

NORTHWEST SPECIES AT RISK COMMITTEE

**Town of High Level Office
High Level, AB**

Thursday, August 10, 2017 at 7:00pm

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Adoption of the Agenda
3. Adoption of the Minutes
4. Committee Members Updates: Round Table Discussion
5. Administration Update on NWSAR Deliverables:
 - a. Final report delivery update
 - b. Protected areas discussion
 - c. Scenario analysis discussion and mapping exercise
 - d. Additional stakeholder input and open houses discussion
 - e.
- 6.
- 7.
8. Next Meeting Date(s)
9. Adjournment

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Northwest Species at Risk Committee

**Town of High Level Office
High Level, AB**

Wednesday, June 21, 2017 at 10:00 a.m.

- PRESENT:** Lisa Wardley Chair, Deputy Reeve, Mackenzie County
Crystal McAteer Vice Chair, Mayor, Town of High Level
Jacquie Bateman Councillor, Mackenzie County
Eric Jorgensen Councillor, Mackenzie County
Linda Halabisky Councillor, County of Northern Lights
Terry Ungarian Councillor, County of Northern Lights
Mike Morgan Councillor, Town of High Level
Miron Croy Councillor, Clear Hills County
Sunni-Jeanne Walker Mayor, Town of Manning
- REGRETS:** Michelle Farris Mayor, Town of Rainbow Lake
Chris Mitchell Councillor, Town of Rainbow Lake
Charlie Johnson Councillor, Clear Hills County
Peter Frixel Councillor, Clear Hills County
Brenda Kerr Councillor, Town of Manning
- ADMINISTRATION:** Byron Peters Director of Planning and Development,
Mackenzie County
Hayley Gavin Planner/ Recording Secretary, Mackenzie
County
- ALSO PRESENT:** Diana McQueen DMC Consulting (via teleconference)

MOTION

1. Call to Order

Lisa Wardley called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m.

2. Adoption of Agenda

17-06-001

MOVED by Linda Halabisky

That the agenda be adopted with the addition of:

9. Provincial Survey

CARRIED

3. Adoption of Minutes

17-06-002 **MOVED** by Mike Morgan

That the minutes from the May 17, 2017 NWSAR Committee meeting be adopted as presented.

CARRIED

4. ACP Grant Discussion

We applied for a community partnership grant just before Christmas. We were successful and have received the funds, the project cost was for \$270,000.00, but we were successful in receiving \$200,000.00 – how do we source/divide up the additional \$70,000?

High Level passed a motion for \$25,000

County of Northern Lights agreed to contribute \$9,000

Can the cost be made up in-lieu? By using some of work already completed by Dan and consultants.

Mackenzie County has spent \$200,000.00?

The budget from our last meeting covered everything that the County has spent on the SARA project to date. These funds are additional to that; a grant from the province. Ideally some of the funds can be used for the caribou project but most will likely be used for the Lower Peace Regional Plan and inter-municipal planning.

When the Tri-Council made the motion to apply for the grant a condition was made to come-up with the additional \$70,000.

Schedule A is what we originally agreed to with the province.

The Town of Manning is led to believe that we need to provide \$9,000 – we cannot afford \$9,000.

The agreement was to budget for \$9,000 each, but if you could not afford it, you contribute what you can.

I will revisit the contract and come back to the committee if we need a motion to move forward on funding for this grant.

Are we going to bid for the government socio-economic RFP?

We believe it would be a stretch for us (meeting the specific requirements, such as educational background is a challenge) to complete the assessment required. We could find another company to partner with us to complete the assessment though.

Maybe we should just keep track of who obtains the contract and inform them/stay in touch with them as it progresses?

5. Phase 2: Political Engagement

During stampede week there will be huge federal and provincial presence in Calgary; there could be opportunities to set up meetings. If we get some confirmations, do you want to attend?

Will the report be completed by then? There is no point in having more meetings with no report to hand over.

Administration plans to have the first final draft complete by the end of this week.

Federal Liberal caucus will be there we can meet them and deliver report and have discussions. Federal (Edmonton) MPs will be great to connect with; getting the message out, sharing the document and gaining their support. Wildrose, PC and Alberta parties will be present. Some meetings can be informal and some formal – getting the information and messages out is most important. Consultants will complete the communications document and send it out to administration soon after any changes have been made to the report today. Sunday, Monday and Tuesday (9, 10, 11th July) will be best.

Things are booking up quickly so we'll have to discuss hotels and logistics very soon. Somewhere between now and September we need to connect with the Parliamentary Secretary (PS). It will be difficult to get the Parliamentary Secretary and the SARA Director General (DG) etc. altogether outside of Ottawa; it's important to meet with the PS and DG to deliver our document in person. Let's try and combine meetings to maximize our resources.

There is also the K-days event in Edmonton, another good opportunity to set up meetings.

We can always grab officials for ten minutes and opt to follow up via email with the report. This is raising awareness in person. I'm meeting with Pembina Institute and CPAWS after this meeting – let's see

where they are going on this file.

6. Report Presentation Meeting with DM Corbould Discussion

Met with the DM and Brian Makowecki. I didn't leave any documents; shared that we don't want parks, we want to go through this process with the land-use planning. Protected areas may be closer to 200,000 Ha.– areas that can still sustain development. We talked about Territories and BC – we need to plan the caribou in these areas together. They understand that this needs to happen; BC is going into election within the next year and Territories are further behind than us, so collaboration may be limited upfront. We spent more time talking about the park and trans-boundary issues. Results may be much better than we had originally thought; there will be some conversation areas carved off (possibly in the region of 200,000 Ha.). The province has also added to the orphan well fund (we need to mention PSAC in our report somewhere). The zones of influence (particularly around fire) the government agrees with us on this. I said we were interested in applying for the RFP for the socio-economic assessment, but if we didn't apply we would like to be significantly involved/inform the development of the indicators and assessment. DM Corbould wants to meet with some of you in July for our report presentation, and then Minister Phillips is also coming up to the area in August.

Under the federal legislation the provincial government needs options that speak to protecting habitat. When we start the land-use planning we can start the discussion of removing moratoriums – in stages of approval.

The tool to create more parks is not caribou range planning, it is land-use planning. I told them we'd be back once we had a completed report to share. The Minister is doing a tour so we'll have to accommodate her (RE location). The intent is August – no date yet.

7. Wazuku Consulting Contract Renewal Discussion

We engaged Wazuku Consulting for 6 months at \$30,000.00; the contract is up for renewal at the end of June. I don't see much value in renewing this contract – Curtis did say that he felt he was under-utilized, so we may be able to get him to do a few little tasks without any additional cost.

17-06-003 **MOVED** by Sunni-Jeanne Walker

That the contract with Wazuku Consulting not be renewed, but to utilize Curtis O’Nyon on a day-rate basis in future.

CARRIED

8. Big Lakes County Membership Extension Discussion

CAO of Big Lakes County contacted us asking for information on the NWSAR and whether the NWSAR membership extension was available to the County of Big Lakes. I explained that membership would be unlikely at the point in time; given the timelines and limited capacity of administration.

Just to add to that, the County of Grande Prairie and Northern Sunrise County are also interested in becoming a part of the committee (they had previously assigned members to the CCoA). The Town of High Prairie also contacted me stating they would like to provide a letter of support. Perhaps, administration could provide a letter of support template and send to a number of these municipalities (who want to be involved/provide support) for them to provide us with their support?

The AAMD&C Zone meeting is in Fort Vermilion the eve of the Ag Fair in August, if we can get the NWSAR solution paper endorsed at this meeting, we could take then it to the AAMD&C fall session.

17-06-004 **MOVED** by Crystal McAteer and Eric Jorgensen

Establish the NWSAR associated membership and invite interested municipalities to be a part of the NWSAR this way. Through this, we will share all information we have gathered and also the information/data we will be sharing in our report, but we cannot add to the data, analysis and assessment in our current report for their areas.

CARRIED

Lisa Wardley called a recess at 11:11 a.m. and reconvened the meeting at 11:25 a.m.

9. Provincial Survey

Unless you put in text to explain why you don’t agree, the survey will result in Albertans wanting parks. I’m thinking after we’ve finished our report, we should share the survey with all stakeholders and make

sure they link it to our report. We can use the stakeholder list to make sure people fill it out with our recommendations.

The answers are predetermined and some specific questions do not have room for comments.

Why don't you take their questions and provide them for stakeholders (open-ended answers though, not predetermined) and include the results in the report.

How are we distributing the surveys, online alone?

It's easier to build the answers and stats at the end if we use Survey Monkey. Let's have a conversation with REDI – enlist their assistance with this

10. Committee Member Updates (Round Table Discussion)

Letter from Ray Hilts was a little concerning. We had some very productive meetings in Ottawa; Chris Warkentin had a very different view of how we should approach this project though.

AFPA and FPAC – our concerns and recommendations align with what they're doing. FPAC is focusing mostly on trans-boundary issues and range planning between jurisdictions. The Canadian Wildlife Service was interested in a locally-based management board for caribou and was asking about funding opportunities. FCM conference – this year was the largest attendance they have ever had. The caribou issue is affecting everyone but most municipalities do not know what to do, or do not have the capacity to deal with it. Rural and Remote sessions flagged up the challenge that rural Canada has at getting their voices heard; urban governments at all levels have stronger voices than rural.

Laura Smith from the Office of the Leader of the Official Opposition joined us in the meeting with Jim Eglinski MP, in general, she was very knowledgeable on the procedures and processes on the SARA file – background is as Registered Professional Forester.

We should provide the opposition with questions for their committees – this is the place for meaningful discussions and for the opposition to help us.

We cannot afford to wait until the opposition is in government. Meeting

with CAPP – they are very much aligned with our messaging and are pleased we are taking this approach upon on ourselves. We need to recommend working with CAPP and PSAC with the additional orphan well funds (province has made \$250,000,000 available to reduce the liability on Orphan Well Association).

11. Administration Update on NWSAR Deliverables

In my conversations with FCM they are very much looking for higher level resolutions for policy; they're looking for issues that affect specifically municipalities.

The printed version in front of you is the most up-to-date version of the report (editing has been done down to challenge 5, Page 67), some has been restructured and the engagement section will be bumped up to the beginning of the report to emphasize our process and methodology. Socio-economic piece is still lacking oil and gas component.

We will provide a disclaimer – we have some data compiled, the province needs to fill in the gaps. Perhaps, we should treat this as a living document (releasing draft 1, draft 2, etc.) so that we can continue to edit and update all sections.

17-06-005

MOVED by Eric Jorgensen

We provide a submission to GOA (deadline June 29, 2017) for involvement in development of the provincial socio-economic assessment for northwestern caribou range planning.

CARRIED

Lisa Wardley called a recess at 12:09 p.m. and reconvened the meeting at 12:35 p.m.

12. Review and Finalize Report Content (Round Table Discussion)

Multiple amendments were made to the draft document, including the; introduction, executive summary, socio-economic section and recommendations. Predominantly changes are to reflect that we want to focus on – recovering the caribou populations (increasing numbers) and any permanent land-use changes (such as parks) are not to be implemented if there is a significant risk of adverse socio-economic

impacts.

Mike Morgan left the meeting at 1:01 p.m.

Sunni-Jeanne left the meeting at 1:35 p.m.

Recommendation revision:

Overarching recommendation: ensure that population recovery is accomplished through a flexible adaptive management process, while minimizing the socio-economic impact on the region, which also includes a meaningful local multi-stakeholder partition process.

Jacque Bateman left the meeting at 1:57 p.m.

Consensus: this document is to stay in draft form to allow for continuous updates and revisions.

13. Next Meeting Dates

Calgary Stampede: Lisa, Crystal, Byron, Linda, Eric, Jacque?

Edmonton K-Days: Jacque? Lisa? Terry? Linda? Eric, Miron?

17-06-006

MOVED by Lisa Wardley

❖ Thursday 10, August 2017 at 7:00 p.m. in High Level

CARRIED

14. Adjournment

17-06-007

MOVED by Linda Halabisky

That the Northwest Species at Risk Committee meeting be adjourned at 2:43 p.m.

CARRIED

These minutes were adopted this 10th day of August, 2017

Lisa Wardley, Chair

TERMS OF REFERENCE

NORTHWEST SPECIES AT RISK COMMITTEE

Background:

The northwest region of Alberta encompasses high economic development value in a variety of natural resource sectors. Notwithstanding this, the region is requested to carry the highest burden of environmental protection of any other region within Alberta.

Current and proposed Provincial policy and strategies requires the Lower Peace Region to subsidize economic activity in other regions; to allow, both, the Federal and Provincial governments to achieve conservation targets for the natural environment. Cumulatively, multiple conservation initiatives and species at risk recovery strategies have the ability to negatively impact the rural communities of northwest Alberta.

We, the local tenants of this region have collaborated; in an attempt to secure smart economic growth, a sustained quality of life, and well-balanced environmental protection for our future generations. Through the use of optimal adaptive management, transparent stakeholder engagement, and effective environmental stewardship; we endeavour to achieve this purpose.

Purpose:

To collectively provide and share information, ideas and resources; relating to the continued and future prosperity of northwest Alberta. Instill effective regional adaptive management and transparency which allows all stakeholders to play a vital role in shaping our collective future. Develop tangible solutions founded upon an evidence-based approach, to ensure a balance of smart economic growth, a sustained quality of life, and an enhanced natural environment; for all of our businesses, communities and wildlife.

Responsibilities:

To ensure that any impending species recovery or conservation initiative, that has the ability to affect the smart growth of northwest Alberta; is prefaced with a thorough regional socio-economic impact analysis.

To proactively work with all other levels of government, including the First Nations; to create well-balanced working groups; with all key stakeholders relevant to impending conservation areas and species recovery.

Emphasizing that, northwest Alberta currently encompasses a vast amount of protected lands. Impending species recovery and conservation initiatives should aim to enhance the value of these areas for species at risk recovery and biodiversity, rather than seeking to protect unjustifiable additional areas of land.

Structure:

Two councillors and an alternate appointed by each of the founding municipalities.

Alternates may attend all meetings.

Founding municipalities consist of:

- County of Northern Lights
- Mackenzie County
- Town of High Level
- Town of Rainbow Lake

Mackenzie County is the administrative lead for the committee, with administrative support from each of the founding municipalities.

The administrative lead will prepare and provide the agenda for all meetings.

Meetings are open to the public as per Section 197 and Section 198 of the Municipal Government Act.

Meetings may, in part, be closed to the public if matters to be addressed are recognized under; Section 197(2) of the Municipal Government Act, and/or Division 2 – Part 1 of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

The committee shall pursue grant opportunities to fund any larger projects, with Mackenzie County as the grant sponsor and/or lead.

Quorum and Costs:

Decisions shall be reached by consensus, consisting of two appointed members from each of the founding municipalities. Alternates shall not be considered for consensus unless standing in for an appointed member.

Meetings shall be hosted by the Town of High Level, at the Town of High Level Office, and meeting costs will be shared by the founding municipalities.

Each Municipality and other delegates are expected to cover the costs of their members. Additional costs, such as those derived from committee motions, will be subject to additional discussion and approval from each of the founding municipalities.

All decisions reached by consensus; which are within the scope of the Terms of Reference, are binding upon all municipalities.

Communication:

An electronic data sharing forum will be created and maintained, with access for all of the committee members, and meetings will be scheduled quarterly, or as required by the Chair.