

Bulkley Valley Community Resources Board (BVCRB) Minutes

Date: December 18, 2017. Meeting convened at 7:00 pm

Location: Smithers Town Office

Board members in attendance: Eric Becker (Chair), Cor van der Meulen, John Fisher, Christoph Dietzfelbinger, Matt Sear, Bryan Swansburg (recording)

Absent: Karen Price, Ron Vanderstar (Treasurer), Ted Vanderwart, Debra Flemming

Item	Discussion
Introduction /Agenda Review	Agenda accepted.
Past Minutes	November 2017 minutes accepted.
Ongoing Items	<p>New Provincial Slash Burning Regulations</p> <p>The proposed new forestry slash burning regulations have been published on line Old: http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/34_145_93 New: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/environment/natural-resource-policy-legislation/legislation-regulation/open-burning-smoke-regulation/openburningsmokereg.pdf</p> <p>Without a thorough analysis of the proposal it is difficult to determine exactly how the proposed changes are and it is difficult to determine the effects on any specific location. However, the new regulations are perceived by the Board to be a lowering of standards; and by extension it would be assumed that the public would have the same perception.</p> <p>For example, the new regulations specify a burning distance (10 or 20 km) from populated areas. This does not take into account wind direction on the day and is probably unnecessarily constraining to industry on some days while on other days insufficient for town air quality.</p> <p>Currently the Forestry companies are unlikely to relax their own policies as a Public Relations benefit; but relying on corporate goodwill may not be effective with future changes of ownership and economic considerations.</p> <p>The deadline for public input has passed but we on the BVCRB feel that these new regulations do not appear to be in the public interest. Rather than just saying 'no' we discussed possible options.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. For household wood heat the recommendation is to allow wood to dry for over a year. Implementing this in the forest is impossible due to the hazard of leaving piles of the previous year's brush during times of high fire hazard. b. Leaving coarse woody debris on the cutblock. This could be done more economically by backhauling debris from the loading point back onto the cutblock with skidders, or by processing the trees at the stump. This is recommended by many forest biologists; but does leave the terrain more

difficult for replanting.

- c. Portable burners – this has obvious logistical issues but would vastly improve air quality.
- d. What do other countries do? Open slash burning seems inconceivable in European nations.

Any of these 'solutions' would increase the costs of logging and can be easily calculated. Benefits of leaving more organic matter and/or standing live trees in cutblocks have poorly defined economic benefits involving (for example) Fungal mycorrhizae, organic debris recycling, wildlife, reducing replanting requirements, the head start from smallish trees (e.g. 10 years old instead of seedlings).

The current Bulkley Valley smoke management plan appears to be a reasonable compromise between the costs to industry and the benefits to the human population. Would it not be sensible to allow these regional agreements to supersede the provincial regulations? Or more sensibly, to avoid regional duplication of effort can this type of regional agreement be implemented at the Provincial level?

Suggestion to do a field trip to the Wetzinkwa forest after the thaw to see the difference between processing at stump and the alternative, adjoining operation.

Action: Bryan will generate a letter on this matter to the contact on the new regulation page.

Hauling on Telkwa High Road

A draft letter to the ministry of forests outlining the CRB's concerns with hauling on the Highroad was discussed. The board feels that Ministry should takes steps for compliance; pending a new agreement which would consider the change in number of leaseholders, forestry lots and other changes that have occurred in the past 15 years or so.

Action: Matt will tidy up this letter in preparation for sending it to the Forest Ministry

Visual Effects of Logging

In the original LRMP there was mention of keeping visual effects of logging minimized from the Highway 16 corridor, Telkwa High Road and the Bulkley River. This requirement has over the years been modified to one or more specific viewpoints; and even that does not seem to have data to back up anything in the agreement. The board would like to determine if, when and how any of this agreement has been followed.

Action: Christoph and Bob will plan on following up on this matter.

Discussion of funding for the Board: Optimistic about possibly seeing some funding

	from the provincial government. Having a source of knowledge of what grants are available would be useful, perhaps we should discuss this with Smithers town & their grant writer.
New Business	<p>Discussion of air quality sensors installed in the Bulkley Valley and now on line.</p> <p>Discussion of a presence at the Minerals North conference in Houston in April.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Probably not a good fit for the Board. <p>Next month:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anne Hetherington and Len Vanderstar are booked for a presentation. Karen Price presentation on Climate Change. <p>Action: Bryan will assemble minutes for this meeting & forward to the participants for initial editing</p>

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm. Next meeting 7:00 pm, January 15, 2018

Actions

Task	Due	Responsibility
Write letter on slash burning	Next meeting	Bryan
Tidy up the letter concerning hauling on the Telkwa High Road in preparation for sending it to the Forest Ministry	Next meeting	Matt
Determine if, when and how any of the agreement on visual effects on logging has been followed.	Next meeting	Christophe, Bob
Discuss with town and the grant writer what grants will be available in the future	TBA	TBA
Forward minutes to the board for editing		Bryan