



## Highlights of meeting # 33 held on October 30<sup>th</sup> 2007 in Richmond

complete minutes and attachments on (<http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/partners/index.htm>)

### Focus Session on Bio-Energy

**Gustav Rogstrand**, BC Ministry of Agriculture and Food (MAL), provided a short overview of on-farm renewable and bio-energy production opportunities including solar, geothermal, wind and biomass options such as gasification, anaerobic digestion and energy crops.

**Paris Thomas and Dick Klein Geltink**, BC Milk Producer's Association, gave an overview of the August 2007 European Biogas Tour. Representatives from the dairy and poultry sectors, BC Hydro, MAL, other Ministries and bio-energy industry representatives interested in anaerobic digestion attended the tour.

**Gustav Rogstrand** (BCMAL) updated the committee on the feasibility study findings on anaerobic digestion and biogas processing in the Fraser Valley. There is 3.3 million tons of organic waste available in the Fraser Valley. This could generate 30 MW of electricity which is equivalent to 385,000 barrels of oil.

Barriers to initiating an anaerobic digestion pilot project that were identified in BC are:

- Rules that limit the amount of off farm materials that can be used on farm. Waste importation guidelines are currently being developed for agricultural waste, benign off farm waste, slaughter waste and prohibited wastes such as plastics, and solvents.
- Energy production is currently not a standard practice on the farm. Currently the energy price offered by BC Hydro does not make anaerobic digestion viable.
- The ALC will need to establish anaerobic digestion as an acceptable farm practice.

The general consensus by the PC was to pursue AD as an opportunity for the agriculture sector.

### Habitat and Farmland Committee

The Riparian Working Group has developed draft guidelines for agricultural building setbacks adjacent to natural streams, channelized streams and constructed channels and ditches. DFO and BC Ministry of Environment (MoE) are working on letters to confirm approval-in-principal of the setbacks. Once the BCAC receives the confirmation letters from DFO and MoE, a meeting will be set up to brief producer groups about the setbacks that have been approved-in-principal and receive their comments.

A letter from the BC Fruit Grower's Association identified concerns that some vegetation species on MOE and DFO's preferred planting lists were hosts for apple maggot. The committee has initiated contact with the agencies to see if we can get those species removed from the list.

**Water Strategy - Ted van der Gulik** (MAL) provided the current status of the work being done on the provincial water strategy from an agriculture perspective. An update on the Okanagan Agricultural Demand Model and the Irrigation Scheduling Calculator was given.

**Jim Mattison** (MoE) provided some background on the groundwater management planning process, the Langley Groundwater Management Pilot and the reasons behind the Okanagan Water Supply and Demand Project.

### Langley Groundwater Management Strategy

**Brad Badelt** (City of Langley) outlined the rationale behind the Langley Groundwater Management Strategy. Langley has 100,000 residents of which 80% are supplied by groundwater. Langley has completed a water resources management strategy and is in the process of doing a water demand management strategy.

**Mark Robbins** (MAL) summarized the goals and outcomes of the Draft Water Management Plan for Langley. These include mandatory drilling authorizations, geological assessments for wells over 50 gpm, universal metering and “well aware” site visits. Reducing demand will include the installation of flow control devices as well as sprinkling regulations.

**Wildlife Committee - Brian Baehr** (BCAC) provided an update on the Wildlife Committee meeting. A written update is included with the minutes. The review of the Wildlife Act may result in changes to the legislation as early as spring of 2008. MoE is proposing a Provincial Agriculture Zone Wildlife Program. The purpose is to recognize special agriculture zones with specific hunting objectives and opportunities.

**Harvey Sasaki** (MAL) indicated that discussions on the wildlife compensation funding program are still underway but nothing can be announced at this time.

### Federal - Provincial Programming March 08

**Philip Bergen**, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, indicated that an official decision on programming beyond March 08 to transition between the old program and a new program has not yet been made. The ministers have agreed in principle to a transition period for up to one year; however authority at the provincial and federal level must still be obtained.

**SRM Program - Ken Nickel** (MAL) provided an update on the Specified Risk Material program.

SRM Slaughter Plant Programs	SRM Program Applications Received	Incomplete Applications	Applications Approved by Adj. Committee	Agreements Offered	Agreements Accepted and Signed	Total Program Funds Offered
SRM Separation, Storage and Destruction	26	6 of 24	17 of 24	12 of 24	11 of 24	\$1,405,277

**Agriculture Environment Initiatives – Brian Baehr** (BCAC) invited committee members to an Agricultural Plastics Recycling Seminar scheduled for November 22<sup>nd</sup> in Abbotsford. The intent of the seminar is to provide an overview of the current initiatives and challenges faced in expanding opportunities to conveniently collect, package and recycle unwanted agricultural plastics.

**EFP – BMP** - The following statistics are totals since the inception of the program:

- Applications approved 280
- Program funds to producers (committed and expended) \$1.73 M
- Total project value (approximate) \$6.0 M (est.)

BCAC and Ducks Unlimited Canada recently renewed their partnership agreement supporting selected environmental stewardship practices of BC farmers and ranchers with an additional \$200,000.

### Next Meeting Focus Session

Climate Change and Carbon Credits were chosen as the focus for future Partnership Committee Meetings.