a shape file to Eric		Anne
The CRB will decide on a letter of support for FLNRO's WHMA plan	1 week	All
Send the climate change presentation to the board		Karen
Finish letter, send to BVRC to put on a letterhead	1 week	All
Connect with Brandy Hughes about the summer RAMP		Eric
Send referral email to the BVRC and the board	1 week	Eric
Update the May meeting date on the CRB website	1 week	BVRC