

Bulkley Valley Community Resources Board (BVCRB) Minutes

Date: November 20th, 2018 - Meeting convened at 7:00pm

Location: Smithers Town Office

Board members in attendance: Karen Price, Eric Becker, Ron Vanderstar, John Fisher, Ted Vanderwart, Bob Mitchell, Matt Sear, Bryan Swansberg

Guests: Leigh-Ann Fenwick (BVRC), Ryan Holmes (FLNRO), Roxy Hirshfield (FLNRO), Daphne Hart (member of the public, "Voices for Good Air Committee")

Absent: Christoph Dietzfelbinger, Cor Van Der Muelen

Recording: Emily Hashemi (BVRC)

Acronyms: BCWS (BC Wildfire Service)

| Item | Discussion |
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| Intro/ Agenda Review | Agenda accepted. Other topics <ul style="list-style-type: none">Trail and website database update – Eric |
| Past Minutes | October minutes approved. |
| Discussion | <p>Presentation to the Board from BC Wildfire Service – Ian Meier: Acting ED of BC Wildfire Service</p> <p>A look at the landscape: how forest policy is impacting fire behavior and the changes that need to be done. Forest fires have always been a natural resource issue, but have now become a public safety issue.</p> <p>Long-range forecasts predict what we saw in 2017 - fires are not getting better. BCWS wants to open up discussion around forest policy issues and re-introduction of new forest policies.</p> <p><u>Key Drivers of Fire behavior:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Insect and disease infestationChange in harvesting practices, such as process at the stump, has shifted forest policy responseImpact to fiber-timber supply <p>Bottom line: 1.3 million hectares were burnt in 2018; we can't afford to continue on that level. It requires a joint effort - all of BC needs to be a part of the solution. The old way of fire suppression is becoming more and more out of date.</p> |

Altered Harvesting Practices:

- Fiber utilization – how can we get the fiber into a facility?
- Pre and post fuel loading
- Debris Piles (burn the block). Burning piles does not reduce fire spread

Impacts:

- Unhealthy landscape – fuel loading continues to become more of an issue. Starting to impact wildlife.
- Impacts to investments
- Impacts to land base (intensity of burns) – losing future productivity
- Limited response options – BCWS under a lot of pressure to increase resources and response times.
- Research – BCWS is attempting to make research and data collection around BC a major focus. There is a need to collect data from this province. BCWS is trying to gain research capacity by looking for long-term relationships with universities, research centers, etc. Research from all arenas: social, economical, psychological (mental health strategies for staff and communities impacted), as well as efficacy of policies and methods.
- Added workload for many arms of government (Ministry of Health, Forest, etc.) is hard to quantify. There is a lot of economic lost opportunity that needs to get factored into the research.
- Additional challenges: the last two years have also been flood seasons. As a result, both flood and fire seasons are now overlapping and becoming more intense.

Bottom line: These impacts are far reaching. Fires are raging more than ever before. What years ago was “worst ever seen” has now become the “new normal”.

The amount of smoke across BC in summer 2018 = worst air quality than Beijing. On one day, the smoke in the air was the equivalent to a major volcanic eruption.

Summer 2018: Alberta looked into suing the BC government because of effects of smoke in their province.

Work In Progress:

The Fire danger class developed in the 70s hasn't been adjusted for changes in conditions. This needs to be updated.

BCWS is working on how to bring in and use artificial intelligence when combatting fires and collecting data.

BCWS is working with Airbus Canada on a high altitude drone that can be piloted. Possible to use as detection and communication platform. Could also be used for data collection to help inform and make better decisions.

Options:

- Critical infrastructure – economic corridors, major highways, ports: what are the impacts to BC?
- Communities need to look at their watersheds and develop plans
- Options for existing landscapes and options for moving forward (connecting blocks, protecting investments, etc.)

Bottom line: Research is critical in order to better understand the future of wildfire management.

Abbott-Chapman Report: 2017 fire season

Report of 108 recommendations, 67 directly linked to Ministry of Forest. BC Wildfire Service has started to address and take action on over 40 of them.

Leigh-Ann Fenwick: ED at BVRC addresses the audience

- BVRC is a not-for-profit organization; mission is to support research for better stewardship of our natural resources and natural resource management in the 21st century.
- BVRC planning a conference on the subject of forestry and community resilience based on 2017-18 fire seasons: *Landscape level forest and fire management for ecosystem and community resilience in a new climate.*
- Working with conference planning team. Date: April 2019 in Burns Lake.
- Conference to include a two-day technical session with one-day workshop/community outreach.

- Themes: adaption and resiliency, fire modeling, climate change, ecosystem and community recovery.
- Keynote speakers to date: chief Marine Chapman, Paul Hesberg; a lot of interest in connecting with other BC scientists and researchers.
- Tone for the conference is positive and collaborative – what future we want and how we can achieve this future.
- Possible outcomes: a report to the public as well as an action plan for resource priorities and needs.

Implementation Report: Modernized Land Use Planning – FLNRO (Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development)

Presenters:

Roxy Hirshfield: Land & Resource Specialist
 Ryan Holmes: Director of Regional Initiatives

Modernized Land Use Planning

- Developed by the province and indigenous governments in response to emerging opportunities and challenges in the management of public lands and natural resources
- Calling for a need for a renewed program
- Many historic land use plans build in the 90s are becoming outdated and no longer relevant

Intends to:

- Working to advance reconciliation efforts with indigenous peoples, which has been successful and getting better
- Provide economic clarity that supports community
- Respond to changing social and environmental conditions (caribou, water sustainability, wildfire, etc.)
- Continue to build public trust and confidence in the stewardship of BC's natural resources

What is different this time?

- **Formerly:** limited engagement with First Nations governments without prejudice to the treaty process.
Currently: partnership with FN governments and integration with BC's reconciliation framework - following

the principles of the UN Declaration for Indigenous rights.

- **Formerly:** Consensus building through multi-stakeholders. **Currently:** looking to have more targeted engagement with stakeholders that really need to be involved in those conversations.
- **Formerly:** Land use direction primarily was for the forest sector. **Currently:** need to integrate this across the natural resource sector and bring them together in the decision making process (include forest, water, mining, and species at risk).
- **Formerly:** Little integration with resource monitoring and evaluation programs. **Currently:** CE and Integrated Monitoring programs support plan development, implementation, and monitoring.

Program Design:

- Partnerships with FN – advancing our reconciliation agreement
- Responsive
- Scalability – fitting the purpose. What are we planning for, *specifically*?

Scalable:

- **Comprehensive:** full scope of land use plan development across a large area
- **Component Based:** shorter process that focuses on limited set of values or issues across a large area
- **Issue Specific:** focused process for a single value in a small area that results in a specific plan

Bottom line: much more targeted, direct approach.

Specifics for the Bulkley Region:

- The recently completed Practices and Projects Implementation Report are updates to 2016 report.
- Practices report: monitors LRMP strategies related to ongoing activities of which are implemented through legislation, policy or professional reliance.
- Project Reports: monitors LRMP objectives and strategies related to discrete activities called Projects.

FLNRO planning to release report to CRB as a draft in December,

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| | <p>to be reviewed by the CRB. They welcome comments. They plan to submit the report at the end of the fiscal year.</p> <p>Regarding Bulkley LRMP report: not making any changes that haven't been seen before, simply adding anecdotes around modernized land use planning.</p> |
| <p>Ongoing Business</p> | <p>Review Answers from Telkwa Coal</p> <p>Comments on Telkwa coal questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ron: there's a lot of issues with the coal mine that are coming to light that will come out with environmental assessments. • Issues that they are still unsure of. A lot of areas that they are still working on. <p>Action: Ted to inquire when would be a good time to have another meeting with Telkwa Coal. What are their timelines? Request to keep CRB on the list as a stakeholder.</p> <p>Trail and website database update – Eric</p> <p>Sean at Spark Design plans to update the website. Approximately \$2500 to setup the database and get the website up and running.</p> <p>Trails & Rec are committed to helping out with the site.</p> <p>Estimate = \$5000 for the whole project, including website and data content input.</p> |
| <p>New Business</p> | <p>Financials – Ron</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Running off \$5000 from last year • \$1000 to BVRC costs • In total: \$4890, of which the summer RAMP still contains \$2300 and operation costs = \$2590 |

Meeting adjourned at 9:30pm. Next meeting 7:00pm, December 17th, 2018.

Actions:

| Task | Due | Responsibility |
|---|------------|-----------------------|
| Review Report from FLNRO once sent. Comments welcome. | | All |
| Inquire when would be a good time to have another meeting with Telkwa Coal. What are their timelines? Request to keep CRB on the list as a stakeholder. | | Ted |
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