

Northwest Species at Risk Committee

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

Thursday, August 10, 2017 at 7:00 p.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
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
Peter Frixel Councillor, Clear Hills County

REGRETS: Michelle Farris Mayor, Town of Rainbow Lake
Chris Mitchell Councillor, Town of Rainbow Lake
Linda Halabisky Councillor, County of Northern Lights
Charlie Johnson Councillor, Clear Hills County
Brenda Kerr Councillor, Town of Manning

ADMINISTRATION: Dan Fletcher CAO, Town of High Level
Byron Peters Director of Planning and Development,
Mackenzie County
Hayley Gavin Planner/ Recording Secretary, Mackenzie
County
Allan Rowe CAO, Clear Hills County

ALSO PRESENT: Diana McQueen DMC Consulting
Chad Tullis Manager of Lands, Planning and
Development, MD of Opportunity

MOTION

1. Call to Order

Lisa Wardley called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

17-08-001

MOVED by Jacquie Bateman

That the agenda be adopted with the addition of:

3. Minister Phillips Meeting: Round Table Discussion

CARRIED

3. Minister Phillips Meeting: Round Table Discussion

The GOA need range plans that will stand up to a challenge of Federal legislation in a Federal court of law.

Minister Phillips said there will be new conservation areas within caribou range planning, but the actual designations will not be determined within the draft range plans.

We also heard that industry could still be managed within these new conservation areas and the rest of the caribou ranges. There was also talk of obtaining permits to operate within range boundaries and new conservation areas, different to what we see now; so long as activities do not destroy critical habitat.

Minister Phillips made a lot of commitments in line with our recommendations, actions to follow through on. We can be more optimistic, but it still remains to be seen what happens when draft range plans are released.

Minister Phillips was clear on not providing designations for new conservation areas within draft range plans; that the Feds will make the determination through the legal course.

Minister Phillips stated that “environment does not trump economy” – there is optimism in this statement.

The knowledge consortium mentioned by Environment and Climate Change Canada representatives was also encouraging.

The diseased bison was accepted as a landscape-level issue.

The Federal Cabinet (Governor in Council) has the final say on socio-economics; we’ve only spoken to 2 out of 15 Federal Ministers. We need to engage more in this conversation.

The meeting began with very much a forestry focus, initially. But Minister Phillips did say that the meetings they’ve had over the last couple days with us, forestry and First Nations is the start of the multi-stakeholder consultations.

The local forestry industry, logging contractors and trappers thought they’d have an opportunity to participate in meetings with Minister Phillips, while she was in High Level. She only met with the larger forestry industry (mills), the NWSAR and the First Nations meeting was this morning.

Minister Phillips stated that the regional planning process is to commence in the fall, 2017.

We need to undertake a cautious approach when negotiating for new conservation areas; the government are aiming to achieve 65% habitat protection – what if 65% is not enough to recover the caribou? They may keep on protecting more land until 100% of each caribou range is under protection – that is not what anyone wants.

We need to look at the natural resources available over a 50 year timeframe in each range – and look at areas that can be restored in the near future and show how these resources can be extracted over the 50 year timeframe, while achieving local caribou population recovery and habitat connectivity.

4. Adoption of the Minutes

17-08-002

MOVED by Mike Morgan

That the minutes from the June 21, 2017 NWSAR Committee meeting be adopted as presented.

CARRIED

Lisa Wardley called a recess at 8:14 p.m. and reconvened the meeting at 8:28 p.m.

5. Administration Update on NWSAR Deliverables

Anything we can deliver to AEP by the end of August will be considered prior to the release of the draft range plans. Then we'll have to wait for the draft range plans to be released from the province, and provide a written response to them. Essentially, we have 21 days to influence the draft range plan development, before GOA will be finalizing them for release.

Communications documents: our website is now live – all municipalities need to link to this website and we've talked about putting together a blog on the website for people to leave comments.

We need to engage Silvacom to expand the assessment map to include assessment data for Northern Lights County and Clear Hills County.

The NWSAR has had a lot of push back on the socio-economic scenario we've used in the draft report. Though people do not dispute the numbers we used, they do not like the scenario; as they say it's unrealistic. If we can provide some more context to support the scenario on all communications handouts it will benefit us, and help stakeholders to understand the scenario.

Allan Rowe left the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

Question: What is the impact to the oil and gas and agriculture sectors?

We've obtained the data from AER for active oil and gas fields, and we have other product reserve values – we're working on defining final values for use in the socio-economic scenario.

On the agricultural side – we could provide a per hectare/quarter section value for farms that will derive the “on-farm” value, but determining the impact will be difficult without knowing the “off-farm” revenue.

Ag statistics do provide an “off-farm” revenue values, but to determine the “on-farm” impact, you'd need to know how much the annual revenue is for each farm or average income across northern farms and the average percentage of “off-farm” income to subtract from annual “on-farm” revenue.

Actions:

1. Local (northwestern) context on why the NWSAR and locals do not like parks – historic overview.
2. Re-create the oil and gas field data; to overlay onto product reserves (for internal use only) – determine whether we can strengthen our argument on future opportunities and prosperity.
3. Define the activities that we'd like to see within all caribou ranges and any new conservation areas – the input from stakeholders will be included here.

Jacque Bateman left the meeting at 9:26 p.m.

4. Stakeholder Open Houses:

- Electronic layering exercise (mapping) to assist the public presentation explanations.

5. Final report:

- Identify where new development could/can occur (other resources: geothermal, lithium, etc.).
- Conducting somewhat of a cumulative effects model per caribou range (issues limiting recovery).
- Clearly define monitoring steps (socio-economic and caribou populations).
- Flush out/make clearer the relationships that we see on the landscape – how they impact caribou.
- Propose that boreal caribou could have a managed Indigenous hunt, similar to that of the Hay-Zama bison hunting regulations?
- Include a stat chart – similar to those of GOA's in the discussion documents they shared on May 17, 2017.
- Research the definition of moratoriums – what is their legal standing in court?
- Provide the socio-economic gaps (Oil and Gas and Agriculture sectors).

Sunni-Jeanne Walker left the meeting at 9:50 p.m.

Miron Croy left the meeting at 9:54 p.m.

6. Next Meeting Date(s)

17-08-003

MOVED by Crystal McAteer

- ❖ Tuesday August 22, 2017: High Level Open House Best Western Mirage @ 5:00 – 8:00 p.m.
- ❖ Wednesday August 23, 2017: Manning Open House County of Northern Lights Office @ 5:00 – 8:00 p.m.
- ❖ Tuesday August 29, 2017: Northwest Species at Risk Committee Meeting in High Level @ 1:00 – 6:00 p.m.

CARRIED

7. Adjournment

17-08-004

MOVED by Mike Morgan

That the Northwest Species at Risk Committee meeting be adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

CARRIED

These minutes were adopted this 29th day of August, 2017.

Lisa Wardley, Chair

APPROVED