



**Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako  
HRVA Electoral Area ‘D’ Committee**

**Summary - Understanding Community Resiliency  
Workshop**

**Date:** April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022

**Time:** 9 am – 12 noon

**Format:** Professional Building Fraser Lake

**Overview**

On Friday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022, participants from the HRVA Committee for Electoral Area ‘D’ came together in Fraser Lake to review and discuss community vulnerabilities. This document provides a summary of what was discussed throughout the first in person session. Thank you to everyone who took the time out of their week to contribute to this session.

The Understanding Community Resiliency workshop objectives were as follows:

- Review list of selected hazards;
- Review and identify additional vulnerabilities in Area ‘D’: Social, Economic, Environmental, Physical, and underlying risk drivers;
- Review and discuss hazard scenarios to better understand vulnerabilities.
- Discuss the need for additional information before embarking on likelihood and consequence scoring of hazards.

**Participants**

Organization	Name
Area D Director, RDBN	Mark Parker
Village of Fraser Lake Fire Chief	Joe Pacheco, Fire Chief
Glennanan Association	Jo-anne Fiske
Village of Fraser Lake	Kristin Levy
RCMP	Jason Rumming
Fort Fraser Fire Department	Yvan Laramee, Fire Chief
Cattlemen’s Association	Bryan Adams
Nadleh Whut’en First Nation	Juan Cereno
Resident of Fraser Lake	Bob Storey
ESS, Village of Fraser Lake Councillor	Audrey Fennama
RDBN	Deborah Jones-Middleton, Director of Protective Services
RDBN	Christopher Walker, Emergency Program Coordinator
RDBN	Liliana Dragowska, HRVA Coordinator

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## Welcome and Review of Selected Hazards

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The session began with a round table of introductions asking participants to discuss share what they feel is a strength in their community or neighbourhood that will assist them during an emergency event or recover from an emergency event. This was followed by a short presentation from Liliana reviewing the objectives of the meetings, overview of the HRVA committee process, and reviewing the 41-hazard selected at the November 2021 HRVA Hazard Identification workshop.

The notes below summarize the discussion and reflections on the hazards selected to date:

- Truck traffic has increased on the highway, still no known information on what chemicals and hazardous materials are being transported and when. Transport Canada does not report and are we prepared as local response agencies to respond.
- Story of cyanide spill on the bridge over the Stellako River. The Response agencies learned a lot through this incident in the mid 80's. One thing that stood out was the communication and the ability to alert residents and the village to stop drawing potable water from the lake.
- Voyent alert system is a strong resource for our local area, can reach landlines, cell phones, emails and more.
- Last fall cell communication crashed in the floods down south affecting communication infrastructure in the north.
- Unique communication challenges in the region that include lots of unserved areas, cell tower expansion in the region, RCMP radio service does not go all the way to Francois Lake – must switch to burns lake frequency, new repeater tower at mouse mountain.
- Nuclear war – many global targets in the region with Kennedy Dam and Endako Mine tailings ponds.

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## Discussion on Vulnerabilities in Area 'D'

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In this section Liliana presented the key findings from the Area D Understanding Community Vulnerabilities backgrounder paper and began to explore with participants four grouping of vulnerabilities that may be considered in this project. The information presented and discussed is a starting point in the collection of known vulnerabilities within the region. The intention is that the HRVA process will help to strengthen our collective community knowledge of our vulnerabilities to enable future conversations that will focus on resiliency strategies. Both vulnerability and resiliency are important, and closely related, concepts for evaluating a community's ability to cope with the impacts of a hazard event. It is important to differentiate between the two:

- Vulnerability looks at the factors that increase a community's susceptibility to damage from a hazard;
- Resiliency is a measure of a community's ability to resist or recover from damage (SOPAC, 2002).

Participants were asked if there is any missing information or insight members might have on specific factors that they perceive have the potential to contribute to vulnerabilities within Electoral Area 'D'. The notes below summarize the discussion and additions under each topic presented and will ultimately assist HRVA committee members in subjectively scoring the likelihood and consequence of each hazard in our area.

### Area 'D' Response Agencies:

- Add Voyent Alert System – accessible by the RDBN, partner municipalities and first nations governments.
- Nadleh Whut'en has an EOC

- Livestock response – locally there are a number of panels (unclear who stores these); in the Okanagan and provincially there is development of emergency trainers for cattle liners with training available through FARSHA. May not be a primary response but is a valuable resource.
- 911 dispatch is a first response resource in Area D. Some concerns that 911 dispatch is unfamiliar with this area, and there have been mix ups with Francois Lake Road in Area D and B through Burns Lake a road that does not connect. This issue is serious with BC Ambulance Service.
- Although not a first response, Nadleh Whut'en has recently established a not-for-profit organization that will be responsible for the Emergency Operations Centre of excellence. In the process of recruiting board members and will focus on establishing evacuation centres that have a cultural openness and learning atmosphere.
- Fort Fraser has one fire engine and 1 tender with new equipment on its way.
- Search and rescue are tasked by the RCMP, BCEHS, Fire departments, or local authorities and takes 45 minutes to get to Fraser Lake on a fast deployment.
- Village of Fraser Lake has a contract with BC Wildfire Service to fight wildland fire if called out/ dispatched with a task number to suppress a wildland fire until BC Wildfire crews can get to the sight and location.
- Many wildfires are started by trees on power lines.
- When trees are down on rural powerlines, there is slow response support from BC Hydro. For example, the Fraser Lake Fire department has to respond to 30 + trees that fell on the North Shore of Fraser Lake.
- Interest for a response flow chart. With 911 at the top.

### **Social Factors and Vulnerabilities**

- Fraser Lake influx of people from out of the community, COVID influx and migration to rural areas.
- Shortage of housing in the community.
- Seniors are moving away from community because of a lack of medical services. there is a need for more housing and services for seniors in the region. Need for extended care. Lack of doctors in community and in-home supports.
- Low level of literacy in the area. Recognition that language is changing with generations of youth and literacy is decreasing. Need for signage?
- Need for cultural learning opportunities in the community with indigenous communities and learning indigenous laws. IE there was a water law enacted by the Stellat'en and Nadleh Whut'en First Nations to protect food and ensure human survival. How do we promote this traditional knowledge and learning of laws that have helped cultures adapt?
- Move Autumn Services into Community Services. Autumn Services provide services to the seniors as well as to the public in general. They assist people in accessing government programs, licensing, social assistance etc.
- Under "Community Food Programs" we should add the Fort Fraser Food Bank.

### **Economic Factors and Vulnerabilities**

- Risk of Forest Industry Collapse.
- Need for climate adaptation and adaptations in our fuel dependant economy.

### **Environmental Factors and Vulnerabilities**

- Water Vulnerability for fighting fire and food growth.
- April 11<sup>th</sup>- 42 years ago there was snow in Fraser Lake, we are seeing the effects of climate change.
- Forest Fires regeneration – vulnerability in reforestation and forest fire management practices create vulnerability because of monoculture crops that are susceptible to

strong fire behaviour, low diversity in forest covers. There is a need to recognize and implement indigenous forest practices

- [Shovel Lake Wildfire Ecosystem Restoration Plan](#) is a great resource to talk about the effects and restoration plans for the Shovel Lake Fire.
- Local atmospheric river conditions with flash flooding in Fraser Lake.

### Physical Critical infrastructure factors

- How do we alert those residents who live in rural and remote regions of Area 'D'? In past emergencies RCMP and Search and Rescue helped to notify of evacuations.
- [Bulkley-Nechako Emergency and Public Alerts](#) – need to share and advertise this service to residents. The system will provide communication via landline, cell, app, and email; however, individuals need to sign up.
- Communication for RCMP, there is a radio frequency change in the Glennan area of Francois Lake. This creates challenges.

### Underlying Risk Drivers

- Climate Change – need for transition into new economy. Example was the heat dome, strain on humans directly because of climate change.
- Canada is one of the largest contributors to GHG- interest and need to clarify what is Canada's and the local regionals contribution to GHG emissions? Maintaining status quo is a vulnerability.
- Misinformation:
  - Mistrust from the public towards government messaging;
  - Creating cultural division;
  - Need for a strong approach to communication and creating relationships for credible information sharing and belief.
  - Great example is the Buffalo Tracks the Fraser Lake RCMP Newsletter, building trust and relationships in Area D – community Outreach.

### Discuss Hazard Scenarios

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These scenario worksheets were designed to help guide the committee through an alternative discussion process that would help to highlight and articulate additional vulnerabilities within the Electoral Area. The participants broke into three groups and discussed five hazard scenarios on Wildfire, Hazardous Material Spill, Electrical Outage, Pest Infestation and Animal Disease.

Hazard Scenarios have been updated and included in the Final version of the Understanding Community Resiliency Background document available on the RDBN's [HRVA website](#) under Electoral Area 'D' updates.

### Wrap Up and Next Steps

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To wrap up the session committee members had a brief overview of the likelihood and consequence scoring excel spread sheets that will be sent out to committee member for completion by May 16<sup>th</sup>. This was followed by some final remarks and reminders of next steps in the process:

- Liliana to send a summary of this meeting along with a request for committee member to reflect and respond to Liliana if they feel there is a need for additional information before embarking on likelihood and consequence scoring of hazards?
- Liliana to draft and send out Hazard Likelihood and Consequence Scoring instructions, followed by committee members completing the Likelihood and Consequence Scoring surveys.