

Bulkley Valley Community Resources Board (BVCRB) Minutes Addendum

Date: June 19, 2017. Meeting convened at 7:00pm

Location: Smithers Town Office

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

Absent: Christoph Dietzfelbinger, Bryan Swansburg, Debra Flemming

Recorders: Laura Guillon (BVRC)

Guests: Alan Baxter (Presenter), Bob Mitchell (Presenter), members of the public

Item	Discussion
<p>New Business</p>	<p>Discussion led by Bob Mitchell on Slash Burning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last fall, companies received a venting index which was good and lit their slash piles. Venting crashed and the valley saw 5-6 days of thick smoke. People were concerned; a group called VOICES FOR GOOD AIR came up with recommendations (report emailed to members). Addendum: In the section “New Business” on the discussion led by Bob Mitchell he asserted that “venting crashed, and the valley saw 5-6 days of thick smoke”. This assertion was incorrect, or at least hyperbolic. The smoke was in the valley for the day and that night of the burn due unforeseen weather. However, the over subsequent two days the venting was good as per the forecast, and the smoke in the valley cleared out. • Slash is left over wood from logging that is piled up. An enormous amount is accumulated, approximately 10 mill tons slash/year and most is burnt. The numbers of piles in the Bulkley are estimated at 20,000, with 400,000 total in BC, which release greenhouse gases (GHG), (1 kg wood ~2kg CO₂) and smoke when burnt. Approximately 20 mill tons of CO₂ is released by slash burning, which is equal to the total amount released from transportation in the province. • Currently slash burning is Exempt from BC Carbon tax (recommending a carbon tax) although the International committee of climate change says forestry is carbon neutral. • Next 20-30 years is crucial for GHG. Smoke inhalation = health problems. • Alternative ways to get rid of slash (convert to biochar (like charcoal), burying, stacking, and pellets). • Voices for Good Air recommend a moratorium on slash burning or a carbon tax on wood burnt as slash. • <u>Board Comment:</u> Decomposition of the wood will release the same amount of GHG over time. This will not accomplish the goal if decomposition releases GHG anyway. <u>Answer:</u> Slash Burning is the immediate release of CO₂ and does make a difference in the short term <30 yrs. • Risk of wildfire is a factor (first 4-5 years especially) • Have the health costs been quantified? Actually the effects of breathing smoke are quantified but not specifically smoke from slash burning. <u>Board Comment:</u> How would this affect the industry? Could they just absorb the cost and not change?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Comments from Alan Baxter</u>: Switching from slash burning to another method has been a push for a long time. Different methods have been tried and industry is taking this seriously. There are usually alternative methods to use some of the slash. Trying to keep revenue neutral is a big point. We have been dealing with the slash for so long (over 50 years); it is hard to know how leaving the piles will affect wildfires. There is some research on MPB stands showing the early risk might not be as bad as thought.• No action asked of CRB, just a presentation of information• Action: BVRC - Send report to new BVCRB members
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