

TERMS OF REFERENCE

for the

BRITISH COLUMBIA HABITAT AND FARMLAND COMMITTEE

MISSION STATEMENT

The Habitat and Farmland Committee (HFC) seeks solutions that maintain agricultural productivity while also protecting valuable fish and wildlife habitats.

AUTHORITY

The Habitat and Farmland Committee (HFC) will report to the Partnership Committee on Agriculture and Environment.

MEMBERSHIP

The Committee will be comprised of members from:

- Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)
- Environment Canada (EC)
- Water, Land and Air Protection (WLAP)
- Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF)
- BC Agriculture Council (BCAC)
- Union of B.C. Municipalities (UBCM)

GUIDING PRINCIPLES *(from Partnership Committee on Agriculture and Environment)*

- Environmental Conservation and Protection: Agricultural policies and practices, and industry development will be conducted in a manner that protects and conserves the environment.
- Economic Sustainability: Environmental protection policies and initiatives will consider the economic sustainability of agriculture.
- Consultation: The agriculture industry and governments will consult with one another in a timely, inclusive and transparent manner.
- Cooperation and Consensus: Industry and government will work in a cooperative manner and seek consensus on joint initiatives and solutions.
- Regulatory Certainty and Equitability: Environmental regulations will be fair, consistent and predictable and will be administered in an equitable manner.
- Prevention and Stewardship: Agricultural practices will work to prevent environmental degradation and encourage individual and community stewardship.

OBJECTIVES

The HFC is to develop an annual joint work plan to enhance corporate compatibility between member organizations. The Committee will endeavour to minimize and resolve conflicts, improve communications, provide and promote resource stewardship, improve understanding, and enhance implementation of joint initiatives related to water, fish and wildlife resources.

Specific objectives are to:

- Recognize and support a stewardship ethic among producers;
- Recognize that water management issues are integral to habitat and farmland management and Committee scope;
- Review current approval processes and recommend improvement;
- Promote partnerships between agencies and producers, recognizing the need to share and accept the costs, risks, and benefits;
- Provide certainty, consistency and clarity to producers in application of relevant environmental legislation (appendix 2)
- Identify innovative new approaches and solutions(e.g. Integrated Pest Management, covenants);

SCOPE

- The Committee will build on existing partnerships and relationships between parties to find solutions to issues and facilitate and improve communications at all levels. The HFC will provide guidance on short and long term tasks such as those listed in appendix 1.
- The Committee will prepare an annual joint work plan and schedule to outline key initiatives required to carry out the objective.
- The Committee will prepare a list of issues and initiatives that may require further discussion or action by the Committee or its members.

CHAIR

The Committee will meet quarterly and will be hosted and chaired on a rotational basis by a member from DFO, EC, MWLAP, MAFF, and the BCAC. The Chair will be responsible for organization of venue and agenda. DFO will record proceedings and prepare and distribute minutes.

Appendix 1

Habitat and Farmland Committee Preliminary Short and Long Term Task List

Short Term Initiatives:

The following items are considered short term (less than 12-month time frame):

- Support the implementation of Agricultural Policy Framework (APF) initiatives and Environmental Farm Planning (EFP) Program in BC.
- Review each member's programs and initiatives to look for areas of commonality, mutual benefit, and to develop solutions to issues.
- Review existing committee structures and propose modifications and improvements
- Initiate training related to federal/provincial legislation, APF implementation and operations, and inter-agency workshops.
- Review applicable BMPs and guidelines, identify gaps, and recommend development and establish technical working groups as required.

Long Term Initiatives:

The following items are considered long term (more than 12-month time frame):

- Identify initiatives that may require co-ordination across parties.
- Develop case studies of habitat and farmland interactions and solutions.

Appendix 2

Related Legislation

- Fisheries Act
- Canadian Environmental Assessment Act
- Migratory Birds Convention Act
- Water Act
- BC Environmental Assessment Act
- Fish Protection Act
- Fish Management Act
- Environmental Management Act
- Wildlife Act
- Species at Risk Act
- Pesticide Products Control Act