



Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako HRVA Electoral Area 'B' Committee

Summary - Understanding Community Resiliency Workshop

Date: May 3rd, 2022

Time: 9 am – 12 noon

Format: Zoom

Overview

On Tuesday, May 3rd, 2022 participants from the HRVA Committee for Electoral Area 'B' came together on Zoom to review and discuss community vulnerabilities. This document provides a summary of what was discussed throughout the 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 'B': 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
Electoral Area 'B' Director, RDBN	Michael Riis-Christianson
Village of Burns Lake Fire Chief	Rob Krause, Fire Chief
Lake Babine Nation	Rick Dobbs
Search and Rescue, Village of Burns Lake EPC	John Rempel
Lakes District Road Maintenance	Corie Funk
Lakes District Integrated Health Services – Health Services Administrator	Vicky Rensby
Elizabeth Fry Society - Burns Lake	Kim Campbell
Babine - Hampton Lumber	Doug Bysouth
RDBN	Deborah Jones-Middleton, Director of Protective Services
RDBN	Christopher Walker, Emergency Program Coordinator
RDBN	Liliana Dragowska, HRVA Coordinator

Welcome and Review of Selected Hazards

The session began with a round table of introductions asking participants to discuss share and 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 36-hazard selected at the February 7th, 2022 HRVA Hazard Identification workshop.

There was discussion on how the current avian flu concerns and cases in the region fit into the hazards identified. Further discussion was had on how information regarding the risk is being shared with the community.

Discussion on Vulnerabilities in Area 'B'

In this section Liliana presented the key findings from the Area 'B' Understanding Community Vulnerabilities background paper and began to explore with participants four grouping of vulnerabilities that are to 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 'B'. 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 'B' Response Agencies:

- Correction on BC Ambulance Services in the Burns Lake Area. The station was classed as full time station in 2021 with allocation for 8 full time staff, 4 to 6 part time or casual staff, and a community paramedic. The station supports the Southside ambulance station and covers a very large rural area including Francois Lake, Babine Landing, Topley, and Endako.
- Village of Burn Lake EOC.
- SAR has 32 members; response is only with those members available at the time of an incident. Locally own boats, drone, underwater camera.
- Babine Lake Nation has an active fire brigade, the nations are continually conducting and training members. Tachet works closely with Granisle on fire protection. The EOC for Lake Babine Nation is continually training staff and working to improve communication. Currently working on an Lake Babine Nation amber alert system on communications with members. RDBN to send information on Voyent Alert.

Social Factors and Vulnerabilities

- Woyenne is spelt wrong in the document.
- Misinformation is a social vulnerability.

- There are instances where the vulnerable populations are cut off from credible information sources during stressful times such as evacuations. Particularly with information on where vulnerable populations should go in the time of emergency events. What do we do as a community with seniors and homeless individuals during the time of emergencies?
- RDBN is currently working on low literacy accessibility for evacuation notices and alerts.
- Northern health keeps a list of vulnerable populations, and their contacts and where people might go in case of an emergency event. These are updated annually.
- Add the LINK to the list of Social Services.

Environmental Factors and Vulnerabilities

- List significant wildfire events in the region as these and surrounding fires had a major impact on the community.
- Concern over climate change having an impact on the state of tree species that are susceptible to changing climates. What will happen in 40-60 years when the vegetation, ecosystems, and climate changes in the region.
- 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.

Physical Critical infrastructure factors

- Add Margaret Patrick Memorial Centre – 300-person capacity, commercial kitchen, air conditioning and heating.
- Add Burns Lake Band Gathering Place, hall, full sized kitchen.
- Add Heritage House and Carol Cottage – seniors housing.

Underlying Risk Drivers

- Climate Change – need for transition into new economy. Example was the heat dome, strain on humans directly because of climate change.
- Influx of people interested in rural living and in Area 'B'. Concern what pressure this will place on rural properties to subdivide and create higher density in the wildfire urban interface zones. Recognition that there is a lot of crown land in the region, but there still might be increased pressure on rural living and housing.
- Psychological long term impacts on residents due to wildfires. Heightened anxiety due to previous experiences. Local governments could have a role in advocating for continual funding for community-based programs in regarding mental health and wellness for recovery.
- Misinformation:
 - Mistrust from the public towards government messaging;
 - Creating a social divide;
 - Need for a strong approach to communication and creating relationships for credible information sharing and belief.

Discuss Hazard Scenarios

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 Backgrounder document available on the RDBN's [HRVA website](#) under Electoral Area 'B' updates.

Wrap Up and Next Steps

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 30th. 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.