

BV Community Resource Board – Draft Minutes

Sept. 16, 2024

Present:

Directors: John, Anne, Ted, Eric Secretary: Sue
Guests: Lee Boland and Seth Van Varseveld
Public: Irena Wieland, Jay Gilden of the BV Stewardship Coalition
Regrets: Jim Deward expressed interest but was not present
Director: Ron

Next Meeting: Oct 21, 7pm, Smithers Council Chambers, 2024

Meeting convened at 7:05pm

Chair: Ted Vanderwart

Everyone in the room introduced themselves.

Organizational:

Motions

1. Motion to approve [April 2024 minutes](#).
Motion to approve by Ted, Anne seconded.
2. Motion to approve the [letter to Glen Buhr](#) re: Dean Daly's concern about ADA development.
Defer, correction and all Directors have not seen it.
3. Motion to approve the [draft letter to the OW re: Forest Landscape Planning and Old-growth Deferral Areas Assessment Request](#)
Anne to revise slightly and resend. All in favour.
4. Motion to approve the The formation of a Steering Committee to work through the Forest Landscape Plan process. As encouraged by the [Minister in his letter to Anne of June 17, 2024](#)
All in favour.
The idea of a steering committee is generally supported by Directors. We should now poll current and past members with forestry expertise, willing to sit on the committee.

Organizational Business:

1. **SMBA** - we commend you for coming and thank-you.
 - Round the Mountain - the main recommendation is that you should have come forward earlier. It's troubling the construction began without any public consultation.
 - Seth (4 years in the valley) is a trail Director and been pursuing the idea of the trail building project for a couple years. Remained as a Director as large to focus on this project and liaison with BC Recreation site and trails.
 - 1 year ago trail planners came up with a multi use trail system and they got approvals from HBM, this spring they came to check run off and pin flagged the trail.
 - Seth feels he could have communicated the construction plans better but there has been since lots of good conversations with the BV Backpackers, Naturalists, the BV Stewardship coalition group, Pojars, specialists in eco systems, Jim Easterday.

General Discussion:

- What is included in the plan? - like parking and gathering place?

Answer: no other plans other than the trail itself.

- What volume of travel do you expect?

Answer: the initial opening had a lot of use, bikers, hikers, there is currently no trail counter but one is planned. The current estimate is 30 bikers a weekend day.

- BV back packers and Naturalists were talking about erosion solutions, Backpackers were only notified about the trail in July after 5 or 6 km of trail on the HBM property and an excavator was on site.

- What about 2 way traffic on the hiking trail? How do you enforce this?

Answer: bikers are discouraged from riding the hiking trail. No means was given as to how.

- A Director notes this is not an official trail by Recreation Site and Trails, it hasn't had funding or maintenance ever and yet it's the most popular trail in the valley with diverse people use it.

- The HBM boundary was originally much smaller and the public pushed back when told of expansion at the time of a previous sale, the expansion and inclusion of this area now by HBM now is a surprise to the community.

Considerations; this is a jewel

1. Red listed species exist in the creeks, they are super sensitive to trail development.
2. In one 3 hour survey, there were 12 - 15 marmot colonies found in close proximity or alongside the trail route.
3. There are 8 - 9 stream crossings that will affect red listed species among others.
4. It's so incredibly fragile that damage is a lifetime consequence and cannot be restored. Damage on the current trail was the result of a search and rescue operation in the 1990's.
5. Big tire bikes, ebikes - the Class 1 ebikes are pedal assisted and considered non motorized since limited to 30 km an hour.
6. The CRB is the appropriate forum to discuss these considerations and more.
7. The HBM master plan is in violation of the RAMP, the LRMP and one other thing (some master development plan).
8. Cutting trees and crossing water requires permits.
9. The meadow is more a tarn more than a cirque, one edge is lower down, a result of glaciation.
10. The feel of the lake and hiking access is interrupted by proposed flagging.
11. There is no reason we can't still try to protect the ecology even though it's close to Town and easy access.

Why wasn't this brought up to the CRB? Answer: Seth was advised not to bring it to the Board.

- CRB - would have been the appropriate place to discuss this
- Seth was aware of the LRMP and read the document and figured it wasn't related, Directors stress that if you are interpreting it one way - bring it back to the Board to discuss your interpretation and get validation/confirmation. Hudson Bay

Mountain is a public asset and you need a public process to minimize impact and make the most of local knowledge.

- the LRMP has designated the trail as hiking only, its non motorized

Current Status:

- water permits are not issued so there is a stall on development.
- it all feels like a fait de complete.
- a request for public access to the application was allowed by one member of the gallery but the applicaion itself was mostly blanked out.
- there now exists an informal group who is asking for 60 days notice prior to more construction.
- the CRB has oversight responsibility.
- what role does the HBM Resort play? The master development agreement between the Province and the Resort seems to be the guiding document. They have authorized development within the controlled recreation area and laid out responsibilities of HBM. What are the details? This is the purvey of the [Mountain Resorts Branch](#) of the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport.
- the 2008 master plan for the HBM resort, page 89 says that mountain bike trails are subject to subsequent review and approval. The master development plan incorporates the master plan - both are important to understanding this is the way forward.

Directors notes:

- Can the volunteers reach out to those involved to get background on their interpretations?
- How can the efforts of previous volunteers who developed the LRMP be so sidelined?
- How could our previous chair not mention this to Seth: Jeff McKay, where was his insight?

Action Items**

1. Send a response to Seth: can you keep the spirit of the SM2 designation and come back to the Board.
2. Reiterate the importance of the RAMP to BC Parks Recreation Sites and Trails.

2. Tenas Project: Participation in a Community Advisory Committee (CAC)

This is a call for interest, the Smithers Exploration Group (SEG) was also contacted. Ted read the proposal of the CAC per the Tenas website: community advisory committee - speak on the effects to the local community, make recommendations on the effects, mitigate negative effects, EAO would use the effects assessment and post it publicly, no terms of reference are provided, there is no organizational structure mentioned. The EA will develop the terms of reference for the CAC.

- we are conditionally interested but we want terms of reference
- Eric will stay in contact and liaise with us

3. Lease Sales of Agricultural Development Areas:

- Dean Daly's offer of a tour is still open.
- This is about development in the valley bottom.
- Harvesting a valley bottom forest for pasture without using under-utilized pasture land that already exists in the same area is unacceptable land use planning.

- The Board expresses the community sentiment to preserve the crown land forest, the recommendation from Paula Bartemucci, Forest Ecologist also supports this effort.
- The Board also noted it's concern that ADA's remain for agriculture and food production.

4. Wetzinkwa Forest Stewardship Plan - Public Review

- Of the Directors that reviewed the plan, they agree that it took a lot of their time to go through the details. This effort of theirs and others is 100% volunteer.
- The BV Backpackers were allowed to look at the 5 year development plan and made comments.
- How do we systematically look at these plans and digest them for the public?

5. Old Growth management areas and connectivity corridors are a good focus for a tangible way the Board can get involved with monitoring. Let's evaluate and judge how effective the LRMP has been. Let's work on developing the Wildlife/Agriculture Effects Matrix.

6. The FLP Pilot:

- The BVCRB should be more than a stakeholder.
- First Nations invited signers of the FLP to a meeting on September 6th, this included the OW, the Witset FN and Lake Babine Nation
- In their letter they welcome the Community Resources Board to sit at a side table to provide an avenue to reach out to the wider community, this is another example of recognition of the Board.
- Also at this meeting were the Friends of Babine Lake.

7. Objectives set by Government:

- Anne went through these plans and discovered a lot of loop holes in BC Timber Sales interpretations of SMZ classification and CORE Eco Systems.
- She intends to chart her observations, show her response to government and the answer she received back. When ready this will be future agenda item.

8. Development of WHMA and Section 16 and 17's:

- Serb Creek Drainage:
 - there appears to be no development plans just now thanks to the OW
- Thyee Lake WHMA:
 - the block sale has only been deferred for this fiscal year. The implications of this sale going forward is that it would set a precedence for resource development in the SRMP areas that are identified for conservation and habitat designation, prior to the Wildlife Management Area process, under Wildlife Act, process.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:00pm