

## **NORTHWEST SPECIES AT RISK COMMITTEE**

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

**Tuesday, May 9, 2017 at 6:00pm**

### **AGENDA**

1. Call to Order
2. Adoption of the Agenda
3. Adoption of the Minutes Page 3
4. Administration Update on NWSAR Deliverables
5. Invitation to Extend Membership to Clear Hills County Page 5
6. Next Meeting Dates Page 7
7. Stakeholder Delegation: First Nations and Metis Peoples (7:30 p.m.)
8. Adjournment

Northwest Species at Risk Committee  
Administrative Lead: Byron Peters, Mackenzie County

**Northwest Species at Risk Committee**

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

**Wednesday, May 3, 2017 at 4:30 p.m.**

- PRESENT:**
- |                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Lisa Wardley    | Chair, Deputy Reeve, Mackenzie County<br>(arrived at 5:00 p.m.) |
| Jacque Bateman  | Councillor, Mackenzie County                                    |
| Eric Jorgensen  | Councillor, Mackenzie County                                    |
| Mike Morgan     | Councillor, Town of High Level                                  |
| Crystal McAteer | Vice Chair, Mayor, Town of High Level                           |
| Linda Halabisky | Councillor, County of Northern Lights (arrived<br>at 4:59 p.m.) |
| Michelle Farris | Mayor, Town of Rainbow Lake                                     |
| Terry Ungarian  | Councillor, County of Northern Lights (via<br>teleconference)   |
- REGRETS:**
- |                |                                  |
|----------------|----------------------------------|
| Chris Mitchell | Councillor, Town of Rainbow Lake |
|----------------|----------------------------------|
- ADMINISTRATION:**
- |                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| Dan Fletcher    | CAO, Town of High Level  |
| Ashleigh Bulmer | Director of Development and IT Services,<br>Town of High Level |
| Hayley Gavin    | Planner/Recording Secretary, Mackenzie<br>County               |
| Susie Dziwenka  | CAO, Town of Rainbow Lake                                      |
- ALSO PRESENT:**
- |               |  |
|---------------|--|
| Diana McQueen | Owner, DMC Consulting (via teleconference) |
| Evan Gardner  | Constituency Assistance, Peace River       |

**MOTION**

**1. Call to Order**

Crystal McAteer called the meeting to order at 4:43 p.m.

**2. Adoption of Agenda**

**17-05-001**

**MOVED** by Mike Morgan

That the agenda be adopted with the addition of:

5. Diseased bison discussion

**CARRIED**

### 3. **Adoption of Minutes**

17-05-002

**MOVED** by Michelle Farris

That the minutes be adopted with the amendment of "...does not expect caribou herds to survive..." (Please see Committee Member 4, Page 11 of May 3, 2017 Agenda Package).

**CARRIED**

### 4. **Administration Update on NWSAR Deliverables**

Hayley provided an overview of external assistance engaged to complete all components of the reports:

1. Associated Environmental
2. Paragon Wildlife
3. DMC Consulting
4. RSG Consulting

Hayley stated that the socio-economic consultant has not been secured as of yet; as we await approval from the appropriate forestry companies to utilize the data from and/or the LuSEE model.

Dan provided an update on to the internal socio-economic analysis.

### 5. **Diseased Bison Discussion**

At the last meeting, April 21, 2017 the following motion was tabled.

**MOVED** by Eric Jorgensen

*That the Northwest Species at Risk Committee accepts the responsibility of working with ABP and federal bison association to find solutions for the diseased bison in place of the northern municipalities, specifically in place of Mackenzie County.*

**TABLED** for a future meeting date

*Administration will work to incorporate the diseased bison issue into draft range planning documents where appropriate and make the lateral connections, as discussed by the committee.*

Committee Consensus: we are happy to work on this file in the future, but our current capacity is limited to concentrating our efforts on the caribou recovery planning process. However, we are willing to contribute information and our position on this issue for the combined report; as it relates to our current workload (i.e. information collected during caribou planning process) but not above and beyond this capacity at this time.

**6. First Nations and Metis Information Handout**

See handout for more information.

**7. Next Meeting Dates**

**17-05-003**

**MOVED** by Crystal McAteer

- ❖ Tuesday May 9, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. in High Level
- ❖ Tuesday May 16, 2017 at 4:00 p.m. in High Level
- ❖ Wednesday May 24, 2017 at 4:00 p.m. in High Level

May 24, 2017: NWSAR Committee Stakeholder Open House, this is also an opportunity for all committee members to review all documentation and provide comment. Administration will endeavour to provide the committee members with electronic access to documents prior to this date, as an additional opportunity to review and provide comments.

Members attending FCM:

1. Lisa Wardley
2. Eric Jorgensen
3. Terry Ungarian
4. Byron Peters

**CARRIED**

**8. Adjournment**

**17-05-004**

**MOVED** by Jacquie Bateman

That the Northwest Species at Risk Committee meeting be adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

**CARRIED**

These minutes were adopted this 9th day of May, 2017.

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Lisa Wardley, Chair

**9. Membership Extension**

After the meeting, Hayley provided an email to all committee members asking for a decision on the extension of committee membership to Clear Hills County.

Consensus was reached by a unanimous vote to extend NWSAR committee membership to Clear Hills County.

Friday May 5, 2017: administration provided a written invitation for Clear Hills County administration to present at their next council meeting: Tuesday May 9, 2017.

**NORTHWEST SPECIES AT RISK COMMITTEE**

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Fort Vermilion, AB, T0H 1N0  
Phone: (780) 928 – 3983

Email: Byron Peters, [bpeters@mackenziecounty.com](mailto:bpeters@mackenziecounty.com)

May 5, 2017

Mr. Allan Rowe  
Clear Hills County  
Box 240  
Worsley, Alberta  
T0H 3W0

Dear Mr. Rowe:

**RE: NORTHWEST SPECIES AT RISK COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP INVITATION**

The Northwest Species at Risk Committee (NWSAR) is comprised of four rural municipalities from Northwestern Alberta, including; the County of Northern Lights, Mackenzie County, the Town of High Level and the Town of Rainbow Lake. To date, the committee has met with and heard from a diverse range of northern local stakeholders; most of whom have shared concerns with the application of the 2002, federal Species at Risk Act (SARA) upon non-federal lands.

At present, the committee is concentrating our efforts on gaining a better understanding of the complexities surrounding land-use management and critical habitat protection of at risk species. Our focus has largely centered on species recovery for the boreal woodland caribou; with a [recent] additional shift towards focusing on the challenges associated with the recovery requirements for wood bison and the recent UNESCO review of Wood Buffalo National Park.

Our overarching concerns with species recovery planning include:

1. The federal and provincial government's ability to ensure an effective and transparent participative process is strategically conducted; equipped with multiple opportunities for all stakeholders to provide meaningful input. A process which instills timelines that allow for critical review processes; revisions of which should be subject to public scrutiny.
2. The requirement for socio-economic and land management impacts, both, regionally and provincially to be strongly considered, prior to the implementation of any decision- making under the Species at Risk Act. This mechanism would help to alleviate the likelihood of profound negative implications regionally.
3. Species recovery likely to have profound negative implications on a regional level should be undertaken with a multi-species approach. We would support any jurisdictional attempt to recover multiple species and to emphasize biodiversity, so long as the process conducted satisfied the above two statements.

Along with a number of other municipal and forestry representatives we participated in a meeting with Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change

Canada, Jonathan Wilkinson; in Edmonton on April 10, 2017. The outcome of this meeting has seemingly significantly reduced our committee's consultation process with local stakeholders and the provincial government and has unfortunately limited the time for groups, such as ourselves; to provide valuable input on the provincial plans for woodland caribou recovery.

As we consider the seeming lack of an effective participative process, a socio-economic assessment and a multi-species approach to woodland caribou range planning, we have decided to develop a suite of multi-stakeholder documents; identifying implementable solutions that will work for the stakeholders of Northwest Alberta, with a view to also improving critical habitat for woodland caribou and thus, seeking to increase local populations.

Our documents will also include consideration of crucial new scientific analysis, currently underway, as well as the challenges associated with critical habitat protection and recovery methods for multiple at risk species; a connection which we feel has been severely overlooked. Particularly, in regards to the diseased bison within and surrounding Wood Buffalo National Park, unsustainable food sources for northern First Nations and Metis peoples and the threat posed to our nearby agricultural lands.

The Northwest Species at Risk Committee members would like to extend its membership to include representation from Clear Hills County. Should you choose to accept this invitation, Clear Hills County may appoint a maximum of two (2) council members and one (1) administrative representative to the committee; please also review the attached Terms of Reference for more information.

The potential socio-economic impact to our region as a result of provincial caribou range planning shall also be included within our suite of draft documents. To identify these impacts, all of the NWSAR founding municipalities have provided this committee with financial data (i.e. linear assessment electronic inventory); as a member municipality and/or as a key Chinchaga range stakeholder, Clear Hills County would also be asked to provide the committee with such data to complete the potential socio-economic impact assessment.

Should you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact any one of our committee members. We would like to thank you for taking the time to read this letter and for considering our membership invitation request; we look forward to receiving your response shortly.

Yours Sincerely,



Lisa Wardley  
Chair, Northwest Species at Risk Committee  
Deputy Reeve, Mackenzie County

cc: Northwest Species at Risk Committee

### **NEXT MEETING DATES**

- ❖ Tuesday May 30, Paul Whittaker and Keith Murray (AFPA) Edmonton.
- ❖ Wednesday May 31, 2017: Fly out to Ottawa.
- ❖ Thursday June 1, 2017: Meeting with Parliamentary Secretary Jonathan Wilkinson at 10 a.m. (45 minutes) Ottawa.
- ❖ Thursday June 1, 2017: Meeting with Derek Nighbor (FPAC) 1:30 p.m. (1 hour) Ottawa.
- ❖ June 1 – 4, 2017:
  1. The Office of the Leader of Opposition to Minister for ECCC (Critic) – have not heard back from yet.
  2. Gurpreet Vinning (in place of Minister Sohi) – have not heard back from yet.
  3. Mark Stahl MP (Natural Resources Critic) – received voicemail, called back and left a message.

## 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.