REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO

RDBN FORESTRY COMMITTEE
(Committee of the Whole)
Supplementary Agenda

Thursday, January 14, 2016
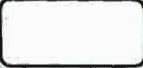
PAGE NO.	CORRESPONDENCE	ACTION
2-7	Wildfire Workshop Plan & Proposed Implementation Priorities	Receive (For Review by the Forestry Committee - to be addressed by the RDBN Board on Jan 28/16)

NEW BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT

WILDFIRE WORKSHOP FOLLOW-UP PLAN & PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES
REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO AND THE OMINECA BEETLE ACTION COALITION
October 2015

WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATION	POSSIBLE ACTION BY RD OR OBAC (SUBJECT TO FURTHER DISCUSSION AND AVAILABILTY OF RESOURCES)	COMMENTS & SUGGESTED IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES
		LEAD RESPONSIBILITY · RECOMMENDED PRIORITY
FIRESMART		
Increase awareness of FIRESMART standards and practices in communities.	1. Take an active leadership role in the OBAC proposed project "Becoming a FireSmart Region" 2. As an alternative to #1 – RD to approach the province to discuss how to accelerate and enhance a regional FireSmart Initiative. 3. Whether or not #1 and #2 are successfully implemented, include FireSmart brochures and best practices in tax assessment and other communications with homeowners. 4. Ensure all local fire departments and bylaw officers have training in FireSmart and are able to assess properties and advise homeowners and residents.	• Action # 1 as described is subject to the ability of OBAC to continue undertaking projects beyond 2016. • Second option will require some staff/consulting work to develop a rough proposal and work with RD members and provincial agencies to refine it. • FireSmart activities are subject to engagement with the provincial initiative and access to the necessary funding and implementation capacity (e.g., qualified staff). **SHARED** · **LOCAL GOVERNMENT** · **2** Initial work by local governments will include determining the current state of FireSmart implementation across the region. This will vary between communities. Addressing the gaps will require expertise and resources from the province.
Investigate and promote insurance premium incentives for homeowners.	1. Follow-up with FireSmart program for more information. 2. Make residents aware of any incentives already existing through web site and mail-outs. 3. Join appropriate initiatives to encourage insurance companies to provide incentives.	• First step is to work with the province to determine the present status. • It may be possible to check directly with some insurers to see what their policies are. **LOCAL** · **2**

WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATION	POSSIBLE ACTION BY RD OR OBAC (SUBJECT TO FURTHER DISCUSSION AND AVAILABILTY OF RESOURCES)	COMMENTS & SUGGESTED IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES	
		LEAD RESPONSIBILITY	RECOMMENDED PRIORITY
PLANNING			
Develop approaches that ensure fire is considered during all planning activities.	1. Examine RD planning practices and bylaws to determine whether they adequately address wildfire. 2. Encourage all members to examine official community plans with a wildfire lens. 3. Incorporate wildfire considerations into all RD involvement in / input to: land use plans; forest stewardship plans; and other development plans.	• Land referrals from the province are one method for flagging concerns. **LOCAL** **2** • For #1 RD(s) could initiate an internal review. If required, advice and expertise could be sought from Wildfire Management Branch or qualified consultants. • For #2, if external technical support is required the Province could be approached to assist with plan review, either as a coordinated region-wide effort or ad-hoc as individual communities are able to initiate. • #3 would be a policy decision for RDs and may require some staff training or outside help.	
Improve processes to ensure more effective community input to fire management plans, including more dialogue about values at risk.	1. Work with wildfire management branch across the region to establish effective mechanisms for community input. 2. Establish a venue and invite residents to identify values-at-risk on an on-going basis so that information can be made readily available to fire managers during strategic and tactical planning.	• Venue might utilize web site or social media – allowing residents to register information that can be accessed by planners as-and-when needed. **SHARED** **1** • For #1 incorporate into process proposed under integrated planning and leadership recommendations below. • For #2 RDs could assess the feasibility of putting an interactive page on their existing web sites with easy and obvious access from the home page.	
Provide for legal fire management objectives in forest practices legislation.	1. Work with wildfire management branch and forest industry to review the current requirements to more accurately identify gaps. 2. Directly and through other regional and provincial organizations, encourage the provincial government to address the gaps.	**PROVINCIAL** **3** • #1 could be initiated during the initial contact to establish a regional forum as identified in leadership recommendations. • #2 would be an outcome of discussions under #1. It may involve communicating with legislators directly and/or through resolutions at NCLGA or UBCM.	

3

WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATION	POSSIBLE ACTION BY RD OR OBAC (SUBJECT TO FURTHER DISCUSSION AND AVAILABILTY OF RESOURCES)	COMMENTS & SUGGESTED IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES	
		LEAD RESPONSIBILITY	RECOMMENDED PRIORITY
Integrate or coordinate plans done by various agencies at various scales – start with better communication.	1. Work with member communities, First Nations and wildfire management branch to establish a regional forum on fire management planning. 2. Adopt and support practices that improve interagency information sharing about the planning and operational aspects of wildfire management.	• Could start with by having an initial meeting with Wildfire and Resource Management staff of FLNRO to explore best approaches. • See also "Leadership" below. **SHARED** **1** • Although OBAC could take the initial steps, the actual implementation of improved practices would fall to all of the agencies involved in planning.	
Reevaluate some land-use objectives with a fire management lens.	1. Work with wildfire management branch to identify the highest risk areas of the region. 2. Evaluate land use objectives / guidelines in identified high risk areas for their impact on fire management. 3. Recommend changes where indicated.	• This would be a medium to longer term undertaking. **PROVINCIAL** **3** • Local governments can advocate for this activity directly through communications with the province and possibly through advisory resolutions at NCLGA and UBCM.	
Examine and address risk distribution through permitting processes.	1. Encourage the province to ensure that all industries operating on the landscape are required to make an equitable contribution to fire management planning and prevention.	• This will need more clarification and may include the references to broadcast burning mentioned under fuel management. **PROVINCIAL** **3**	
FUEL MANAGEMENT			
Assess the economics and mechanisms for incentives to utilize biomass in conjunction with fuel management projects.	1. Contact MFLNRO to determine what mechanisms are now in place or being worked on. 2. Identify gaps and possible solutions. 3. Determine how community forest licences can play a role.	• There may be avenues through BCTS or the forest investment account. **PROVINCIAL** **2** • How best to initiate action under #1 and #2 can be raised in an initial review of workshop results with Wildfire Management Branch (possibly through OBAC). • Local governments can encourage community forests to bring forth suggestions.	

WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATION	POSSIBLE ACTION BY RD OR OBAC (SUBJECT TO FURTHER DISCUSSION AND AVAILABILTY OF RESOURCES)	COMMENTS & SUGGESTED IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES	
		LEAD RESPONSIBILITY	RECOMMENDED PRIORITY
Ensure logging waste (particularly piles) is dealt with in a timely manner.	1. Discuss with MFLNRO and industry - possible slash disposal guidelines linked to key high risk zones identified in fuel management plans.	• Coordinate with bioenergy opportunities – possible conflicts or synergies. PROVINCIAL 2 • Incorporate into planning activities described above. Highest urgency is any existing unabated piles in areas of high risk to public safety and infrastructure.	
Identify and address the barriers to broadcast burning, including liability and smoke management issues.	1. Communicate with existing MFLNRO and forest industry to understand existing issues and potential solutions. 2. Support the parties to implement solutions.	• Some work appears to be underway on this matter. One of the issues is distribution of liability. Another is public response to smoke from prescribed burns. PROVINCIAL 2 • Include in initial debrief of workshop results with wildfire and resource management staff at MFLNRO.	
Coordinate the priorities of the Land Based Investment Program and fuel management activities.	1. Work with wildfire management branch and program staff to determine where and how this could be accomplished. 2. Support any necessary policy changes.	PROVINCIAL 2 • Include in initial debrief of workshop results with wildfire and resource management staff at MFLNRO.	
LEADERSHIP			
Identify champions at the local level and work together on planning and mitigation that is appropriate to the particular community.	1. Invite key stakeholders to participate in a "Regional Forum on Wildfire" which would meet periodically to deal with matters such as those identified at the October 13, 2015 workshop in Burns Lake.	• Local and First Nations governments, provincial ministries, industries. Participants would likely be technical staff. OBAC or RDs could "host" and provide the secretariat services to the forum. SHARED 1 • Could start with by having an initial meeting with Wildfire and Resource Management staff of FLNRO to explore best approaches. • Determine how First Nations can most effectively be included. • Determine if/who/how other stakeholders should be included.	

5

WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATION	POSSIBLE ACTION BY RD OR OBAC (SUBJECT TO FURTHER DISCUSSION AND AVAILABILTY OF RESOURCES)	COMMENTS & SUGGESTED IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES
		LEAD RESPONSIBILITY RECOMMENDED PRIORITY
		• Develop terms-of-reference and a list of high priority activities to be endorsed by participating organizations.
Generate a "bottom up" voice, including taking the conversation to provincial forums.	1. As potential issues and solutions are better identified, take forward resolutions to provincial and federal organizations (e.g. NCLGA/UBCM/FCM). 2. Participate more actively in provincial activities (e.g., conferences) dealing with community interests in wildfire.	LOCAL 2 • Individual solutions may become a #1 priority as they are clearly identified. • Look for opportunities to demonstrate that communities understand and have a role in wildfire management. Where necessary obtain independent expertise to ensure technical credibility.
Involve community leaders in discussion and analysis following significant fires.	1. Make a request to MFLNRO that local government be invited to participate in post-fire debriefings/analysis as a matter of standard practice. 2. Request that a review and analysis be conducted of any significant wildfire in the region. 3. For fires that are particularly complex and/or involve a variety of competing interests, request that an independent third party participate in or conduct the review.	LOCAL PROVINCIAL 2 • Initial discussion can take place as part of initial debrief of the workshop with Wildfire Management Branch (RDBN or OBAC). • Solutions may be incorporated into the strengthened communications protocols suggested below. • If a formal policy proposal is required it can be developed by RDs or OBAC in consultation with Wildfire Management Branch, then advanced directly and/or through advisory resolutions at NCLGA and UBCM.
Increase communication pre and post fire to minimize rumors and incorrect information.	1. Work with wildfire management branch to establish communications protocols with local government. Review and update the protocols annually based on a joint review of effectiveness.	LOCAL PROVINCIAL 1 • Some work has already been done in this regard. RDs could put a high priority on this to ensure protocols are current and implemented.

WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATION	POSSIBLE ACTION BY RD OR OBAC (SUBJECT TO FURTHER DISCUSSION AND AVAILABILTY OF RESOURCES)	COMMENTS & SUGGESTED IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES	
		LEAD RESPONSIBILITY	RECOMMENDED PRIORITY
CAPACITY			
	1. Internally at RDs or in partnership with OBAC, establish capacity to support and sustain the increased activity required to implement proposed activities.	This may include additional in-house staff, training, contractor, etc. LOCAL	1
		• Options should be explored for capacity improvements, including: - Utilizing expertise or revenue from community forest licences. - Financial support from the province, directly or through OBAC. - Building and sharing capacity with First Nations. - NDIT grants. - Obtaining a commitment for technical capacity from the province.	

6