

BV Community Resource Board – Final Minutes

May 15, 23

Present: John, Eric, Jeff, Sue, Ted, Bob and Christoph, Anne, Eugene, Ron

Guests: Eugene Wittwer

Regrets: Matt

Chair: Jeff

Recording: Sue

Next Meeting: June 19, 7pm, Smithers Council Chambers, 2023

Meeting convened at 7:05pm

Organizational

Financial report: not much different

Action Item(AI)** Jeff to file with the CRA and pay the \$250 fee then get reimbursed.

Additions to the agenda

A **motion** to approve the April minutes was made: All in favour.

For a full list of acronyms please check the link:

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

1. Guest: Eugene Wittwer Regenerative Agriculture: Community Ranching

Principles

- Farming with context, or farming with what fits the valley. Farming grains alone was too unreliable.
- We minimize the disturbance of our soil. Our ploughs and discs are for sale. No chemical fertilizers are used.
- Soil is always covered by microbiology (ground cover). It's moisture retention during the heat dome last year was a real indicator of success. Roots still in the soil, still function.
- Species diversity - legumes, grasses, forbs (weeds), woody debris, chirops, insects, wildlife, birds, dragon flies.
- Grazing can be made better for soil health, cattle are rotated to a new patch of grass every 12 hours. In mid July they go out to range, the cows at home get moved in the afternoon. Finished cattle gain 3 - 3.5 lb weight by pasture grazing in the afternoon.
- Crown range is on the Lawson Rd. and across pipeline and powerline.

On average a 10 acre piece will produce enough grass for 2 cows for a summer. After about a week they will do damage to your ecology.

Predator/prey relationships - the importance of putting calcium back on the land by composting carcasses and bones. Reduces the need for fertilizers.

The grass growing takes out essential nutrients - ie selenium, uranium. Selenium use is 1 kg on an average town lot. Soluable calciums. another factor of sustainability.

Hawkweed - a micro leaf (a basil), cutting it shorts fosters its growth - keep the grass longer for weed suppression. Grazing also allows for trampling in the grass - nutrient cycling in the aerobic zone, it's how you guild organic matter. 1% increase of org. matter means 1 acre of land will hold 1000 gallons of water. Fire experience in California is evidence of this.

Forested land has 3 - 4% of organic matter in the soil.

On the range - it's not possible to go to daily moves - you would need range riders. Staffing a farm or ranch is a problem already. Crown ranging is a secondary use of forests. 95% of agriculture in the valley is cattle production.

Cattle, pigs on pasture, sheep, goats, chickens, bees - break the parasite cycles using different livestock. Ivermectin is no longer used in their cattle for the last 5 years. It stays in urine and manure for 240 days. The crows are spreading the cow patties, the microbiology is working so well. They are still feeding salt.

Thistle and alfalfa, timothy seed has a growing history in the valley. It was a great industry but seed got mixed with daisy seed and at the time you couldn't separate them.

Discussion Notes:

- Mentor: Gabe Brown, North Dakota
- about 4 other farmers are doing this now
- there is some climate action funding
- check out: "Kiss the ground" Netflix, micro-horizon fungi, "the Mothertree"
- brief speal on marketing channels for the meat - they travel Prince Rupert to Telkwa
- challenges with grazing on crown land - long term planning for those polygons would hep - prolong the serial stage - this would be more beneficial for the wildlife
- mudboggers, recreational vehicle use hard on the range
- Wildlife for Tomorrow - food security, generational people living on farm, migration fowl - etc - perhaps symmetry - or biodiversity projects overlap
- FENCES- 670 acres, 150 rented acres, 25 km of permanent fence, barbless barb wire, 2 or 3 strands.
- railway fence is 80 years old - he can't get permission to put in a new fence

2. Treasurer Report

Just paid BC Web, around \$9980 in the bank.

Sue's last invoice is outstanding.

New treasurer is wanted. Not a lot of work - current board may need to choose someone.

3. General Discussion

1. Sue to upload recent documentation from Len with regard to the WHMA designations. It seems these sites are now protected from development but Jevan Hanchard is pushing this back. Chris Schell doesn't want to manage these lands so now they are under Jevan's directive.
2. There isn't resolution but the start of getting back to where we should have been. Shouldn't these be converted to WMA's - managed by a different Division of government - the wildlife branch?
3. WMA's - needs to have a species identified under the wildlife management act. Regionally important wildlife was Anne's project - the Interior Goshawk qualifies because it came out as the equivalent as red listed, if a region lists a species - we need area based tenure to manage species at risk, a WMA.
4. **AI***** send a letter to Chris Schell stating we have consensus among the board and find Glen's letter consistent with the LRMP. Ron volunteers to draft it. There is some urgency to get this out. BCSALES - Darrell Whalen, Glen McIntosh and There's no point in connecting with the Forester. What Prov. level will take responsibility for not managing this value?
5. **AI**** send a letter to Daryl Whalen, boss of Curtis' boss for clarification on the scope of the last presentation and that maybe we would like a new one. Clarify we have not supported the WHMA...Volunteer. - its a logging block not a wholistic plan and its right in the middle of goshawk territory. Clarify we are still waiting for a presentation. Curtis does not know the intent and position of the Board.
6. We could also ask to remove Section 16 and 17's from the AAC, we need clarity on the species, we don't need deer range we need old growth species protection. Can the Province provide clarity about what values and targets they are in compliance with?
7. Clarity - what is old growth? The presence of large life, dead trees, large woody debris? Old growth doesn't necessarily rely on tree age, other characteristics should be respected.
8. How can you do this ad hoc, and on a stand by stand basis? How many large chunks of forest are old growth? Spreadsheet tables can't tell us this. We need a spatial plan on how to retain old growth forests.
9. Landscape level plans need to capture the protection of this land. We can't let this delay more. A letter to FN's to help maintain a biodiversity plan to help maintain something functional in Old Growth - would be

helpful. Include a statement to encourage the FN to speak in support of the Old Growth. **AI**** volunteer to draft for consensus.

10. SRMP and LRMP are signed by Minister so we could take this back to the Ministers and get them to drill down. It's a deliberate change in policy...on the ground problem solving. We've got to recognize the problems in the old plan. State of the Forests - same thing. How do we get to the measurement of Effectiveness? Invite a member from the RC to discuss the idea, to pitch an idea.
11. Connectivity corridors are key reference. Historical reference noted again because we lost parks to corridors.
12. How do we retain old growth in the face of wildfire abatement?
13. Field trip May 24, Bob not sure if he's invited, they want the Operator there. Bob wants to go to see if Old Growth is there but he is not critiquing the operator, just observing.
14. **AI**** Jeff to invite the BVRC to the next meeting for flushing the idea.
15. Cattleman's, AGM was in January, range officer Mark Schuffert wanted a letter to Canfor to defer the logging from these blocks. This demonstrates a failure of the District Manager (DM). DM doesn't sign off on blocks now - it's now the licensee. Why is forestry coming to Cattleman to oppose logging? Deep Creek Area - woodlot, licensee: Witsuwiten, Canfor's blocks are approved, DFO declared streams damaged, over-logged.
16. Anne's email: she will double check her send function, it was not received. She reports that the Kalum PIC and the Bulkley CRB were mentioned in meetings in Terrace regarding our esteem and value.
17. BC Timber sales meeting - Jevan says no Goshawk support.
18. **AI**** review's Bob email chain for the valley WRRP and the treatment units.

Check Out: David Montgomery, geologist
"Too close to home" - a BC wildfire service documentary

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.
Next Meeting Date: June 19, 2023