

Partnership Committee on Agriculture and Environment

Minutes of meeting number 26 held on June 15th, 2005 in Vernon

Attendees	Affiliation
Bud Graham	Ministry of Agriculture Food and Fisheries
John Patterson	Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Catherine Ponsford	Environment Canada
Phil Bergen	Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
Allen James	BC Poultry Association (BCAC)
Rae Fawcett	Horse Council of BC (BCAC)
Irmi Critcher	BC Grain Producers (BCAC)
Hans Buchler	BC Agriculture Council
Jennifer Dyson	BC Horticultural Association (BCAC)
Henry Wiens	BC Horticultural Association (BCAC)
Gord Shandler	BC Fruit Growers Association
Lorne Hunter	BC Milk Producers
Steve Thomson	BC Agriculture Council
Brian Baehr	BC Agriculture Council (AEPI)
David Borth	BC Cattleman's Association
Linda Allison	BC Cattleman's Association (BCAC)
Barb Edwards	BC Landscape and Nursery Association (BCAC)
Niels Holbek	BCAC
Ron Bertrand	BCAC
Mary Margaret Gaye	BC Greenhouse Growers Association
Lynne Wilson	FARM
Sylvia Von Schuckmann	Ministry of Water Land and Air Protection
Jack Bryden	Ministry of Water Land and Air Protection
Lynn Bailey	Ministry of Water Land and Air Protection
Heather Smart	Ministry of Water Land and Air Protection
Hugh Sloan	Union of BC Municipalities
Lloyd McKimmon	Union of BC Municipalities
Walter Goerzen	Investment Agriculture Foundation
Terry Dash	Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada – PFRA
Ken Nickel	Ministry of Agriculture Food and Fisheries
Kevin Murphy	Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
Terry Dever	Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
Orlando Schmidt	Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
Ted van der Gulik	Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries

The meeting was chaired by Hans Buchler - WLAP
Recording secretary – Ted van der Gulik - MAFF

Minutes

Minutes of meeting 25 held on March 2nd, 2005 in Abbotsford – adopted. Minutes are posted on MAFF website.

Partnership Committee Administrative Items

BCAC new members – Len Bouwman has resigned from the committee and will be replaced on an interim basis by Lorne Hunter from the BC Milk Producers Association. The appointment will be confirmed at the next BCAC executive meeting.

Specified Risk Materials Disposal Strategies

Ken Nickel provided an update on the SRM disposal strategies. A strategic plan is being developed and will be tabled at the Investment Agriculture Foundation Board in July. New rules from the Federal Government are expected in September on the disposal of specified risk materials. The strategy will need to adjust to these new rules in short order. The goals identified in the strategy include: short term – maintenance of slaughter industry to allow for transition; medium term – transition to the new reality; understand the risks and ramifications; long term – minimize cost and maximize value recovered; medium and long term – emergency event management.

SARA Update

Sylvia Von Schuckmann provided an overview on SARA. There is an agreement between the Federal and Provincial governments on how SARA will be implemented. The Federal Government will allow the province to implement SARA and will only step in if they are not satisfied with the implementation.

At the last PC meeting it was agreed that the province would engage in discussions with BCAC. Steve Thomson provided the committee with an update on the two step process that has been agreed to. The first step will be to set up a meeting with key provincial agency staff and a few key BCAC commodity representatives to initiate a consultative process and decide on the how to update the agricultural industry on the SARA process.

A SARA workshop or forum for the agriculture industry is anticipated to be held this fall.

Air Quality

Hugh Sloan provided a presentation on the Georgia Basin Pudget Sound International Airshed Initiative.

Air contaminants from vehicles have been decreasing but marine vessel contaminants are on the rise because of poor fuel and increased traffic (ships coming into port from overseas). After 2015 marine sources are projected to be the highest sources of pollutants. It is expected that legislation will force changes to reduce the emissions from this sector. changes to Greenhouse Gas (GHG) is expected to continue to increase until 2025. In 2010 the projected GHG from the FVRD and GVRD is expected to be 41% above 1990 values, mainly due to projected population and industry growth in the region. Agriculture emissions of ammonia are 77% of the total in the region. (Dogs and cats are 17%). Most

of the ammonia is from the FVRD, the only contaminant that is higher in the FVRD than the GVRD or Whatcom county.

Agriculture contributes 32% of the particulate matter, most of which is from wind erosion.

The international airshed strategy will address for major sectors; motor vehicles, residential heating, marine vessels and agriculture. The FVRD will take the lead on the agriculture strategy. A key objective of the agriculture working group is to address the ammonia issue through the development of a management strategy and implementation of best management practices.

Action: The FVRD will develop a working group that will include representation from BCAC and MAFF to address the agriculture component of the air strategy and to ensure that agricultural activities that are currently being done will be integrated into the strategy. The working group will also ensure that new programs that may be proposed will complement the many activities that are currently underway.

Habitat and Farmland Committee

Committee status and update provided by Steve Thomson on the committee's May 31st meeting.

Key issues discussed:

Pacific Fisheries Resource Conservation Council

Bud provided an update on the agriculture and fishery report released on Monday by the Pacific Fisheries Resource Conservation Council.

Action: The authors of the report have been invited to present the findings of the report at the next PC meeting.

Partnership Committee Information Outreach

Ted van der Gulik raised the issue on how the PC reports back to staff within each agency. There has been some frustration from staff that they are not aware of the issues and the processes that the PC committee is working on. This has led to misunderstanding when agencies are dealing with issues such as OCP's. An information note is included in these minutes on issues regarding the NORD OCP. A meeting with NORD and agencies is being held on June 16th to develop a strategy on how to move forward on the NORD OCP.

Action: Partnership Committee communication and outreach will be added to the agenda of the next PC meeting in November.

Building Setbacks from Watercourses for Agricultural Buildings – Sylvia Von Schuckmann provided an update on current status of the building setback standards for agriculture buildings and facilities. A meeting with BCAC has been held to review the

draft standards. The BCAC has provided comments on the draft standards which the working group will assess at their next meeting. After this assessment has been done the next step is for WLAP to prepare a rationale document for the agriculture setback standards with respect to the Riparian Area Regulation. When this has been completed WLAP will do an internal review of the standards with staff and organize a meeting with UBCM's Environmental Committee for the working group to present the standards. If agreement has been reached the final standard will then be forwarded to BCAC for approval.

Vegetation Management Guidelines – Ted vdG provided an update on the process that is being considered to develop agricultural vegetation removal guidelines. Phase 1 of the project which was to conduct a literature review of the existing science of riparian protection in agricultural areas has been done and the GEI report accepted. This report will provide some of the background data that will be used to assess the next steps of the project. A project charter will be developed and circulated to agencies for comment by the end of June. The project charter will be used to develop a plan and identify resource and funding needs. A steering committee will be established, meet later in July to initiate the next steps in the project.

Environmental Process Modernization Plan

John Patterson provided an update of the plan being initiated by DFO. This is one of three pilots being undertaken across Canada. The plan includes a risk management framework, streamlining habitat referral practices, predictability and coherence, partnerships and a new approach to environmental assessments and major projects.

The Risk Management Framework model for agriculture includes identifying farming activities; identifying pathways of effects of farming on fish; evaluating activities versus the pathways of effects; evaluate mitigation and residual impacts for fish and fish habitat; evaluate fish habitat values in agriculture; model habitat values and impacts in a matrix; and develop management prescriptions for each category in the matrix.

Meetings with MAFF are being held in July and a draft model is expected to be developed by the end of the year.

Riparian Management Guide – a new draft of the guide has been prepared and forwarded to agencies for comment. MAFF will follow up with agencies and hope to complete the guide by the end of summer.

Grazing Management Guide

The Grazing Management Guide is complete and available on the Resource Management Branch web site.

Drainage Management Guide

Guide is complete and available on the Resource Management Branch website.

Irrigation Management Guides

The Irrigation Assessment Guide has been completed and is available on the Resource Management Branch web site.

Water Management

Agriculture Water Strategy - Ted vdG provided an update on the Provincial Water Strategy that is being developed by LWBC and the Agriculture Water Strategy that is being developed by MAFF. The agriculture strategy will be incorporated into the provincial strategy. MAFF organized a Water Connections Seminar for MAFF staff, other agricultural agency staff and industry in May to obtain input into the strategy. The next step is to prepare a draft of the strategy and circulate for comment. An agriculture and water forum with other agencies is being planned this fall to review and provide input into the agriculture water strategy. In addition the forum will provide an opportunity to discuss agricultural resource needs and the role that an expanded PFRA can play in British Columbia.

Water Management Planning – Heather Smart provided an update on Water Management Planning and Groundwater Protection Regulation that has recently been introduced in British Columbia. Water Management Plans once developed can be approved by cabinet which will then allow for regulations (enforcement) to be developed that can be used to implement the plan.

A Groundwater Advisory Board has been appointed by the Minister to obtain input from industry, engineers, geoscientists and universities on groundwater regulations. Phase 1 of the legislation comes into effect this fall and includes qualifications for well drillers, well pump installers, well identification, surface sealing requirements of well casings, well caps and covers, deactivating and closing wells, and well construction standards.

Phase 2 will focus on well reports, additional standards for well construction, well operation and testing. Phase 3 will focus on regulations for implementing water management plans.

Nutrient Management Committee

Orlando Schmidt presented the committee terms of reference and work plan. These reports are available on the Resource Management Branch web site.

Nutrient Management Guide Update

The nutrient management guide has been completed and is ready to be published to the web site. There are two revisions that still need to be added to the document. These are nutrient management for horticultural crops and additional resource information for winter feeding areas.

Farmland Soil Survey – Orlando Schmidt provided an update on the status of the farmland soil survey. Approximately 50% of the survey sites for phase 1 of the project have been completed and it is expected that remainder will be done by the end of summer. Phase 2 work which includes detailed soil analysis will be done this fall.

Long Term Nutrient Management Report – Ron Bertrand presented an update on the nutrient management report. The PC committee originally approved a four step plan that included research, monitoring, on farm planning and long term planning.

The long term report process included a workshop that was organized and facilitated by McTavish. A draft report was prepared and circulated to industry for comment. The report outlined a number of options. For each option environmental and agribusiness impacts were investigated. The nutrient management committee has now completed the report and considers their task to be done.

A response from industry to the report has also been prepared and circulated to meeting attendees. The nutrient management committee is recommending that the PC provide clear recommendations on what the next steps should be to respond to the report.

Action: BCAC and the agencies responsible for nutrient management take the results of the report back to their respective agencies and work cooperatively to develop a direction on policy to ministers. Further direction and additional steps can then be identified on how to proceed on this issue. MAL to lead and facilitate the development of a policy position.

Compliance and Enforcement Strategy– Lynn Bailey provided an update.

Action: The framework for the strategy is being developed and will be able to be presented at the November PC meeting.

Jack Bryden provided an update on compliance and enforcement in the Fraser Valley. Meetings are being held with the greenhouse industry on matters related to the industry. WLAP is also assessing compliance with winter manure spreading and the covering of manure piles.

BC Agriculture Wildlife Committee

Ken Nickel provided an update for the committee. Wray MacDonnell is the new MAFF co-chair for the committee.

Terry Dever provided an update on the wildlife damage and compensation pilot projects. The next stage will be to develop information on the successes and challenges of the pilot projects.

Brian Baehr provided an update on wildlife initiatives funding, partnerships, projects and resources. The AEPI funds that have been allocated to these initiatives have been 75% allocated and are shrinking. The Canada - BC APF agreement ends in March 08. Meanwhile the public awareness and appreciation of wildlife is increasing. The opportunities available are a new APF, broader support from WLAP, stronger partnerships and increased appreciation of the mutual benefits for wildlife and agriculture.

Keys to success include the assurance of continuity to resources, committed parties, flexible delivery options, and innovative ways to involve the non agriculture sector.

Updates

Agri-Food Policy Framework

EFP National Farm Stewardship Program – an update is attached to the minutes

AEI Update – an update is attached to the minutes

Canada British Columbia Water Supply Expansion Program

An update is attached to the minutes

Agenda Items for future meetings:

- GVRD Presentation on Air Emissions and Alternate Fuels for Greenhouse Industry – target for presentation at November meeting.
- Climate Change – WLAP
- PFRA expansion in British Columbia
- Pacific Fishery Resource Council Report on Agriculture Intensification
- Sustainable Poultry Group – Kevin Chipperfield
- Amendments to Federal Fertilizer Act - CFIA
- Invite Energy and Mines to discuss issue regarding Coal Bed Methane

Next meeting: November 2nd – FVRD offices in Chilliwack

AEI Management Committee Meeting – June 21, 2005

Agriculture Environment Partnership Cttee Meeting – June 15, 2005

Operations Update:

- The delivery of wildlife damage compensation projects is moving beyond the pilot project phase into a more broadly available initiative. The approval of a proposal from the Comox Valley to compensate for waterfowl impacts marks the first new geographic area to benefit from compensation funding under the Canada BC APF Business Risk Management Agreement. There has been interest expressed by sheep producers in a wild predator program and by the Cariboo in a forage loss compensation and prevention program.
- The next big challenge for the wildlife component of the Agriculture Environment Initiatives is more fully engage wildlife oriented agencies and groups in long-term mitigation of the impacts of the wildlife resource on agricultural operations.
- The transition from AEPI funded on-farm works to EFP Program related incentive funding is underway. Currently funded projects are beginning their wrap-up phase as of June 30, 2005. There are already several applications, for works such as wildlife fencing, manure storages and riparian area enhancements, in to the National Farm Stewardship Program from producers who have completed an EFP.

Financial Update:

- Investment Agriculture has implemented new procedures for the requisitioning of advances for the AEI. It is aimed at simplifying the process on both the advance of funds perspective as well as in the reconciliation after the fact of program expenditures.
- To date 79 applications have been fully or partly approved of the 131 submitted, and 33 projects completed. A summary of approved and completed projects can be found on the BCAC website www.bcac.bc.ca under "Programs -> Agriculture Environment Initiatives".
- Financial status to March 31, 2005
 - \$9.2 million of \$12 million in AEPI funds have been committed by MC decisions to date.
 - \$597,000 of \$990,000 of AESI funds have been committed.
 - Approximately \$7.3 million has been received from Investment Agriculture Foundation (IAF) to date.
 - A further \$155,000 has been received by BCAC for contributions towards AESI/AEPI projects and operations.
 - \$3.3 million has been expended or is committed for wildlife compensation projects including the first three years of the three pilots. Payments are made through MAFF.

Update Note: Agriculture Environment Partnership Committee Vernon- June 15th , 2005

Environment Farm Planning Program:

Delivery Groups

Eighteen Delivery Groups were approved and have received funding to provide EFP services throughout the province. The Groups are as follows

- BC Cattlemen's Association
- BC Fruit Growers Association
- BC Grain Producers Association
- BC Greenhouse Growers Association
- BC Landscape and Nursery Association
- BC Milk Producers' Association
- BC Pork Producers Association
- BC Potato and Vegetable Growers Association
- BC Poultry Association
- BC Raspberry Industry Development Council
- Certified Organic Association of B.C.
- Comox Valley Farmers' Institute
- Creston Valley Agricultural Society
- District "C" Farmers' Institute
- Horse Council British Columbia
- Island Farmers' Alliance
- Peace River Forage Association of British Columbia
- United Flower Growers Cooperative Association

Communication

A program brochure was developed and 6,000 copies were printed. A separate brochure dealing with Beneficial Management Practices was developed and 3,000 copies were printed

Program Coordinators made 13 presentations about the program. Delivery Groups conducted 142 communication events to raise awareness about the program among the farm community.

Workshops

Delivery Groups held a total of 203 workshops with 1671 farmers and ranchers participating in workshops.

EFP/BMP Support

The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, in cooperation with the British Columbia Agriculture Council, trained 110 planning advisor candidates. Of these, 59 planning advisors are recognized by the Council.

3000 copies of the Planning Workbook and Reference Guide were printed and distributed to farmers and ranchers through the Delivery Groups.

121 farmers and ranchers were issued Statements of Completion indicating completion of an Environmental Farm Plan.

National Farm Stewardship / Greencover Canada / AEI Funding to Producers

Program Coordinators completed application forms and guides for producers to use to access funds once a Statement of Completion had been issued.

49 applications were approved with a total project value of \$1,117,395.45 and projected cost to the program of \$333,519.68.

Administration

Delivery Group expenditures included:

- \$94,318 on communication
- \$142,025 for workshops
- \$232,090 for EFP/BMP support

Delivery Group expenditures totalled \$614,975.09

Program expenditures for the entire fiscal year were \$1,929,499.86

Canada-British Columbia Water Supply Expansion Program

Update for Partnership Committee on Agriculture and the Environment June June 15, 2005

Program Summary:

- The objective of the Program is to provide financial and technical support for the planning and development of sustainable water supplies for agriculture.
- The Program has three components:
 - Tier 1 – On-farm water infrastructure projects such as wells, dugouts and small dams. Irrigation equipment is not eligible. The Program contributes up to one-third of the eligible costs to maximum of \$5,000 per project.
 - Tier 2 – Multi-user infrastructure projects that are larger and will provide water for agricultural purposes. The Program contributes up to one-third of the eligible costs.
 - Tier 3 – Strategic work projects that will serve to increase opportunity for strategic partnerships and enhance understanding of the operational and developmental limitations to the water resources for agriculture in their community or region.
- Program funding available for projects is \$1,900,000; \$2,500,000; \$1,100,000 for Tiers 1, 2 and 3 respectively. The Program ends March 31, 2008.
- The Program is managed by a Program Working Group that includes federal, provincial and industry members. The application contact point for Tier 1 is the BC Agriculture Council, (604) 854-4483 and for Tiers 2 & 3, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, (250) 782-3116. Application forms are available at www.agr.gc.ca/h2o.

Program Activity Highlights:

- Since the launch of the Canada-British Columbia Water Supply Expansion Program in May, 2004 there have been six application intake deadlines, the most recent being June 1, 2005. The next two application deadlines are September 1 and January 1.
- To the April 1, 2005 application date the Program Working Group (PWG) has reviewed 265 Tier 1, 12 Tier 2 and 31 Tier 3 projects. 166 Tier 1 projects have been approved for a total Tier 1 funding commitment of \$617,120. 9 Tier 2 projects have been approved for a total Tier 2 funding commitment of \$892,158 and 19 Tier 3 projects have been approved for a total funding commitment of \$1,088,631.
- There continues to be strong demand for Tier 3 type projects. The Program Working Group will need to address whether or not to re-allocate more funds to Tier 3 from the other Tiers. Further promotion may be needed for Tier 1.

Prepared by: Philip Bergen
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
June 8, 2005