



**Highlights of meeting # 32 held on June 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> 2007 in Fort St. John**  
for complete minutes and background information go to  
<http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/partners/index.htm>)

**Focus Session on Bio-Diesel** - Harvey Glasier, Ministry of Agriculture and Lands (MAL), provided an overview of the biofuel industry in North America. He pointed out that most proposed biofuel facilities in North America are in jurisdictions with production incentives, and that there is a need for a BC strategy to encourage development in the province for the benefit of both producers and the local economies. Currently BC provides a tax exemption of \$0.09/ liter on bio-diesel as an alternative fuel.

Garnet Berge of the BC Grain Producers Association presented an overview of the rationale and scope of a proposed plant for the BC Peace region. The plant will produce 22 million liters of bio-diesel annually and require 56,000 tons of canola from the BC and Alberta Peace region. The project consultants indicated that Alberta offers significantly more incentives than BC, particularly during the five-year construction and initial production phase. Current plans are to construct next spring.

**Action:** BC Agriculture Council (BCAC) to facilitate a presentation by the BC Grain Producers Association to the Minister of Agriculture and Lands, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources and others as necessary on the BC Peace bio-diesel initiative.

**Focus Session on Wildlife** – Harvey Sasaki, Assistant Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Lands and Al Martin, Director, Fish and Wildlife Branch, Ministry of Environment led off the session with confirmation of the priority of addressing wildlife agriculture conflict issues within their respective Ministries as well as cooperatively between all agencies and stakeholders.

Brian Baehr (BCAC) provided an overview of the major provincial wildlife issues and current prevention, mitigation and compensation initiatives. These include wild predators and livestock, waterfowl in forage and cereal crops, bird damage to berries, cherries and grape crops, wild ungulates in stored and standing forage crops.

Wray McDonnell (MAL) provided information on the role of the Wildlife sub-committee of the Partnership Committee and summarized the wildlife damage compensation projects in BC

Mike Badry, Ministry of Environment (MoE), provided a presentation on the Provincial Wildlife Conflict Strategy. Conflicts include property damage, agricultural damage, vehicle collisions and human injury or death. Costs to the BC taxpayer are in the millions of dollars each year. The biggest issue province wide is bear and cougars, primarily for human safety. Badry described wildlife management tools including hunting, translocation, hazing and aversive conditioning; diversionary feeding, fencing, repellents/deterrents, and fertility control.

George Derksen, Environment Canada, gave a presentation on the mandate of EC regarding wildlife and species at risk.

Jeff Morgan, MoE gave a presentation on the landowner incentive programs. Morgan also outlined options for addressing agriculture wildlife conflicts stressing the need to integrate programs, both strategic and operational. Some MoE led initiatives include:

- Development of agriculture zone specific regulations such as specific hunting licenses, harvest strategies and monitoring that target agricultural zones.
- Development of hunter access coordination/reservation systems. The intent is to facilitate or maintain hunter access to private land by building a level of trust between hunters and farmers.

Sasaki provided his perspectives on the presentations and commented on how the various agencies can move forward to resolve many of the wildlife damage issues. He indicated that the Ministers of Agriculture and Lands and of Environment are conducting a review of current and future needs for wildlife compensation programs and a review of the wildlife act.

**Action:** The Wildlife Committee take the comments and ideas presented and work with MAL executive to develop a strategic wildlife damage reduction plan and compensation funding for farmers in British Columbia in a timely manner.

**Water Strategy** - Ted van der Gulik (MAL) indicated that the principles have been developed and provided to other agencies. A meeting of the committee will be held in the fall.

#### **Habitat and Farmland Committee**

Ted van der Gulik (MAL) reported the draft building setback standards were changed to accommodate the new definitions of a channelized stream. MOE and DFO now must approve the draft standard. Once approved by the agencies the building setback standard will be presented to BCAC for approval.

Sylvia Von Schuckmann (MoE) reported on the development of a biodiversity guide. The draft will be ready in July and will be field tested later this summer in a number of areas around the province.

**BC Nutrient Management Working Group** - Ted van der Gulik (MAL) indicated that a coordinator has been hired and the Okanagan Soil Survey is underway. Approximately 160 sites will be part of the survey, which is expected to be completed this fall.

**Specified Risk Material** – Ken Nickel (MAL) reported on the funding available for operations that are handling Specified Risk Material to adapt to new regulations that are coming into force in July 2007. An issue was raised on how wildlife will be processed as many butchers will no longer slaughter wildlife with the new regulations coming.

**Canada-British Columbia Water Supply Expansion Program** - Philip Bergen, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada provided a summary while confirming that applications are closed. It is expected that all program funds will be expended or committed when the program wraps up on March 31, 2008.

#### **Environmental Farm Plan Program** – Report submitted electronically

The following are totals from throughout the province since the inception:

- |   |                |
|---|----------------|
| • Producer participants                               | 3917           |
| • Statements of Completion                            | 1565           |
| • BMP Applications reviewed/approved                  | 1650/1454      |
| • Program funds to producers (committed and expended) | \$ 7.7 million |

**PC Tour** – Photos attached are of the PC Tour in the Fort Saint John area.



Wildlife damage to stored feed at Kantz' feedlot



After the tour BBQ at Critcher's



Discussing surface right's issues with oil and gas exploration and development at Fine's



Tour of huge OSB plant in Ft St John



"Hamilton's Electrical" at the OSB plant