

BV Community Resource Board

Final Minutes Feb 16, 2026

Present:

Directors: Ted, Anne, Petra, Ron. Kevin sent his regrets.

Secretary: Sue Brookes.

Sue used Chat GPT to summarize her notes on the discussion on Offsets and LRMP Implementation.

Public: Daphne Hart, Les Ellis, Len Vanderstar, Jay Gilden, Mitchell Flowers, Glen Buhr

Next Meeting: Mar 16, 2026, 7pm, Smithers Council Chambers

Meeting convened at 7:15pm

Chair: Ron

Acronyms can be found at this link: https://bvcrb.ca/images/uploads/documents/crb_acro_1.pdf

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1. Review of Agenda Items

1. Introductions.

2. Appoint a Chair.

3. Call to Order.

4. Review additional agenda items and motion to approve the agenda was made by Ron.
All agreed to the agenda.

2. What Matters in Our Valley

1. Jay and Mitchell gave a brief background on the Telkwa Coal Mine application process and history. Designated as the Community Advisory Committee by the BC Environmental Assessment Office (EAO), they have agreed to act as a conduit about public concerns between the community and the EAO.
2. Telkwa Coal's original application of 2022 was for 750 000 tonnes/year, but they stated later that they had expansion plans by another half.
3. WMIOV is asking the CRB to **sponsor or co-host** this type of community forum. They have letters from the Town of Smithers and the Village of Telkwa in support of further discussion. "The EAO has informed us that the Final Assessment stage of the project will begin shortly. Once it commences, the EAO will have 150 days to make a recommendation. During that 150 days, the EAO will conduct a public comment period." WMIOV do not think that the public has been fully informed about the impacts of this project should it go ahead. Issues that remain:
 - flood management, water quality and dam standards
 - air and noise
 - caribou habitat
 - realities of living in a Coal producing town
4. A **motion** was made to cohost the open house/forum by Ron. All voted in favour.
5. Discussion on format of the forum ensued:
 - having prepared questions and answers
 - a panel type forum with a moderator (Ron volunteered)
 - some panelists will be remote
 - WMIOV has panel experts in mind to speak to several issues
 - consider some sort of follow up meeting or multiple meetings considering the scale of the project
 - funding requirements
 - flexibility in planning and with dates/venues - we don't know when this period will begin it could happen over the course of the summer which might affect attendance and participation

Actin Items** Mitchell and/or Jay will submit a draft letter for the Board to review regarding the request for an open house/panel discussion on the topic.

Note for future discussion - If/when panel is assembled, there should be full disclosure on any conflicts of interest.

3. Forestry Working Group (FWG) Update

No Updates, a background was provided for those present.

It was agreed a workshop on predators and the grizzly populations would be a great pilot of the working groups.

Action Item** Les will take this back to the Cattlemen and see if they would be interested in following up. They have an AGM on Saturday and will let us know soon after.

4. Referrals

1. Referral No. 186472291 - a proposed new snowmobile trail to Microwave Ridge from the Smithers Snowmobile Association (SSA). This was sent in email Jan 23, 2026 and responses are due March 8th.

General Discussion:

1. It was noted that according to the Winter RAMP there should be no other development until there is a winter access management plan.
2. The Microwave range has unofficially been designated for Snowmobilers.
3. As a result of snowmobilers there is goat displacement on Seaton Mountain. There was reference to a draft set of legally established goat polygons but these are ignored.
4. Snowmobilers are trying to access Netazul and the Serb, which could again impact wildlife.
5. We should refer to the draft goat designations as of 1997 in our response.

2. Action Items**:

1. Len to send round pertinent information for review.
2. Ron to draft a response for the Board to consider.

5. Motions

1. A motion to approve the Dec. 17 minutes was put forward by Ted. All were in favour.

6. Director or Business Updates

Review of Glen Buhr's presentation "Telkwa Caribou Offsets"

https://bvcrb.ca/images/uploads/documents/TelkCaribouWHAOffsets_GBforbvcrb.pdf.

April 2022. The file details how the timber supply impacts caused by establishing the Telkwa Caribou Wildlife Habitat Area (WHA) should be *offset* under the Bulkley Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) balance framework. It explains what offsets are, how they were agreed to be calculated, and what kinds of activities or changes might be counted toward those offsets.

What "Offsets" Mean Here

- When the WHA was established, it reduced the available timber supply. Under longstanding planning commitments (the *10% LRMP balance* approach), that reduction should be balanced (offset) so that overall timber supply targets are maintained.

An agreed *offset requirement* over a 20-year period (2016–2035) totals **553,660 m³** of timber supply benefit that must be found through actions that increase harvest flexibility elsewhere.

How Offsets Were Supposed to Work

- The requirement was broken down into 10-year increments (2016–25 and 2026–35), with offsets to be identified every five years.

Offsets could come from opening areas currently reserved from harvest, amending forest stewardship plans, or other processes that increase timber supply to compensate for the WHA impact.

Types of Offset Opportunities Identified

The presentation lists categories of *acceptable offset-generating* activities, such as:

- Harvesting where legal thresholds allow minor amendments.
- Harvest that directly reduces wildfire risk.
- Salvage of beetle-killed or otherwise vulnerable timber.
- Allowing harvest of older seral stands where future recruitment will replenish them.

It also notes “*de facto*” offsets – benefits from deviations in forest stewardship practices or changes that effectively increase timber volume relative to what was expected under prior management.

Summary of Discussion:

It was generally agreed that forestry stakeholders should formally bring the offsets discussion to the CRB to ensure transparency, documentation, and proper accounting. Currently, the CRB is not consistently informed about offsets, and this needs to be addressed. Further debate on this topic will be scheduled.

There was also a suggestion to reconsider the overall approach to offsets, particularly in light of it being six years since the cancellation of all land act designations.

Additional related matters include:

- * A current Freedom of Information request by Len concerning Northern Goshawks and a report prepared by Liz Rache with respect to the Tyhee Mtn RCTS layout in the WHMA.
- * The need to pursue designation of Regionally Important Wildlife to better protect key species and habitats. (ex. NoGo - Northern Goshawk)
- * Consideration of hosting a public forum on offsets to build consensus around acceptable trade-offs and potential forfeiture of certain objectives.

- * Exploring whether increased harvest productivity could serve as an offset.
- * Recognition that biodiversity is under significant pressure.

Rick Trowbridge identified a new biogeoclimatic zone in the Northwest, which resulted in an increase to the timber harvesting land base. This raises the possibility that additional zones and offsets may be warranted.

Finally, there are ongoing questions about how to meet Visual Quality Objectives (VQOs) in perpetuity. These objectives were often colocated in areas with net timber downs. Key considerations include whether future compliance should focus on timber supply, timing, and clearcut size/shape, or whether stand structure approaches and selective cutting criteria could help meet VQOs while balancing harvest objectives.

7. LRMP Implementation

In a recent meeting with Cam Bently, District Manager Regional Operations - Skeena Stikine Natural Resource District SMITHERS, and West Fraser's Matt Sear and Colin Vandergaag, Anne and Ron discussed these items:

1. Shortcomings Within the LRMP Itself

Ambiguity in Definitions

- * Key terms – such as **“facility”** – are not clearly defined.
- * Rules of interpretation are vague, creating inconsistent application.
- * Language that once reflected negotiated intent now allows broad discretion.

2. No Clear System for Measuring Outcomes

- * The LRMP lacks direction on **“how to track success over time”**.
- * Indicators such as **“road density”**, habitat effectiveness, and cumulative disturbance are not tied to measurable benchmarks.
- * Without monitoring standards, commitments cannot be meaningfully evaluated.

3. Planning Safeguards with Significant Loopholes

- * Protective measures contain broad exemptions and escape clauses.
- * Safeguards are often subordinate to later policy or operational decisions.
- * Objectives lack enforceable thresholds.

4. Trade-Offs That Were Never Secured

- * Early negotiated trade-offs – including the intent behind the **“70% rule”** – were premised on the LRMP carrying legal weight.
- * Because the Province did not formally entrench the Plan as binding legislation, many industry concessions no longer function as intended.
- * Corridor width and related implementation details require clarification and formal direction.

5. Landscape Unit Plans Are Voluntary

- * Adoption of Landscape Unit Plans remains discretionary.
- * This undermines the ecosystem-based planning framework originally envisioned.

6. Unclear Application of the "3 for 10" Rule

- * The interpretation and implementation of the "3 for 10" rule by provincial agencies (e.g., PIR) lacks transparency.
- * There is no publicly accessible accounting framework to assess compliance.

2. Shortcomings in Provincial Implementation

1. Lack of Transparency & Data Access

- * The Province has not provided sufficient data to evaluate LRMP performance. The role of the CRB Board is to monitor effectiveness.
- * Without access to disturbance mapping, road metrics, and compliance tracking, meaningful oversight is impossible.

2. Loss of Institutional ("Corporate") Memory

- * Staff turnover and restructuring have eroded understanding of the original negotiated intent.
- * Decisions are increasingly detached from the LRMP's foundational compromises.

3. Systemic Process Failures

- * Approval processes operate in silos.
- * Cumulative effects are not consistently integrated into decision-making.
- * Monitoring and adaptive management mechanisms are weak or absent.

4. Provincial-Level Policy Conflicts

- * Broader provincial policy and legislative gaps complicate local implementation.
- * Without correcting higher-level structural problems, local planning objectives cannot be effectively realized.

5. Government Objectives Contain Loopholes

- * Objectives established under provincial frameworks allow flexible interpretation.
- * The absence of enforceable thresholds enables incremental erosion of intent.

Overall Concern

The Bulkley LRMP was negotiated as a balance between conservation, community values, and resource development. However, without:

- * Clear definitions
- * Measurable benchmarks
- * Legal enforceability
- * Transparent monitoring
- * Provincial accountability

... the Plan's intent risks being diluted over time.

8. Review of Open Action Items

Open Items are on the next page.

Item regarding: Forestry representatives and presentations of highlights from a recently released industry report: a 5 year review, a report showing joint industry met the objectives and exceeded the objectives set by government.

Anne and Ron met with Matt and Colin Vandergaag of West Fraser regarding LRMP implementation, offsets and the above action item. There was some general discussion around their use of cruise volumes to determine offsets. Please refer back to the review of the Offset discussion.

9. Adjourned at 9:45 pm

Table 1

type	task	who	date
Referrals	Referral No. 186472291 - proposed new snowmobile trail to Microwave Ridge, SSA Sent in email Jan 23, 2026, responses due March 8th, Ron to draft a response and Len to send round pertinent information for review.	brandy.Hughes@gov.bc.ca	Mar 2026
Referrals	Lands: ask to review Tantalus format with Lands Officer and see if an additional column might help link legal and non legal direction sections. Check with Front Counter that CRB has a valid BCID for accessing and responding to public referrals. Check individual BCIDs also. Work with MOF and WLRS to link effectiveness and implementation monitoring for LRMPs and related planning.	All	May 2025
Panel Debate	WMIOV (Mitchell and/or Jay) will submit a draft letter for the Board to review regarding the request for an open house/panel discussion on the topic.	WMIOV, Sue	Feb 2026
Ongoing	BC Environmental Office (EAO) - Ted will be the liaison	Ted	Apr 2025
Ongoing	Keep Mitch Flowers in the loop about the CRA: _____	Sue	Jun 2025
Ongoing	Follow up with BCHydro regarding Walcott and wire technologies available in California and why they are not using the same.	Sue	Feb 2026
Ongoing	FLP Forestry Working Group (FWG) meetings, this is ongoing with Anne as the coordinator and Nic, a contributor and representing the Wet'suwet'en First Nation	Anne and Nic	Apr 2025
Ongoing	Drop a print copy of the agenda and relevant documents to Ron's house prior to the start of the next meeting.	Anne	Mar 2025
Ongoing	CRB to FLP reps officially proposing the FWG workshops and asking how collaborative linkages might be structured. It needs to include reference to several past letters from Ministers, directing the CRB to work within the FLP to resolve the issues sent to Ministers, including WHMA cancellations. This gives some formal, higher direction and establishes a record and rationale for our involvement beyond just a 'stakeholder'.	Anne	Dec 2025
Mapping	Create layered maps, that can help us identify the areas in the Bulkley TSA experience high intensity development or projects. We need the groundwork for spatial modelling. Anne and Les suggested seeking support for combining maps from the Province and Wetzinkwa.	Anne, Les	Nov 2025
Mapping	Connect with Glen Buhr possibly and ask for the original shape files or updated versions for the WHMA's.	Anne	Dec 2025
Guest/FWG	Sue is requesting an audience with the Board in March. She wants to present on air quality management. The BVLVD Airshed Management Society also wants to partner or cohost a workshop.	Sue	Nov 2025

Table 1

type	task	who	date
FWG	1) recruit Petra or possibly DebW to spearhead a structured based decision making process (LUP) with regard to grizzlies and land management in the Blunt and Evelyn. 2) ask Deb and Petra to document the known and unknown from their biologist background, speak individually or invite the Cattlemen, House Chiefs or reps., provincial biologists, private bios, and kill verification officers to contribute. 3) workshop solutions for predator control. 4) share the Board's or sub committee recommendations	Sue, Anne - others	Sep 2025
FWG	Les Ellis to ask the Cattlemen whether they would participate in a working group on predators specifically Grizzlies and from their answer we will go forward.	Les Ellis, Anne	Feb 2026
Correspondence	A request to suspend logging in the WHMA within Tye Trails Rec Area, adjacent to Burnt Cabin Bog. The Burnt Cabin Bog Ecological Reserve itself being a BC Park is not within BCTS' jurisdiction to offer up for logging, but any adjacent logging affects its integrity.	Anne	Nov 2025