

Partnership Committee on Agriculture and Environment
Minutes of meeting number 36 held on November 6th, 2008 in Abbotsford

Attendees	Affiliation
Lindsay Kislock	Ministry of Agriculture and Lands
Steve Thomson	BC Agriculture Council
Denise MacDonald	BC Fruit Growers Association
Linda Allison	BC Agriculture Council
Brian Baehr	BC Agriculture Council
Henry Wiens	BC Agriculture Council
Irmi Critcher	BC Agriculture Council
Rolf Soth	BC Pork Producers
Allen James	BC Poultry Association
Lorne Hunter	BC Milk Producers Association
Mary Margaret Gaye	BC Greenhouse Growers Association
Andrew Flokstra	BC Landscape and Nursery Association
Stuart Wilson	Investment Agriculture Foundation
Margaret Crowley	Ministry of Environment
Diane Beattie	Ministry of Environment
Randy Cairns	Ministry of Environment
Alex McLean	Ministry of Forests and Range
Paul Kluckner	Environment Canada
Bruce Reid	Department of Fisheries and Oceans
John Patterson	Department of Fisheries and Oceans
Janet Demarcke	Union of BC Municipalities
Lloyd McKimmon	Union of BC Municipalities
John Berry	Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
Philip Bergen	Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
Doug Edwards	Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
Harvey Hill	Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
David Trotter	Ministry of Agriculture and Lands
Orlando Schmidt	Ministry of Agriculture and Lands
Chris Zabek	Ministry of Agriculture and Lands
Hannah Cavendish-Palmer	Ministry of Agriculture and Lands
Ken Nickel	Ministry of Agriculture and Lands
Linda Wilson	Ministry of Agriculture and Lands
Ted van der Gulik	Ministry of Agriculture and Lands

Chair – Lindsay Kislock / David Trotter - MAL
Recording Secretary – Ted van der Gulik

1. Minutes

Minutes of meeting number 35 held in Courtenay on June 19th and 20th are approved and will be posted on web site as final.

2. Climate Change Adaptation Session

Hannah Cavendish Palmer – Ministry of Agriculture and Lands

Hannah provided an overview of the adaptation activities that are underway in the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and the BC Agriculture Council.

Adapting to climate change will mean:

- Understanding climate trends and predictions
- Choosing crops carefully
- Conserving existing resources
- Being ready for extreme climate events

Harvey Hill and Doug Edwards, AAFC

Harvey provided an overview of the work that is currently being done and planned for by Agriculture and Agrifood Canada. These include:

- Climate change is a key priority under Growing Forward, along with industry competitiveness.
- It is important to understand the variability around climate change predictions so that we can build resiliency.
- AAFC moving towards better climate impact data and prediction capability.
- Linking soil expertise at AAFC to expertise at EC.
- Extreme events management, particularly around drought, is very advanced in the US, India, and China, but not as advanced in Canada.
- Groundwater status and potential is being assessed in Alberta.
- Various AAFC staff have been involved with Okanagan water studies, which Ted will talk more about.
- Crop yield forecasting work has begun for commodity crops and they are now working on this for specialty crops, which would have more relevance for BC.
- The main goal of their work is to get to the point where they can help producers make decisions.
- One consideration is municipal decision making, particularly in the realm of agriculture. It would be helpful for BC agriculture to identify where critical infrastructure needs to be fortified and share that with the AAFC.
- Denise mentioned concerns with production insurance premiums. Harvey asked that they compile their specific concerns. Harvey suggests that him and Doug work as a team on this.
- Steve asked about the new PFRA and E. What does this stand for? PFRA now encompasses the environment branch of AAFC. They are recognizing that environment is an important piece of their work.
- A concern was raised about what tools are available to producers for mitigating risk. In the Peace region, there is not much available other than no-till. Their economic viability is based on crop insurance programs in which coverage goes down the more extreme events there are. Harvey restated that this is something him and Doug can work on.

Ted van der Gulik, Ministry of Agriculture and Lands

Ted provided an overview of some of the tools that are being developed that can be used to plan agriculture's water requirements in the future and help the industry become more efficient.

- With climate change concerns, agriculture needs to become more efficient with water use.
- Described Okanagan Irrigation Water Demand Model development. Data was collected for the entire basin on type of irrigation, crop, soil, and climate.
- Model was then used to determine the water demand of each crop.
- This study is now moving to other valleys including the Salmon River and Kettle Valley. Metro Vancouver and Maple Ridge have expressed interest.
- Irrigation scheduling calculator demonstration. This tool is available to farmers on the Irrigation Industry Association of BC website. Farmers wanting to use it can create their own account and store their crop and field information so that data does not have to be re-entered.
- This calculator also makes things easier for Environmental Farm Planners, who can now use this tool when they help farmers navigate EFP.

Linda Wilson, Ministry of Agriculture and Lands

Linda provided an overview presentation on invasive species and pests impacts with respect to climate change.

- BC has many issues related to invasive species because of the province's diversity.
- Linda's specific mandate is invasive plants, but she incorporates larger concerns about invasive species into her work.
- BC has an Invasive Plant Strategy that led to the formation of the Invasive Plant Council of BC.
- One project she is involved in the Provincial Invasive Plant Working Group. This group involves a wide variety of ministries.
- BC has Regional Invasive Plant Committees that elevate awareness and education around the province.
- There are various invasive plant pilot programs, including the formation of the Northwest Invasive Plant Council. This council is doing invasive plant planning for the north western region of BC.
- There is a Weeds Cross Borders Program, which works on cross-jurisdictional strategic planning with jurisdictions surrounding BC.
- The Annual Invasive Plant Forum will be January 21st, 2009 in Richmond, BC.
- Invasive Alien Species Framework for BC was created in 2004 by the Ministry of Air, Land, and Water Protection.
- There is also a variety of invasive species programs at the federal level.
- There is an online database that is used for tracking invasive species in BC.
- Carbon dioxide increases alter plant growth, in many cases, plant biomass is likely to increase with higher carbon dioxide levels.
- Kudzu has spread north with increasing temperatures. Kudzu also helps spread Asian Soybean rust, a pathogen.
- There are more questions than answers about what climate change will mean so far.
- Climate is likely to be a factor in limiting population establishment and the spread of invasive species.
- Resources on climate change and invasive species: www.climateandfarming.org

Comments arising from the discussion:

- How much can we actually change predicted climate trends? Is it too late to do anything?
 - We may not be able to change some of the effects within the next 50 years, but it makes sense to practice conservation and adopt efficient practices. These things should happen anyway.
- Current economic conditions make adaptation difficult. Producers are having a hard time economically.
- Where is the emergency management work at in BC? This is a large issue for confined livestock systems.
 - The provincial government has committed \$100M over ten years for emergency management, which is linked to federal money and programs.
- Mountain Pine Beetle poses a problem with potential climate change scenarios. Competitiveness and resiliency are an important focus within emergency management work.
- Where is work at with breeding and forage? There seems to have been a drop in the number of forage variety trials.
 - AAFC is working with partners on research with private partners. BC Forage Council has been active in forage trial coordination.
- The continuation of the AAFC program NWSP is to be determined through the Growing Forward negotiations. There needs to be a consideration of population movement and growth when thinking about climate change.
- They need tools for adaptation- each sector does. Whose responsibility is it to create awareness about diseases, such as club root? Both producers and the industries that might be responsible for spreading it need to be aware.
 - Linda stated that there is a model for dealing with these issues, it just needs to be activated.
- Producers have always been adapting, they now just need to move more quickly. There needs to be constant communication about available tools, so that producers know what is out there and how to get access to them.
- Plastics recycling keeps coming up for the Landscape and Nursery Association. They would like to see support from MAL on what they can do to recycle.
 - There has been some movement on this in the Okanagan with funding from AEI. A regional district there is carrying on this work.
 - There is new research coming out about plastics recycling.
- Lots of requests come in to MAL about alternative and specialty crops. However, MAL does not have a formal mechanism for addressing this.

Powerpoint presentations are to be emailed to those requesting a copy.

3. Lunch

4. Federal / Provincial Programming Update – John Berry AAFC

John Berry provided an update on the Growing Forward initiative that is being planned. Cost sharing for the new program will be on a 60/40 basis. The Province's now have more flexibility in the programs that are offered in their regions. Competitiveness and innovation is now given higher emphasis by the Federal Government which will shift the program BMP's and other activities that are funded.

Timing for the five year program will be difficult to initiate by April 2009 but some funding has been obtained to carry the current one year agreement further.

Steve Thomson updated the committee on the challenges that the industry is facing with respect to rolling out and implementing the new agreement. Discussions are underway within industry on how to facilitate these changes.

5. **Agriculture and Air Quality Issues**

Update on the FVRD Air Quality report was provided in the meeting package. FVRD wants to facilitate a presentation at the Partnership Committee meeting in Victoria in March. The report identifies BMP's that may be implemented by the agriculture industry to improve air quality in the Fraser Valley. MAL has identified that resources are needed to look at air quality issues. This topic will be addressed at the meeting in March to help develop a strategy that BCAC, MAL and other agencies can support. A short update on this issue is attached to the minutes.

Action: Invite Kevin Chipperfield to give a presentation to the PC meeting in Victoria on the poultry industry dust control project.

Action: Lloyd McKimmon to find where the FVRD report is available and provide information to Ted vdG on how to obtain the report.

Action: Report to be forwarded to Steve Thomson so BMP's identified can be considered for Growing Forward program.

Action: Hugh Sloan or other representative from FVRD to give a presentation on the air quality report.

6. **Water Management**

Water Governance Initiative – Randy Cairns MOE

In June 2008 the province released Living Water Smart - British Columbia's Water Plan. The Ministry of Environment's Water Governance Project supports delivery of commitments made in the province's Water Plan and will provide input to potential changes to the *Water Act*. Four workshops were held around the province on water governance in the summer of 2008.

Two reports have also been prepared :

Nowlan & Bakker Report:

www.watergovernance.ca/Institute2/PDF/FBCwatergovernancefinal2.pdf

Regional Workshop Report:

www.fraserbasin.bc.ca/programs/water_governance.html

Randy Cairns also provided some background on the Collaborative Watershed Governance Initiative that is being lead by the Fraser Basin Council and the Pacific Salmon Foundation. They will be hosting a workshop in November to identify common ground for collaboration among sectors, protect watersheds and ecosystem services and finding ways to contributing to stream health.

The BCAC raised concerns on the process and where it will lead. A short update on the two governance initiatives is attached to the minutes.

Agriculture Water Plan

The Okanagan Basin Water Strategy was distributed to everyone. A copy of the template for the agriculture water strategy was also provided to the committee. Committee members are invited to provide input into the document and the process for the Water Committee that was outlined.

The committee discussed the Drinking Water Action Plan and the impacts it has on agricultural producers. Steve Thompson mentioned that the Ministry of Health and Wellness may now have some responsibilities for Drinking Water protection and asked whether they should now be part of the Partnership Committee.

Action: Eric Young, Deputy Provincial Health Officer, Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport be invited to the next PC meeting to give a presentation on the Drinking Water Action Plan.

Randy Cairns to set up the invitation.

7. Habitat and Farmland Committee Report – John Patterson

John Patterson provided an update on the Habitat and Farmland Committee meeting in early October. An update on the Biodiversity guide was provided and is attached to the minutes. The Habitat and Farmland committee minutes are also attached.

A copy of the Agriculture Building Setback Standards Factsheet was distributed to the committee. Steve Thomson provided the steps that the BCAC is going through to consult with their commodity sectors on the building setback document. If consensus can be achieved by the commodity groups the BCAC will forward a letter to the MAL. BCAC will become a signatory to the Memorandum of Understanding for implementation of the setbacks.

David Trotter provided the committee with an update on the Riparian Management Strategy and where the Habitat and Farmland Committee is going with vegetation management. A technical working committee has been formed to work on the ag-riparian framework. This committee will report to the Habitat and Farmland Committee.

8. Wildlife Committee Report – Chris Zabek

The committee met on October 7th. Chris Zabek provided a brief overview of the Wildlife Committee meeting. The minutes of the Wildlife Committee are attached to the minutes.

9. Nutrient Management Committee Report – Orlando Schmidt

Orlando Schmidt provided an update on the Nutrient Management Committee of October 14th. A committee report is attached to the minutes.

Orlando gave an update on the current status on the Okanagan Agricultural Soil Study. The current standards and procedures for doing soil surveys in BC is outdated and the committee is dealing with this.

A poultry manure movement study has also been initiated. This study will be conducted over the next year.

10. Written Updates attached to the Minutes.

- Specified Risk Materials – Mark Raymond
- AEI Committee – Brian Baehr
- EFP/NFSP Greencover – Angela McKee
- CBCNWSEP – Philip Bergen

11. Partnership Committee Future

A short discussion was held on the future direction on the Partnership Committee. It was suggested that at each meeting an agenda item be added that allows committee members to put forth upcoming issues that should be addressed at future meetings. The Partnership Committee should be the first point of contact for any environmental issue or consultation process that agencies wish to have with the BCAC.

12. Items for Future Meetings

Coal Bed Methane – Linda Allison, Irmi Critcher
Crop Adaptation to Climate Change Study – Ben Kangasneimi
Climate Change Adaptation - Jenny Feick
Fraser Valley Air Strategy – Hugh Sloan
Kevin Chipperfield – Poultry Industry Dust Control Program
Drinking Water Protection - Eric Young – Deputy Provincial Health Officer
Waterbucket – TvdG
Metro Vancouver Air Emissions Issue

13. Next meeting – Victoria – March 5th, 2009

Habitat and Farmland Committee Update

Partnership Committee for Agriculture and Environment Meeting

November 6, 2008

The Committee met October 2, 2008 at the Agriculture Centre in Abbotsford, attended by representatives from MAL, MOE, DFO, and the Fraser Valley Regional District (UBCM rep).

1. Agriculture Building Setbacks
 - a. The June 2008 letter from MOE and DFO to MAL providing support for the proposed Setback Standards and recommended implementation was discussed at the last BCAC meeting October 26, 2008.
 - b. Implementation discussions continue and will be linked to the developing Agriculture Riparian Strategy.
 - c. MAL will initiate Bylaw Guide revisions and will need to revise the MAL Farm Practices Factsheets.
 - d. The UBCM will be approached through the Committee rep as to how to discuss the next steps with the UBCM.
2. Wildlife Tree Removal in the ALR
 - a. Issue between City of Surrey and effected landowner has not been resolved. MOE will determine status of issue with Regional staff and work towards resolution.
3. Riparian Management Framework for Agriculture Land
 - a. MAL (Dave Trotter, Gordon Mackinnon) presented the Background, purpose, timelines, and Terms of Reference for the strategy to develop guidelines for vegetation management and agriculture activities in agriculture lands.
 - b. A Technical Working Group has been formed, with representation from agencies and the BCAC, further develop the details related to assessment, implementation, training, and governance. The first meeting of the TWC will be in Kamloops October 30, 2008.
 - c. A draft assessment method, a workplan and outline for implementation, and a detailed Charter to further develop the Riparian Strategy, are expected by March 2009.
4. Air Quality and Agriculture
 - a. The Members discussed ways in which the H & F and the Partnership Committees might consider matters related to agriculture and air quality, and examine recommended BMPs.
 - b. Hugh Sloan agreed to work on the issue with the Lower Fraser Valley Air Quality Coordinating committee and MAL staff to prepare a future presentation to the Partnership committee on this issue. Part of the proposal would be to integrate Air Quality work with the Environmental Farm Plan process.
5. Provincial (Living Water Smart) and Agriculture Water Strategy
 - a. Ted van der Gulik provided committee members with a copy of the Living Water Smart document and outlined a process for integrating the agricultural water strategy.
 - b. MAL will prepare one-pagers on key strategy activities and initiate discussions with agencies.
6. Next Meeting of the H & F Committee – February 12, 2009. Chaired and hosted by DFO

BC Nutrient Management Working Group Update

Partnership Committee on Agriculture and the Environment October 24, 2008

Prepared by David Poon

This update highlights current activities of the Nutrient Management Working Group and summarizes the group's most recent meeting on October 14, 2008.

1. Assessment of Nutrient Management BMPs: Orlando Schmidt, MSc thesis

For his MSc thesis, Orlando Schmidt investigated the effects of reduced N fertilizer manure treatments on crop yields and residual (post-harvest) soil nitrate over one growing season. This was a follow up study on two high fertility sites – one in corn, one in raspberries – of the Fraser Valley Soil Nutrient Study (FVSNS).

There was no treatment effect on crop yield. In the control treatment, residual soil nitrate was 230 kg NO₃-N/ha in the raspberry site, 150 kg NO₃-N/ha in the corn site, and the nitrate levels increased with increasing application rate. The soil nitrate levels are in the very high nitrate risk level as categorized in the FVSNS, suggesting the N fertilizer rates could have been decreased from the farmers' standard application rates without decreasing crop yields on the study sites.

2. Developments in BC Soil Testing System

MAL is currently standardizing soil testing methods and interpretations as part of the follow-up to the Fraser Valley Soil Nutrient Study. MAL's goal would be to recommend soil tests and laboratories in which we are confident, for agri-environmental programs (e.g. Nutrient Management Planning and monitoring environmental health indicators).

On September 15, 2008, MAL met with soil scientists from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) and UBC and other soil specialists. Grant Kowalenko (AAFC) provided a written document on the current state of soil testing knowledge. There was widespread support for 1) MAL to engage labs on interim soil testing standards for the Fraser Valley and the Okanagan and 2) the use of North American Proficiency Testing program – a North American-wide quality assurance system – to accredit labs; this is a system that the Ontario government uses in its nutrient management planning program.

The next step is for MAL to meet with labs and scientists to decide the most suitable interim soil tests given the state of knowledge and resources available. MAL is aiming to do this before the end of 2008.

3. Poultry Manure Movement Study

The contractor, Ference & Weicker, began collecting data from eight haulers for this one-year study in May 2008, with the goal of quantifying the distribution of poultry manure within and outside of the Fraser Valley. Data collection thus far has been incomplete and somewhat inconsistent, although it's believed that most haulers can provide good records.

Angela McKee (ARDCORP, BC Agriculture Council) continues to try to involve a ninth, potentially important hauler. The Ference & Weicker liaison plans to meet personally with haulers and should be providing a six-month report in fall 2008.

4. Okanagan Agricultural Soil Study (OASS)

Individual producer reports were mailed on August 7, 2008. MAL is collecting feedback on these reports from producers as part of an OASS follow up strategy.

GK expects a draft scientific report to be done by the end of November 2008. This report will have a more significant soil water component than the Fraser Valley Soil Nutrient Study report. As with the Fraser Valley Soil Nutrient Study, it is possible for GK to further develop the work into a format suitable for publication in a peer-reviewed journal if extra funding became available.

Agriculture Wildlife Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

October 7, 2008
MAL Office, Kamloops

Attendees: Chris Vos, Alex McLean, Richard Daloise, Mike Badry, Wray McDonnell (Chair), Bob France, Mike Rose, Brian Baehr, Karen Goodings, Stu Rhodes, Jeff Morgan, Carl Withler, Don Trethewey, Rick Kantz, Chris Barker, Scott Ellis, Jim Forbes; Joan Best; Chris Zabek

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 am. Introductions were made and the agenda was reviewed.

1. Business Arising from the Minutes:

- a. Regulation restrictions impacting hunter ability/opportunity to resolve agriculture conflicts (RD):
 - BCWF is interested in ways of harvesting more female animals in areas where populations are too high, despite some internal resistance. ‘Systemic Blockages’ in Wildlife Branch can prevent this e.g. lack of inventory information; CO concerns over enforcement resources for initiatives such as overlapping seasons/species. Creative and collaborative thinking is needed to overcome the blockages and permit the public service to make sound decisions.
 - Province is trying to deal with the issues and has funded some population assessments. PAZWP will address many current issues but is yet to unfold. Will attempt to fund 3 regional ag-wildlife positions this year; develop private land programs beyond the pilots; working with Peace CO’s on compliance/enforcement strategy; collaborate with partners on education/awareness; establish regional conflict committees.
 - noted a need for greater connectivity with bodies such as PHRAC, including relevant presentations.
 - noted that while provincial predator populations appear to be stable, agricultural areas are not conducive to predation as a control for ungulates.
 - given the current economic status of the beef industry, any forage losses are particularly difficult for producers to absorb. This can lead to a negative feedback loop if ranches are forced out of business, ungulate habitat suffers.
 - First Nations are often hunting less than in the past, further limiting the tools to control ungulate populations.
 - noted that increased doe harvest must be regionally specific as opposed to a cookie cutter approach. Also noted that due to drought or other factors, animals will graze fields that may not have been hit traditionally and may not be readily visible from roads.
- b. Next steps – how do we get hunters onto ag land to reduce problem wildlife populations (RD)?
 - PAZWP is one tool. Some landowners may not be comfortable with it. Is a fear of any perception of mandated hunting on private land.
 - trespass and disrespect to landowners (past and present) is a big obstacle to landowner participation. Sharing positive landowner experiences may be a way to increase comfort levels and work towards long-term relationships between hunters and landowners. LEH’s don’t help to build long-term relationships.
 - more effort is needed in finding willing hunters and willing landowners. Website?
 - information/education about landowner and hunter liabilities is needed.
 - some landowners may not want to be part of PAZWP but may already be undertaking many of the suggested actions.

- provincial recognition is needed for contributions made by producers. Suggested that connected enabling legislation could allow \$ to flow directly back to producers for environmental goods and services provided e.g. assigned hunt permits.
- noted that the agriculture wildlife advisory committee needs to liaise with other groups and be able to provide specific, consensus-based directions and communication. However, we cannot expect other groups, such as the Partnership Committee, to take things on for us.
- important for all committee members to take the messaging of this committee back to their respective organizations. Stakeholder groups can use information to provide ground-level pressure for needed changes.
- roles can be political and/or communications oriented.
- professional, detailed and timely minutes from all meetings must be taken and used. Critical that a consistent message goes out to all groups and levels.

2. Report from Partnership Committee meeting in Courtenay (BB):

- summary notes distributed.
- minutes from this committee should be forwarded to Partnership Committee. Although the PC may not be able to take our recommendations anywhere, it is important that they receive the information.
- noted that the PC has become less action-oriented than in the past. It is difficult for the ag-wildlife advisory committee when there is no point body to act on our recommendations.
- the AWAC and the PC have a mutual educational responsibility, including exchange of reports and periodic presentations. Members also have an educational responsibility to their parent organizations.
- discussion about split assessments by the farm assessment review panel.

ACTION: Karen will provide further information to the ag-wildlife advisory committee Chairs regarding the farm assessment review panel.

3. Project Reports:

1. Predator Loss – Compensation and Mitigation Report (BF)
 - currently in the last year of the pilot project and trying to restructure a follow-up program.
 - wolves are the main predator of interest.
 - there is a need to expand beyond cattle
 - require funding of \$400,000 – 500,000/year
 - no Federal 60:40 funds appear forthcoming this time. BCWF has written to the Feds requesting cost-sharing support.
 - **ACTION:** Bob will send further notes and program numbers to the committee Chairs.
2. Forage Loss – Coastal (CZ)
 - 2 projects: Delta and Comox Valley
 - Delta/south Surrey: 23 producers in program, 2,777 acres in program
 - acres damaged: 573.5
 - acres overseeded: 139.7
 - acres reseeded: 0
 - damage value paid: \$86,017.50

- overseed value paid: \$34,912.50
 - total value paid: \$120,930.00
 - Notes: While there were fields that were eligible to be reseeded or overseeded, the program does not allow reseeding/overseeding values to be paid if in fact those fields are switched out to another crop. Inclement early spring weather was not conducive to overseeding or reseeding in some areas of Delta/Surrey as fields were too wet to allow these operations. In these situations, the producer only receives payment for damage even though the severity warranted overseed/reseed. In general, damage was noted early in the season (late fall/winter of 2007), with additional damage occurring from that point on into the spring. The migration for the majority of waterfowl of concern appeared to be earlier in 2008 than in 2009 for the most part, other than Snow Geese. The Snow Geese remained in the Delta area until the last week of April 2008. There were still some wigeon around, but in much smaller numbers. Resident Canada Geese were noted on some fields in South Surrey late April 2008.
 - Comox Valley: 27 farms in the program, 4,564 acres in the program (3,882 owned , 682 leased)
 - acres damaged: 1758.9
 - acres overseeded: 63
 - acres reseeded: 51.45
 - damage value paid: \$263,827.50
 - overseed value paid: \$15,750
 - reseed value paid: \$19,551
 - total value paid: \$299,128.50
 - Notes: Overseeding remains a significant challenge due to the short window of opportunity and adverse weather conditions. Undulating topography and variation in soil types within individual fields also complicate this method of forage re-establishment. Cover crops of fall rye, barley and oats, as well as unharvested potatoes and corn served as lure crops. Without these crops, compensation claims would have been significantly higher. The Comox Valley Naturalists counted a peak trumpeter swan population of 2,906 swans on February 5th 2008. The swan field use patterns changed a bit this year – swans foraged on a higher percentage of each field and eliminated foraging on some fields used in the past. Feeding closer to field edges with forest cover and field night feeding and roosting had significantly increased this year. Wigeon populations appeared significantly higher in the area this past winter. Flocks of up to 5,000 birds on individual fields were not uncommon. Even with the use of scare/kill permits these flocks were not deterred from feeding on the perennial grass fields. The resident Canada Goose population consistently increases each year while the migratory population appears to be stable. Damage on the perennial forage fields occurs from late summer (August) to late in the spring (May). The geese utilize a fewer number of fields than the swans but concentrate on certain fields and are very difficult to dissuade.
 - one farmer faces charges under the migratory bird act for intentionally killing trumpeter swans. This farmer is not in the program due to the fact he winter grazes his cattle on the fields used by waterfowl.
3. Forage Loss – E. Kootenay and Cariboo, New program (CV)
- pilots continued this year incorporating 2 cuts plus aftermath grazing. The provincial interim program was only for 1st cut due to the logistical challenges of implementing the new program province-wide on a very short timeframe.
 - value of losses paid in Cariboo expected to be \$500,000 – 600,000.

- value of losses paid in E. Kootenay expected to be approx. \$350,000
 - accurate numbers should be available after November
 - approx. 10,000 acres are enrolled in the Interim Wildlife Damage Compensation Program. Claim numbers are not yet available.
 - built an excreta program for separation/cleaning costs due to excreta contamination. Not well subscribed yet, likely due to harvest conditions this year.
 - Province continuing to build the wildlife damage compensation program. Currently looking at the issue of bear damage to standing corn.
 - the waterfowl pilots are projected to continue in 2009.
 - goal is to align pilots and Provincial programs.
4. Agriculture Environment Initiative Projects (BB)
- report distributed
 - future funding for wildlife damage prevention BMPs may not be included in the Environmental Farm Program.
 - current AEPI funding is winding down. Conditional approval and progress toward ag-env wildlife initiative new funding. Expect to see more emphasis on proactive management (wildlife, ag by-product management). May be more latitude for provincial initiatives and projects, as opposed to running programs.
5. Provincial Agriculture Wildlife Zoning Program (JM)
- Peace and E Kootenay pilots. Farmers contact the hunt coordinator. High workload for the producer but gives high control.
 - hunters seem receptive to the pilots.
 - some producers have concerns around the ‘rigamarole’ involved in participating.
 - PAZWP being developed by several partners; will be brought to the committee.
 - will be hiring 3 agriculture-wildlife specialists (currently posted).
 - signage, maps, websites, other tools may all be useful in facilitating positive hunter-landowner interaction. Long-term goal is to work towards this linkage without the need for heavy government involvement.
 - discussion: report detailing satisfaction with the pilots will be available upon completion.
 - last year, pilots paid \$15/cultivated acre to participants. There were 9 original landowners. There is no funding for new landowners at this time.
 - the concept is still a tough sell to some landowners as there is fear of a voluntary program evolving into a mandatory one.
 - compensation will never cover all of the costs a producer must bear, therefore is an overarching need to make hunting a more effective tool for population control.
 - noted that in the EK, all of the ungulate winter range is in the ALR. Such regions will require more difficult balancing of agricultural and other interests.

4. New Business:

1. Mortality Disposal

- BCMAL factsheet indicates it may be acceptable to feed morts to predators in some areas of the province.
- the practice is actually not ideal in all areas of BC.
- the factsheet should be modified with context statements which more accurately reflect the current situation/recommendations.

2. Grey squirrel impact on nut farms
 - an emerging issue in the lower mainland and on southern Vancouver Island.
 - the committee may invite an appropriate speaker to a future meeting.
 - grey squirrels are a Schedule C animal and therefore landowners are free to control them.

3. Roosevelt Elk damage to forage corn on Vancouver Island
 - information presented as an emerging issue.
 - MAL staff visited one dairy farmer in the Errington area (near Parksville) who is suffering very significant damage to his forage corn from elk, both from stripping cobs and from destroying whole plants.
 - no legal hunting activity occurs on this herd of over 50 head or several other herds.
 - First Nations have also been controlled from hunting the herd.
 - fields are long and relatively narrow, making fencing extremely expensive. Current EFP programs cover a relatively small portion of the costs of exclusion fencing.
 - on the farm visited, staff estimate of 20 % yield loss and a 30% quality loss. This results in an estimated loss of very roughly \$18,700.
 - Roosevelt elk damage to field vegetable crops has also been reported on the Sunshine Coast.

5. Wild/Domestic sheep Interaction Project (Chris Barker, Wild Sheep Society of BC):

- information presented
- this is a long term collaborative project. Partners include the HCTF, WSSBC, MOE and MAL regional staff. Dr. Helen Schwantje (MoE) has coordinated the project in the past through a working group but a provincial coordinator is now in place.
- interactions between domestic sheep and goats are associated with significant disease related die-offs in wild sheep in North America and in BC. Guidelines are developed to reduce disease transmission risk but management goals are to keep these species separate.
- Contact is a concern in Regions 3, 4, 5, 8
- The program has cooperated with agricultural producers in proactive education of producers and situation specific solutions.
- the program coordinator, Dave Zehnder of Invermere is developing a provincial strategic plan with funding from the WSSBC. Involvement by MAL and appropriate producer groups is seen as beneficial.
- Discussion: given ongoing economic hardship in the beef industry, some producers are looking at diversifying into sheep.
- Okanagan RD examined the concept of a Bylaw to prevent interaction. However, such a Bylaw would need MAL Ministerial approval. The draft Bylaw never went to the Minister for signature.
- MAL staff are willing to work with the parties on this issue.

Next Meeting: Williams Lake in late April

Adjourned at 2:00 pm.

BC Water Governance Project

November 2008 Update for Agriculture Partnership Committee

The BC Water Governance Project was initiated in 2006 to explore options for improving water governance in British Columbia. The project is a partnership of the Ministry of Environment, Fraser Basin Council, Living Rivers Trust Fund Georgia Basin and, Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

The exploration of new water governance arrangements is driven by pressures that are emerging on water resources today, the transforming role of government, new approaches and expectations regarding public involvement in decision-making, and the evolving relationship with First Nations. The Water Governance Project is developing new governance models and tools intended to improve the management of water in places such as the Salmon, Bonaparte and Nicola rivers where current governance arrangements do not facilitate an effective balance of the various, and competing, interests in water.

The BC Water Governance Project has produced two reports. Linda Nowlan and Karen Bakker authored a review of water governance in British Columbia which includes and exploration potential changes to move forward. Additionally, four regional workshops were held to gather input from stakeholders and First Nations regarding opportunities for moving forward with water governance in British Columbia.

Governance vs. Management

- Governance - ***decision making process***: how we make decisions, who gets to decide and who is accountable
- Management - ***operational approach***: models, tools, and information we use to make those decisions

For More information on Water Governance please visit Livingwatersmart.ca

of

Water Governance Project Reports are available at:

Nowlan & Bakker Report: www.watergovernance.ca/Institute2/PDF/FBCwatergovernancefinal2.pdf

Regional workshop summaries: www.fraserbasin.bc.ca/programs/water_governance.html

Moving forward, the BC Water Governance project supports the delivery of commitments made in ***Living Water Smart: BC's Water Plan***. The information gathered through the water governance project will be used to inform the development of the legislative changes noted in Living Water Smart. Further work is being conducted with the Polis project and the Cowichan Basin Water Management Plan to develop tools and options for British Columbia.

The Collaborative Watershed Governance Initiative (CWGI), which is separate from the BC Water Governance Project, is being led by the Pacific Salmon Foundation and the Fraser Basin Council. CWGI is working to identify common ground for collaboration among sectors to protect of our watersheds and the ecosystem services they provide through a shift to ecosystem management. Progress by CWGI will contribute directly to one of the cornerstones of Living Water Smart, in that land and water managers will know what makes a stream healthy.

Biodiversity Component of Environmental Farm Plan

Update to Partnership Committee on Agriculture and the Environment November, 2008

Background:

Planning for Biodiversity: A Guide for Farmers and Ranchers was published as a draft by the BC Agriculture Council in March, 2008.

The guide is available on the BCAC website:

http://www.bcac.bc.ca/EFP_pages/documents/index.html See the British Columbia Biodiversity Program Guide (draft June 2008).

Recent Activities:

- The draft guide is now being used in a province-wide pilot program. Results of the pilot will be used to revise the draft guide.
- The Canada – British Columbia EFP Steering Committee developed a training program for EFP Planning Advisors to introduce them to the guide and teach them how to assist farmers to develop Biodiversity Plans. Niels Holbek (BCAC), King Campbell (Ducks Unlimited), Lavona Liggins (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada), Laura Maclean (Canadian Wildlife Service), Geoff Hughes-Games (MAL), and Dave Trotter (MAL) taught the course.
- The training courses were given in September in three locations: Prince George, Kamloops, and Abbotsford. Thirty one Planning Advisors, nine agency planning advisors and four agency observers participated.
- Ducks Unlimited has provided funds to develop 60 pilot Biodiversity Plans on farms this year. All 60 of the plans have been booked by Planning Advisors on behalf of farmers. There is a waiting list to have more Biodiversity plans done.
- Completed plans will be reviewed by and approved by the Steering Committee. Farmers would then be eligible to apply for cost shared BMP funding for biodiversity projects if funding is available.
- Planning Advisors who helped prepare an approved plan will be qualified to do other plans.
- Feedback from the pilot including training sessions, preparation of the Biodiversity Plans and comments received on the draft guide will be used to revise the guide in 2009.
- Work is underway to secure further funding to support this initiative.

Prepared by:

Sylvia von Schuckmann, Ministry of Environment

Agriculture and Air Quality Issues

Report to Partnership Committee

Hugh Sloan
Director of Planning
Fraser Valley Regional District

There are many sources of emissions in BC that contribute to air quality deterioration, including manufacturing, waste disposal, burning, vehicles (both on-road and non-road), and others. The agriculture industry is responsible for a significant portion of these emissions, which add to the overall air pollution burden in the province.

Significant efforts have been made in B.C. to lessen and mitigate air emissions from transportation and most industrial sectors. The Air Care program, for example, is responsible for significantly reducing emissions from automobiles across the Lower Mainland. Manufacturing and industrial sources participate in programmes involving emission control equipment, permitting and regulation with the result that significant reductions have been achieved in most of the common air contaminants over the past three decades.

The Agricultural sector, through the Environmental Farm program and other efforts, has also been working to address environmental impacts associated with farming. To date the greatest effort has been directed at protecting water resources and wildlife habitat. Programs for agricultural building setbacks and riparian protection promise to comprehensively deal with protection of the riparian environment while protecting agricultural uses and practises. Air quality protection has not received the same attention, and the recent court challenges involving the greenhouse industry indicate that there is a need to advance dialogue, understanding and new approaches to air quality matters related to agriculture.

Using the Lower Fraser Valley Airshed (Metro Vancouver, FVRD & Whatcom County) as an example, according to the Metro Vancouver 2005 Emission Inventory, agricultural operations generated the following emissions as a proportion of the airshed total:

- Particulate matter – 16% (including 11% of PM₁₀ and 4% of PM_{2.5})
- Volatile organic compounds (VOC) – 7%
- Ammonia – 76%
- Smog forming pollutants – 11%
- Greenhouse gases – 5% of CO₂ Equivalent, including 61% of methane (mainly from manure management) and 32% of nitrous oxide (from fertilizer application)

While the proportions may vary in the rest of the province, the numbers clearly indicate a need for active involvement of the agriculture industry in BC to reduce emissions.

Smog and fine particulate emissions are associated with respiratory and cardiovascular effects, and aggravate the symptoms of these diseases. Ammonia, for which agriculture is responsible for the largest component, reacts to form both smog and secondary fine particulate, the latter being small enough to pass through the body's natural filtering mechanisms to reach the lungs directly.

In terms of greenhouse gases, manure management and fertilizer application are the main sources.

Regional haze and reduced visibility are created through the reaction of ammonia with sulphur and nitrogen oxides to produce PM_{2.5}. This is the characteristic “white haze” that often forms in the Fraser Valley during the summer.

Odour complaints resulting from agriculture operations are becoming more and more frequent as urban development boundaries approach rural farming areas. Reducing ammonia and the use of best management practices for manure handling would help to alleviate complaints.

Recently, federal, provincial and local agencies in the Lower Mainland met to discuss options for addressing agricultural emissions. The result was a recommendation that this issue be referred to the Partnership Committee, considering its active and successful role in mitigating other environmental problems in the agriculture industry. While it is recognized that emission reduction work is taking place in some sectors of the agriculture community, there does not seem to be a focused effort on the industry as a whole. To this end, I would like to present the issues to the next meeting of the Committee in March/09, together with a recommendation that air quality be included as a function of one of the subcommittees or as a new subcommittee.

Agriculture Environment Initiatives

UPDATE

Operations Highlights:

- The Ministry of Agriculture and Lands (MAL) has completed the first phase of the implementation of an "Interim" Wildlife Damage Compensation Program. The focus was on first cut forage outside the pilot areas and the introduction of a Deer Excreta Program for grain producers. Uptake was relatively light, which is being attributed to the tight time frame for first cut forage and the severity of drought in the Peace.
- Recently approved funds under the Wildlife Program Development initiative (04-018) have been committed to investigation of hunter/landowner liability analysis, support for development of a new wild predator mitigation program option and further work on hunt coordination.
- IAF have agreed to allow a carry-over for the 3 projects identified that will have significant unspent funds, and where other partners have also made significant contributions. The projects are the Obsolete Pesticide Collection, East Kootenay Landowner Incentives and Peace River Landowner Incentives.
- At time of writing we do not have confirmation of a contribution agreement with IAF for the Agriculture Environment and Wildlife Fund
- AEI staff is in the process of closely tracking all projects to ensure that all funds committed are expended and reported on or identified for decommitment. Decommited funds can be reallocated under AEPI or in the end lapsed for return to the AFFF funds of IAF.

Financial Update:

To date 159 applications have been fully or partly approved of the 220 submitted and 97 projects are completed.

AEPI

- \$11.51 million of \$12 million in AFFF funds have been committed by MC decisions to date for AEPI projects. Included in that is the commitment of \$500,000 for new and supplemental BMP's.
- \$490,000 from other funding sources has been committed to AEPI projects to date; the total commitment to AEPI projects from all funding sources is \$11.96 million
- **\$525,000 remains uncommitted for AEPI projects**

AESI

- \$983,588 of \$990,000 AESI funds have been committed
- \$57,500 from other funds has been committed to AESI projects
- The total commitment to AESI projects to date is \$1.02 Million
- **\$6,400 remains uncommitted from AESI funds**

Brian Baehr, AEI Coordinator

October 24, 2008



Canada-British Columbia Environmental Farm Plan Program and National Farm Stewardship Program Update.

http://www.bcac.bc.ca/EFP_pages/about_us/index.html

2008/09 Continuity Year as at October 21, 2008:

- The 2008.09 Continuity Year Agreement (between Investment Agriculture Foundation and the BC Agriculture Council) for \$3.288 million has been signed by all parties.
- The APF Environment Working Group Membership: Linda Allison, Philip Bergen (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada) and Ken Nickel (Ministry of Agriculture and Lands) as Co-chairs, Rae Fawcett, Greg Norton, Corny Hertgers, Jennifer Dyson, Lynne Wilson, Allen James, Bert Miles (Investment Agriculture Foundation), Laura MacLean (Environment Canada), Margaret Crowley (Ministry of Environment), and King Campbell (Ducks Unlimited Canada) as an observer. Support Staff: Geoff Hughes Games (Ministry of Agriculture and Lands), Coreen Moroziuk (Investment Agriculture Foundation), Steve Thomson (BC Agriculture Council), and Angela McKee (BC Agriculture Research and Development Corporation).
- The EFP/NFSP Working Group has decided to maximize funds to producers for Beneficial Management Practice (BMP) projects, while keeping the planning component of the program for the full year.
- Planning is offered by smaller number of Delivery Groups as listed below.

Current Delivery Groups and Contact Information

Delivery Group	Coordinator/Main Contact	Phone Number
BC Cattlemen's Association	Peter Spencer	250-764-0376
BC Fruit Growers Association	Don Magnuson,	250-717-6948
BC Landscape & Nursery Association (Floriculture and Greenhouse)	Hedy Dyck	604-574-7772
BC Milk Producers' Association	Dave Melnychuk	604-812-3276
Mainland Fruit and Vegetable (Fraser Valley Strawberry Growers' Association)	Jyl Singh	604-807-5659
BC Poultry Association	Allen James	604-795-7656
Certified Organic Associations of BC	Paddy Doherty	250-747-3287
Island Farmers' Alliance	Peter Versteeg	250-743-2243

- In May an additional \$1 million grant was received from the BCMAL and will be used for BMP funding.

- To further assist with the demand for Beneficial Management Practice funding, an MOU between BCAC and IAF for an additional \$2.5 million was signed in September.
- A change to the BMP program was made to better manage limited funding. A farm is limited to apply for 2 BMP projects within the year. These are to be the top two environmental priorities for the farm as decided in consultation with the Planning Advisor but there must also be consideration to the affordability of those projects by the farm.
- Applications were accepted as of April 3, 2008, projects are to be completed by December 31, 2008 and all receipts and invoices are to be received by January 31, 2009.

- BMP Project Details to date:
 - 2008/09 Applications approved 674
 - Program funds to producers (committed) \$ 4.71 M
 - Program funds to producers (expended) \$ 27,273.18
 - Total project value (approximate) \$ 14.0 M (est.)

- Environmental Farm Planning Activities from April 1, 2008 to September 30, 2008:
 - Communication Events 41
 - Workshops 244
 - Producer participants 434
 - Statements of Completion 314

Prepared By:

Angela McKee
 Senior Program Manager
 BC Agriculture Research and Development Corporation
 Phone: 604-854-4483
 Email: angela@bcac.bc.ca

Canada-British Columbia Water Supply Expansion Program

Update for Partnership Committee on Agriculture and the Environment October 2008

Continuity Year Program:

The original Canada-British Columbia Water Supply Expansion Program continues for an additional year with a separate allocation of funding. The continuity year program agreement provided \$1,800,000 with notional allocations of \$500,000, \$800,000, and \$500,000 for Tiers 1, 2, and 3 respectively. Similar to the previous program, the program objective is to provide financial and technical support for the planning and development of sustainable water supplies for agriculture. The application deadlines for the 2008/09 continuity year program were May 1, June 1 and September 1, 2008. The Program ends March 31, 2009. The Program's three Tiers are summarized below:

- 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. Projects must be completed by January 31, 2009.
- 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.

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. Program information is also available on-line at www.agr.gc.ca/water

Program Activity Highlights to date:

Program figures since inception:

- Tier 1 – 204 applications reviewed, 174 approved (plus 5 in process). Total funding committed and expended \$693,000. Note: not all the committed funds will be claimed.
- Tier 2 – 12 applications reviewed, 5 approved. Total funding committed and expended \$455,000.
- Tier 3 – 24 applications reviewed, 14 approved. Total funding committed and expended \$678,000.

The Program Working Group gave priority to Tier 1 and 2 eligible projects that could be completed by March 2009. The last application date for all Tiers was September 1, 2008. There was continued strong demand for funding for all Tiers however many Tier 2 projects proposed were not able to be completed by March 2009. As a result, some Tier 2 funds were re-allocated to Tier 1 and 3 projects to limit the funds originally allocated to Tier 2 from lapsing when the Program ends. All program funds have been committed and the Program Working Group is meeting as needed to manage the wind down of the program.

Prepared by: Philip Bergen
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
Oct 20, 2008



CANADA-BRITISH COLUMBIA SPECIFIED RISK MATERIAL (SRM) MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Partnership Committee Update November 6, 2008

The Canada-British Columbia Agreement Establishing the Facilitation of the Disposal of Specified Risk Materials (SRM) Program was signed on April 11, 2007. *The Canada-British Columbia Specified Risk Material Management Program (BCSRMMP)* is funded through a 60:40 federal-provincial cost-sharing agreement between Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands. The program is designed to assist the province's beef processing sector in complying with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's enhanced feed ban regulation. The purpose of the Agreement is to assist industry in adapting to new controls on animal feed by improving adequate disposal infrastructure and, where applicable, investing in research to seek long-term, value-added uses for SRM.

There are six areas of support or subprograms under the *Canada-British Columbia Specified Risk Material Management Program*. These include:

- A. On-Site Slaughter Plant SRM Separation and Storage;
- B. On-Site Slaughter Plant SRM Destruction or Containment;
- C. Regional/Community SRM Destruction or Containment;
- D. Bovine Dead Stock Storage, Destruction or Containment;
- E. Environmental Assessments required for SRM Projects; and
- F. On-Site Slaughter Plant SRM Separation, Storage, Destruction or Containment

Thirty five (35) projects have been approved for funding, for a combined federal funding amount of \$2,337,646. Of the 35,

- 16 have applied under Subprogram A – On-Site Slaughter Plant SRM Separation and Storage
- 4 have applied under Subprogram B – On-Site Slaughter Plant SRM Destruction or Containment
- 2 have applied under Subprogram D – Bovine Dead Stock Storage, Destruction or Containment;
- 3 have applied under Subprogram F – On-Site Slaughter Plant SRM Separation, Storage, Destruction or Containment;
- 10 projects have been approved under miscellaneous funding.

Of all of the federal and provincially inspected plants that handle SRM, and which were licensed prior to the introduction of the BC Centre for Disease Control Class C transitional license, it is estimated that the BC SRM Management Program has addressed approximately 90% of the total SRM by volume produced in the province. The 10% that has not been funded represents slaughterplants that have been contacted and encouraged to apply for funding but have not done so at their own discretion.

It is important to note that the majority of the above slaughterplants have received funding for the on-site separation and storage of SRM, but have not received funding for the containment or the disposal of their SRM.

Because the *Meat Inspection Regulations* have come into effect concurrent with the enhanced feed ban regulations, many new licensed plants have come on stream needing SRM disposal options. As of

October 15, 2008, it is estimated that the BC SRM Management Program has funded approximately 65% of the province's SRM-producing slaughterplants representing 65% of the Province's future SRM production. The remaining 35% that have not been funded at this time, have been contacted by the SRM Management Program and are either not interested in available funding, have not yet completed their funding application, or are in the early stages of building their facility and have not approached the SRM Program to fund their waste disposal system.

The focus moving forward for the BCSRMMMP is to implement regional / community projects to establish long-term solutions in regions of the Province where they are currently inadequate or non-existent. One of the major obstacles to overcome arises from negative public perceptions pertaining to environmental and social concerns associated with slaughterhouse and SRM waste disposal options.

SRM Subprogram Summary:

SRM Program	Agreements Offered	Agreements Accepted and Signed	Total Program Funds Offered	Total Program Funds Paid
Programs A & B: On-Site SRM Separation, Storage, Containment, and Destruction	18 of 18	18 of 18	\$ 1,729,855	\$ 651,449
Program C: Regional Containment & Destruction	0 of 0	0 of 0	\$ -	\$ -
Program D: Deadstock	2 of 2	2 of 2	\$ 150,619	
Program E: Env. Assessment	-	-	-	-
Program F: New On-Site	3 of 3	1 of 2	\$ 223,281	\$ 36,080.05
Misc. Funding	5 of 5	5 of 5	\$ 233,891	\$ 49,985