



Highlights of meeting # 36 held on November 6th 2008 in Abbotsford

For complete minutes and background information go to
<http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/partners/index.htm>

Climate Change Adaptation Focus Session

Hannah Cavendish Palmer, BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands (MAL) provided an overview of the adaptation activities in MAL. 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, Agriculture and Agri Food Canada (AAFC) provided an overview of the AAFC work underway in climate impact and predictability. These include:

- Climate change is a key priority under Growing Forward, along with industry competitiveness.
- Understanding the variability of climate change predictions so that we can build resiliency.

Ted van der Gulik, (MAL) provided an overview of planning tools that are being developed for more efficient use of agriculture's water requirements in the future.

- **Okanagan Irrigation Water Demand Model** . Data collected for the entire basin on type of irrigation, crop, soil, and climate and used to determine the water demand of each crop.
- **Irrigation Scheduling Calculator** This tool is available to farmers on the Irrigation Industry Association of BC website.

Linda Wilson, (MAL) provided an overview presentation on invasive species and pests impacts with respect to climate change. See related information on www.climateandfarming.org

Climate is a factor in limiting population establishment and the spread of invasive species. BC has an Invasive Plant Strategy that led to the formation of the Invasive Plant Council of BC.

BC also has Regional Invasive Plant Committees that elevate awareness and education around the province.

Habitat and Farmland Committee Report

John Patterson, Environment Canada (EC) provided an update on the most recent meeting.

Riparian Management Strategy - David Trotter (MAL) described a new technical working committee formed to work on the ag-riparian framework.

Building Setback Standards - Steve Thomson (BCAC) 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 MoU for implementation of the setbacks.

Wildlife Committee Report

Chris Zabek (MAL) provided a brief overview of the most recent Wildlife Committee meeting. Provincial Agriculture Zone Wildlife Program lead by MoE is key to facilitation of more effective mitigation of wildlife impacts in support the MAL Wildlife Damage Compensation program initiated in 2008.

Brian Baehr (BCAC) emphasized that a key factor to long term success is improved effectiveness of hunting as a tool to manage wild ungulate numbers.

Nutrient Management Committee Report - Orlando Schmidt (MAL)

Okanagan Agricultural Soil Study. The committee is dealing with the outdated standards and procedures for doing soil surveys in BC. 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. A report should be ready by end of November 2008.

Poultry Manure Movement Study has been initiated. This study will be conducted over the next year. 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.

Federal / Provincial Programming Update

John Berry (AAFC) provided an update on the Growing Forward initiative. Cost sharing for the new program will be on a 60/40 basis. The Province's now have more flexibility in programs 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.

Steve Thomson (BCAC) 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.

Water Governance Update

Randy Cairns (MOE) provided background on the **Collaborative Watershed Governance Initiative** facilitated by the Fraser Basin Council and the Pacific Salmon Foundation. The objective is to identify common ground for collaboration among sectors, protect watersheds and ecosystem services and finding ways to contributing to stream health.

Agriculture Water Plan. The template for the agriculture water strategy was provided to the committee. Committee members are invited to provide input into the document. The committee discussed the **Drinking Water Action Plan** and the impacts it has on agricultural producers.

Steve Thompson (BCAC) noted that the Ministry of Health and Wellness has responsibilities for Drinking Water Protection and suggested they be invited to the Partnership Committee.

Program Updates

Canada-BC Environmental Farm Plan Program and National Farm Stewardship Program – Angela McKee (BCAC)

- A Continuity Year Agreement has been signed by all parties.
- The EFP/NFSP Working Group has maximized funds to producers for Beneficial Management Practice projects, while at the same time keeping the planning component .
- 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.

Canada-British Columbia Water Supply Expansion Program - Philip Bergen (AAFC)

Program figures since inception:

- Tier 1 –Total funding committed and expended \$693,000.
- Tier 2 –Total funding committed and expended \$455,000.
- Tier 3 –Total funding committed and expended \$678,000.

All program funds have been committed and the Program Working Group is meeting as needed to manage the wind down of the program.

Next Meeting – Victoria March 5th 2009